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PLANNING PHASE IN CHANGE MANAGEMENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS	page
1. INTRODUCTION	10
1.1. Aim and research questions	12
1.2. The structure of the thesis	12
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1. Change	14
2.2. Change Management	15
2.3. Models of change management	16
2.3.1. Lewin´s model	19
2.3.2. Kotter´s 8-step change model	20
2.3.3. Kaizen	21
2.3.4. Planning phase in the models of change management	23
2.4. Planning changes in organizations	25
2.4.1. Change Plan	29
2.4.2. The role of supervisors in change planning	29
2.5. Communication in change	31
2.5.1. Defining communication	31
2.5.2. Communication in change planning	32
2.5.3. Importance of change communication for the personnel	38
2.5.4. Supervisors role in change communication	39
2.6. Key theoretical issues of the thesis	41
3. METHODOLOGY	43
3.1. Qualitative Research	43
3.2. Collection of research material	45
3.3. Research objects description	47
3.4. Collection of empirical material in this study	48
3.5. Processing and analyzing of the empirical material	51
3.6. Trustworthiness of the study	52

4. RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY	54
4.1. What does organizational change planning include?	54
4.2. Communication in practice when planning changes	61
4.3. Supervisors' role in change planning and change communication in practice	68
5. CONCLUSION	73
5.1. Summary	73
5.2. Meaning and usability of the research	77
5.3. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research	78
REFERENCES	79
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1.	84
Appendix 2.	85

LIST OF FIGURES	page
Figure 1. Structure of the study	13
Figure 2. The three-phase model of change	19
Figure 3. Kotter's 8-step Change Model	20
Figure 4. Kaizen Change Management - PDCA Model	22
Figure 5. Levels of change communication	33
Figure 6. Interview structure	50

LIST OF TABLES	page
Table 1. Different Models of Change Management	16
Table 2. Interviewees' background information	47
Table 3. Number of questions	50

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ABSTRACT

Change management has been a popular subject in business life for a while. The global competition and changes in operational environment have increased. Rapid changes in organizations are needed, but at the same time changes should be planned and communicated properly. The role of supervisors in change planning and their communication cannot be passed over either.

The purpose of this study is to examine how should changes in organizations be planned, what is the role of communication in change planning and what is the role of supervisors in change planning and its communication. These themes are researched through a literature review and a semi-structured theme interview. For the interviews five people working in same company were interviewed. The outcomes from the literature and the results of the interviews will be discussed and compared with each other.

As results of this study it was found out that the planning phase in changes has a crucial role for the changes success and there are certain parts that change planning should include. Communication when planning changes have a major role too. Including the supervisors in change planning have a positive impact on changes and communication of the supervisors is crucial when planning changes.

KEYWORDS: Change management, change planning, change communication

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational changes and change management have been topical issues for a long time already. Still the amount of changes seems to be speeding up and the importance of organizational change is emphasized more and more. Consequently, plenty of studies can be found of change management, but as its importance and topicality seem to be only increasing, it is still important to emphasize this research area (Pettigrew, Woodman and Cameron 2001). For example, in Kauppalehti (2014) it is mentioned that change management is no longer a project that has a beginning and an end. The tempo of changes will only accelerate. The quicker and more agile an organization will adapt to the change, the better the chances it will have on surviving.

Changes in organizations tend to be quite common in today's organizations. One reason for the necessity of changes is globalization. Consequently, the competition is jagged in different parts of the society. Besides the competition, the need for changes arises when, for example, laws are changed to make them correspond to the present culture. Changes in technology, multi-culture and financing can create need for organizational changes. The change can also be purely a strategic choice of the organization. The change process includes careful planning, implementation and examination of the change. This kind of a change emphasizes the role of supervisors and human resource management's work as mobilizing the change. (Baker 2007: 5-11.)

In Tekes report it can be found that during the last years slightly less than half of the Finnish companies have gone through some level of organizational change. These changes have mainly been outcomes of increasing competition, new technologies or changes in demand. (Alasoini & Lyly-Yrjänäinen & Ramstad & Heikkilä 2014.)

Change is often an excellent opportunity. Many good ideas would have not been carried out if managers and employees had not had to reconsider the ways of work. Research on change management is important because in today's world changes need to be made constantly and its communication is difficult for many supervisors. In global competition the organizations must be effective and ready to renew and change old ways of action as

quickly as possible. (Arvola 2012: 9; Sydänmaanlakka: 2000: 24; Lämsä & Hautala 2005: 185-186.)

In organizations change can be seen rather as a normal state than an exception. For the continuity and development of operations, it is important for the organization to plan changes and not just react later by force. Strategic planning needs to be an enduring process and organizational learning should support it. One should act in anticipation to changes and not just responding to them afterwards. The challenge for change is that companies and their partners are now spread around the globe as a spider web. (Cameron & Quinn; 1999: 6; Holtari: 2009; Paliszkievicz, et al. 2015.)

Kotter (2007) and Stenvall et. al (2007) claim that in most of the organizations the importance of planning tends to get forgotten. Even though it seems that changes happen constantly it needs to be remembered that not all the changes succeed. Like many others, Doyle, Claydon and Buchanan (2000) estimated that almost 70% of organizational changes fail. Of course, there are many opinions of this and the amount is relatively high. For example Hughes (2011) state that there is not enough scientific research from this 70% failing rate.

Marjo Silvo (2014) writes in her blog in Kauppalehti that there is no single guarantee of a successful leading through change. However, it is certain that one of the most important ingredients of a successful change is a skilled supervisor. Also, importance of change communication from the beginning to the end of change process cannot be emphasized enough. Also, the management and supervisors must be sensitive and foresee the individuals' reactions to change. Facing change situations is easier for personnel if also the negative sides of the change are openly recognized. It is important to find positive factors that will make the change meaningful with everybody. The task of top management in changes is to give directions, goals and step marks to change. The supervisors are the real safeguards of the day-to-day work of change and work in front line with their team, but also need support from their own supervisor. Similarly, in larger organizations HR supports the success of the changes by bringing its own expertise to

support supervisors and by creating the conditions for change in their own role. (Kauppalehti 2014.)

1.1. Aim and research questions

The purpose of this research is to explore our understanding of the planning of changes in organizations. As discussed in the previous chapter change communication and supervisors' role in changes are important. Thereby the research will be focusing on these themes. Following this the research questions of this study are:

- How should changes in organizations be planned?
- What is the role of communication in change planning?
- What is the role of supervisors in change planning and its communication?

These research questions will be examined in this study through existing literature, but also through empirical research. The empirical research is based on semi-structured theme interviews in a global company's Finland's HR (human resource) department. Five people from the HR function were interviewed.

1.2. The structure of the thesis

The first chapter of this study is the introduction, which introduces the background of the research, research objectives and research problems. The second chapter goes through the literature review. The chapter starts by dealing with change, change management and models of change management. Through this, the chapter transfers into the planning phase of changes, communication in change and most importantly communication in change planning. Together with change planning and change communication the supervisors' role in these is elaborated. Chapter 3 deals with methodology that has been used in this study. The fourth chapter examines the results of this research. This chapter's empirical study includes direct quotations from the interviewees. The last chapter presents the conclusions drawn from theory and empirical study, considers the significance of the

research, the limitations, and presents proposals for further research. This is the structure of this thesis and it is presented in figure one.

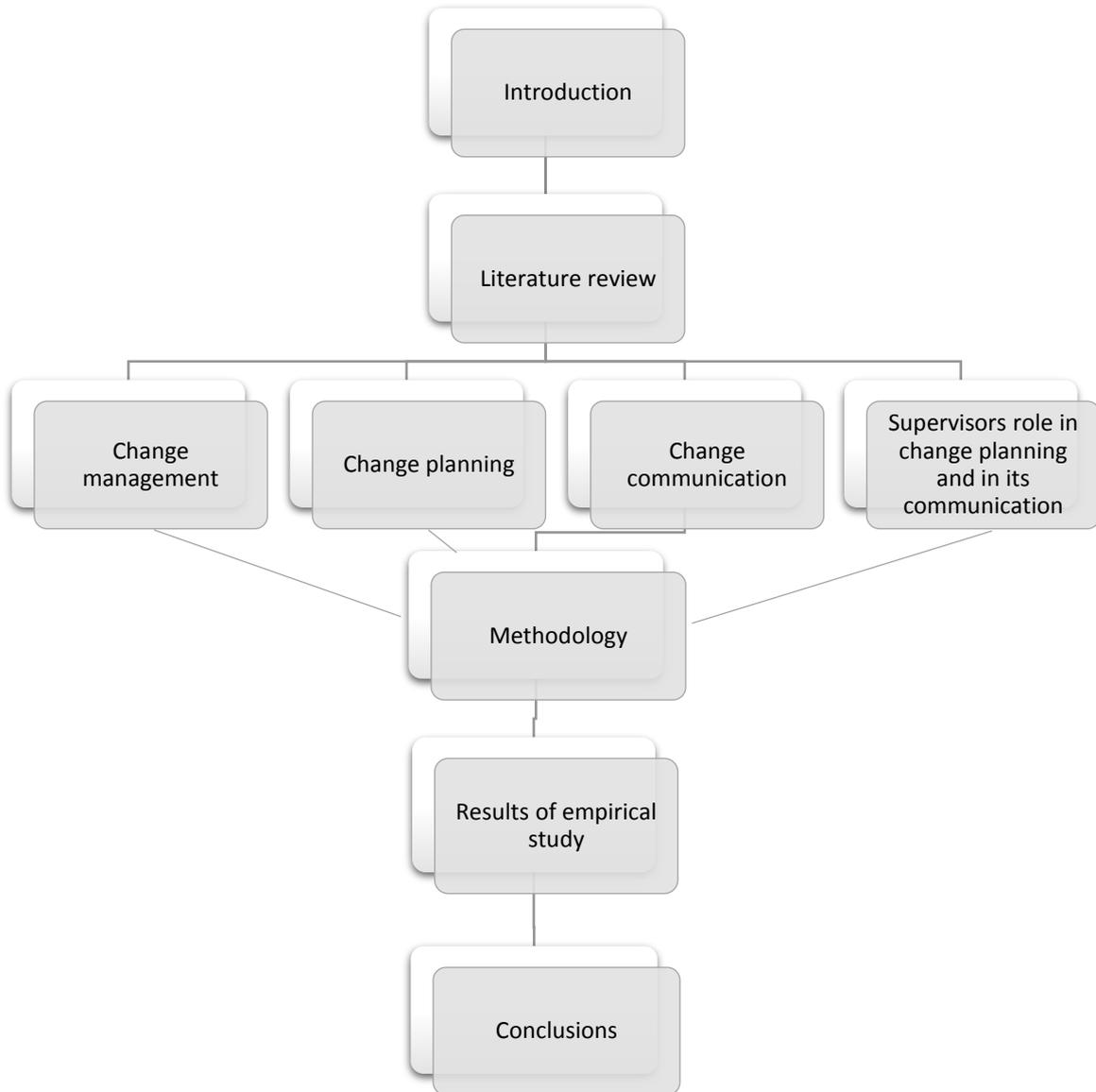


Figure 1. Structure of the study

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Change

Beecroft, Duffy and Moran (2003: 3) claim that “A common question asked by leaders and employees in organizations is “*Why do we need to change our organization on a regular basis? We like the place the way it is. Why keep changing all the time*” The answer is simply that the old ways of accomplishing our organization’s purpose are not effective and efficient and do not work any longer in the current market environment.” For most enterprises and their executive group in today’s Internet-based world of rapid change this is often found out too late.

One could ask what does change mean? Organizational change can be defined as a process that organizations use for moving from their present stage to some future state demanded when acquiring increasement in their effectiveness (Jones 2003; Paton & McCalman 2000; Tan & Tiong 2005). The purpose of change is to reduce the gap between present reality and ideal place where the organization is wanted to be (Hersey et al. 1990: 322).

Changes can be divided into different types based on different characteristics. Firstly, the changes can be divided into periodical and continuous changes. Periodical changes are rare and individual events that occur mainly in still and slow organizations. Continuous change, on the other hand, is steady and cumulative and such a change is common in growing and self-directed organizations. (Weick & Quinn 1999.) In addition, the division into transformational and transactional changes is possible. Transformational change arises because of external factors and directly affects the organization's strategy and leadership. Transactional change is influenced by the organizational structure, the environment and leadership practices (Burke & Litwin 1992). Tainio and Valpola (1996: 181) claim that changes can be divided into two main characters: changes that are born from internal development needs and changes that are results of external changes.

2.2. Change Management

Change management can be defined as a process, where the goal is to implement changes in business processes, information, organizational tasks or structures and to reduce risks and costs concerning the change and by the help of these to optimize the benefits received from the change (Murthy 2007: 22).

Change management can also be specified as a process among other things. The aim of change management is to implement the changes in the information, business processes, organizational structures and jobs, and to reduce the risks and costs associated with the change. These will help with optimizing the benefits of the change (Murthy 2007: 22). Kotter (1996: 3-4) claims that change management is needed due to a fundamental change in the business structure, which in turn is due to the need of adapting to the new and more challenging business environment.

Change management's goal is a successful transition from one phase to a next one. This transition includes practices in processes, tools, techniques, methods and approaches that will lead to a desired outcome. Change management has two main goals. First, to help the organization to achieve its goals that are not achieved in the current state. Second, to minimize the negative impact of change. Change management needs to define why the change needed, how to approach it, how to get the most out of it and how to ensure that the change is done successfully. (Newton 2007, 7-8.)

Juholin (2008: 186) describes leading change as influencing people who have feelings and intellect. Hersey and Blanchard (1990: 82) state that successful organizations have one important distinctive character that distinguish them from unsuccessful organization and this factor is dynamic and effective management.

Change requires leadership. With good change management the company can significantly reduce change-related costs, improve innovation and productivity, and support employee well-being in change. Good change management ensures that work is proceeded efficiently during and after the change. Change only occurs when people are

involved in the implementation of change and when it is visible in concrete changes of activities. The most important goal of change management is the successful lead-through of the change and to establish the change into everyday work in the organization. (Ilmarinen: 3.)

2.3. Models of change management

Leading change has been discussed since the 1940s. Change management has been studied greatly and there are plenty of different models that aim for successful change management. However, the first theoretical model of change management was Kurt Lewin's force theory in 1951. After Lewin's force theory many other theories of change management have followed. It should be noted, however, that in practice changes are rarely carried out in accordance with only one theoretical model. (Stenvall et al. 2007: 26 – 27).

In table 1, different change management models from several decades are introduced shortly. (The table presents author, year and title of the reference that has been used for describing the model. The name of the change management model and a summary of its main ideas are also presented in the table.)

Authors (year)	Title	Name of the model	Summary of the model
Bridgman & Brown & Cummings (2016)	Unfreezing change as three steps: Rethinking Kurt Lewin's legacy for change management	Lewin's model	Change starts by unfreezing which main point is creation of unhappiness to the current situation. Actions are made in the change stage. Change is solidified in the phase of refreezing.
Kotter (1996)	Leading Change	Kotter's 8-step change model	Phases of change: create a sense of urgency, form a guiding coalition, create a vision, communicate the vision, empower others to act on the vision, create quick wins, build on the change and institutionalize the change.
Hiatt (2006)	ADKAR: A Model for Change in Business,	ADKAR model	Released in 1999 by Prosci. Model name comes from words awareness, desire, knowledge,

	Government, and Our Community		ability and reinforcement. A model for approaching individual change based on the idea that organizations change is dependent on managing just one person's change.
Brunet & New (2003)	Kaizen in Japan: an empirical study	Kaizen theory	Kaizen can be defined as an ongoing journey towards quality and efficiency. Employers participation to the process improvement is important.
Paliszkievicz & Pietrzak (2015)	Framework of Strategic Learning: The PDCA Cycle	Kaizen Change Management - PDCA Model	Based on four stage action sequence circle Plan-Do-Check-Act. Model can be used for problem solving and as a development method. The model aims for continuous learning.
Leavitt (1965) & Keen (1981)	Applying organizational change in industry: Structural, technological and humanistic approaches & Information systems and organizational change	Leavitt's diamond	Leavitt's model describes four components that an organization consists of task, people, structure and technology. An organizational change can be pictured as a change in the organizations task, personnel, structure or accessible technology.
Valpola (2004)	Organisaatiot yhteen. Muutosjohtamisen käytännön keinot.	Five factors of successful change	To reach successful change, the next five factors need to be fulfilled successfully: definition of need for change, creation of common conception, taking care of ability for change, first measures and institutionalization of initialization.
Erämetsä (2003)	Myönteinen muutos	Lead-trough stairs	Model consist of eight steps: be accounted for, analysis and decisions, vision, strategy, target and indicators, planning of change lead-through, selling of the change and influencing, abandonment and removal of obstacles, development of know-how and the last step doing and permanence.
Schein (1980)	Organizational Psychology	The Process Consultation Model	Model tend to be used in a situation when the customer does not know where in the organization the problems is. The consult will lead the customer into recognition of the problem. The customer owns the problem and the resolution.

Cameron & Green (2009)	Making Sense of Change Management	Cycle of Change	Change process is a continuous cycle rather than as a linear progression. Cycles in the change: establishing the need for change, building of a change team, creation of vision and values, engaging and communicating, empowering of others, energizing and noticing improvements and consolidating.
Murthy (2007)	Change Management	Planning model	Model developed by Lippit, Watson and Westley (1958). Consists of seven step process: scouting, entry, diagnosis, planning, action, stabilization and evaluation and termination.
Murthy (2007)	Change Management	Action Reaction Model	Developed by Cummings and Huse 1989. The cycle includes eight steps: problem identification, consultation with a behavioral expert, data gathering and preliminary diagnosis, feedback to key client group, joint diagnosis of the problem, joint action planning, action, data gathering after action.
Murthy (2007)	Change Management	Integrative Model of Planned Change	Found by Bullock and Batten in 1985. Involves four stages exploration, planning, action and integration phases.
Stacey (2011)	Strategic Management and Organisational Dynamics: The Challenge of Complexity to ways of thinking about organisations	Dynamic Changing Model	An opposite model comparing to the models of planned change. According to the dynamic theory organizations actions, changes and renewals are chaotic and dynamic.

Table 1. Different Models of Change Management

In table 1, most of the listed models see change as a linear piece by piece happening event that has a beginning and an end. Kaizen differs from this as it aims for continuous improving and learning, also the Leavitt's diamond is not necessarily moving linear piece by piece and the dynamic changing model sees change as a chaotic and dynamic event. Most of the models also acknowledge different parts of change and even though they use different words in conclusion there can be seen phases of planning, implementing and establishing the change. Some of the models distribute these into smaller pieces but for

example the dynamic changing model on the other hand does not even recognize the planning phase in changes.

As mentioned before, there can be found a lot of research about change management. This is shown also in the table one. This chapter discusses about the most relevant theories of successful change management, which are Lewin's model and Kotter's eight step change model. Finally, Kaizen is presented as the literature presented, suggests that today's change is continuous. Through Kaizen a PDCA Model has evolved and this will be presented as well.

2.3.1. Lewin's model

Bridgeman, Brown and Cummings (2016) state that Kurt Lewin's three-part changing model is, by many, seen as the fundamental or classic accede to managing change. Robbins (1998: 638-639) points out that Lewin's model is one of the first theories of change management and that many other models are based on it. Though in the recent years the model has been criticized for being too simple (Bridgman et al. 2016).

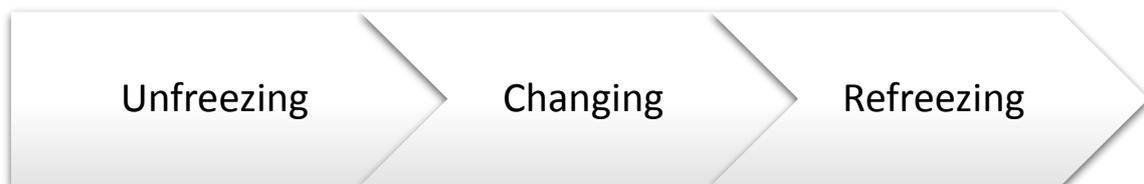


Figure 2. The three-phase model of change (adapted from Lewin, 1951)

As shown in figure 2 Lewin's change model, in the unfreezing stage the preparation for change starts and creation of unhappiness for the current stage of the organization starts, which will create space for the change. During the changing stage the change actions are made. In the stage of refreezing the change will be solidified to the organizational culture and the accomplished actions will be maintained. (Robbins 1998: 638–639.)

2.3.2. Kotter's 8-step change model

Lewin's model is seen as the fundamental model of change management and has engendered for instance Kotter's (1996) 8-step change model. This is one of the most known change management theories. The model consists of eight steps. Through these eight steps it is possible to follow through the change and the change will be carried out successfully in today's high and competitive business environment. The model is presented in figure 3.



Figure 3. Kotter's 8-step Change Model (1996: 21)

In figure 3 the model reflects managing obtrusive changes in eight parts to compose a whole. The first step of creating a sense of urgency means the identification of the imminent crises or opportunities. (Zenab, et al. 2013.) The first step is seen as very critical as at this point it is crucial to start the almost aggressive cooperation with many individuals to start the transformation process. If there will be no motivation, the effort will not go anywhere as the people will not help. (Kotter 2007.) The next step is to form a guiding coalition, which means the establishment of a team that is capable to take

through the crisis. The third step of creating a vision and supporting strategies includes a realizable sense of the direction and purpose of the change. (Zenab, et al. 2013.) When comparing with Lewin's theory these three steps are a part of the unfreezing phase, which is also seen as the preparation phase.

According to Kotter, the preparation phase is followed by execution. It is very important to contain an effective change communication all the way from the beginning of the process until the end of the process. The fourth step is to communicate the vision. This needs to be carried out openly to the team members to engender the atmosphere of trust among the workers. Fifth, empower others to act on the vision means removing the obstacles. Sixth, create quick wins, happens through e.g. a supportive team. The team will support the change. (Zenab, et al. 2013.) Again, when comparing with the Lewin's model these parts are a part of Lewin's change phase.

The seventh part, build on the change, means that the change needs to be moving on constantly. The last part, institutionalize the change, stands for making the change to stick. In this part the steps to make the change must be nailed deep enough in order them to stay permanently. These last steps could be seen as the refreezing phase in Lewin's model. The Kotter's model might be considered as a quite rational model. (Zenab, et al. 2013)

2.3.3. Kaizen

In the management literature Kaizen has been many times credited for its importance as a key element for Japanese management prosperity also by the employers' participation to the process improvement and refinement. Kaizen is Japanese and means improving. Kaizen is considered as the Japanese view of the change. Change is a continuous improvement. The change is gradual, endless, setting and achieving ever higher goals. (Brunet & New 2003; Åberg 2006: 214.)

First of the recognized elements is that Kaizen is continuous. This signifies its ongoing journey towards efficiency and quality as well as its embedded practice nature. Secondly

Kaizen is “usually incremental in nature, in contrast to major management-initiated reorganizations or technological innovation”. Kaizen is seen as involving intelligence and involvement of the employees, participating and constructing natural quality and psychological of work-life advantages for employees. It can be considered as one way to change management but additionally as a continuous, gradual and participating leadership strategy. Kaizen can be so deeply integrated in the company that the workers and management might not even realize they are thinking Kaizen. On the other hand, it can also be used as a tool in organizational change, for instance. (Brunet et al. 2003.)

Through Kaizen it is possible to make the company and its employees to accept new technologies and change more easily. Kaizen differs from the other models presented earlier by its way of seeing the change as the other models see the change as phenomena that is linear. Still, in a need of quick and radical changes Kaizen is not always seen as the best option because of its slowness. (Brunet et al. 2003.) In figure 5 the Kaizen four stage action sequence Plan-Do-Check-Act is presented. This change management tool is also known as the PDCA Model.

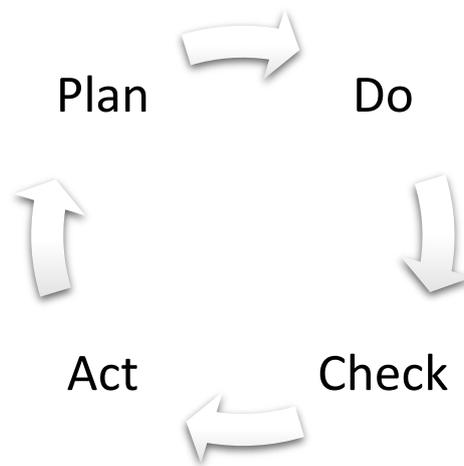


Figure 4. Kaizen Change Management - PDCA Model (Paliszkievicz et al. 2015)

The “*planning*” stage’s purpose is to formulate the mission, initiate strategic analysis, develop vision and strategy and then to translate the strategy into operational terms. (Zenab, et al. 2013.)

Vision can be defined as a place the work community aims to reach. Vision is a good concept as it is considered vague. The vision describes the future world we want to be building (Åberg 1997: 46). The need of change will be best justified by creating a vision of the wanted future and the vision needs to support the organization's idea of acting and basic goals but also to be a part of the organization's general values and operational principles (Fernandez & Rainey 2006: 169). Mission is a way to explain how the vision is implemented. The mission is based on areas of superior knowledge and the development of demanding areas. The mission is directed towards the realization of the vision (Åberg 2006: 215).

In stage of "*doing*" the weight is on communicating the strategy and aligning the organization to it, not forgetting to also motivate and engage the employees to the implementation of strategy. In the checking part the focus is to control the implementation, strategy's validity testing, to verify presumptions and keep track of the changes. The last stage "*acting*", is about adopting and correcting or perpetuating methods by implementation control. This stage also includes rethinking, confirming or adapting the strategy according to testing. (Paliszkiewicz et al. 2015.)

Through these different models it is clear, that the planning phase has its own place and importance in changes. A more closely look into these three different models show to put a lot of weight on the planning phase. Because of these a more closely look into the planning phase is required to examine.

2.3.4. Planning phase in the models of change management

Based on the models of change management presented in chapter 2.3. it can be concluded that change consists of three main phases: preparing for change, the actual implementation of change and the implementation and the strengthening of change into the daily operations. To support these phases additional assistance is required, such as communication (Paton and McCalman 2008: 380-385; Stenvall et. al. 2007).

Even though this study is concentrating on the planning phase in change it is important to notice that for example Paton et al (2008: 380) point out that the overall change success should always be viewed as a whole rather than as separate stages. The key elements of change management models and theories presented ensure the success of change, but at the same time change is a holistic process that is more than the sum of its parts. Change is continuous (Paton et al. 2008: 380). Stenvall et al. (2017: 118) agrees that changes are continuous, but state that the essential success in promoting change is simply to strengthen the forces that are conducive to change. Successful changes have four key factors; change pressures, a clear common vision, change capacity and a viable project.

As shown in the former chapter as well when comparing Kotter Kotter's 8-step change model to the Lewin's theory they both separately point out the planning phase in change. Lewin calls this part unfreezing and Kotter as the preparation phase. Both authors see similarities in the importance of planning. The change communication seems to be pointed out as a very important matter, but also communicating the vision and creating urgency (Zenab, et al. 2013; Robbins 1998: 638–639). In the Kaizen four stage action sequence Plan-Do-Check-Act planning's stage the communication of the vision is also pointed out as a critical matter of change management (Zenab, et al. 2013).

Cameron et al. (2009) highlight that many of the change management models, such as Lewin three-step model, Kotter eight steps and so on put a lot of focus on the planning phase. When defining planning in change management, it could be seen not only as planning but also as creating a vision, finding energy to move forward and deciding of the first steps.

Higgs and Rowland (2005) point out that there are problems with many of the change management models because of their linearity, such as in Lewin's (1951) three-phased model of change. In reality, changes may be more complex processes. Recognition of the changes' complexity is important in the formulation of efficient change strategies. When the change process is seen as relatively simplistic and linear it might have unintended consequences. Also, centrally planned changes that are assumption-based on linearity

tend to fail with achieving their aims. In the planning phase the role of leaders is essential and has a remarkable impact on the success of change. (Higgs, et al. 2005.)

2.4. Planning changes in organizations

Åberg (2006: 219) defines planning as decision-making aimed at influencing the future as planned by the designer. It precedes activity and is needed when the desired state requires several successive and interlinking decisions.

Planning in change management means creating a ground for the change. There are different parts that should be defined, considered and carried out in planning. First, it is crucial to specify the need for the change. This is the first task of change management. Critical analysis of how far away we really are from the target condition should be clarified. Second, a vision and communication of the vision for the personnel is needed. The vision needs to be justified and communicated believably. If the vision is communicated successfully, it will create motivation and will lead different parts of the organization into better performance. When the vision is clear, the next step is to solve the change's strategy. In what manners can we achieve the vision? Is the strategy to change the organizational structure first or to first direct people's actions into the direction wanted and then to hope that the structures will change. It is important to create concrete goals. Otherwise the vision will become hollow. Not even a good vision will tell the personnel what the change is concretely demanding from them. The third part is that the risks of the change should be gathered and analyzed. It is important to recognize the major and most likely risks and decide how to control them, reduce or prevent them or in case the risks would become real what would it mean and how to act in that case scenario. (Mattila 2007: 133-152.)

Planning of change is seen very critical as in this point it is crucial to start cooperation with many individuals to just start the transformation process. If there will be no motivation the effort will not go anywhere as the people will not help (Kotter 2007). The planning phase should include questions about how the organization will look like in the

future and to execute the way to get there. This means that the planning phase demands a lot of time and consideration. (Kotter 2007; Stenvall et. al 2007.)

When planning changes, it is extremely important for the management to start the planning from the need of change. It is vital to be able to ask the question whether the change is needed, where is it supposed to take us and how will the set goal be achieved. When the need of change arises, it needs to be connected to the workers by persuasive communication (Fernandez & Rainey 2006: 169). Changes' utility should be estimated in relation to its costs and to the already existing action. During planning it is important to clarify the basic need for the change. Only after the elaborate planning the change process can proceed into implementation phase (Stenvall et. al 2007: 28-30).

Organizations that are able of leading through the organizational change process successfully are more optimistic and concentrate greater importance on planning. Main factors in successful planning are employees support level, adaptability, flexibility, optimism and openness to change. 90 percent of the time implementation of change fails due to lack of consideration of changes impact on individuals. Human factors are critically important when planning. The planning phase should include at least main factors, which are employee involvement, transition plan, communication, training and support, and supportive human resource policies. (Tan & Tiong 2005)

Paton and McCalman (2008) present the so-called TROPICS-test as well as the identification of the change in support of preparation and planning. TROPICS consists of seven key factors, which are time, resources, goals, ideas, interest, management, and change the source. The test is for anticipating before the change of the implementation of its effectiveness and scope, as well as to choose the most appropriate way forward to change and to estimate its chances of success. Changes in these factors should be considered and managed. Mapping in turn allows the change to be examined even though the environment is often complex. By mapping one determines the forces that affect change. (Paton & McCalman 2008: 25-26, 75-77.)

Well-designed changes are in at least halfway. The planning phase should be executed carefully and thoroughly. It should address both the implementation organization and the implementation issues. The planning phase therefore requires time and good judgment. There are a multitude of different requirements that should be considered in the planning phase of the change. Common thoughts are “*who makes the change*” and “*how*”? (Stenvall et al. 2007: 47.)

Preffer and Sutton (2006) and Stenvall et al. (2007: 47) have presented a comprehensive list of issues that should be considered when planning changes:

“1. Are the planned new practices better than the current organization?”

2. Is the change worth the effort when concerning the time and resources it will take and the disturbances it will create?”

3. Is it only useful to make a symbolic change instead of trying to change the core of the organization?”

4. Is the change beneficial for individuals but harmful to the entire organization?”

5. Is there sufficient time for the forwarding parties to establish the change project?”

6. Is the personnel burdened with too many change projects?”

7. Is the personnel ready and able to learn and update their knowledge to the extent required by the change?”

8. Is the change of forwarding parties willing to suspend or relocate in a change situation if it is necessary?” (Preffer et al. 2006; Stenvall et al. 2007: 47.)

Planning of changes should be carried out carefully. What if conditions do not exist? This should be considered critically whether it is worth to implement the change. There is a

suspicion that many organizations ignore the in-depth design significance. Consideration should be given to the usefulness of change in relation to existing operations and costs in the design phase. Sometimes the changes are only necessary for external approval. Similar psychological factors may be associated with the changes. Individuals may make observations of matters that match their own views and interests in the change situation. It is quite understandable that different occupational groups interpret matters from their own actions. For this reason, the change manager should always evaluate critically about what the organization is all about. (Pfeffer et al. 2006; Stenvall et al. 2007: 47.)

Stenvall et al. (2007: 48) state that it may sound self-evident, but it is important that before the change is implemented a careful consideration should also be given to the basic purpose of the change. If the main purpose of the change is not known, significant problems arise during the implementation phase. The basic purpose of the change is clarified when answering the following questions:

“1. Why is this change right?”

2. What is the subject of change?”

3. What is the organization doing?”

4. What kind of change is appropriate from the point of view of the organizational culture and the prevailing situation?” (Stenvall et al. 2007: 48.)

The change phase is the basis for a successful process. It creates perceptions and facts that affect the entire process. It is illustrative that people who see problems of the change in the beginning tend to continue seeing these problems in the implementation stage as well. The planning phase will give direction to the entire change process. The initial stage requires the change manager to genuinely create new knowledge and insights. The problems of the change process often arise from the fact that the planning and implementation needs to be done almost at the same time. (Stenvall et al. 2007: 48 – 49.)

2.4.1. Change Plan

The change plan includes change objectives, key actions, factors, and schedule. A good change plan also includes defined internal and external migration support needs. Good change planning is geared towards formal roadmap which, at the same time, takes account of unofficial activities and proceedings. (Luomala 2008.)

The plan also anticipates possible pitfalls and crises as the change always involves both the risk of failure and the chance of success. Change launching requires the identification of the risks and the ability to present them in such a way in the form that the expected positive opportunities are not only higher than the risks, but also more probable than the estimated risks. However, the risk and the concrete possibility are not the same than a threat or perceived uncertainty, both of which are more difficult to convey to the subject just because they do not yet have a sufficiently concrete idea. (Luomala: 2008.)

By following strictly exact plans can lead into losing the sensitivity for changing situations. The plan may change somewhat along the way, but the purpose of the result should stay clear in mind to everyone. It is the most important source of energy for creativity. (Tainio et al. 1996: 183.)

As the change process goes further planning changes in practice becomes more and more important. Companies need deeply influential and rapid change processes. Tools such as conversations, sparring, seminars, management training programs, extensive management and personnel discussion programs, personnel outplacement and personnel reduction planning become important parts of planning the change (Tainio et al. 1996: 183.).

2.4.2. The role of supervisors in change planning

Typically, when planning changes, supervisors continue to work with incomplete information. At this point they rely on their experience and similar previous situations in

search of explanations for events that occur. Knowledge is therefore based on existing knowledge and experience. (Stenvall et al. 2007: 120.)

In change planning supervisors should try to find out what is happening right now, what is likely to happen in the future if no efforts for change are made, what is the ideal condition that people expect and what are the barriers between current and desirable change. In the diagnosis process of change there are three stages that can be distinguished: view, identification of problems and analysis. (Hersey et al. 1990: 322.)

When the supervisor identifies the needs and causes for the change he will be leading the meanings of these. The supervisor needs to lead his subordinates in change processes through his own activities and show example for the others. The supervisors observe the organization's internal and external environment and interpret their significance and potential impact on the organization. Therefore, the findings of supervisors and the interpretations guiding them may be central to the organization's operation. (Stenvall et al. 2007: 120.)

The supervisors evaluate the changes in their entirety. It is typical that the supervisors recognize the winners and losers of the change. The perceptions of supervisors predictably affect the perceptions of employees when employees do not feel that they are particularly strong. The low self-esteem of employees increases the influence of supervisors as interpreters in change situations. If the personnel see supervisors as qualified, friendly and generally supportive they are more receptive and more open to their supervisors' and others' attitudes. In other words, the relationship between supervisors and personnel affects interpretations. Going through changes is also important for supervisors' development. (Stenvall et al. 2007: 121.)

In the process of change special expectations towards supervisors occur. The supervisor should be able to draw an overall picture of the reasons for the change and explain the goals in his own unit, team or projects. The supervisor should also be able of having conversations with individuals throughout the change process. Key question is what the change will mean for us, what will it take from every unit together and separately. The

supervisors tend to feel like as they are some kinds of horns of management and will repeat the same that they have heard from their supervisors and read from formal publications. The supervisors need to be ready for showing exemplariness, willingness and courage for conversations with their subordinates and readiness for answering sometimes also difficult and unpleasant questions. (Juholin 2008: 133.)

The change will take energy from people and strenght from supervisors. A good supervisor in changes is able of coaching employees individually and shows his subortinates the company's direction. (Juholin 2008: 193-194.)

2.5. Communication in change

In this chapter the importance of communication in change planning will be presented. First, concept of communication is defined. The contents of change communication will be presented and especially what is important in communication when planning changes. Importance of change communication for personnel will be determined. In the last two sections of this chapter the supervisors' role in change planning and in change communication are discussed.

2.5.1. Defining communication

Communication is an event, the purpose of which is to interpret the state of different matters and this interpretation is brought into consciousness of others by interacting and message-mediating network (Åberg 2006: 222). Barret (2006: 385-387), Juholin (2008:20) and Arvola (2012: 35) present that communication is a broad concept and it reaches everything in culture and society.

Communication is transferring information from one person to another or to many people. Communication can be carried out verbally or nonverbally. Communication is a strength that should be harmonized so that it matches the organization's communication needs and

prepares personnel for positive and negative impacts of changes. (Barret 2006: 385-387; Juholin 2008: 20.)

The transfer of knowledge is of course important, but communication also allows us to reflect on different and often unclear issues. Because of this communication creates common sense and gives us a cultural home. The power of communication could even be described as follows, communication has succeeded when the receiver responds to the sender's wishes. (Åberg 2006: 83.)

The main purpose of communication is to answer the question "*why*" rather than "*what*". According to the author, leaders have a clear tendency to send too much information to the personnel and to follow up too little how the message is received. (Karlöf 1996: 176-177; Åberg 2008: 84.)

Many supervisors see communication as a mechanical transfer of information. Such a concept of communication is somewhat limited. Communication is not just information or information communication. Communication is not just a process where something is transmitted to the subjects of communication. Communication does not end when the message has been sent. Communication is an ongoing process. (Åberg 2006: 83.)

2.5.2. Communication in change planning

Change communication and especially change communication when planning changes is a key part of organization's strategic communication. The goal of change communication is to help personnel to understand what the change is about, why is the change crucial and where are we aiming with this change. On the other hand, the goal of change communication is to optimize the utilization of personnel expertise in the implementation of the change (Arvola 2012:40; Valtionkonttori 2007).

Change communication is a process in which the sender sends information to the receiver through a certain route. The senders and receivers can be part of the organization, groups or individuals and be located at the same or different levels of the organization. The

process forms from a) modifying the information in to a communicable form, b) transferring of information to the receiver, and c) handling the message for understanding the original information. There is a risk of possible disturbing factors that might affect the process and the success of the process requires succession on its every stage. Baron and Grenberg emphasize that giving feedback plays an important role in change communication. The purpose of the feedback is that the sender of the message can determine whether the information transmitted has been understood as intended by the sender. Giving feedback has a major role in change communication. Based on the feedback the sender will know whether the information has been understood in a way the sender has meant. (Baron & Grenberg 1990: 334-336.)

Presented in figure 5 the position of the sender has effect on receiving the information. The change communication can be from top to down, from bottom to up or horizontal. In change planning it is possible at the same time to create enthusiasm and offer information. The difficulty of asking questions arises if the receiver does not understand the information. Consciousness is not born by a major amount of distributed information but more over how is the information received. (Arvola 2012: 40-42; Johansen & Gillard 2005: 93-94; Mattila 2007: 161-162.)

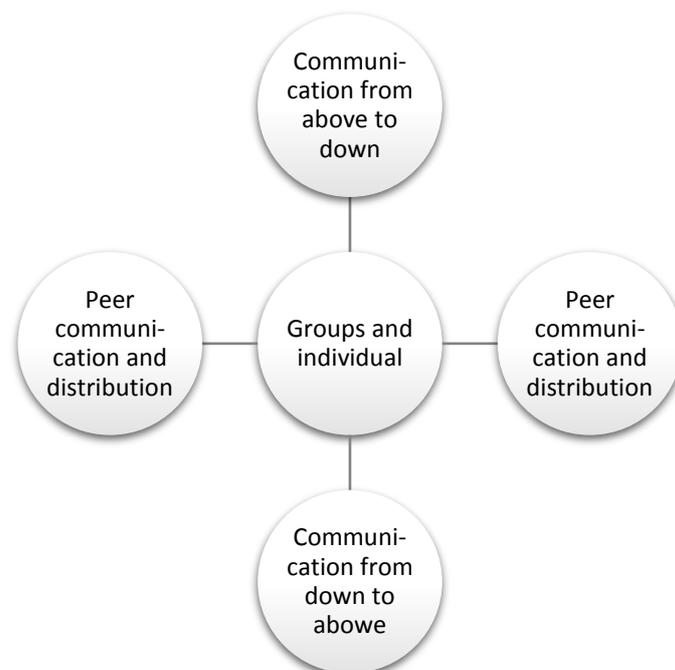


Figure 5 Levels of change communication (Mattila 2009)

Change communication has a major role in the organization's success. Change is a continuous process and repeating is closely connected to change communication. Same matters should be informed repeatedly by using different channels. Change communication is also supported by the fact that changes are not usually implemented as decided in the beginning. In this case it is important that the parts of the organization will still be given a clear overall picture of the change. (Aarnikoivu 2008: 168; Åberg 2008: 131-132.)

Change communication has been started to see as its own genre of communication even though it is a part of strategic communication and management. The role of change communication is to describe in words maybe even by figures that what kind of change is starting, create understanding, explain causes and goals, deal with the results achieved and challenges that are coming. Communication is an essential part of creating better preconditions for the organization's change. (Arvola 2012: 41; Juholin 2009: 320.)

Main principles of change communication without exception include openness, continuity and interaction, and coherence of different contents. Change communication requires more mutual interaction than conventional communication in the organization. Face to face communication should be the most used and the most important part of change communication. Utilization of multiple channels, such as management information and discussion meetings, unit and department meetings, general development and discussion occasions, brain storming, supervisor subordinate discussions and volunteer appointments. These kinds of opportunities will create response to the need of information and interaction. (Arvola 2012: 41; Juholin 2009: 336-338.)

As Arvola (2012) and Juholin (2009: 336-338) claim that face to face communication should be used the most, other tools of communication exists as well. For example, email and cloud-based collaboration tools are good tools when the communication needs to be executed quickly (Belicove 2016). *“Managers have many channel choices for their messages (e.g., email, newsletters, intranet articles, departmental meetings, employee forums, video, or social networks). Choosing the best channels depends on relationship questions (e.g., How well do you know the audience? Is interactivity important?) and*

logistical questions (e.g., How quickly does the audience need the news? What technologies are available?)". It is important to use different communication ways such as oral, visual and written styles. This is because people communicate and learn differently. Also, it is important to use the correct communication tool for correct situation. (Newman 2016.)

Managers must be able to communicate effectively. Good communication skills and the wide use of communication tools promote trust building between the members of the organization. However, the management of a company must carefully consider what means of communication it uses in its communication. It's important to note that for example, engagement may not be effective by e-mail and in these kinds of situations personal communication must be used. (Arvola 2012: 39; Barrett 2006: 385; Koskinen 2006: 91).

One of the main goals of change communication is to create trust and framework for dialogue. Barrett believes that building trust is particularly important as leaders and superiors often overestimate their own credibility. (Barrett 2006: 385-390; Åberg 2008: 67-68).

There are three key points that should be considered in change communication:

1) *"Clarity of the message. The reasons for the decisions made must be clear. The information should be consistent with other information given in the work community. Consistency creates continuity and safety in the work community. The information should endure also critical analysis from the personnel."*

2) *"The information should reach the people who need the information. People evaluate the information from their own point of view: what change means to me, what, where, how, and when will something change."*

3) *“Possibility for discussion. In unsafe situations, people need more information. In complex situations, people need the opportunity to discuss and analyze information and the situation with others.”* (Valpola 2004: 63-64.)

Dialogue is closely connected to daily communication. However with words it is possible to communicate only part of the change. Studies show that 80% of communication is wordless. As an example for this is that supervisor nervous fingers tapping can destroy the entire message (Stenvall 2007: 62; Holtari 2009; Arvola 2012: 36-37). Daily communication needs goals, contents, parties, means and forums and these need to be defined. Rules and practices need to be created for communication as well, such as how often should daily communication be used, who’s responsibility this is and what is the responsibility of individuals in the daily communication (Juholin 2009: 111-116). Daily communication has several manifestations. Communication can be between supervisor and a team / unit / function or between the team and its participants, between teams and units of the organization or between experts and same profession representatives (Åberg 2008: 110-111; Juholin 2008: 42-43)

Channels based on personal interaction are important in internal communication. Most of the effects of internal communication are indirect. Internal communication gives the personnel a common knowledge base for co-operation. Internal communication affects job satisfaction, the atmosphere on the workplace and increases work motivation. (Åberg 2008: 110-111; Juholin 2008: 42-43.)

In organizations employee satisfaction surveys internal communication tends to get the lowest feedback. During big organizational changes, especially when planning the change internal communication tends to be the most difficult when it comes to informing. The internal communicating tends to be very difficult in these kinds of changes as it is very hard to stay up with describing and outlining the situation when the progressing of the change is quick and variable. (Mattila 2007: 112-113.)

Executive or executive group of the change has a major role in communication of the change. The executive group has to clarify the significance of the change and needs to go

over new ways of working and commit personnel in to a new strategy and values (Peltonen 2008: 132). Executive group's central communication tasks are informing, reacting and responding, listening and hearing formal and nonformal conversation and feedback. (Juholin 2008: 195.)

As mentioned before in this study Juholin (2008: 186) describes leading as influencing to people who have feelings and intellect. Managers have become conscious that without communication it is not possible to lead. One challenge in management group's communication to the other parts of the organization is that the bigger the company grows the more their communication will bound to their intimate circle and their association with other parts of the organization will decrease. Because the management group has the most information in their hands about the work community and operational environment there are also high expectations into their communication which can sometimes be oversized. The management group should have more information than others. The kind of impression the management gives of its work and interest of the organization's people is related to images. Management group that is never being seen and with who the personnel cannot have conversations is easily considered arrogant and distant. Vice versa a management group that is conversational with its personnel is respected as the conversation expresses leaders respect to its personnel. (Juholin 2008: 186-188.)

Pentti Kotoaro developed in Kansa a model of continuous change reporting. Even when there are no news to be communicated it is important to communicate. Otherwise news rumble is filled with rumors. Instead of telling the news alone also a background of the news is significant to tell e.g. what has happened so far and what will happen next. (Åberg 1997: 165.)

Structures create persistence in the change situation. The goal is to aim for the future and leave the reputation of the past. The current state is only a short moment. A well-constructed image of the change's goal creates belief in the legitimacy and continuity of the employees work. It also creates a sense of security. Security is a very real and concrete issue for people. For this reason, awareness of a safe future is important. (Åberg 1997: 163.)

2.5.3. Importance of change communication for the personnel

The most interesting matters for personnel that a management group discusses are changes in near future or in future overall that influence people as individuals, their work or working teams. It is not possible for organizations to avoid changes and influences of them. The employees will feel the pressure of change either directly or indirectly. (Juholin 2008: 193-194.)

In change communication it is important to tell the personnel a real justified threat, which the organization would go through without the change. Personnel training for new values and habits is important. It is also worthwhile to take the help of the personnel to hear their opinions and suggestions of the chosen direction. It is also encouraging to create visible signs for the new direction and emphasize the safe transition. (Åberg 1997: 164.)

The organization's habits of change and its own transformation capabilities are an essential resource. If a long time has passed with no changes, the market has developed smoothly, the products and services have satisfied customers and the business activity has been positive the situation is felt natural, and personnel consider changes to be strange. (Tainio et al. 1996: 181.)

Sometimes lamentation might be the first step in the change process within the personnel. It means personnel is paralyzed and shocked when it comes to the upcoming reform. As a result, there is a strong denial or criticism of the change. The atmosphere is tense and apathetic (Stenvall et al. 2007: 51). Change can bring personal fears such as retention of work or questions about the adequacy of your skills and competence. Constant changes can also cause tiredness for the employees and confusion in job duties and job descriptions (Luomala: 2008). It is as if the change is not even coming. In the latent phase of the personnel they have limited ability to receive information. Therefore, communication in the early stages of the change process may be problematic. The management argues that all relevant information was given in the change situation. The personnel feel that no information was provided about the change. Shock means we do not always hear messages transmitted to us. (Stenvall et al. 2007: 51.)

The threat images between the personnel can create ground for the change resistance and because of this it is important to inform the personnel about the change all the time so that these possible wrong threat images can be tackled in early stage. When planning changes and particularly when guiding people in change, uncertainties should be able to be translated into certainty and at the same time pointing to people that threats to change do not change into dangers. This typical example could be for example the interconnection of two organizations which despite their expected benefits and synergies may also cause fears e.g. of losing their jobs. (Luomala: 2008.)

When planning change, the direction of it should always be pointed first. People can be given power by trusting, delegating, communicating and listening to them. A change should become a desirable way to learn. In a minor situation surrounding a creative chaos leads to a concrete vision of joint efforts in the same direction. If a person feels himself insecure, he is preventing higher needs from being met. (Åberg 1997: 163.)

2.5.4. Supervisors role in change communication

Supervisors can influence the different phases of change. In the planning phase of change people's first step is often a banning. In this case the supervisor should share as much information as possible and maintain a discussion about the rationality and impact of the change. When planning changes the supervisor should show the importance of the change and response by empathy and support towards his subordinates. The manager should remember to respect, praise, and encourage proposals that are conducive to the implementation of the change. (Åberg 1997: 164-165.)

In change communication supervisors and management must also explain the reasons honestly and transparently: why, when, who. People affected must be able to participate in the planning and implementation of the change. It should also be kept in mind that a supervisor has the right to demand information from his supervisor or how else can he possibly act as a link? (Åberg 1997: 166.)

In organizational changes informal communication through communication professionals is a small part of organizational communication. Immediate supervisors have a crucial importance at this point. It is important how the immediate supervisors can extract and interpret the information coming from upper levels and after this generate it into an understandable output. The development of a changeable and change-oriented organizational culture requires that employees are provided enough overall picture of the reform as well as relevant spatial communication relevant to their field of work. (Mattila 2007: 112-113.)

There are often problems faced with supervisors' change communication. The supervisor knows that something should be done, but does not know what and why exactly, so there may be a clear lack of knowledge on how and what should be communicated. A supervisor can be avoiding the feeling of discomfort. Possible negative feedback from employees to the supervisor may cause that the supervisor does not want to inform the employees enough about the changes. (Arvola 2012: 44; Cards 2009: 27-29.)

Particularly, avoiding the informing of negative changes may be caused by the fact that the supervisor does not want to create negative "feelings" for the employees. Even though the supervisor has a good intention and the thoughts are on the employees' side, such a pleasing need will result in worrying subordinates who will feel even more displeasure due to unpleasant change news. In addition to the above, rush is always a good excuse for failing to communicate. There are always more important matters that need to be carried out first. (Arvola 2012: 44; Cards 2009: 27-29.)

One reason for the dereliction may be the differences in perspectives. Supervisors and employees see changes in very different ways. Both can feel that vision and management lead to a successful change but too few leaders are able to consider how individuals perceive changes. Supervisors should put themselves in the position of employees so that the supervisors could understand how employees feel about the future changes. At the same time, it should be examined whether the values of management and employees are similar to each other about the changes and whether the desired changes are worth the effort. (Arvola 2012: 44; Strebel 1996: 86-88.)

While different leaders have different preferences on how to make a choice between different communication channels and methods, communication and internal communication have a significant role to play when building successful change processes. The organization will learn when the personnel will communicate openly about the development of the change and reflect it continuously. In this way the work community can openly learn from both the environment and each other. Mistakes should also be opportunities of learning new and improving old. (Daly, Teague & Kitchen 2003: 161-162; Talja 2006: 66).

2.6. Key theoretical issues of the thesis

It is emphasized that the planning phase in changes demands a lot of time, yet this importance tends to be forgotten in organizations (Kotter 2007; Stenvall et. al 2007.) As well it is mentioned that only after the elaborate planning the change process can proceed into implementation phase and that the planning needs to be given enough time (Stenvall et. al 2007: 28-30; Tainio et al. 1996: 183). At the same time the literature of change management emphasizes that companies need deeply influential and rapid change processes (Tainio et al. 1996: 183). How can it be managed at the end if the companies should make rapid and influential changes but at the same time put a lot of time and effort into the planning of change?

The importance of change communication is also given a lot of importance when planning changes. On the other hand, the leaders have a clear tendency to send too much information to the personnel and to follow up too little how the message is received (Karlöf 1996: 176-177; Åberg 2008: 84). At the same time, change communication has a major role in the organization's success and there should be a lot of repeating communication of the change (Aarnikoivu 2008: 168; Åberg 2008: 131-132). Also, if there is a gap between the information the gap will be filled with rumors (Åberg 1997: 165). When examining employee satisfaction surveys, internal communication tends to get the lowest feedback. During big organizational changes, especially when planning the

change, internal communication tends to be the most difficult when it comes to informing (Mattila 2007: 112-113). If the personnel see that there is usually not enough communication in changes and at the same time the management is informing too much, where is the problem of the communication truthfully?

Supervisors can influence the different phases of change. In the planning phase of change people's first step is often a banning. In this case the supervisor should share as much information as possible and maintain a discussion about the rationality and impact of the change (Åberg 1997: 164-165). Still, there are also often faced problems in supervisors change communication (Arvola 2012: 44; Cards 2009: 27-29).

According to these key theoretical issues it seems that the research questions, how should change be planned, what is the role of communication in change planning and what is the role of supervisors in change planning and its communication, need more examination through empirical study. In the last three main chapters the examination of methodology, empirical research results and conclusion of this study will be gone through.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research approach can be carried out in two different ways, deductive or inductive. The main difference between these two approaches is that the deductive approach aims for testing a theory and inductive approach is used with the aim of uncovering unexpected issues or new theories from the data. (Hirsijärvi 2010: 161-182 & Hirsijärvi et al. 2013: 164.)

An inductive approach usually uses research questions for narrowing the scope of the study and deductive approach tends to begin with a hypothesis. The deductive approach is normally used in quantitative research and inductive approach in qualitative research. Deductive approach usually emphasizes causality and inductive approach typically aims on exploring new phenomena or already found phenomena but from another angle. (Gabriel 2013.)

This study is following the inductive approach as the purpose of this study is to explore what makes change planning to succeed and what is the role of communication and supervisor work in this. This study did not have any hypothesis, but the purpose was more about examining the change planning from a new angle. Because of these reasons the inductive approach to this study has been selected and the empirical material is gathered with qualitative research.

3.1. Qualitative Research

The empirical research of study is possible to carry out by qualitative or quantitative research method. The benefit of qualitative research is that it aims at the researcher's interest in the potentially new and unexpected aspects of the material and the multiplicity of the material. Hereby the purpose is not so much on testing models or theories.

Differences in quantitative and qualitative research have been discussed for a long time. Some researchers argue that much of the confusion between researchers is due to the ambiguity of quantitative and qualitative research. (Hirsijärvi et al. 2013: 135-136.)

A qualitative study refers to a whole set of different interpretative research practices. It is difficult to define qualitative research clearly because it has no theory or paradigm that would just be its own. Qualitative research does not have completely own methods. (Metsämuuronen 2007: 162.)

The basis for qualitative research is to describe real life. The quantitative research is based on a positivist or post-positivist science ideology. According to Metsämuuronen (2006: 203-210) the qualitative research is based on existential – phenomenologis - the hermeneutical philosophy of science. The purpose of qualitative research is to search and create interpretations of the surrounding reality. Qualitative research is not only one concept, but a set of different interpretative research practices. In connection with comprehensive study is that the aim is rather to find or reveal facts than verifying existing claims. The aim of the conclusions is to use the available theory for making interpretations of the material and its outside world. The material does not aim to explain so much about the causal processes. Thereby the theory directs the researcher in search of new knowledge and at the same time by the theory it is possible to structure and systematize previously collected information. From the general theory are derived deductively separate problems and the empiricism used can be obtained for answers to the set research questions. (Arvola: 2012; Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2011: 161-182; Metsämuuronen 2006: 203-210.)

Qualitative research is particularly suitable for research where interest is in the detailed structures of events and in the significance of individual actors involved in certain events. This research type is suitable in need of an insight in natural situations that cannot be organized as an experiment or where we cannot control all the factors that affect them. (Metsämuuronen 2007: 167.)

Hirsjärvi (2010: 161-182) separates seven typical characters for a qualitative research. First character is that the research is a holistic acquisition of information and the material is collected in natural and realistic situations. Secondly, a person is preferred as an instrument of knowledge gathering. The researcher has more confidence in his own ideas

and conversations with the investigators than in the information acquired on measuring instruments. Thirdly, inductive analysis is used with the aim of uncovering unexpected issues. The fourth character is the use of qualitative methods for the acquisition of material, e.g. theme interview, participatory observation, and discursive analyses of texts. Fifth feature takes place when the object group is selected appropriately not by using random sampling method. Sixth part is that the research plan is shaped as a research process progresses. The last character is that the cases are treated as unique pieces and the material is interpreted accordingly. (Hirsijärvi 2010: 161-182 & Hirsijärvi et al. 2013: 164.)

In this study the qualitative method was chosen as the method of empirical research aims to the authors goal to achieve a realistic and material-based research. According to the literature qualitative research method is the best option for this matter. (Arvola: 2012; Eskola 1998: 81-83; Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2011: 161-182; Metsämuuronen 2006: 203-210.)

In this research a lot of space is wanted to be given for individuals' observations and experiences. There are no hypotheses set in this research, which is one the main characters in qualitative research as central is the specific examination of the data. Qualitative research method is suitable for this research purpose as the aim is to understand the research object's empirical world.

3.2. Collection of research material

Interview is a predetermined, derived, motivated, investigative and investigative interaction and confidential. The interview is particularly suitable as a method when it comes to interpreting questions or specifying answers wanted to be as detailed as possible, checking validity of the study by other means for example observing mapping the area to be investigated. (Metsämuuronen 2007: 187.)

A theme interview is seen as an open interview form. In a thematic interview, it is typical that the themes of the interview are known, but the exact form and order of questions are

missing. (Hirsijärvi et al. 2013: 208.) A semi-structured interview, which for simplification also makes it a theme interview, is well suited for situations where intent and subject topics are targeted or to explore less-known issues such as valuations, ideals and justifications. The interview is focused on pre-selected themes, but the semi-structured interview does not have a precise definition of the form or order of the questions. (Metsämuuronen 2007: 189.)

The focused interview differs in many respects from other types of research interviews that at first may seem similar. Extensively, its features are the following. First, it is known that the interviewees have experienced a certain situation. In this study, the interviewees have been involved in the change and its planning phase. Secondly, the social scientist has preliminarily examined the presumably important elements, structures, processes and the whole of the phenomenon of the subject. In this study, this is accomplished through the theoretical part where the theories of change management have been presented extensively and the literature related to the design of the other is summarized. This content and/or situation analysis has led to certain assumptions about the consequences of the features that characterize the situation for those involved. Based on the analysis, in the third stage, the interviewer's body, which has also been made in this study, is being developed. Fourth and fifth, the interview is directed to the subjective experiences of the subjects studied in situations previously investigated by the researcher as well as in this study. (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2011: 47)

Saving an interview in one or the other way is essential. When choosing a method of recording it is needed to consider how the material is handled. At the end of this research, it was decided to record the interviews, after which the interviews were intended to confirm the validity of the text. (Hirsijärvi et al. 2011: 75.)

When the data is stored the investigator has basically two choices to choose. The first is that the material is written in text. This correspondence can be made from the whole interview dialog or it can be made from menus, for example, only in the thematic areas or just by the interviewees. Another option is that the material is not written into text, but conclusions and themes are coded directly from stored material, for example, audio tapes.

(Hirsjärvi et al. 2011: 138.) In this study, however, it was decided to transcribe interviews in their entirety. In qualitative research transcribing is used to understand how participants in the study organize their speech or writings (Metsämuuronen 2007: 167).

3.3. Research objects description

All the interviewees worked in the same group's company in Finland. The group acts globally in power and automation technology industry. The group acts in about 100 different countries and employs roughly 140 000 people. In Finland the group employs around 5 300 people. In 2014 the group informed that there would become a global organizational change that would influence all the group's countries. The whole change process would last 1000 days, which meant that it started in the beginning of 2015 and ended in the end of 2017. The change was executed by degrees in the countries.

This study will be focusing on the Finland's human resource function organizational change planning, which was a part of the group's change. Five employees that had a notable role in Finland's HR function change planning were interviewed for this study. The background of the interviewees will be presented in the next table. From the table two it is shown that all the interviewees had experience of HR tasks from 8 – 36 years. All the interviewees were working on the company's manager level.

Interviewee	Years worked in HR	Job title during the change planning	Age	Education	Date of the interview
1	28	Talent Manager	57	M.Sc.(econ)	19.09.2018
2	21	Compensation Manager	48	Ms C. (Educational)	18.09.2018
3	36	Country HR Manager	61	Ms C. (Psychology)	18.09.2018
4	8	HR Service Manager	50	M.Sc.(econ)	17.09.2018
5	18	HR Center Manager	43	M.Sc.(econ)	14.09.2018

Table 2. Interviewees' background information

Subjects or questionnaire respondents can be selected in principle in the research in two ways: random or non-random. For non-random samples it is typical that the subjects have been selected according to the researcher's interest either by availability or discretion. The latter may be useful as a superior sign when compiling qualitative material (Metsämuuronen 2007: 31). In this research it was clear that the interviewees would have to be selected non-random as it was important for the study's validity that the interviewees have had enough role in the Finland's HR function change planning so that they would be able of answering what did the planning in Finland include.

The most suitable interviewees for this study were found with the help of a contact person from the company. The contact person pointed out, which people had taken the most part on the Finland's human resource department's organizational change planning and what were their positions in the company. There were in total 7 people pointed out suitable for this research and then the most suitable five of them were selected to be interviewed. In the selection it was important that the interviewees have had role on the change planning. These five interviewees had had a great part in Finland's change planning and four of them were also in supervisor role, so it was natural to interview them from this research. It is also suggested that in theme interviews quite small amount of people are interviewed so it was to be enough to interview five people.

3.4. Collection of empirical material in this study

I chose theme interview form as the information I would be gathering was subjective. The experiences of the interviewees in the organizational change's planning was personal, and this kind of information is best to be collected by not too strict question form or research frame.

I chose to interview five people for this study. This seemed to be enough as the similar observations of the change planning started to occur in this number of interviewees. The interviews lasted from 30 to 50 minutes. I also had to get acquainted with the organizational change of the company beforehand to understand the change that had taken place in the company. To understand this, I got help from the contact person from the

company. The contact person went through the structure of the human resource function and the upcoming changes with me. In theme interviews question design is a question of recommendation, the question area is broadly defined, the number of respondents is quite small, the cost per unit is quite large, the workload analysis is great, the researcher needs to get very involved and the knowledge is very deep (Metsämuuronen 2007: 189).

The areas collected for the interviews were decided so that these would answer to the research questions, but also based on the areas that in literature review seemed to be in a need of closer examination. Four of the interviews were proceeded by phone and one in the office of the company. The interviews were made between 14th and 19th of September 2018. All, of the interviews were recorded digitally with phone. Recording and transcribing them takes a lot time but it is a good way to get to know the topic and carry out research (Eriksson et al. 2011: 85).

After the people who would be interviewed were decided the contact person informed them that I would contact them by email. In the emails I informed the interviewees about the main themes the interviews would be concentrating on. In the same email the background information form was sent for the interviewees to fulfill. After this the suitable interviewing times were agreed on and whether the interview could be proceeded face-to-face or by phone.

The interview structure consisted of the main areas examined in this study. These areas are presented in figure 6. In some of the interviews the background information form was fulfilled in the beginning of the interview if it had not been filled in before the interview or if there was some information missing.

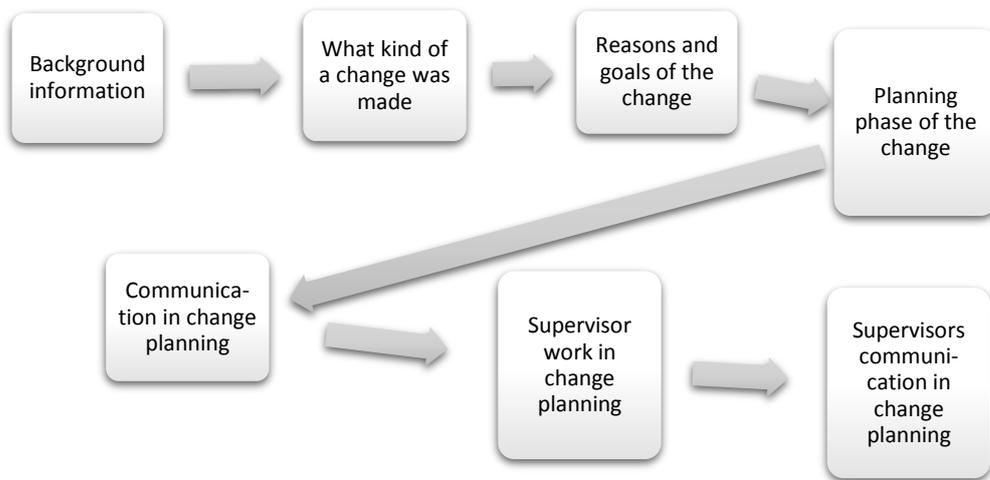


Figure 6. Interview structure

As presented in figure 6 the interviews started from the same themes but after the middle part of the interviews the order of themes varied slightly as at times the interviewees went through some theme that was at the end of the interview structure. When this happened, I continued asking questions about the area the interviewee had already started to speak about.

The amount of questions varied in the interviews. In the next table the amount of questions that I asked in the interviews are presented.

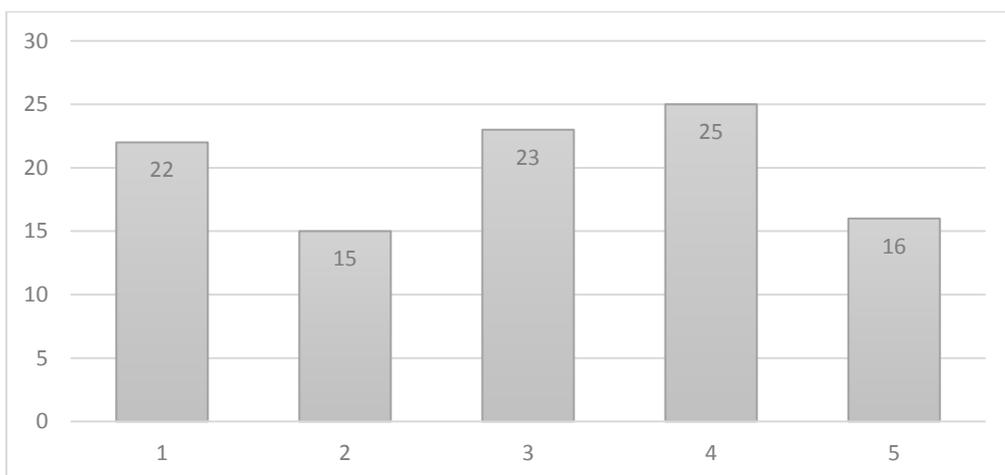


Table 3. Number of questions

The amount of questions in interviews varied between 15 and 25 questions. There were two reasons why the amounts differed. First one is that some of the interviews were more talkative than others and then more questions were asked from the quieter interviewees, but this was not always the case. There had also been a while from the planning of the organizational change so more specified questions were needed in some of the interviews.

3.5. Processing and analyzing of the empirical material

I mentioned before that I recorded all the interviews. After this I transcribed the interview material from word to word, except the parts that had unnecessary repetition or expletives. When the interviews were transcribed there was a total of 31,5 pages of text with font Times New Roman, line spacing 1,0 and the indent on top and bottom of the page 2,5 centimeters and on the sides 2,0 centimeters.

After I had transcribed the interviews I read them through many times and started to take them into pieces so that all the writings of same subject were under the same subject discussed. As this was accomplished, I took a closer look at the similarities and the differences of the texts. From these I summed up the key conclusions and translated the important citations into English as the interviews had been made in Finnish. The purpose of the citations is to support and deepen the thematic message. The stories are the individuals' personal experiences of change planning, supervisor work, and communication in change planning.

I was trying to pick up phenomena and answers to the research questions from the transcribed material. According to content analysis I formed concentrated expressions from the answers I had found and grouped these into general concepts and from these into lower concepts. After the content analysis it was possible for me to find out meanings, consequences, and interrelations of different matters.

I see that because I had defined the important themes and structures before the interviews it was easier to get the answers to the examined content even though the interviews did

not always go in the same order overall. This analyzing method was chosen for making sure the interpretations I made would hold true.

3.6. Trustworthiness of the study

A quality control can be done for research. In the case of interview used as a research method the quality should be monitored at different stages of the study. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2011: 184.) The reliability of a research means the repeatability of the measurement results. The reliability of measurement or research therefore means its ability to yield non-random results. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2013: 231.)

Studies aim to avoid the emergence of errors, but the reliability and qualifications of the results vary. Therefore, all studies aim to evaluate the reliability of the study. Many different measurements and research methods can be used to evaluate the reliability of the study. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2013: 231.)

Another concept associated with evaluation of the study is validity. Validity means the ability of a meter or research method to measure exactly what is meant to measure. Validity means the compatibility of the description with the explanations and interpretations attached to it. The question is whether it is a description when considering the explanation is reliable. The reliability of qualitative research will be improved by the researcher's accurate description of the implementation of the research. Accuracy concerns all stages of the research (Hirsjärvi et al. 2013: 231-232). This has been thought in research as well. All of interviewees had suitable and big role in planning the organizational change in the case company. They were selected so that they would have the knowledge and ability of answering the questions this empirical study deals with.

Validity means reliability in the sense of exploring what is to be investigated. Often validity is divided into external and internal validity. External validity signifies whether this research can be generalized, and if so, into which groups. Internal validity means the study's own reliability. The following questions are part of the internal validity of the study: are concepts correct? Is the theory, right? Good set-up, right concept formation and

theoretical management and sampling can be assured or at least improve the validity of the study. (Metsämuuronen 2007: 35.)

Quality can be sought in advance by making a good interview frame. This is what has been also done in this study. The advantage of an interview frame is the fact that we anticipate how the themes can be deepened and the alternative forms of supplementary questions discussed. It cannot be overly emphasized that a theme interview is not just a presentation of the main themes. On the other hand, one needs to remember that it is never possible to prepare for all the additional questions and especially to their design. However even in this study potential additional questions had been considered before the interviews. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2011: 184.)

In this study, a lot of direct citations from the interviews are used. Hirsjärvi et al. (2013: 233) point out that qualitative research must state the reasons why the researcher makes interpretations and what conclusions he needs to make. It is helpful for the reader if the research reports are enriched with for example direct citations from interview materials.

The reliability of the interview may be undermined by the fact that the interview tends to provide socially desirable answers (Hirsjärvi et al. 2013: 206). This has been taken into account in this study. The company name nor the names of the interviewees are not mentioned as this might have effect on their ability of speaking about the change and its problems openly.

4. RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

In this chapter the results of the empirical study are presented. The parts of interviews dealing with the research problems are discussed in this chapter. The main conclusions from these will be presented and compared with the literature review.

4.1. What does organizational change planning include?

When planning the change, the interviewees emphasize that a lot of the planning was already proceeded in the group level. The upcoming structure was very clear in the group and this message was driven forward by clear practices, roles and meeting practices. These were good chief supports when proceeding planning in the countries later. The planning phase that the group proceeded, defined the upcoming structure. In the group the timetable of the change was decided and that not all the group's countries will begin the change in same time but by degrees.

“Of course, at the planning stage, our freedom of action was quite limited compared to the intentional state, so this project had a very clear global ambition of what is wanted to be achieved.” (11)

“Quite a lot of intentions to countries came from the group as such. When the group has large and small countries, not all can be changed at one time. The approach of the project was that it went in waves.” (15)

As noted the decision of this change came from the group. Four of the interviewees emphasize that the planning made at the group level was out of their hands. Interviewee 3 instead was in a position of country HR manager and could by some means influence the becoming change as he/she took part on global meetings where the consultancy office presented the planned organizational model. The consultancy office justified the model through experiences from other similar organizations and ideas about how this kind of a model could be implemented into the case company. In these meetings the largest countries human resource managers were present. Interviewee 3 points out that in these meetings he/she was able to raise important issues for the country and, also being part

when thinking about in which global business center which services could be done. Still no major changes could be done at this point.

“It started from a big global meeting and then along the way many more global meetings were kept and then the project was distributed into smaller pieces and we got to plan and comment the changes the consult office had planned, on the point of view of our countries.” (I3)

The group gave instructions to find out all the human resource tasks and to describe these. It was determined who are going to plan the change in Finland and move it forward in the organization. It had to be clarified what is the current situation in Finland and how to get to the desired condition. The group would have centralized global business service units in the future and some of the processes proceeded in Finland would be transferred into these.

“In that context, it was defined which function belongs to which of these functions, what should be done and in which country, what is to be done in a centralized way, what is in the CEO organization and what the staff managers are doing.” (I4)

“When thinking about what the planning was, what kind of planning it was at the country level, the planning mainly meant how we change our current situation to the desired intent, what is the way and how it is brought forward.” (I1)

Finland had its own project group, which strongly consisted of the supervisors and the parts of the organization where the change was directed. This group of people started to mediate the progress of change, which people will be involved actively in the various phases when starting to list the current state and thinking about which tasks would be transferred to the global business service units. In other words, what will be the upcoming concept. Åberg 1997 (look at p. 39) sees giving power to employees by trusting, delegating, communicating and listening them, will make the change more desirable for the employees as well.

Big part of the planning was mapping or, in other words, making SOPs (standard operating procedures) in where the tasks of various employees were described and which then later in implementation part were educated to the countries the tasks were transferred. When making these SOPs someone was interviewing beside you and following your working with different work tasks. Such processes mapped were for example the foundation of employment from beginning to its end. Mapping was proceeded by describing different tasks detailed. After it had been checked that all the needed processes in the human resources had been mapped and put into SOPs the processes that were transferred to different countries had to be transferred and educated. These activities that were transferred to other countries were transferred in the form those were executed in Finland.

“When planning it was defined what belongs and where, who’s assignments, so that all the doings of HR function were gone through. In advance for this there was a guideline, what tasks should be done and where and by this we started to think where different tasks should be placed. Besides these there are country-specific activities. There was not such general, fully harmonized approach at this stage so that it could be said that everything was fully gone through.” (I4)

“We did not start from scratch to plan anything and could not have done it either, but in a way there was a framework there and then the plan was more like how we in the countries implement this change, how do we pull the project through as a project, how can we transfer this information, for example task to be transferred to these SOPs, documents where it was described accurately so that these can be transferred and educate a person to do it.” (I3)

“In a way, we got goals from the global project and then also these operating models of what the concern's idea is, what is produced in the global centers and what is left in to the country. My own role was to first chew this by myself and then think what the message is and how to get it through and to keep the conversation constructive. After this we started to make the plan together. In this we had quite tight time schedules and frames from the concern. We got even a real road map. In this it was very

accurately marked that when each phase needs to be done. As a project manager, I had to make sure everything got done that is needed to do and that we stay in the timetable.” (5)

As mentioned previously, tight time schedules were given directly from the group as well as a road map. In this road map it was pointed out when each phase of the project needs to be proceeded. As the timetable was strict, attention had to be paid on resource allocation and some trainees were hired in reserve for the most hectic times of the change process.

“There were finished schedules, excels and power points that we were supposed to fill in a certain deadline. In this way, it was very easy.” (I4)

“Every time there comes a rush. I was doing two projects at the same time so, of course, there is hurry but we made it pretty good in the schedule.” (I4)

“Schedules were made in planning. In February-March, there was a period where the processes were described and then it was defined who is the responsible person for describing each process. Through the co-operation partner there were internal mappers and with them everything was described and documented. These people sort of organized their own service lines that who within the service line is an expert on which, whether one expert is enough or whether two experts are needed to describe some process. Then they thought about different processes whether this is a small, medium or large process. It took two hours for the small process to be documented, the medium four hours and the large one was one day and then there was still large ++ processes that needed two to three days. They thought about how much time each of the processes will take.” (I5)

“As in February-March we had performance bonuses and a lot of heavy annual processes that needed to be done as well. We had hired for more trainees so that we had a little bit of buffer once all the big things happened at the same time. Resource allocation of your own area of responsibility and considering whether you can handle these big change projects.” (I5)

Even though a lot of planning had already been done at the group level, and the interviewees saw that at a country level it was not possible to impact the change decisions made, also a lot of good matters were found. In the sense that, parts of the planning were already executed were considered as positive sides. For example, the timetable for the project had already been planned, excels and power point were ready to be filled. Also, it was seen that there was a lot of basic informing material where it was explained why this change is made for example.

“It was planned and guided by outside consultants. There were completed, very good grounds. We were in the right place doing the project, as the basic problems were already solved. Very good groundwork I would say that exceptionally good for such a project. It was basically for us just filling in the different tables and such, thinking about what the subject matter was in those.” (I4)

“I would say that the material was well done. Well done as it was ready so that we did not have to produce that much material itself. I would say this was quite good compared to many other projects.” (I4)

“The corporate gave the countries a table where the mandatory processes, processes existing and people who are responsible for those were listed. Then we had an opportunity to add the so-called Finnish specific processes such as our labor legislation or calculation of wages and e.g. Matters that could not be given in this kind of a global description were added and in the same context the concern's decision of the functions that will be transferred away from Finland was gone through.” (I2)

Interviewee 3 pointed out that because the change project overall took years, different matters had to be changed along the way. Also, Tainio 1996 (look at p. 29) emphasizes that if very exact plans are followed strictly it will lead into losing the sensitivity for changing situation.

“Generally, it is not known where the change ultimately will end up and when it is a long time change it is not possible either and because of this, things have to be changed along the way.” (I3)

Working together and cooperating in the whole change process as well as during the planning was seen an absolute resource for leading-through the change. The employees and supervisors were very experienced in Finland. It was also seen that employees were used to changes, which helped as this was not the first change for most. Tainio 1996 (look at p. 38) also claims that organization's habits of change and its own transformation capabilities are an essential resource.

“In planning the fact that we had a very tight and committed project group that was doing and building the approach here in Finland and that it was leaded quite clearly and communication was taken care of quite well. So as a structure itself and as an operating model it was really good.” (I1)

“We had the advantage in Finland that we have very experienced employees and such a cooperation has always been our strength, in a way we have supported each other and done together all sorts of things more difficult and easier things. We had the kind of support that I found out when I compared this to some other countries that in some countries the employees got completely locked up and could not do anything together no more as they were protecting their own work tasks. In a way, we did not have such a problem at all, we got the strength to go through this change by cooperation.” (I3)

As gone through, the interviewees saw a lot of points that went well in planning, still some criticism towards the change planning was also given. Especially the fact that in this kind of a global big change possibilities for influencing the planning are quite limited. For example, the decision that all the processes will be transferred by the principle of “lift and shift”, has followed up by problems such as unification of processes.

“The principle of lift and shift gives food for thought, when things and processes were moved as such to the new countries / hubs, there could have

been used a little more time, because still today there are problems in the process unification which of course should be included in the efficiency thinking. It has not yet been possible to fully harmonize processes today. The process was felt heavy but ultimately very successful.” (I1)

One challenge in change planning was that the change was not only made in HR function, but in other parts of the organization in Finland at the same time. Besides the fact HR had to plan its own change it also had to support other functions' changes. It is seen that the project would have succeeded better if the change had been executed function after function. Still, this is also a decision that Finland on a country level was not able to influence.

”And this was a very new thing and it took quite a lot of global discussion and communication and these projects were pulled on very different levels because at the same time this change was made in HR functions it was also made in the business functions of the company so it would have been much easier if it had been done function after function so it would have been possible to concentrate on one function at time. For example, except that we did this own HR function change according to the model, the HR had to support in its role all the other functions as well.” (I3)

“Certainly, it would have been a good idea to do the change in a more controlled way as now later many things must be fixed. So, it would not have been like this if everything would not have been done at the same time in every function. It did not go according to any change book.” (I3)

“The only way to influence was how it was done when it comes to interacting with people and how to keep them active and motivated to do things that after those things are completed the people didn't know what will happen then.” (I1)

Stenvall et al. 2007 (look at p. 28-29) claim that the problems of the change process often arise from the fact that the planning and implementation needs to be done almost at the same time. This seems to be the case in this exact change as well as interviewees 1 and 3 state that some of the processes and problems are still being fixed today.

Although it has come clear that the interviewees saw that they did not have so many opportunities in some parts of the change planning, the interviewee 1 pointed out an interesting matter in the last citation presented. Interviewee 1 sees that the biggest part they could influence on planning was how they interacted with employees and kept them motivated. The subject of communication seemed to be popping out in the other interviews but also when talking about planning. Tainio 1996 (look at p. 29) too emphasizes that a big part of planning are conversations, sparring and personnel discussion programs.

4.2. Communication in practice when planning changes

When planning changes all the interviewees saw that communicating and informing have an important role. It was also seen that it is significant to repeat and to reduce false information and fears. Arvola 2012 and Valtionkonttori 2007 (look at p. 32-33) see change communication as a key part of organizations strategic communication.

“Change Management is quite a lot of giving information and repealing the information that is false and of course reducing fears. At that time, information and understanding of information and the repeating is important. A lot of repeating because when you first time hear about it fright follows and then you close your ears and you will not internalize the information. It needs to be repeated and repeated. It requires a lot of basic material and in this change this kind of material was quite accessible.” (14)

“By communication it was possible to get people committed to the change. If people get a feeling that there is something intrigued secretly, fear and mistrust will arise. As open as possible, it was tried to be gone through.” (15)

Communicating and informing was executed in different ways. There were general meetings for the whole HR function where for example the country HR manager (interviewee 3) was informing employees. The group was informing Finland’s HR function directly in info type of meetings and supervisor meetings were held. They also

had workshops handling the change, team meetings, development discussions and different kinds of supervisor–subordinate discussions. These different kinds of meetings and activities involved information about what kind of change is coming and how does the future look like. Also, Arvola 2012, Johansen et. al. 2005 and Mattila 2007 (look at page 34) point out that change communication can be from top to down, from bottom to up or horizontal. Through these different kinds of communication methods used in this change this is exactly what has been done, but it seems that most of the change communication has been from top to down.

“There were some common general information occasions for the whole HR, we had supervisor meetings and in these we agreed how to inform if there was something bigger or a next step was coming in the project.” (I4)

“The communication was very systematic and very “German style”, so that we had a project manager who led the project and in a way this person was linking us with the European region and to global group management and in a way all the time the communication came from HR manager, this person informed us about what changes are coming and this type of informing and what the future is.” (I2)

“Well we had a lot of sharing of information, as much as we even got information from the global group, so in different forums this information was shared that and also the global group did it in the global info typing meetings for the whole HR function. There was a lot of things to inform and so we also informed on a country level and then we had a lot of workshops, where it was gone through what the change means and how can we proceed this change in a wise way so that the quality of our work does not suffer and peoples' motivation does not suffer.” (I3)

“There were common HR Center occasions where the big picture was gone through. Communication of supervisors to their subordinates was a part of their regular team meetings and a part of the supervisors' daily leading. If there happened to be a development discussion during this time probably in these the change was also being talked about.” (I5)

Then, at the end of April or at the beginning of May, change was gone through face to face, but above all, we discussed together how this would be communicated to our supervisor and staff, and to our customers. This was all our own invention in Finland. The concept of the global group did not really take this into account. After thinking about it, we did not at least do this too much. (I5)

Despite information was given in different kinds of meetings and workshop a lot of different tools were used for informing the employees. Tools used to inform were intranet, Yammer, global calls and video conferences and email for example. It was also noticed that the tool used for informing needs to be suitable for the information given. The correct communication channels were seen quite crucial. The theory according to this subject suggests the same. Arvola 2012, Barret 2006 and Koskinen 2006 (look at p. 37) emphasize the consideration of what means of communication is used when communicating. Arvola 2012 and Juholin 2009 (look at p. 34) claim that face to face communication should be used the most. Belicove 2016 (look at p. 34) claim that also tools such as email and cloud-based collaboration tools are efficient when the communication needs to be executed quickly.

“In communication all the possible tools were used. As I said this was a strongly a global project and it was done in all countries and it probably continues still more or less, so the communication was global. There was information in intranet, we had global calls or video conference opportunities, we had a person from the group who was responsible for this whole completeness and who was talking to the whole personnel, HR manager held communication sessions for the entire HR personnel, we had HR center and the HR center manager and project manager kept monthly and at some point almost every couple of weeks or weeks information occasions and Yammer was in use, what more and then there were these meetings that different teams had according to the supervisor.” (I1)

“The way customer communication is thought through is a very important matter for the wholeness. This is the stage that it is important to get the employees committed so that they don't run away in the middle of the change. And how can this kind of change be informed, by phone or email

etc. The communication channels used when informing different kinds of things can ultimately be decisive.” (I5)

The team meetings and discussions and the workshops were considered as a very important part of the communication. It was seen that in the team meetings there was more discussion than in the meetings of the whole HR function. When the amount of people was smaller, people spoke more openly and dared to ask more questions. The individual conversations between supervisor and subordinate were also seen important as in these the individuals could really speak about their own concerns and ask concrete questions. Arvola 2012 and Juholin 2009 (look at p. 34) too see that change communication requires more mutual interaction than conventional communication in the organization.

There were different kinds of workshops. These were important when leading through the change as it demanded a lot of adaption from everybody. These also important occasions for supporting the supervisors as not in all the workshops the whole HR function was taking part of.

“We had general going throughs for informing of more general information, but quite a lot we tried to discuss within team.” (I4)

“Certainly, the most conversation was born in smaller, teams' own discussions where perhaps people were braver to ask and express their own concerns, feelings, questions and of course in individual discussions, individuals quite openly spoke about their own concerns and their own future and asked very concrete questions.” (I1)

“When there is a smaller crowd it creates better conversation. If there are about 30 people at the place, it's kind of a power point reading, formal and no one dares to ask anything even though if they would want to. Or then there is someone who is braver, who points out some group there and then it's not really even possible to answer anything else to this than something hedging that does not at the end really tell anything.” (I4)

Even though there was a great deal of communication through different forums not everything in the communication was a success. Interviewee 5 pointed out that there was a long gap when it had been communicated that some kind of a change will start, but then the actual start of the change process in Finland did not start for over a year. At this stage people saw that the waiting time is too long and there was not that much to inform during this time. The interviewee 5 even tells that one of his/her subordinates who was in a supervisor position said in one to one conversation *“You are hiding information from us. We need to start doing this together. This cannot be that kind of a thing that it is just decided somewhere.”*. Åberg 1997 (look at p. 42) too state that if there is a gap in the communication the news will be filled with rumors or false information.

It was seen that the communication about the change was very systematic and the change was communicated. Differing from others the interviewee 2 sees that there was nothing wrong in the communication. Interviewee 1 points out that the information was too “high wing”, concrete examples were missing too long time and it was difficult to interpret the content of the information. Interviewee 3 sees that the information given in the beginning it would have been impossible to give more concreteness or concrete examples, but the problem was that the communication stayed for too long time “high wing”. Interviewee 4 points out similar notifications on communication as interviewees 1 and 3, she/he sees that the meetings and communication of the change was too rigid and formal.

Interviewee 1 also sees that the communicating for his/her team was difficult at times. This was because the team members were needed to be part of the mapping as they were experts on their own areas. It was not possible to communicate to them what would be the future after the mapping was proceeded and of course the interviewee 1 didn't know it really either. This seem to be somewhat a similar issue in communication as Karlöf 1996 and Åberg 2008 (look at p. 42) state. They claimed that purpose in communication is to answer the question "why" rather than "what".

At one point, it seemed to me that there was information elsewhere and, after all, it was apparent that information had come to pass earlier but had not been told.” (I4)

“Understanding that change is coming and that it is some kind of a big change that will happen here but the clarity of what it is stayed probably very indefinite along the entire journey. More substance.” (I1)

Of course, I needed the team experts who had done these transactional tasks, I needed them along describing and mapping these present tasks while at the same time it was difficult to inform and tell what the future is, because no one of the team members knew at that stage what will be the future for their self. (I1)

“It was difficult to interpret the content of the information. What does it really mean, so at the beginning and well almost during the whole journey it was talking about of very big visions and big lines that might have left during this project and during informing quite vague for the personnel. So that what kind of a change is this about.” (I1)

“So, I do not think that in the communication itself, someone can disagree of, but there was nothing wrong with the communication.” (I2)

“Of course, as always in big global projects it was very high-level planning. When it was thought with consultants at the headquarters it would have been easier if it had been possible to concretize the changes in quite early stage for e.g. what does it mean in practice on a country level but nobody knew these sort of thing when we went to this change and to this there was not ability in the consultancy office nor at the headquarters, and we didn’t really know either at that stage that what exactly this really meant, so concrete examples was terribly difficult to give and so the communication was on too high level for too long.” (I3)

“A lot of attention was tried to give to communication. Of course, that community (Finland HR function) was quite big then and because of this stiffer. I would say that the information sessions were too rigid and formal so that those would have been more discussing. Of course, the number of people was quite big, but the occasions were pretty official. The questions came only later, these were not able to be discussed on spot and then there came after meetings.” (I4)

It can be concluded that all the other interviewees except the interviewee 2 saw some problems in the communication of the change. It seems that even though there would be good tools and structures for communication the change communication in organizational changes is still rather difficult area to succeed in.

It was claimed before that the purpose in communication is to answer the question "why" rather than "what". The interviewees mentioned that there was a lot of communication, but still that there were problems as well. Karlöf 1996 and Åberg 2008 (look at p. 32) mention that leaders have a clear tendency to send too much information to the personnel and to follow up too little how the message is received. Somehow this seems to be the problem in this exact change communication as well.

It is not that surprising that some problems in the change communication arose in the interviews as Mattila 2007 (look at p. 36) see that during big organizational changes, especially when planning the change, internal communication tends to be the most difficult part when it comes to informing. It is very hard to stay up with describing and outlining the situation when the progressing of the change is quick and variable.

The comments from the interviewees about the problems of the communication seem to be quite a like to Valpola's 2004 (look at p. 35) three key points in change communication. First, the clarity of message seemed to stay unclear long in this change. Second, information reaching people needing it seemed to be carried out partly. Third, possibility for discussion did not come true in the bigger meetings.

One point that did not come up in the interviews is the statement from Åberg 1997 (look at p. 38) that in change communication it is important to tell the personnel a real justified threat the company would face without the change. It does not seem this was really communicated for the interviewees nor the rest of the personnel.

4.3. Supervisors' role in change planning and change communication in practice

As mentioned already in the former chapters, one main activity that the interviewees saw that supervisors had in the change planning was to start the mapping of required work tasks and ensuring everything required was mapped as well. It was also seen that this kind of engaging of supervisors was important as otherwise wrong decisions would have been made and the supervisors were important links between the change information and their subordinates. The supervisors of course had their normal daily tasks to do as well when the change was planned. These kinds of daily tasks were for example ensuring the service level of business and development discussions.

“I see that the supervisor role emphasized at the beginning of the change when it was time to start mapping the work and ensuring that everything was would be mapped, knowing what your team does, making sure that all the events were listed was important.” (I2)

“Our clear choice was that the supervisors were really actively involved in the thinking of the change and we had also talked to our HR personnel that this is now going on and the goal is to move tasks to global centers.” (I5)

“A detailed describing of what tasks exactly will be transferred were done together with the team.” (I4)

“When it was planned different countries had quite different approaches. In some countries it might have even been quite close so that the person responsible for County HR Manager as in Finland interviewee 3 alone was planning that this and this stuff will be done in here in future. This way and thus the different roles will go. When we were thinking about it, if interviewee 3 or I had done it, we would not have had a substantive knowledge, we would have made bad decisions about what will be done and where. To change management, it is better that the pains will be distributed as this engages. When people are involved in change and they are engaged the outcome is better.” (I5)

“Firstly, the supervisors had their daily tasks. They led their own team and when the change was planned they had an operational responsibility all the time that services are running. Serving our business well, then our place will be earned. Customer thinking is still a key theme besides communicating. Their role as supervisors was to make sure that your own customer service work as well as on the side you have to think the solution that how is the work done and what is done in here.” (I5)

In change planning a large degree of importance was seen in supervisors communicating with their subordinates. Interviewee 5 points out that it was still important to show yourself in the office otherwise it would immediately seem that you would be hiding for some reason. Interviewee 1 said he/ she made a clear decision already in the beginning of change that he/she would put a lot of effort for informing the team. He/she also got credit for these actions from the team members even though he/she made it clear that he/she cannot inform everything but everything he/she can inform will be informed and discussed. Stenvall et al. 2007 (look at p. 30) claim that the supervisors interpreting of the change to their subordinates is important and he even suggests that the findings of supervisors and the interpretations guiding them may be central to the organization's operation.

It was also seen important that the supervisor worked as a link for the team as if the tasks had been given straight to the team it would not have been successful decision. As they also got to hear some parts of the change earlier than the other personnel they were in this way also working as a link for informing their subordinates. It was important that the supervisor showed example for the team that the change will start, and we will lead it through as well. As a supervisor it does not matter what you think yourself about the change, but it needs to be executed and executed by showing example for others. Stenvall et al. 2000 (look at p. 30) emphasize the supervisor needs to lead his subordinates in change processes through his own activities and show example for the others.

“The fact that you physically walk in the office and show yourself to people in the middle of change I see that has effect. People need to see you as they have seen before so that you don't suddenly disappear somewhere. At some point, I said to someone that do the employees really understand what is

going on as they were doing exactly work the same way as before and the customer service was as good as before as well.” (I5)

“I believe that if the things had been given directly to the team then it would not have succeeded. The role of the superiors is extremely important close to the people and close to the team and taking care of keeping them motivated and energized in the middle of change which is incredibly busy and hectic, a lot of things to do and work and at the same time the uncertainty on the bottom that you do not really know what is happening and where are we actually going.” (I1)

“I started straight away from the beginning quite strong communication and informing in the team. I knew that I might have told my team more than maybe others in that organization, but I was very exact that I did not tell anything I could not tell but I tried to tell everything I knew and that I knew could be told and by this way tried to keep the people conscious and maybe by a bit more concrete level that what are we doing, what is happening, what the future looks like and we discussed together what this structure really means. (I1)

“Well from the part of the supervisors it was not that much planning that they had to do actually, of course there was maybe on the part of other functions as well that they had to identify certain doings which are important for them but not so much planning. It was more that all the time they had the opportunity to hear what is happening and what types of models are currently being worked on and what change will cause to their own activities.” (I3)

“The role of the supervisor includes that even though you yourself think that this is not possible, you will not say this out loud.” (I4)

“The change just has to be done and with colleagues it can be then talked about. But the message is being forwarded as it is, and the change will be continued no matter what you think about the change yourself. It just belongs to the role.” (I4)

“I have been working as a supervisor for twenty years, it is a lot of listening, discussion and courage to talk about different issues and difficult issues as well. I would almost say that when you find out what is bothering every individual's mind and then discussing about this issue openly is important. I would say it may be the most difficult you might not even think about the matters people might misunderstand or worry about. I would say that is the most difficult. People think there is something that is hidden even when there is not.” (I4)

It was seen important that different supervisors informed their teams at same time. Still every supervisor would inform in their own way. It was still important to inform teams at the same time so that rumors would not spread.

“A lot of care was taken so that rumors would not spread as this is quite possible and fast in a small community. We tried to pay attention to informing our teams as it was important that the information will reach everybody at same time, not two hours or two days before. Yes, we paid attention to this.” (I4)

The interviewees also pointed some problems supervisors faced in change planning and its communication. It was quite rough at some point for the supervisors as it seemed not all the employees would have a place in the HR function after the change process. Stenvall 2007 (look at p. 30) also sees that the supervisors typically recognize the winners and losers of the change and added by Juholin 2008 (look at p.31) the change will take energy and strength from the supervisors.

The communication of supervisors was seen to have some problems. It was not clearly pointed out for all the supervisors what can be communicated and what not. A lot of the communication was left on the half of supervisors even though it was quite hard for them as well to understand the message coming from the group. The problem seems to be quite similar to the problem Arvola 2012 and Cards 2009 (look at page 40) points out; there may be a clear lack of knowledge on how and what should be communicated. It seems that this kind of a problem arose in this exact change as well.

“Honestly speaking, when the cooperation negotiations and the biggest step in the change was going on, it was really hard for our supervisors when it seemed as if some people would be left over. We had to think about what is the know-how that we would then need.” (15)

“What could have been done better was that the supervisors could have been coached better in acting with their own teams and what can they communicate and what not as the communication is not that natural for everyone. So perhaps that point could be one that should be paid attention to, different supervisors go in to change with different facilities.” (11)

“I think that different supervisors worked differently, a lot was left on the quarters of the supervisor’s. And, of course as I said there was a lot of communication, common communication as well and common occasions but because the message was so high and not accurate it did not really relieve the pain. Might have even been that it only increased the frustration.” (11)

“Perhaps it was quite natural for me, I did not feel that change management was problematic, but the only problem in the supervisor role was that what can be communicated and what cannot be communicated, it is always challenging in this kind of a situation because it is still a matter of fact that the work decreases locally and will change to another format.” (11)

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary

The first of the research problems was how should changes in organizations be planned. Through the literature review and empirical research key points linking to change planning were found.

It is clear, changes made in organizations need justified reasons. These reasons are also important to communicate for the personnel when planning changes. In the company studied these kinds of reasons were for example uniform structures, speed and cost efficiency, common operating models and practices. Another important part of planning change is considering the risks of the change and whether it is worth to implement the change.

The real threat the company might face without the change should also be communicated. In the company studied it seemed this was not too clearly communicated. It was clear that other similar groups had got good results with these kinds of changes but what would have been the possible outcome if the group would not have implemented this change? This remained somewhat hidden and perhaps also because of this at times the meaning of becoming change was also unclear for the interviewees.

A timetable for the change needs to be defined as well. In the company resourced the timetable in a big picture came from the group. It is important to have enough time for the planning even though the literature review shows this tend to fail quite often and the planning and implementation is proceeded almost at the same time as rapid changes are needed. Through the interviews it was found that this was not quite the case as at the end they executed the planning phase in time, but what was the problem was that in addition to this the HR function also had to support the business functions change in its role.

Resource allocation needs to be considered. In the case company this had been considered. New trainees were hired before the real rush with the change process started.

Interviewees described that the global group gave instructions to find out all the human resource tasks and to describe them. Part of planning is also defining the current doings and the future doings. Through this it will be found out what is the current situation and how to get to the desired condition.

People in charge of the change process need to be clarified. For example, through the interviews it was found out they had had a project group in Finland for the change processes lead through. The project group strongly consisted of supervisors and the parts of the organization where the change was directed. According to this the parts of the organization that the change has affected should be, by certain means, included also in the change process and planning.

In the literature review it was found out that in changes employees work efficiency might be reduced as the change might have a major effect on people's emotions. In the case company it was a big resource that people were working together and cooperating. Also, if the employees of the organizations are used to changes it will have positive effect on the change process success.

The next research problem was what is the role of communication in change planning. Several important parts and problems of this were also found through the interviews and literature review.

When planning changes all of interviewees saw that communicating and informing have an important role, the literature review suggested the same. It is also significant to repeat a lot and to reduce false information and fears. In the interviews it arose that at some point as the change process took years and did not start right away there was no communication about the change in the beginning. There was a gap in informing and communicating. This problem was recognized in the literature review as well. If there is a gap in the informing it will be filled with rumors and false information. This is what happened in the company studied as well, not enough attention was given for the communication when there were not new matters to inform.

Communicating and informing should be carried out in different ways. In the case company this was fulfilled for example by general meetings for the whole HR function, supervisor meetings, workshops and team meetings. Through the interviews it seemed that most of the change information was communicated from top to down, which is typical for change communication.

Different tools for change communication should be used as well. The case company used tools such as intranet, Yammer, global calls and video conferences and email. Both the interviews and literature review pointed out the importance of using correct communication tools for correct situations. The team meetings and discussions and the workshops were considered a very important part of the communication. It was seen that in the team meetings there was more discussion than in the meetings of whole HR function. Also, the literature of change communication emphasizes the importance of face to face communication and possibility for discussion, concerns and questions.

It was seen that the communication about the change was very systematic and the change was communicated. As suggested in the literature review there should be a concrete plan for change communication as well. Still both the literature and interviews pointed the same problem in communication when planning changes. The literature claimed that when planning it is difficult to give enough concrete information of the change. Similarly, some of the interviewees saw that the communication was on too high a level for too long and did not include enough concreteness. Another problem that both of these recognized was that it is very hard to stay up with describing and outlining the change situation when the progression of the change is quick and variable.

The third and last of the research problems was that what is the role of supervisors in change planning and its communication. Both the literature and interviews show that overall that supervisors' role in change planning is very important. It is vital how they communicate the change to their subordinates and support them, as well as it is important they take part in the planning that concerns their or their team's work.

When planning changes supervisors have the responsibility of finding out the doings of his team and then by this ensure which of this will be done inside the team after the change and which not. In the case company this was one of the most important tasks of supervisors according to the interviewees. Supervisors had in the change planning to start the mapping of required work tasks and ensure everything required was mapped as well. This kind of action is also important as it engages the supervisors to the change.

It was also seen critical that the supervisor worked as a link for the team as if the tasks had been given straight to the team it would not have been successful decision. As they also got to hear some parts of the change earlier than the other personnel they were by this way also working as link for informing their subordinates. It was important that the supervisor showed example for the team that the change will start, and “we will lead it through as well”.

During change planning supervisors still have their normal day-to-day work tasks to do of course. These kinds of daily tasks in the case company were for example ensuring the service level in business and development discussions.

Both the interviews and literature review showed that the communication of supervisors during change planning is extremely important. The supervisors interpret the change to their subordinates. It is important that different supervisors inform their subordinates at same time. Still every supervisor, communicate in their own way.

Both the interviewees and literature review found similar problems of supervisors' role in change planning and in its communication. The change demands energy and strength from the supervisors as for example the supervisors typically recognize the winners and losers of the change. The communication of supervisors also tends to have some problems. Through the interviews it was not seen too clearly pointed out for all the supervisors what can be communicated and what not. A lot of the communication was left on the behalf of supervisors even though it was quite hard for them as well to understand the message coming from the group as mentioned the problem seemed to be quite similar to literature. Perhaps there should have been more effort put on the guiding

of supervisors in change planning, what, how and how often are they supposed to communicate with their subordinates about the change. The responsibility of supervisors' communication could have been cleared out and followed up more closely.

5.2. Meaning and usability of the research

The significance and usability of my research directs particularly on the company where the interviews were made, but at the same time it directs to similar companies as the case company. By this I mean companies that are a part of a global group. The companies at the country level will not have the possibility to plan everything in the change, but through this study it is more clear what is the role on the country level when planning changes, what should be included to the planning and what are common pitfalls and how can these be prevented.

Theoretical reflection and results in practice provide together a comprehensive picture of organizational change planning, its communication, and the role of supervisors in these. Particularly the company that the interviews were carried out could take advantage of the results of this study. The company can utilize these study's findings in their future changes. The results of the research can therefore be utilized when changes are planned.

The study confirms the view that when already the planning phase, the communication and the importance of the role of supervisors and their communication is paid attention, it will lead into to a positive impact on the change overall. Again, if there is inadequate change communication, and supervisors are not sure what and how much should they communicate about the change with their subordinates, it will feed the uncertainty in the organization and increase change resistance. According to the research results, change communication and the role of supervisors change communication and their involvement in change planning are a key part of the organization's change planning.

5.3. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research

The generalizability and usability of the results of this study in other contexts is made more difficult by the normal limitations of generalizability of qualitative research. The aim was to examine whether the theoretical literature review gone through in chapter 2 holds true in the cases explored by empirical research. The reliability of the empirical material would have been better if the interviews had also concerned the organization's employees who did not have a similarly strong role in change planning and who were not in a supervisor position. However, in this case, the research would have originally been different from its research setting. The aim of this study was to find out what makes planning changes successful and what is the role of communication and supervisors in this.

As clear limitations of this study it can still be seen that now the study only provides the perspectives of employees who were very involved in the change planning and four of them were also in a supervisor position, which usually means you will get more information and earlier than others. Because of these reasons it would be interesting as a future research suggestion to compare these kinds of perspectives of changes to perspectives of employees who are not as much involved in the change planning and who are not in a position of a supervisor. Still in this way this research would have become too extensive.

As another future research suggestion is that in this study the case company was a part of a very big global group. Would there be differences in the results if the company is small or even if it would be big but not a part of a global group. Would there be some variation in the results in these cases?

I believe that communication and supervisors' role in change planning have a major role in the success of the change. The organizations and supervisors that can, in the best way, take advantage of many opportunities of change planning and communication, will manage it through the tough global competition.

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Appendix 1. Background information

Survey form of the interviewees background information

1. Work experince years as a superior:

2. Graduated degrees:

1. Primary stage education
2. Further vocational qualification (vocational degree, secondary school)
3. Post-secondary education which is not a higher education (eg special vocational qualification)
4. Polytechnic education (bachelor or master´s degree)
5. Other certification, what? _____

3. Number of suborninates: _____persons

4. Interviewees age: _____years

5. Job title at the moment: _____

6. Number of working years in the company: _____years

7. In how many organizational changes have You taken part of: _____

Appendix 2. From the research questions into themes of the interviews

The research questions of this study were how should change be planned, what is the role of communication in change planning and what is the role of supervisors in change planning and its communication? The themes above are collected for empirical clear of these research questions.

Theme	Empirical questions	Interview themes
	Background information	Background questions were fulfilled if needed
Change	What does change mean?	Where did the need for change come from and what was the ultimate goal of it?
Models of change management	How can change be led?	How was the need for change detected? Were some change management models used in the change?
Change planning	What facts do you see that take part in change planning? What critical factors are there in change planning?	What did the change planning include? What went good in it and was there something that could have been done better? Who took part in change planning? What kind of a role did personnel and supervisors have in the change planning? Which matters helped and which complicated to succeed in change planning?
Role of supervisors in change planning	What were the tasks of supervisors in the change planning?	Which kinds of successes and difficulties did you meet as a supervisor in change planning?
Communication in change planning	What does communication in change planning include?	How was the communication in change planning established? What were the successes and failures in it? Does communication in change planning have effect on the

		change`s succession and if so in what ways?
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