CHALMERS

Strategy realization and implementation

A study on identifying and managing critical factors to change and strategy implementation

Master of Science Thesis
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Acknowledgements

Abstract

Changes in customer's behavioural patterns, rapid technological development and increasing competition are just some of the reason to why changes in organisations' environment are occurring more frequently. Forming and realizing new strategies then become a central concern for most organisations. However, even though organisations are constantly working with these issues today, 50-70% of new strategies fail to reach its desired effect (Blanchard et al, 2009).

The purpose of this master thesis was to research how different actors are working with realizing strategies and how their way of working correlate with academic research in the field. The additional purpose was to give suggestions on how to more successfully realize strategies. This study is based on 21 interviews with 11 different individuals. The actors were divided into two categories. The first category is internal actors working with strategy in their own organisation. The second category is external actors working with strategy issues as consultants for other organisation. In this study three organisations and four consultancy firms was researched.

During the research two main approaches to strategy was identified. The first was to work with strategy as a clear project consisting of an analysis of the organisation's current state a plan on how to reach a desired future state that is then realized. The second approach was to work with strategy as incremental improvements that together create a movement to a desired future state. However, regardless of approach to strategy three topics were identified as important for the success of the change and these three topics was researched further.

The three most central concerns for the companies within this study was using effective communication, developing appropriate goals and managing resistance to change efficiently. Conclusions drawn from this is that there seems to be advantages with working more proactively with goal development and continuous communication both as a mean to working more effectively, but also to manage resistance more effectively.

Lastly in this report it's discussed that to be able to have a proactive approach a suggestion for a model for strategy impact analysis (SIA) should be developed. The purpose of a SIA model would be to assist managers to review how the realization of a strategy affects the individuals in the organisation. The advantages with such analysis would be that manager would be able to better adapt the strategy to the organisation and learn more about the own organisational culture which in turn will minimize the risk of unexpected resistance and thereby increase the likelihood of success. Identifying the root causes of resistance I also argued to be much easier than trying to predict when and how resistance can occur.

Contents

1 Introduction

In this chapter the background to this study will be described and the purpose of the study will be presented. Furthermore, the research questions this report aim to answer will be presented and the disposition of the report will be described.

1.1 Background

Forming and realizing strategies is a central concern for any organisation. Globalisation has increased competition and expanded the markets which in turn have led to technologies evolving more rapidly. Thus, changes in an organisation's environment are occurring more frequently and when the environment of an organisation is changing, the organisation itself is faced with a need of change. Moreover, the behavioural patterns of customers are changing which has the consequence of new trends occurring. This is also an issue that the constantly firms have to adapt to or try to control.

To meet these changes the organisation must be able to successfully form and realize strategies. Strategies set directions for manoeuvring challenging environments, outwit competitors, focuses effort and enables collective action by promoting coordination of activities (Mintzberg, 1987). Even though organisations are working with formation of new strategies 50-70% of these strategies fails to reach the desired effect (Blanchard et al, 2009). This failure rate indicates that there is no uniform best practice solution for managing strategic issues used by organisations today. However, there are several different recognized theories regarding how companies should work with strategic process in practice and which factors should be taken into account when implementing a strategy.

1.2 Purpose

In general, there are two main groups of actors working with strategy issues. The first group consists of actors who are working with these issues internally in their own organisation. The second group consists of consultants who in this case are external actors working with these issues in client organisations. The purpose of this master thesis is to study how these two groups of actors are working with strategies and comparisons between how they work and look upon strategy will be made. Thereto making additional comparisons between how companies are working with strategy in practice with existing recognized theories regarding strategy and organisational change. The overall objective is to identify essential aspects that could be used to increase the likelihood of success. This is done by answering two following research questions:

- *How are companies working with strategic implementation and how does this way of working correlate with academic research related to strategy realization and implementation?*
- *What could be done in order to increase the chance of successful strategy realization and implementation?*

1.3 Scope

In this section the scope of this master thesis will be described. Firstly the types of data and the limitations of this data will be presented. Secondly it will be defined what parts of strategic work that will be covered in the master thesis.

1.3.1 Limitation of data

The study is supported on both theoretical and empirical data. The empirical data consist of information from 21 interviews with 11 representatives from three organisations and four management consultancy firms. The selected consultancy firms are offering their clients services both regarding strategy development and realisation. Some consultancy firms are offering clients services regarding their operative activities as e.g. interim management. But this kind of services will not be included in this study. All consultants have at least five years of experience as management consultants. The internal actors studied in this master thesis are all working with strategic formation and implementation but they have different operational tasks in their organisations, as presented in the method section. However, only the strategic activities will be studied and the operational activities will not be taken into consideration. The theoretical data will be limited to two categories of theories. The first category includes literature regarding strategy formation and strategy realization and the second category includes literature regarding communication in relation to strategy and change. Figure 1 illustrates the scope of the data collected in this research.
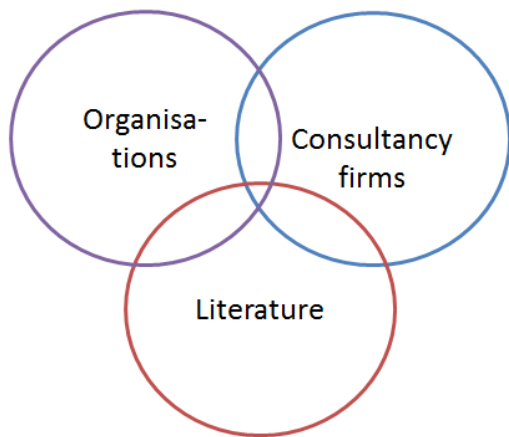
Figure 1 comparison of data

1.3.2 Definition of strategy work

As mentioned in the background section of this report the term strategy can simply be described as direction that focuses effort and enables collective action by promoting coordination of activities (Mintzberg, 1987). Thus, strategy involves changes in the organisation to enable a movement from the organisations current state to a desired future state. This is illustrated in figure 2.
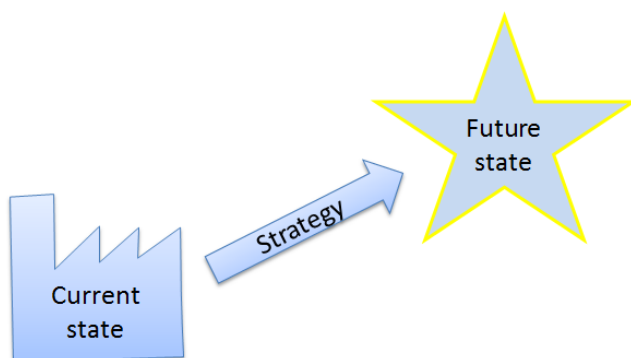
Figure 2 Strategy as a movement and direction

The scope of this master thesis is to study how the direction to the desired future state is formed as the strategy gets realized. Thus, in this master thesis it will not be studied how the desired future state is developed. This means that in the organisations studied the desired future state is already developed as a goal to reach.

1.4 Report disposition

In the first part of this report the method used to answer the research questions will be presented. This section will describe the research approach used and how the data was collected and analysed. In the second part, the theoretical framework used in the analysis of the empirical data will be presented. This theoretical framework will also constitute as a literature review to study different perceptions of strategy formation and realization. The third part consists of empirical data where the description of strategy formation and realisation from internal and external actors will be presented as different cases regarding how the different actors are working with these issues. The fourth part is a pre-analysis where the empirical cases are compared to each other. The fifth part is the analysis where the different perceptions from the literature review and the actors' perceptions will compare. In this section will also the most recurring topics from the interviews with the actors be identified and analysed in more depth. The sixth part of the report is the conclusions, where the main takeaways from the report will be presented. Thereto, the answers to the research questions will be summarized in this part. The seventh part is the discussion where the authors will give a review of the result of the analysis and based on the analysis and conclusions a model for increasing the chances of a successfully realised strategy will be suggested. The final part of the report suggestions for further research will be given.

2 Method

In this chapter the research processes conducted to answer this study's research questions are presented and in depth described. The aim of the study is to investigate how companies are working with strategic issues and realisation, how this way of working correlates with academic research and what can be done in order to minimize gaps between practice and research. Furthermore in this chapter the choice of method will be elaborated and discussed.

2.1 Research design

The choice of research design provides a framework for the collecting and analysis of data (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The research design that is used in this study is a cross-sectional design. A cross-sectional design implies that data on several cases are gathered at a single point in time. The purpose of this is to be able to examine the collected body of data to detect patterns of association (Bryman and Bell, 2011). A case can be a single organisation, a location, a person or a single event where the setting is intensively examined. The purpose of the case in this study is to be able to generate statements that apply regardless of time and place; this is called a nomothetic approach (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

2.2 Research approach

In this study the empirical research will be based on theory but in the same time the findings from the empirical research will be used to shape the theory. To start with a theory and then let it continuously get shapes by empirical findings is described by Peirce (1931) as an abductive research approach. Dubois and Gibbert (2010) states that the abductive research approach is suitable in fields where a lot of information is available and there are several viewpoints on knowledge and truth in the field. Smith and Fletcher (2004) claim that there is room in the abductive research approach to make conclusions between the observations of knowledge the research process. This makes the abductive approach suitable for this study since the empirical data is collected in several steps where the data collection in forthcoming steps builds upon prior collected empirical data. In figure 3 the abductive research approach is illustrated.
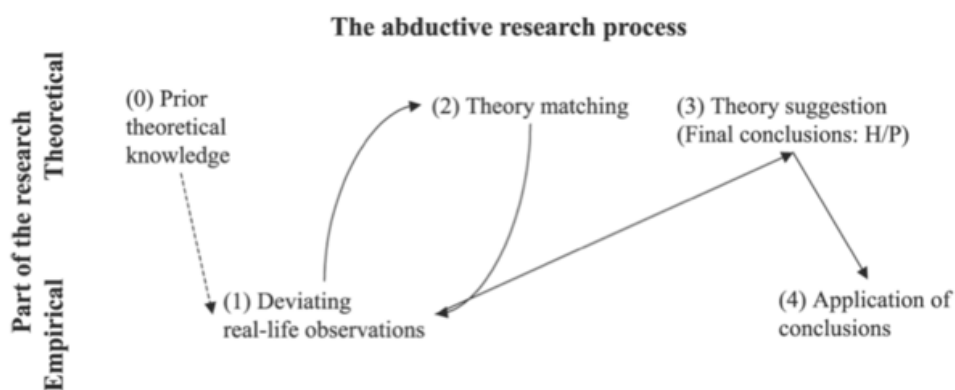
Figure 3 the abductive research approach (Kovács & Spens, 2005).

2.3 Research strategy

The research strategy is a general orientation to the conduct of the study. According to Bryman and Bell (2011) there are two different approaches to research strategy, namely a qualitative approach or a quantitative approach. The aim of quantitative studies is to

generalize theories about an environment from findings made from samples in that environment. To be able to achieve this aim the data collected and analysed must be quantifiable, i.e. the data should consist of numbers (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The aim of qualitative studies is to gain a deeper insight into the studied phenomenon. Qualitative data is textual and the collecting of the data can be performed through e.g. by research of literature or archival data and case analyses (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Hence, the research strategy for this study is the qualitative approach, since the aim of the study is to get deeper insight into different viewpoints of strategy in literature and how strategic issues are managed in companies.

2.4 Data collection methods

The data collected in this study can mainly be divided into two groupings of information, theoretical data and empirical data. The theoretical data has been collected through, for the study, relevant literature. A more detailed description of this process is given in the next section. The literature and publications studied is of a secondary nature, meaning that the data is collected from another data source with another purpose than this this study (Churchill and Iacobucco, 2005). The empirical data is collected through qualitative interviews. The interviewees are divided into two general groups. The first group consists of actors working with strategic issues internally in their organisations and the second group consists of consultants from different consulting firms providing external services with strategic issues. The empirical data in this study is primary data, meaning that the data is collected by the authors of this study specifically for the purpose to answer the research questions of this study (Churchill and Iacobucco, 2005).

All sources of empirical data are anonymous in this report due to requirements of this from the organisations and consultancy firms studied. Thus, to be able to distinguish the organisations and the consultancy firms they will have fictive names in this report. The organisations fictive names will be based on the industry they are operating in and the consultancy firms fictive names will be based on the word business development and its synonyms. The fictive names of the consultancy are handed out randomly. The fictive names are presented in table 1.

Table 1 fictive names of organisations and consultancy firms

Organisations	Name (fictive)
1	DistributeC
2	ServiceP
3	ProduceM
Consultancy firm	
1	BusinessCon
2	OrganisationalCon
3	ProcessCon
4	ManagementCon

2.4.1 Literature study

Since this study follows an abductive research approach, relevant literature will be studied both in advance of the study as well as during the study. The purpose of the literature study

is to give the authors a broader understanding of strategy formation and realisation. The literature study is refined with the empirical data collected through interviews.

2.4.2 Interviews

The research method used for collecting the empirical data in this study is semi-structured interview. In a semi-structured interview the interviewers follows a list of questions on specific topics, referred to as an interview guide (Bryman and Bell, 2011). What makes the semi-structured interview different from a structured interview is that the interview guide does not have to be followed strictly, meaning that other questions can occur during the interview depending on the interviewee's answers. According to Bryman and Bell (2011) factors that support the choice of semi-structured interviews as research method are: If more than one person will be interviewed and if the study is a multi-case-study. This study fulfils both these criteria's.

The purpose of using an interview guide is to make the interviews with the different actors as similar to each other as possible. However additional questions are needed for the researchers to fully understand the situations the interviewees are giving. All the questions in the guides used in this study are open, meaning that the interviewee is asked questions that can be answered in their own terms and examples that the authors can create cases from. In all interviews the communication is recorded and then transcribed by both the authors', notes were also being taken during the interviews. The purpose of this is to get as rich data as possible and thus, reducing the risk of missing out on information important for the study. Below the structure of the interviews with the different actors will be presented.

2.4.3 Consultant interviews

Four different management consultancy firms were investigated in this study. The four consultancy firms chosen for this offers their clients both services regarding strategy development and realisation. All the consultants interviewed from these firms are senior consultants with more than five years' experience in the firm. Only senior consultants were chosen since the authors want the interviewees to have as good insight into their organisation as possible. The purpose of the interviews was to gain insight into what the consultancy firm is offering their clients and how they proceed solving their clients' problems.

2.4.4 Organisation interviews

Three organisations were researched in this study and all internal actors interviewed are involved in strategy formation and realisation in the organisation. The purpose of the interviews was to get insight into how strategy formation and realisation is performed in the organisations. The interviews was performed in two round where the first round regarded how the organisation is working with these issues overall and the second round regarded a specific change process in the organisation and how it proceeded. In the second round several representatives from the organisation was interviewed. The representatives are chosen due to that they are currently working with change processes in their organisations. The representatives interviewed in the organisations is presented table 2.

Table 2 presentation of the representatives' interview.

Organisation	Representatives	Interview round
DistributeC	CEO	First round

	Board member	Second round
ServiceP	National manager (Sweden)	First round
	National manager (Sweden)	Second round
	Department manager (1)	Second round
	Department manager (2)	Second round
ProduceM	Business developer	First round
	Sales manager	Second round
	Business developer	Second round

2.4.5   Final interview round

To be able to answer the second research question a third round of interviews was performed. The purpose of these interviews was to get a deeper insight into factors that are considered as important when working with strategy formation and realisation. The purpose was also to research how these factors can be managed. In this round all representatives listed in table 2 and three consultants was interviewed. These interviews are covering the three most recurring topics in the first rounds of interviews. These topics are: communication, goal development and resistance management.

2.5   Data analysis

The study started with an extensive literature research regarding strategy formation and realisation. The literature was then divided into two main categories. The first one has a holistic view of strategy work and focus on categorisation of organisations approaches to strategic work. This category was named strategy and strategizing. The second category has a more micro perspective to strategy work and focus more on how actors in an organisation can work with strategic issues. This category was named organisational evolution.

After the data from the first and second interview round was collected and analysed three central factors in strategic work was identified. These factors are communication, goal development and resistance management. To be able to further investigate these factors the literature review was complemented with theory on communication. After the third interview round the collected data was analysed to investigate how these three factors can successfully be managed. To make the information form the analysis easier to overlook and grasp the authors has chosen to present it as a model consisting of methods and tools to manage the factors.

2.6   Method discussion

In this section the method used and its potential impact on the researched conducted will be discussed. The purpose of this is to enable the reader to question the credibility of the research.

First of all the choice of using an abductive research approach is considered to be positive for the research. The reason for this is that the existing literature covering strategy and change are very wide and fragmented. Thus, it was necessary to adjust the theoretical framework in parallel to the collection of empirical data to be able to develop a theoretical framework covering organisations work with strategy formation and realisation. Also the theoretical framework needed to be adjusted after the three factors for the second research question was identified. When it comes to the choice of research design the cross-sectional

design is obvious since the purpose of the first research question is to compare the work of several actors.

The data collection from the interviews is considered to be rich. The reason for this can be that an intensive literature study was performed before the interview guides were developed. However, to make the data richer the research could be complemented with observations of how the change process is carried out. In this way factors as political influence and use of methods could be investigated further. The reason why observations wasn't chosen as a data collection tool was that the time period for this study was too short. Another factor the authors believe affected the data collection was that the actors were ensured anonymity and in this way they claimed they could be more open with sharing information.

Regarding the choice of offering the interviewed organisations and consultancy firms anonymity the authors consider this to be a good choice. The reason for this is that some of the interviewees claimed that they couldn't participate if this wasn't offered to them and the others said they felt they could share more detailed information with anonymity. Thus, the anonymity made the collected data richer.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011) there are four criteria's used to assess the soundness of a qualitative research study and these criteria's are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. These four criteria's will be treated below.

2.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is about ensuring that the research is carried out according to good practice and submitting the findings to the members of the area studied to confirm that the researcher correctly understood the area researched (Bryman and Bell, 2011). There are two ways to ensure to ensure credibility. The first way is respondent validation which means that the interviewees confirm the findings of the research. The second way is triangulation which means that several methods or sources are used in the research (Bryman and Bell, 2011). To achieve respondent validation the cases in the empirical section was sent out to the interviewees who the case was based on to ensure that the authors have interpreted the interviewee right. To achieve triangulation several persons involved in the change process in the organisations was interviewed to get a holistic view of the process.

2.6.2 Transferability

Transferability concerns to what degree findings can be generalized to other settings and contexts (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Overall qualitative research tends to be more of depth than breadth and findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness. Also the findings in this study show that there is no uniform way of working with strategy formation and realisation and thus, this research is considered to have a low degree of transferability. However, since the findings indicate that the work of consultants are more similar than the work of the internal actors it should be easier to generalize the findings regarding the consultants and get the same result by identifying other consultancy firms.

2.6.3 Dependability

Dependability regards the stability of data over time. In a study with high dependability it's important that the researchers account for changes in the context and situation of the researched area. This means that the researchers have to outline how the potential changes have affected the results of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Considering that the time period of this study is only four months which makes it fairly short, no changes in the context

of the research was likely to occur. Thus, since no changes in the context have occurred, the dependability of the study is considered to be high.

2.6.4 Conformability

Conformability is the ability for external parties to judge the results of the research. The external party judges how well the data collected supports the results (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The conformability of this study is considered high since several external parties will judge it. As earlier mentioned in this section all interviewees have gone through the empirical section regarding them. Also a supervisor from Chalmers have read the study and discussed it with the authors. Furthermore two other master students from Chalmers have performed a peer review of the report.

3   Theoretical framework

In this chapter the theoretical data from the literature review will be presented. Literature will cover organisational change, teams and organisations, understanding the individual and communication.

3.1   Organisational change

Organisational changes can be divided into episodic or continuous changes (Weick and Quinn, 1999) and such chances in organizations do occur in the context of failure of some sort. Episodic changes are discontinuous, intermittent and infrequent and often occur when the organisation can't keep up with the changes of its external environment. Continuous changes, however, are organisational changes that tend to be on going, evolving and cumulative. Löwstedt, et al (2011) develops the two types presented by Weick and Quinn (1999) further by arguing that there are two other perspectives on organisational change: the objectified and the lived version. The objectified version is the documented version given to outsiders as a representation of the changes within the organisation, whereas the lived version is the version of how these changes actually were interpreted and discussed within the own organisation. Löwstedt, et al (2011) argues that researches needs to apply an interpretative approach when studying organisational change in order to capture both perspectives.

3.1.1   Top down and Bottom up approach

Generally there are two approaches to how change initiatives are managed; commonly known as top-down and bottom-up approach. With a top down approach the management sets a plan that they then execute and communicate to their staff. In direct contrast with this is the bottom-up approach where the initiative and the changes are developed with the perspectives of those further down in the organisation.

In strategy terms these two approaches can be compared with the concept of deliberate and emergent strategies. A deliberate strategy must fulfil the characteristics: the intention with the strategy must have been precise in the sense that the desired actions should have been articulated beforehand. All actors within the organisation must have known these intentions and the realized intentions must have been become exactly as planned (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985). This makes the deliberate strategy similar to the top-down approach. A perfectly emergent strategy has order and consistent action but the strategy is constantly affected by and adopted to the organisation's internal and external environment, i.e. emergent strategy implies learning what works and what doesn't works (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985). This makes the emergent strategy similar to the bottom-up approach.

The two approaches don't have to be followed strictly, but rather there can be a mix of the two approaches. A deliberate strategy affected by an emergent strategy is called a realized strategy. Mirabeau and Maguire (2014) identifies that the source of emergent strategies are autonomous strategic behaviour resulting from local problem solving. For an autonomous strategic behaviour to become an emergent strategy and thus affect the deliberate strategy it must go through three steps, which are: the autonomous project must have been mobilized with support to impetus execution. Its strategic context has been manipulated to consonant with the deliberate strategy and the organisation's structural context has been altered in order to embed the project (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014). The need for autonomous projects can come from misleading information between top management and down-the-line managers (Ekelund and Räisänen, 2011). Ekelund and Räisänen (2011) identifies that this misleading information can cause decision-makers to base their directions on issues not

recognized by the down-the-line management, which makes the local problem solving different from the intended problem solving. Thus the realized strategy will not be the same as the deliberate strategy.

The two approaches each have its pros and cons. Although one might argue that, in a given situation, one approach might be more favourable to the other. According to Siverbo, et al (2013) change initiatives applied with a top-down approach have a tendency to be unwanted and forces upon the employee's. Thus, in order to increase employee commitment and thereby stimulating the change process, they argue that applying a bottom-up approach would be more effective. Furthermore, Beer (2003) argues that one reason to why many top-down TQM programs fail to sustain over time is partly due the lack of motivation among employees caused by the gap between top management's intentions with the program and the objective reality of subunits within the organisation. Hence, successful change initiatives require the right managerial values and attitudes as much as the right skills and behaviours among employees.

In order to improve managers' ability to utilize their knowledge about strategy, Lau (1999) argues that managers need to understand the context, content and process of implementation in relation to the organisation. The context is the configuration of an organisation. It can be divided into e.g. internal context, which includes internal resources, cultures, skills base, structure, distribution of power; and external context, which includes the environmental, economic, legal and social context. Within the context of the organisation, managers must decide upon strategy content. Appropriate leadership is an essential element in this process. The third and last part of the conceptual model is the process.

In a study of the evolution and development of a specialist group within a company, Pettigrew (1975) states that although the process is not linear, it consists of three phases; the conception phase, the pioneering phase and the self-doubt phase. Moreover, he argues that the self-doubt phase, which can be characterised by e.g. intra-group conflicts, career anxieties and uncertainty caused by staff turnover, can result in resistant to change. In order to deal with this resistance, he states the two different approaches maladaptive and adaptive strategy. With the maladaptive strategy, reactions are made based on the symptoms rather than the causes of problems, and applying this may result in absorption by default by absorption of demise. Whereas if with the adaptive strategy, responses are made with the causes of self-doubt and uncertainty in consideration, and applying this may lead to more effective use of the units' expertise and capabilities in the future.

Alänge and Steiber (2009) states that a reason to high failure rates of organisational changes is that large scale changes need time to materialize. Thus, having committed top management is crucial for the sustainability of implemented change programs. There is a risk with having a board that does not understand the essence of an organisational change, and that is that the programs risk being abandoned before the solution have had time to be set, e.g. when the people driving the change moves on to another responsibility.

3.2 Teams and organisations

Organising a company around independent teams is a common way to increase effectiveness by creating a more flexible and efficient organisation. In this section literature related to the effectiveness and development of teams and organisations are presented.

3.2.1 Effective teams

A team is a group that share an overall objective. In order for a team to remain effective it should consist of between 6 to 8 people, each individual should have clear roles and being able to work independently and supportively towards the that shared overall goal (West, 2008). If a team becomes too big, it will increase coordination complexity and cause communication problems. West (2008) argues that there are seven barriers to effective team work; (1) The team do not have clear tasks, (2) The team do not have freedom or authority to make decisions necessary to accomplish their tasks, (3) The team has too many members and do not have the appropriate skills to perform the tasks, (4) The organisation is structured towards individual work, (5) team processes are neglected and not nurtured within the organisation, (6) The leadership within the team is too directive rather than facilitative in generating solutions, and (7) Teams are in conflict, either internally or with other teams.

The effectiveness of a team will also be affected depending on which development stage the team is currently within. Tuchman's (1965) suggested model for team development consists of the five stages forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. Briefly put will there be considerable anxiety where members reflects upon their own roles and ask questions to seek information about others in the *forming* stage. During the *storming* stage will hidden tensions start to emerge and conflicts may arise as members starts questioning provided value and feasibility of said tasks. Conflicts start to resolve and the team begins to agree upon rules and form norms during the *norming* stage. It is during the *performance* stage, the team finally starts to work successfully towards the joint goals. The final stage *adjourning* is not something that every team goes through as a team, since members could leave the project at different times. However, the adjourning stage is important since as team could revert to earlier stages or the stability of the team could be affected in other aspects as members leave team.

3.2.2 Goal development

To successfully develop a goal it's first of all necessary to understand what a goal is. According to Sternbergh and Weitzel (2001) goals act as a guide to something new and motivate change. Thus, goals are objectives for change and improvements. Sternbergh and Weitzel (2001) describes that there are three different issues that needs to be concerned in order for an organisation to reach goals. Firstly the goal must be valued, this means that the individuals who will drive the organisation to the goal must be committed to do it. Secondly the goal must be supported. If the managers doesn't act as the goal is important and coach the organisation to get there the individuals in the organisation will not be motivated to strive for the goal. Lastly the goal must be specific. If the goal is too broad or overwhelming it becomes difficult for the individuals driving the organisation to the goal to grasp the target of the change. In this way there is a risk that different individuals are starting to work against different targets without knowing that they are doing this (Sternbergh and Weitzel, 2001).

To not risk that the target or objective becomes too broad or overwhelming Doran (1981) initiated five criteria's of how a goal should be and called these criteria's S.M.A.R.T. The first criterion is that the goal should be specific, meaning that the goal is clear and unambiguous. To achieve this goal must tell exactly what's expected and why this is important. Secondly the goal should be measurable to enable the monitoring of the progress of reaching the goal. If a goal is not measureable it becomes impossible to know if progress towards a successful

completion is made. Thirdly the goal should be attainable and thus, realistic. A realistic goal is a balance between too out of reach and too close to the standard performance of the organisation. Fourthly the goal should be relevant, meaning that the goal matter for the organisation and thus, brings it forward in its market. Lastly the goal should be time-bound. By having a deadline it's easier for the individuals to focus their effort (Doran, 1981).

3.2.3 Managing conflicts

Conflicts within teams and organisations can be either destructive and cause poor performance if managed ineffectively or it could spark creativity, increase quality and be the source of excellence if managed effectively (West, 2008). According to West (2008) are there three sources of conflict; task related conflicts, conflicts about processes within the team or interpersonal related conflicts. Moreover, interpersonal and process conflicts impair team effectiveness and the well-being within the team. When becoming personal, such conflicts become even more damaging to the team performance. In contrast are task related conflicts could be desirable if it is constructive (West, 2008). Pinto (2013) groups the sources of conflicts into the two categories organisational causes and interpersonal causes. Examples of conflicts that would categorise as organisational are conflicts in relation to reward systems, scarce resources, uncertainty over authority and differentiation in e.g. attitudes and mind-sets between functions within the organisation. Conflicts that according to Pinto (2013) would characterise as interpersonal are e.g. misconceptions of the underlying reasons behind behaviours (faulty attributions), faulty communication due to ambiguousness or unintentionally provocation,

According to West (2008) are there five way to how conflicts are resolved; only one of which he argue is good. The good way is to *collaborate* to find a solution that becomes a "win-win" situation for involved parties. Other ways that conflicts are resolved is to *avoid* the conflict*, accommodate* to give the others what they want*, compete* to win at all costs or *compromise* which will result in that neither party will have their needs fully met. From a project management perspective, there are five methods for a project manager to handle conflict (Pinto, 2013). First *mediate the conflict* by taking direct interest in the conflict. *Arbitrate the conflict* by listening to the parties before deciding upon one side. This is comparable to taking a role as a judge. *Control the conflict* and waiting a couple days in order to allow the conflict to cool down. There could be benefits with not resolving conflicts immediately and by controlling them instead of intervening, the conflict could be solved more naturally. *Accepting the conflict* is not optimal, but sometimes necessary if they are not manageable. *Eliminate the conflict* by for example transferring team members or make similar changes in order to allow the project to progress.

3.2.4 Learning in organisations

Through a study on learning among high-performing individuals working as management consultants Argyris (1991) identified that there was a "learning dilemma" when it comes to teaching these individuals. He saw that these people often lack a double-loop learning when it comes to learning from failures. That is, they have a theory-of-action they have learnt to live by and they do not question this way of working since it have worked so well historically. Rather than questioning their own performance, they are more likely to attribute failures with external factors when they e.g. do not fulfil goals. Argyris (1991) argued that one of the reasons to why this could be was that these people have been lucky in the sense of not having experienced failure; they have not fully learnt how to cope with failure. Moreover, this can also be led to one contradiction, rooted in human behaviour, between espoused theory

of action and the theory in use. Hence, people often explain their exposed way of working but if their actions are studied, this is not the way they are working. Argyris (1991) also argues that there are two types of misunderstandings that companies needs to overcome in order to manage learning in organisation. Firstly, the definition of learning is too narrow and mainly focuses on changing the external environment. Secondly, it is merely a matter of motivation to get people to learn. Stoll, et al. (2006) has done an extensive review literature in relation to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) where they point to the complexity of building them. Although, there is a need for the concept to be further explored, they argue that there are considerable advantages with having such community. It especially needs to be developed when it comes to sustaining effective professional communities.

A community of practice is a group of individuals that share a profession, which can evolve naturally due to the members' common interest in a specific field or due to a goal of achieving knowledge regarding this field (Lave and Wenger, 1991). The individuals in the community shares information and experiences with each other and it's in this way the individuals learn from each other and thus, evolve and develop themselves professionally.

In most organisations, employees have a way of working that they are most familiar with and comfortable working with. These way are most often learning's that have been accumulated over time. The way that communities of practice have formed will in turn also affect how prone to change the organisations are. Gluch (2009) found an interesting example on this where environmental professionals lacked positional power within a construction company, even though environmental issues was highly prioritized by top management. In order to get through to the workers the environmental professionals had to take a more collaborate approach which was built on understanding of the workers conditions. Thus, they had to create a shared language in order to make the workers become more interested in changing their behaviour.

3.3 Understanding the individual

In this section literature regarding how the individual in an organisation is affected by different factors will be presented. The factors presented in this section are motivation, power and politics.

3.3.1 Motivation

Managing change within an organisation requires that a majority of individuals within that organisation are willing to accept and aligned with the overall direction of the change. One way to help cope with organisational inertia and to make an organisation more prone to change are to focus on developing the organisational culture. There is a clear difference in how people interpret situations due to so-called different collective mental programming (Hofstede, 1980). He therefore argues management theories are best suited for the situation and country where it is originally developed. Thus, in order to not conflict with the local organisational culture when formulating strategy the theories needs to be acculturated to the own organisation.

Moreover, the motivation of individuals is largely dependent on the psychosocial environment in which the employee is within. Hackman and Oldham (1980) outlined a model consisting of five different job characteristics that are still used today. These characteristics are Skill variety, the degree to which the job requires various activities; Task identity, the degree to

which the outcomes are visual or possible to identify; Task significance, the degree to which the job have an impact on other person's life; Autonomy, the degree to which the job offers freedom, independence and flexibility to plan out the work; and Job feedback, the degree to which the individual receives feedback that are clear, specific and detailed enough to enable own improvement. The first three are related to meaningfulness, whereas the last two are related to the own responsibility and the possibility to develop in your role. An individual's well-being and motivation will be increased that person experiences a higher degree of these characteristics in their everyday job activities. Job insecurity might also be another factor that will affect the employee's motivation towards the change initiative (De Witte et al., 2010), especially when it comes to organisational change.

Wadell and Sohal (1998) argue that there may be benefits with resistance to change and managers would benefit from trying to utilize it. Some of the utilities are that resistance points out a potential fallacy, it draws attention to an issue and it brings forward additional mindsets. Thus, rather than trying to eliminate resistance, they argue that it should be utilized. Resistance commonly occurs when there are uncertainties about the change and the outcome of the change. According to Wadell and Sohal (1998) are the most common causes rational factors, non-rational factors (simply do not wish to change), political factors or management factors (e.g. due to how things are managed). Leader-member-exchange (LMX) theory states that leaders have a tendency to establish different relationship with the members within a group; in-group and out-group relationships. The in-group members have a closer relationship with its leader. This relationship is recognized as higher quality than for those within the out-group relationship (Caughron, 2010). According to Dam et al. (2008) do members within the in-group relationship are less likely to resist change than those within out-group relationship. Thus, the involvement of members and close relationship with them are likely to have positive effects to realizing change due to a minimized risk for resistance.

Setting sub goals can be another effective way to increase motivation. In a study of children Bandura and Schunk (1981) found that proximal sub goals could cultivate their mathematical competencies. With proximal sub goals the children developed personal efficacy, self-directed learning and an intrinsic interest in a way that the children that received more distant goals did not.

3.3.2 Power & politics
Some of the demand that needs to be considered in strategy formulation might be of political nature. The political behaviour behind strategy formulation is according to Pettigrew (1977; pp. 81) defined as: "*behaviour by individuals or subgroupings within an organisation that makes a claim against the resource-shaping system of the organisation*". Pettigrew (1977) emphasis that the purpose of a strategy is to solve these dilemmas that evolve around the political demands. The identification, analysis and the study of these demands should be done in relation each individual or subgrouping and when formulating the strategy it should be done with consideration of the relationship with strategy implementation. Effective managers are according to Pinto (2000) willing and able to employ political tactics in order to fulfil their project goals to a larger extent. Pinto argues that the three modes of power are Authority, Status and Influence. There are three tactics of political behaviour that could be applied in order to cope with the three modes; Naive, i.e. refusing to use political behaviour, Sensible, i.e. applying mean tactics, e.g. manipulation, bullying, and Sensible, i.e. using good tactics, e.g. networking, negotiation. Hence, the manager must be able to explain for

receivers how the changes are beneficiary to them and the manager also must be able to handle upcoming conflicts.

Managing change entails managing different personalities and roles within the firm. In knowledge intensive firms managers may be required to provide direction for the experts in order to avoid that these people be working with what they find most interesting (Sveiby, 1990). In turn, staff specialist also might need to engage in political activities in order to get acceptance for their ideas among their managers (Pettigrew, 1974). Thus, in order for staff specialists to gain credibility among their executives, it is required for them to be able to develop their ability to communicate and take a role as an internal politician.

3.4 Communication

In addition to the literature about strategy and organisational evolution, this chapter is added as a complement. The reason for this is that theory regarding communication was necessary to answer the second research question of this study.

3.4.1 Communication as a strategic tool

The power of rhetoric was appreciated and studied as early as in the ancient Greek and much of the ideas are still relevant today; not least within business. The classic rhetoric teaches us that there are, in general, three means to convince an audience; *logos* - by the logical argument, *ethos* - by the personality and character of the speaker and *pathos* - by the emotions evoked within the audience (Johannesson, 1998). Today, a widely accepted model of communication is the one created by Shannon and Weaver (1949) that describes communication with three parts; sender, channel and receiver. Communicating a message is not, however, not necessarily limited to having explicitly expressing your argument. Both nonverbal and verbal communication is used around us every single day. There are for example many nonverbal communications such as body language, facial movements and gestures that may have an effect when influencing behaviour.

How strategy and organisational change are interpreted may be affected by how it is communicated. Löwstedt and Räisänen (2012) showed that in there were two different narratives present within the same organisation; the lived and the formal. The formal narrative, which most often came from top management, described changes as part of a strategic plan with proactive incremental steps. In contrast, the lived narrative described the same change programs as discontinuous processes that required immediate short-term responses.

There are according to Klein (1996) many difficulties with realizing change that can be solved by setting up a communication strategy. Such communication strategy should be based on some of the following principles of good communication that are brought up in the study. A message should be repeated through more than one medium, face-to-face communication is the most effective medium, line authority is a credible and effective communication channel, supervisors' are trustworthy and are the key communicators, informal leaders serve as effective opinion leaders when communicating change and communication should be personally relevant for the ones being affected by the change.

3.4.2   Sense giving and sense making

Effective communication entails that the sender has an understanding of the receiver in order to present information that are relevant and of interest to the increase the likelihood of the receiver obliging. In an article with a somewhat unorthodox perspective to managing change, Frost and Egri (1994) argues that if conventional consultants were to adopt some of the ideas from a shamanic perspective when working organisational change then this may generate positive effects. The general idea is that a shamanic perspective considers the world to constitute of different world or realities. The ordinary world of reality only represents the physical world. In addition to this world there might be an underlying symbolic world of reality. Further, a shaman would argue that everything is connected and that there needs to be harmony among energies such as e.g. individuals and organisations. Energy beings energies can, however, be inhibited due to past experiences (Frost and Egri, 1994). The major a symbolic take-away from this study is that both individuals and organisations are formed by past event and experiences. These experiences will have an effect on how new situations are interpreted. In relation to communication is it therefore important to understand the overall reality of each individual. Equal effort therefore needs to emphasize on sense giving, the sender, as to sense making, the receiver.

When it comes to communicating change Heath and Heath (2008) have identified three common barriers; namely the curse of knowledge, decision paralysis, and lack of common language. The first barrier arises when individuals talk as if their audience have the same knowledge and way of interpreting the presented information. This is commonly seen when management present a strategy that is too abstract for the employees to relate or adjust according to. The second barrier is something that could occur when a person is faced with too many alternatives. The last barrier, relates to how strategy are spoken of within the organisation. It is argued that if an organisation could create a common strategic language, this could result in that criticism from employees are constructive and this would allow everyone to make contribution. Applying their six central principles of developing Simple, Unexpected, Concrete, Credible, Emotional, Stories (SUCCESs) could help overcome those issues.

3.4.3   Contextualisation and visualisation

A middle manager within an organisation often has a complex task that often might be overlooked (Uyterhoeven, 1989). Hence, within an organisation, the middle manager needs to manage communication both with top executives as well as with regular workers. This often entails engaging in political activities and managing to balance authority and responsibility skilfully. Within strategic initiatives, the middle manager is often responsible for communicating and managing change throughout the organisation. The individuals within the organisations will, however, have different incentives. Therefore being able to re-contextualize a message in relation to the receiver is another thing that a middle manager might be required to handle. Although, Aggerholm et al (2012) argues that the interpretation of messages among employees largely depends on other factors than what was communicated by the management. If the employees e.g. have trust in the CEO they tend to favour that persons view. Additionally, employees put their own interpretations of the situation in context with that the management tried to communicate which largely affects the employees view on the strategy. Aggerholm et al (2012) further argue that sense giving and sense making is most effective only when people share the same contextual views and even

if management re-contextualize the message, the effect of what is communicated overestimated.

Another way to make it easier for the receiver to interpret a message could be to use visual elements when presenting information (Eppler and Platts, 2009; Krum, 2013; Viegas and Wattenberg, 2006). With good use of visual theories common challenges such as information overload and uncoordinated actions could be overcome. A common use of visualisation is to make graspable graphs and diagrams out of numerical data. By doing this the numerical data can be summarized into an illustration of the situation of an organisation.

4 Empirical findings

In this chapter the empirical data collected from the interviews will be presented in for of cases. The organisations and consultancy firms studied in this master thesis will be presented. Empirical findings regarding the three most recurring topics from the first rounds of interviews will also be presented.

4.1 Organisation 1: DistributeC

DistributeC transport, distribute and sell commodities to other businesses. The commodities are processed and repackaged before being sold to resellers and other companies. DistributeC is working within three main business areas/markets. Table 3 illustrates the strategic situation of DistributeC.

Table 3 Strategic situation of DistributeC.

Strategic Scenario	Organisational transformation
Strategy phase	Analysis and implementation
Organisational level	Corporate
Organisation size	~ 50 employees

4.1.1 Context and strategic situation

For many years DistributeC have enjoyed years of annual profitability. The ambition have subsequently been to expand the corporation to meet this growth, but today the organisation have created an organisational structure that is too complex in relation to its actual size. The operational distribution company is only one Sub Company within the corporation. The parent company is a holding company. The operational distribution company has a matrix structure which is divided into functions and geographical areas branches. The result of this is that individuals from the functional branch can have the same responsibilities as individuals from the geographical branches despite the small size of the organisation. Hence, two individuals in the company can have the same work tasks.

A few years ago the organisation was involved in an accident, ruining machinery that had been written and causing the organisation to relocate temporarily. In turn, this increased costs for e.g. logistics. Since then, the company have been working provisionally with what was meant to be temporary solutions. This uncertain situation has also affected the employees negatively since the situation makes it difficult to imagine a future state of the organisation to strive for.

The organisation, which is highly dependent on external factors, are working more reactive and without clear goals and vision. Goals are not made into sub goals, or put into the context of different situations. Rather, the organisation talks about aiming at financial goal of EBIT 8%. Last year, the company initiated a generation switch within management in order to turn the downward trend around. They assigned a new CEO and a new board member. The CEO operates in both the holding company and the distribution company to make them more aligned with each other. Before the generation switch there was different CEO.s in the holding company and the distribution company.

4.1.2 Approach to situation

The mission for the CEO is on short term to change the negative trend and long term to set up a new vision/goal for the future. The CEO set the own long term goal to enable the

holding company to make the transition towards becoming a more focused holding company. The goal was also to make the structure of the distribution company as simple as possible to ensure that several individuals will not have the same work tasks.

When the new CEO started working at the organisation it was decided to use an external consultancy firm to help analyse the organisation. This analysis was done in collaboration with the CEO and board members. In order for the CEO and the newly appointed board member to fully understand the organisation, they held initial strategy meetings and interviews with the managers within each business area. Interviews were then held with employees to get a better understanding of the operational processes in the organisation. The CEO considered it important to gather the viewpoints of the employees to be able to better adapt the change to organisation and the individuals it consist of. Also this information was gather because these individuals knows best how their daily processes are working and thus, they are highly capable of giving suggestions for improvements of those processes.

After the analysis, the persons involved in the analysis formed suggestion that they presented to the board. The suggestion consisted of a new organisational structure that also resulted in that individuals had to be let go. Also, the CEO found that the organisation historically had been working with economical prognoses and not with budgets. This was another thing that the CEO now is going to make them do. They needed to start working with budgets and more effectively turning overall goals into sub goals.

The next step in this process is to inform the employees of the upcoming changes and how the new organizational structure will affect them. The CEO will also inform that he is the owner of the change meaning that he will be implementing the change process and be the one that employees can go to with concerns regarding the implementation. The informing will be performed through presentations held for the different departments. The CEO wants to presentation to occur before the implementation of the change to give the employees time to prepare for the change. The reason why presentations will be used is that the CEO wants the employees to be able to ask questions regarding the changes if they have any concerns. If arguments against the change occur during these presentations the CEO invites the individual making the argument to discuss it separately after the presentation. The reason for this is that the CEO doesn't want the risk of starting a public conflict in front of the other employees. Furthermore, the even though the CEO will be the change owner he wants the managers in the organisation to encourage the employees to implement the changes in their work processes. Thus, the manager should act as ambassadors for the change and help the CEO to prove its importance.

Directly when the implementation starts measurements of its result will be performed and carried out continuously. The reason for this is that the CEO wants to be able to monitor if the progress of the change takes the organisation closer to its goal regarding profitability. To be able to do this the change must have measurable parameters regarding cost savings. Figure 4 illustrates the strategy process of DistributeC.
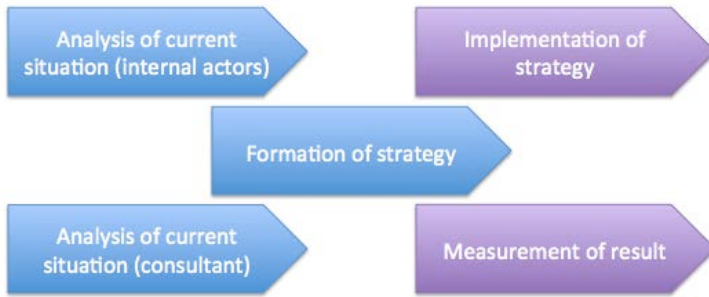
Figure 4 Strategic process of DistributeC, purple boxes have not yet started.

4.2 Organisation 2: ServiceP

ServiceP is a large international service provider. For this case the department targeting private users are studied and the department is active within three different customers segments. The manager of the studied department have the full right to make decisions without the need of improvements from more senior managers as long as the changes doesn't affect the number of employees in the department. Table 4 illustrates the strategic situation of ServiceP.

Table 4 Strategic situation of ServiceP.

Strategic Scenario	Cultural and organisational change
Strategy phase	Proactive testing/realisation
Organisational level	Whole department ~ 200 employees
Company size	~ 6000+ employees

4.2.1 Context and strategic situation

By making sure that every employee understands and lives by the organisational values and understands them within the context of the vision, employees should feel comfortable with making decisions since they already know what decisions are the best for the organisation. ServiceP has a vision that should be easy to understand and possible to re-contextualize downward in the organisation. The overall vision is applicable to every service that the organisation is offering and it is also targeted directly to the customers. Further down in the organisation, however, this same vision is interpreted and reformulated in order to contextualise how that vision is met within each part of the organisation.

The work with the vision is by the national manager considered as one strategic framework. The national manager does not think that it is effective to send out strategic documents if they are not relevant to the employees, because if they are not, they will not be read. Instead, it is necessary that the employee learns the service process from a customer perspective. The organisation works with continuous improvements and ideas are encourages from all parts of the organisation. Although most part of the employees' work is operational ideas of how to improve the current activities are often picked up from employees that work with this on a daily basis. It is essential that process goals and small operational goals benefit the end objective. The ideas are processed in dialogue between manager and employees. To educate the employees in what the managers' wants their ideas to contribute to presentations are held where the vision of the organisation and how the employees can contribute to achieving the vision is presented.

In the studied part of the organisation there are three departments. These three parts have different customer segments and all have different history in how customer has been met, how activities have been solves and how leaders have been operating. Generally, the three different parts are comfortable with their own way of working. Although the management, and the national manager in particular, thinks that it would be better for the company if they would have a more unified way of handling their operations. There are, however, differences within between the different departments that might not be possible to overcome. Therefore, the national manager finds it important that the concerned parties need to be involved in the transformation of the organisation.

4.2.2 Approach to situation

In order to manage the change, the company have taken in external consultants that would assist in the development of leadership within the different departments. Increasing the responsibility among employees starts with focusing on the managers. The new approach originates in that managers must understand and utilize their staff by adopting a more coaching leadership style. This is achieved when managers recognize that the potential in their staff and to a higher extent involve them in the development toward the vision. Thus, the managers should act as ambassadors promoting the employees to help its organisation reach it goals. Solutions need to be properly evaluated and a collective solution needs to be sought. By involving employees in the development, those individuals become ambassadors for the change that in turn contributes to the development of the change. Another important aspect is that employees could contribute with inputs based on observations form their daily processes that the management have overlooked. Thus, the core of the new approach is to challenge the staff to come up with own solutions and to make sure that feedback is used to improve the development since they are most experienced in the daily processes.

Increasing customer satisfaction has historically been achieved by defining metrics that was assumed to contribute to the customer satisfaction. The problem with this approach was that employees worked exclusively towards these metrics, which made some of the suggestions to customers, seem a bit enforced on customers. With the new approach where each person put emphasis on offering as good service for the customer as possible focus could instead be put on making adjustments that will have better effect on customer satisfaction. To determine if a new idea increases the customer satisfaction it needs to increase factors promoting the customer satisfaction. If an adjustment has positive effects on the customer satisfaction it's presented to the rest of the department so that they can start working in the new way as well. These presentations are held orally so that employees are able to ask questions if there is something they don't understand with the new way of working. If arguments are raised against the new work process during the presentation the national manager consider it important to focus on the facts in the arguments to not make it a conflict. These presentations are held before the implementation of the change to give the other employees time to prepare for the change. The same applies for the individual facing the argument, i.e. the answer should always be based on facts as well. Figure 5 illustrate ServiceP's strategic processes.
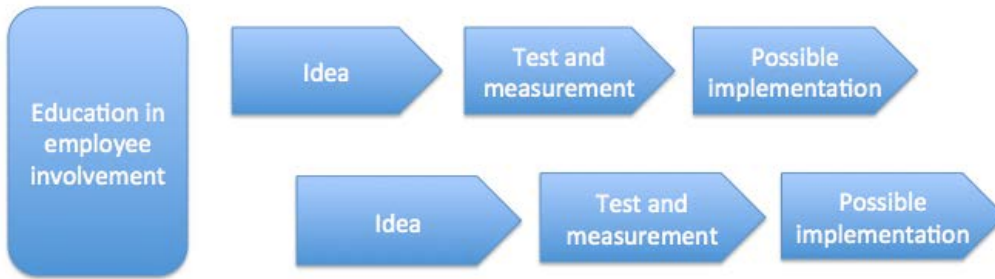
Figure 5 ServiceP's strategic processes

4.3 Organisation 3: ProduceM

ProduceM is a developer and producer of manufacturing equipment. The organisation is a global organisation with functions in Sweden. The Swedish function has full responsibility of its operations and geographically the Swedish function is only focusing on the Swedish market. The current main goal of the company is to increase their market shares in Sweden and the senior management is encouraging the different departments to make improvements that contribute to reaching the vision of the organisation. Table 5 illustrates the strategic situation of ProduceM.

Table 5 Strategic situation of ProduceM

Strategic scenario	Change of sales process
Strategy phase	Implementation phase
Organisational level	Sales department
Company size	1000+ employees

4.3.1 Context and strategic situation

To gain more markets shares the sales department needs to acquire new customers. When approaching new potential customers a seller realised that they was targeting the wrong actor in the customer organisation with the current sales process. The reason for this was that the actor needs to get purchases approved by a manager before a purchase can be made. Another problem with this was that even though the targeted actor was very positive to buying ProduceM's products the purchase could still be called off if the managers didn't approve. The seller recognized that the sales process could be performed faster if the manager was approached directly. Another benefit of targeting the manager was that the seller doesn't have to rely on another actor to try to convince the manager. However, with a new target actor in the customer organisation the sales offerings had to be re-contextualized since different actors have different focuses.

4.3.2 Approach to situation

The seller who detected the problem with the need of the manager's approval informed the sales manager about this and the sales manager understood that there was a need of a new sales process. The sales managers decide to test two different new processes and then evaluate the result of these. The first process was taken from another national sales department. This process is similar to the current process with the difference that the decision-makers will be targeted and the focus will be put entirely on the key benefits of the products. The second process is to approach the decision-makers with the bigger picture, i.e. how the customer will benefit from using the products in the long run. This process was an idea from the employee who identified the initial problem. The manager chooses to test this approach as well because he thought that the suggestion had a good basis since the

employee are performing sales activities on a daily basis and he wanted to encourage this kind of initiatives from employees. Also if the suggestion comes from inside the department it will more easily be accepted by the employees. The reason for this is that the approach is already adapted to the individuals in the affected department. To measure which approach was the best number of sales was choose as the parameter to measure the result of the approaches. This parameter was chosen since it's affecting the organisations vision of increasing its market shares. The result of the test of the two new processes was that the first process gives the same result as the current process, but with the second process the organisation is making more sales and does so faster than the current process. On this basis the sales manager decides to implement this process as a new standard for the sales department. The sales department has free rein from the senior management to implement new processes.

Currently the change process is in the implementation phase. The new sales process was introduced to the employees in an oral presentation where the benefits of the new process were presented, i.e. the result from the test of the process was presented. This presentation was held before the change implementation started to give the sellers time to prepare themselves for the new approach before it was time to start practicing it. During this presentation it was also described how the sellers shall manage this new process and how their daily operative activities will be changed. If arguments are raised against the new approach during the presentation the sales manager consider it important to answer them directly. Otherwise the other employees might think doubt the new process since the manager can't defend it directly. The information presented during the presentation was also sent out on the intranet so the sellers have access to it all the time. After the presentation the sales manager and the seller who detected the problem and tested the new processes started educating and training sellers in the new process. The sales manager is the change owner implementing the new sales approach and the seller acts as an ambassador for the change by encouraging the other sellers to test the new approach. Sellers who does not fully understand the new process or doubt the benefits of it are offered to follow on sales meetings where the new process is used to experience the process in action. The change is followed-up by monitoring the evolution of the result of the sales department. The result is reported to the senior management but how the new process is managed isn't. The strategic process of ProduceM's is illustrated in figure 6.

Figure 6 Strategic situation of ProduceM.

4.4 Consultancy firm 1: BusinessCon

BusinessCon is a medium sized organisation. The consultants are offering their clients strategic analyses and implementation of change processes. The consultants don't have to develop the strategic plan for the change process to implement it. A mission can take everything from a couple of weeks to one year and consist of two to ten consultants.

4.4.1 Client offerings

There are several reasons why BusinessCon gets hired. The consultants might have competences that the client lacks or the client wants to make the change process more focused. An external party creates more pressure on the change to happen. The consultants feel that the clients often underestimate change management in terms of time and work effort. Generally the consultants are working in close relation to the client organisation and its employees to be able to deliver them the best solution possible. Thus, the most important attribute a consultant can have is the ability to handle different individuals.

4.4.2 Preparations and analysis

The first step consultants at BusinessCon take is to set a mission for a pilot study. The purpose of the pilot study is to get a good understanding of the situation the client is facing and to make a quality assurance of the upcoming result. This study is based on experiences from earlier similar projects and the study gives the consultants an idea of what's needed to be done before approaching the client. However it's important to be open-minded and understand that the might have to be adjusted to better be suited for the client organisation. The preconceived ideas are based on methods developed by the firm from earlier projects.

In the analysis phase of the project the consultants are using frameworks developed by the BusinessCon. The frameworks consist of pre-set structures that are adjusted to different industries and to the client organisation. By following frameworks it's easier to know what data is necessary to collect to solve the client's problem. The data is most often collected through interviews with employees but different employees can give different answers to a question due to different values internal contentions. The frameworks used in the analysis phase are constantly developed to better fit in specific industries and trends.

It's important to already in the analysis phase implement the understanding of the terms strategy and change in the organisation to anchor the upcoming changes. The purpose of this is that the change shall not shock the employees when it's time to implement it and to be able to identify resistance to the change as early as possible to have more time to prepare these individuals. An advantage of working with both analysis and implementation is that it gives a more realistic view of what's possible to implement in an organisation.

4.4.3 Implementation and Termination

When implementing a change it's important to have a clear goal to strive for. The consultants must motivate the employees to reach for that goal. Thus, communication and contextualisation are essential success factors for the consultants. To contextualize the goal of the change the consultants must use words that the employees in the organisation are used to and understand. Another part of the contextualization is to dress in the same way as the employees to create a feeling of coherence.

If resistance to the change occurs the consultants takes the individual making resistance aside and take extra time to explain for this person why the change is necessary and the purpose of the change. It's important to explain this in a logic way, this can e.g. be achieved by visualization of why the current situation is unsustainable. In this way trust in the change is built, it's easier to build trust if the employee feels a sense of emergency. To learn about different personalities it becomes easier to identify who will make resistance and not.

BusinessCon often have the responsibility for the progress of the implementation but they usually want someone from the organisation to work with them in the implementation phase. The reason for this is to make the transmission of the change when the consultants are leaving easier. I.e. It should be clear who in the organisation will be the new owner of the change process so it will not stop when the consultants leaves, if there is no clear new owner of the change the project will not bring the organisation any value. To make this possible the change process must be user friendly and not too complicated. Also the new owner must have the right competences to progress with the change. The last step the consultants do in a project is to come back to the client organisation and perform a follow-up on how the progress of the change has been. It's important to understand what went well in the project and what didn't. This knowledge is then used to refine the firm's methods and frameworks for analysis and implementation of change. It's this continuous learning that makes the consultancy firm competitive. The work process of BusinessCon is illustrated in figure 7.
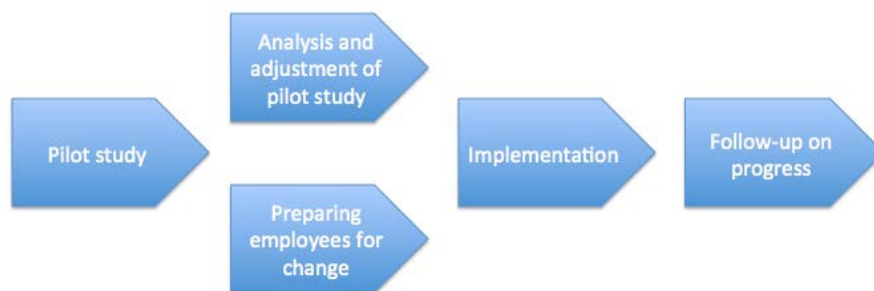
Figure 7 Work process of BusinessCon.

4.5 Consultancy Firm 2: OrganisationalCon

OrganisationalCon is a large organisation with operations in several countries. A mission usually lasts between one month and one year. A project often consists of 2-5 consultants working on the same mission, but the project can consist of as many as 20 consultants. OrganisationalCon strives to plan so that one consultant only has one mission to focus on at a time.

4.5.1 Client offerings

There are several reasons why the clients are hiring OrganisationalCon, but the most common reason is according considered to be due to their experiences in successfully executed change processes. Two other reasons to why OrganisationalCon is hired are that the client organisation doesn't have the resources themselves necessary to manage the change process or a lack of the competence needed to manage the change process. Another reason to hire the firm is the consultants' knowledge within the industry of the client organisation and their ability to analyse trends on both a micro and a macro level. There are three main ways for the firm to get new missions: Through senior consultants customer networks, through new problem identification at current clients or through request for proposal sent out by the client which is answered with a quotation. In their work the consultants uses a mix of the firm's own models and general models.

4.5.2 Preparations and analysis

Before the project starts at the client organisation the consultants makes hypotheses about how the client's problems should be solved. These hypotheses are taken from best practice of how old projects have been solved. How exact the hypotheses can be before approaching the client depends on how much it has to be adjusted to the client organisation and how much information the consultants have about the client organisation. The information about

the client organisation consists of annual reports and internal documents that the consultants have demanded from the client such as internal accounting documents and documents describing internal processes. Furthermore, this information is used to create a "fact pack" of information about the client organisation describing the current state of the organisation.

When approaching the client organisation the consultants start with interviewing key stakeholders to the change to validate the solution hypothesis. These interviews are also used collect necessary data to complement the information from the pre sent out documents. Other individuals can also be interview in this phase to better understand their work tasks. Questions about an individual's tasks can easily be threatening for the individual since its answers can lead to staff reductions and thus, the individual can start making resistance to the change. The resistance can be manifest in three dimensions of arguments: rational arguments, political arguments and emotional arguments. The rational arguments can help create a better solution both the two other dimensions should just be eliminated by describing for the individual why the change is necessary. If the resistance can be solved in the analysis phase the implementation will happen much easier. To not shock the interview individual information about what the interview will regard is sent out in advance. This information contextualizes the change process and its purpose so everyone can understand it.

4.5.3   Implementation and termination

When implementing the change it's important to identify who should be involved in managing the change process. The consultants at OrganisationalCon want to find the persons that the organisation has confidence in and informal leaders. The client identifies the informal leaders. The requirements for the persons that the organisation has confidence in are that they should have a good view of the organisation, they should have good knowledge in their field and they should be willing to change. However, it's also good to include those who are more resistance to the change in the project since it better to argument and discuss with these individual than have them counteracting the change outside the project.

When communicating the change it's important to have a plan for what should be communicated. This includes: which channels that should be used, what the purpose is and how often this should be communicated. A goal with every change process is that everyone should know their role in the organisation and how they are contributing to achieving the goals of the organisation. A good way to achieve this is to visualize the change process by describing the desired future state and how it will be when the goal is reached. The road to the goal is often visualized with a transformation map describing steps the organisation has to go through to reach the end goal of the change process. In this way everyone gets a shared view of the direction the organisation is moving.

The consultants are working in parallel with the individuals involved in managing the change process to make the transfer of the project easy. In this way the individuals´ gets a good understanding of the tools and methods the consultants are using and thus, they can continue working with those tools after the consultants are leaving. Before leaving the consultants are also giving the individuals tools for education and follow-up of the project. After leaving the client the consultant who was responsible for the project makes a follow-up on how the change process has went and how satisfied the client is with the work performed by the consultants. The Work process of OrganisationalCon is illustrated in figure 8.

Figure 8 Work process of OrganisationalCon

4.6 Consultancy firm 3: ProcessCon

ProcessCon is a national management consultancy firm and they are working with analysis and strategic implementations. A typical project consists of one to three consultants and lasts for three to six months. A consultant can have between one to six projects in the same time.

4.6.1 Client offerings

ProcessCon is working with analysis and strategic implementations within the above mentioned fields. Their specialization is working with transformation and change project. They see a number of reasons to why companies choose to take in their consultants as external help. It can be anything from an organisation lacking enough internal resources or when they need the view of an external part to put external pressure.

4.6.2 Preparations and analysis

The preparations that have to be made before arriving at their clients often varies depending on which customer, what type of project it is and also how they have acquired the case. Before arriving at the client organisation the consultants generally have received some background information from the clients, e.g. policy documents. If, however, ProcessCon has sent an offer to a client or if there are no existing relevant documents then the preparation often starts with deciding which employees to start interviewing. Also, the actual case could be to create such non-existing documents. Thus, they are situational dependent.

When starting to collect data at the client organisation the consultants almost exclusively perform some interviews with a number of individuals. This could be individuals from the internal staff as well as external stakeholders. It's important to have continuous discussions with the customer in order to ensure that they are working the right direction. It is necessary that all parties being affected of the change will be included in the preparation and analysis.

Often there is no problem getting information from individuals interviewed. In cases where individuals are not giving accurate information, either of political or personal reasons, this often will be noticed fairly early since they are interviewing a lot of individuals and in such case their stories doesn't add up. Some additional research is performed in order to get a good theory base. The solution to such situation is according to ProcessCon depending on how well the overall situation is understood. You have to understand that everything is all part of one big puzzle. If there are pieces missing, one has to get to the root of the problem. Not only searching for the correct information, but also to understand the underlying reason for individuals not to share the right information in order solves it. Gaining trust will inevitably be a requirement for the success of the project. It might, however, not be possible to get

complete the whole puzzle. In that case the there are no other alternatives than working with the information at hand and extrapolate a picture from that.

The project model of ProcessCon relies on communication throughout the whole project; from start to finish. They have found that in order to avoid resistance to change, it is important to get everyone on board that is accomplished with a great deal of involvement. The information needs to be adjusted depending on who the receiver is. It is important to have respect for the clients. They know what they are doing and are experts on their own work. As consultants, they provide an external perspective that could spark creativity when it comes to generating solutions. The best solutions are created with the customer's own knowledge and capacities in combination with the external perspective and experience that consultants provide.

To assist with the analysis, ProcessCon have an intranet with information about previous projects. In addition, they have their own project models that they are working with. These models could be already established models or developed from experience and practice within the firm. Finally, they also are part of a global network through which they can get help.

4.6.3 Implementation and termination

ProcessCon's way of working includes involvement as early as possible. In order to do accomplish this, all stakeholders that are being affected need to be included. The stakeholders needs to be prioritized, thus, they need to divide the organisation in a stakeholder analysis. The stakeholders need to be identified because these individuals will be affected most by the change and thus, they need more information than others and more time to take in this information. To not overload the stakeholders with information it's important for the consultants to adapt the information to them so that they only get the information that regards them. Thus, the information should be contextualized.

The consultancy firm work with combining and balancing culture and structure. Some organisations might have come a lot further with structure, but do not have the culture to support it; and vice versa. Thus, it's important for the consultants to determine which part the client organisation is better at and then focus more on the other part. All solutions need to be anchored in the organisation. By involving individuals they can feel that they have contributed to the result and the acceptance will be much better. In addition, when leaving a project it is necessary to make sure that there are an individual within the client organisation to take over the project when the consultants leave. The ambition is that the new project owner is taking part of the project while the consultants are still there. Due to limited time and resources, this might not always be possible. The work process of ProcessCon is illustrated in figure 9.

Figure 9 Work process of ProcessCon

4.7 Consultancy firm 4: ManagementCon

ManagementCon is a large organisation who offers their client both strategic analyses and implementation of new strategies. A mission can be everything from a few hours seminar to an implementation project that takes several years. A mission can consist of one up to 40 consultants and normally a consultant can have 1-3 missions at the same time.

4.7.1 Client offerings

There are several ways for the firm to achieve missions; a client calls regarding a specific case, through networks created through previous missions or through cold calls. The reason for hiring a management consultant can be lack of resources or a lack of knowledge or experience in strategic implementation. There can also be more political reasons to hire a consultant, e.g. to save their own status or position in the organisation. A consultant is never forced to take a mission in industries they aren't supporting, e.g. the tobacco industry.

4.7.2 Preparations and analysis

The consultant is expected to be an expert in the field their missions regards. Thus, ManagementCon always have to be up to date with information regarding the industry the clients are operating in. The consultant needs to know what the challenges in the industry are and what the logic of the industry are. Even though the consultant is expected to be an industry expert it's important to understand that the client is the expert on its own organisation. ManagementCon have methods for different work processes that they customise for the client's problem with the help of the client's organisational expertise. The methods can be followed strictly or be used as an inspiration in the work. The methods are based on well-known academic models.

When ManagementCon arrives at the client organisation they start with interviewing the key stakeholders of the problem to gain their view of the problem. The information from these interviews is often rich since the stakeholders have personal interests in the problem. However, the information from other levels in the organisation are often more poor since these individuals don't know why the consultants are there and why they want the information. This is due to that the strategic questions is often an executive only issue and individuals are expected to understand and accept the upcoming change first when it's time for implementation. To avoid this problem the consultants strive to send out information regarding the change before the interview to increase the awareness of the interviewee. In order to get a better result from the interviews the consultants adapt their clothing and language to suit the interviewee's background and interests. Thus, they are contextualizing their messages.

4.7.3 Implementation and termination

When ManagementCon are hired to manage the implementation of a change they usually get the full responsibility for the process. However, this doesn't mean that they are executing on each step of the process. The managers in the organisation e.g. present the change process to show their commitment to it must perform some steps. Every individual affected by the change must be involved in the implementation of it, but different individuals should have different roles. Senior management should missionize for the change and be engaged in it to illustrate the importance of it for the organisation. Middle managers should communicate the change to the employees and explain what their roles are and why. Informal leaders should act as ambassadors for the change.

To successfully implement a change it's important to manage resistance to the change as early as possible and understand that it's in peoples' nature to be reluctant to change. Thus, it's important for the consultant to always be prepared to encounter resistance. However, if the resistance origins from issues regarding the organisation per se and not the change this becomes an issue for the senior management. For the consultant resistance management is about eliminating factors that counteract the ability for everybody to move in the same direction, i.e. achieve the change. The most common nature of resistance is that people don't understand the change, why it's necessary or how it will be implemented. This makes the change a threat to the individual's current situation. The resistance is most often revealed during workshops or presentations. It's most dangerous if the informal leader's makes resistance since other individuals are likely to follow their opinions.

To be able to identify that the change process is moving the organisation in the right direction goals and milestones must be created. These goals and milestones must be measurable to be able to identify the progress of the change process. A goal for the consultant in every implementation project is that their client shall have a better understanding of the organisation as a whole after the project is done. In smaller organisations the consultant wants the employees to gain this understanding as well. In larger organisations this can easily get too complex. Thus, in larger organisations it's more important to make the employees understand how their roles contribute to achieve the vision of the organisation. In this way alignment can be reached, i.e. as many individuals as possible are moving in the same desired direction. The last thing the consultant do on a mission is to write a project evaluation including lessons learned from the project. Figure 10 illustrates the work process of ManagementCon.

Figure 10 Work process of ManagementCon

4.8 Presentation of the three most recurring topics

In this section the empirical data from the second round of interviews regarding the most recurring topics from the first round of interviews will be presented. The three topics that became most reoccurring during the interviews were (1) How to communicate effectively (2) How to develop appropriate goals and (3) How to manage resistance.

4.8.1 Communication

To get an overview of how actors are communicating when managing change they first was asked what good and bad communication is. The main purpose of communication is to make the receiver understand a message. That is, to make individuals understand the purpose of the change and how it will be managed. To fulfil this, the message should be easy to understand and straightforward. When informing the organisation about a change the message should be transparent. This means that as much information as possible should be presented about the change and no part of the change should be a secret to the individuals. However, this doesn't mean that the message should be as long as possible. Rather the only necessary information should be presented to make it easier for the individuals to grasp the change. Even though it's good to communicate early it can lead to the issue that when something is presented it can't be changed, when communicating it's also important to consider which channels to use to reach the individuals. Lastly it's important to listen to how the receiver responds to the message and answer all potential questions regarding the change.

When it comes to bad communication, the worst thing the change owner can do is to not inform the organisation at all and let them know when it's time to implement the change. Similar to this, the actors consider it bad communication to inform about the change and then not being present to answer potential questions regarding the change. Furthermore, a message should not consists of too much information since there is a risk that this will make the purpose of the change and how it will be performed hard to grasp for the individuals, which makes it easy to be misinterpreted. Also for the message to be trustworthy it should be on facts and not assumptions. Lastly it's considered bad communication to not take the receiver's situation into account and adapt the message to make it understandable for them.

To achieve good communication and avoid bad communication there are several methods and tools that can be used. Firstly it can be good to create a plan for who will communicate with different individuals. In this way it's made sure that no departments are left out or a department is informed several times by different actors. Another way of reaching out as good as possible is to use several channels. In this way a message can be repeated several times without being repetitive and different channels can e.g. be presentations, e-mails and roll-ups. To make the information easier to understand and grasp data can be visualized in form of graphs and diagrams in order to reach more senses. To be able to contextualize the information it's important to have a good understanding of the individuals' in a department situation, e.g. what terms they are used to in their daily activities. In this way the actor will know what it need to put more emphasis on. Furthermore, it's important to understand that it takes different time for different individuals to understand the information and thus, it's important to use several channels. To ensure that the individuals have understood and accepted the message the actor can follow-up by asking them questions about the change and how they feel about it.

In communication there is also an important issue of who should be the one communicating. From the interviews it can be argued that there are two groups of actors with different roles of communication. The first group is senior management and the purpose of their communication should be to demonstrate that the change is important for the organisation and why it's important for the organisation. Thus, the senior management's role in communication is to present the change to the rest of the organisation. The second group is department managers or middle managers and their purpose is to explain to the individuals in their department how the change process will be carried out. Thus, it's the department managers who should be prepared to answer questions about the change process and it's here the dialog regarding the change is. When implementing a change it's important to involve all department managers necessary to reach all the affected individuals in the organisation and to ensure that everyone have someone to talk to regarding the change. If consultants are involved in the change process they have the same role as the department managers.

When presenting the change to the organisation two specific approaches have been identified. The first one is to focus on the current situation and present why this state isn't sustainable. The benefits with this approach are that it's inviting individuals to be part of solving the problems by developing ideas of improvements and a sense of emergency can increase the acceptance of an upcoming change. However, the drawbacks with this approach are that there is a risk of resistance to changes to occur when individuals wants to defend the current work processes of the organisation. The reason for this can be that the individuals have been part of developing the current work process. Another drawback is that if the sense of emergency gets too great it can lead to panic instead of willingness to change. The second approach is to sell in the benefits of a change. The benefits of this are that no panic is created and there is a lower risk of resistance since the current work process isn't blamed for the current state of the organisation. However, for this approach to work there must be real positive benefits of the change. Otherwise the positive selling can be seen as a cover up for the need to change the current state which can be seen as empty words and thus, cause frustration in the organisation. Another drawback is that by selling in benefits the managers have already come up with a new solution and thus, the individuals can't be involved in developing the new process. A third alternative when presenting a change is to mix the two approaches. I.e. to present the flaws in the current situation and then sell in a solution of how these flaws can be fixed. In this way the bad news will not create panic and the solution will not be seen as empty words.

4.8.2 Goal development
The most general part of setting a goal is to define it. The goal of a change should reflect where the organisation wants to be in the future and thus, the goal should take the organisation closer to its vision. To achieve this several goals should be developed and evaluated, and then the best goal should be chosen of these alternatives. The final goal can be a mix of parts from the several goals developed. It's important that the final goal is easy for everyone to understand. All departments should have the same goal and thus, the final goal must be easy for everyone to understand. However, this doesn't mean that the goal should be adapted to different departments, since this creates a risk for departments to start moving in different directions, but how a department will contribute to reach the goal can be adapted. I.e. every department should contribute to goal in their own way but everyone is making the organisation move in the same direction.

If possible individuals from concerned departments should be part of the development of the goals. The reason for this is that they are the one working with the current work processes in their daily activities and thus, know the benefits and the drawbacks of them. Hence, they are most suited in the organisation to evaluate if the outcome of the goal will have the desired effects and thus, take the organisation closer to its vision. Also this makes the goal more achievable for the departments. The involvement can be performed through meetings and workshops where the goal setting can be discussed and opinions can be shared. However, a risk with involvement of individuals in the development of goals is that too much input can slow down the process and thus, postpone decision-making, which can be harmful in emergent situations. But even if there is no time for involvement individuals should at least be informed as early as possible that the process occur, as described in the previous section.

To ensure that the change will lead towards the goal it's helpful to set up a plan for how the goal can be reached including milestones to ensure the right direction. To ensure the direction and the fulfilment of the milestones, the milestones must consist of measurable parameters. The parameters can e.g. be number of units sold or decrease in production costs. The goal and the milestone don't have to be fixed, but rather a direction. I.e. the goal doesn't have to be to increase sales by 20% but rather just to increase sales. The parameters can also be measured by interviews of how individuals feel that the change has affected their department. The measurement should continue after the goal is reached to ensure that the change gets reinforced and don't start moving backwards. If the outcome of the measurement is that the change isn't moving in the right direction it must be investigated why the undesirable outcome has occurred and a new plan should then be developed regarding how the goal should be reached from the current circumstances. To make the change progress in the same speed across the organisation, deadlines can be set to the milestones.

When it comes to communicating the goal to individuals there are several methods that can make this process more successful. To make the goal easier to understand numerical parts should be visualized into graphs and diagrams, in this way a lot of data can be made clear and easier to grasp. It's also easier to demonstrate trends with visualization. Furthermore, it's important to repeat the goals to get a high level of recognition; this can be achieved by using several communication channels as described in the previous section. Another important success factor in the development of the goal is to decide who should be involved in drive the change to its goals. There are several profiles that are suited for being involved in this process, so called gatekeepers. Firstly department managers are important since they are the one communicating how the change will be performed to the individuals in the department. Secondly informal leaders are beneficial to involve since they have a lot of influence on the individuals in their surroundings. Thirdly it's good to involve individuals who show interest in the change since they are positive to it and individuals with a holistic approach to the organisation. Lastly it can be beneficial to involve individuals who are making resistance to the change since their work with it might change their mind of it and accept it when actively working with it.

4.8.3 Resistance management
As mentioned earlier in the report two types of resistance have been identified, namely resistance to the change process and resistance to the solution. From the interviews several

sources of these types of resistance have been identified. The source described as most common is when individuals don't understand the change, e.g. if someone is insecure of a new work process. The reason for this source of resistance can be that it's not presented good enough how the change will be managed or individuals gets involved in the process too late. Another common source is that the change affects an individual's or someone that the individual cares about activities in a negative way, e.g. it results in longer workdays for the individual. Furthermore, the reason for resistance can be that individuals wants to defend the current state of the organisation, they feel like there is too less time to learn about the new process or they are insecure to start working in a new team.

There are several ways of how the resistance can be heard. Firstly there can be open complains about the change process or the solution. This can occur as arguments during meetings or in angry emails. Secondly the resistance can also occur in more passive form where the individual making resistance choses to stay away from meetings and presentations regarding the change. A risk with this kind of resistance is that this individual can talk negatively about the change with other individuals without the change owner's knowledge. Thus, this kind of resistance can be hard to identify. Lastly resistance can occur as lower productivity and the reason for this can be that an individual doesn't understand the new process or don't like the new process.

Even though resistance is a negative term in relation to change there are positive sides of resistance as well. Negative arguments regarding the change can lead to a better solution since the argument can point out flaws with the change if the change owner is willing to listen to the argument and isn't afraid of adjusting the change process. Also resistance can indicate that the change process is moving too fast and the individuals' needs more time to be able to implement the new process. Lastly it's good when arguments comes up to the surface they can be discussed and solved, otherwise the negative emotions will occur in a more passive form as described in the previous section.

To be able to answer resistance and arguments it's important for the person facing the resistance to be prepared. Several ways of preparing for resistance have been identified. Firstly the person should know as much as possible about the change to be able to answer all questions that can occur regarding the change, thus, the transparency of the change is important. Secondly, by involving individuals early there will be more time manage resistance before it's time to start the implementation of the change and thus, avoid conflicts. Inviting individuals making resistance to discuss the change in person and ask them what will change their mind can do this. Lastly it's important to familiarize with the individuals' situation, i.e. how the change will affect them, to prepare answers adapted to their situation. However, a risk with preparing too much is that questions and arguments outside of the preparation can shock the person facing the arguments.

When it comes to handling resistance there are differences of how direct resistance and passive resistance should be handled. When direct resistance occurs it's important to answer directly or invite to a later meeting where the argument can be discussed if it's too complex to answer right away and takes too much time from the group. By not act upon the argument directly it gets indirectly accepted. When answering the argument it's important to understand the root cause of and identify the facts in the argument, otherwise the answer can easily turn into a conflict if it's not based on facts. Also it's important to follow-up after the meeting that

the individual has accepted the answer. When handling passive resistance on the other hand it's different since this type of resistance isn't heard through arguments. Here it's important to give the individual more chances to understand the change. This can be done by repeating the purpose of the change and give more information on specific parts if necessary. To find out what part of the process the individual doesn't understand it's important to have a discussion where it's explained to the individual how its situation is viewed and then listen to find the root of the resistance.

5 Pre-analysis comparisons of cases

In this chapter are the different organisations and the consultancy firms compared and analysed with each other. The chapters begin with preparing the organisations and consultancy firms separately before lastly analysing them all together.

5.1 Comparing the three organisations

In this section the organisations will be compared with regard to the following topics: developing change, interaction with individuals, realisation and monitoring and follow-up.

5.1.1 Developing change

In all of the organisations the opinion of the employees are valued important to take into consideration when planning for changes. From the interviews with the organisations several benefits of this have been identified. The individual most capable of making suggestions of improvements of the daily processes are often the individual that normally performs those activities. Thus, that person could evaluate suggestions of improvements of that process or identify problems with process from working with it on a daily basis. In this way the suggestion will be a better solution when it's time to implement it. Another important reason for involving individuals in the organisation in the development of the improvement is that they feels that they could contribute to the development which in turn increases the likelihood that the change will be accepted when it's time to implement it. If the individuals aren't informed about the development of the change the development can become an executive only process that may shock the individuals when the change will be implemented.

Even though all organisations are involving individuals in the development of changes there are a difference in how they do this. DistributeC interviewed the managers in each department and then had an external party doing the same thing to validate the findings from the interviews. The data from the interviews were then taken into consideration when developing the change. However, in ServiceP and ProduceM the individuals were encouraged to come up with new better work processes which then were tested by the individual who got the idea. The result from the new process is then measured and if the result is better than for the current work process that process gets adjusted so everyone starts working in this new way.

Another difference in the development of change among the organisations is the purpose of the changes, in other words, what the change should lead to. In DistributeC the purpose of changes should be to achieve the organisation's short-term goal of reversing the negative trend of their economical results. In ServiceP and ProduceM the purpose of the changes are to fulfil the long term vision of organisation. In DistributeC a specific target should be reach while in ServiceP and ProduceM the goal of the change becomes directions of the organisation.

5.1.2 Interaction with individuals

All the organisations are presenting their upcoming changes through oral presentations with groups of individuals. A benefit of this is that the individuals can ask questions if they don't understand why the change is needed or how it will be implemented in the organisation. However, a risk with oral presentation is that questions can lead to objections and argumentations. When asked how they are handling objections during presentations the organisations often described different approaches. These approaches are not

representative for the whole organisation, rather an indication of how the interviewed individual would prefer handle such situation. DistributeC would like to invites the individual augmenting into a private discussion of the issue after the meeting, before the argumentation turns into a public conflict in the group. ProduceM on the other hand chooses to solve the arguments directly when they occur. The reason for this is that the managers don't want to risk that the individuals in the group to think that the individual making the argument are right. Hence, this can damage the individuals' thoughts of the presented change. Another difference in the presentation among the organisation is what they are presenting. DistributeC is communicating what the managers believes is needed to do in order to reach the organization's short term goal. I.e. the managers are giving orders on what should be done. ServiceP on the other hand is communicating what their department's role is in achieving the visions of the organisation so that the individuals can identify problems and improvements in their work processes that are in line with the vision. I.e. the organisation is communicating the direction the department should evolve in. Altogether, this shows that that there is no common approach for how to handle such situation and the effectiveness of the approach will to a large extent depend on the experience, skills and behaviours of the involved individuals.

5.1.3 Realization

In all three organisations it's made sure that at least one individual who is the clear owner of a change process and this individual takes the full responsibility of the evolution of the change process. To be able to implement the change in the organisation the owner has the right to make decisions regarding the change process without the permission from senior management as long as the decisions are in line with the organisation's goal and restrictions. A restriction in the organisation can e.g. be that the decision maker can't hire or fire employees, i.e. the decision maker isn't allowed to change the organisation's internal resources.

If several departments in an organisation are affected by the change process the owners of the change process needs the middle managers responsible for these departments to act as ambassadors for the change. The reason for this is that the middle management has a natural daily contact with the individuals in their department and by informing that the change is necessary for the department they show their engagement in the change. In this way overall the individuals in the department view the change as important for them.

A difference between the organisations in terms of realisation of changes is that ServiceP and ProduceM encourages individuals to test ideas to improvements they come up with. First the idea is discussed with the manager of the department and adapted to the goals of the organisation if necessary. The result of the test is then measured and if the outcome is positive the improvement gets implemented in the operative process of the department. This kind of system doesn't currently exist in DistributeC. Important to note is however that the three organisations are faced with fairly different situations which could be the reason for why DistributeC currently do not have such system.

In the three organisations differences in opinions about a change among the individuals are expected. This means that all three organisations are always prepared for some kind of resistance to the change to occur. However, there are differences in how the resistance is handled among the organisations. For DistributeC it's important to act on resistance as

quickly as possible and invite the individual making the argument to discuss it separately, otherwise the individual can believe that its resistance is accepted. ServiceP wants to filter out the emotions from arguments to be able to see what the facts behind the argument are. The reason for this is that there that they feel there is a lower risk of conflict when discussing facts rather than emotions. Of course this should apply for the owner of the change as well. ProduceM's tactic is to prove the result of the change in order to convince sceptical individuals that the new process is better than the current one.

5.1.4   Monitoring and Follow-up

All organisations consider it important to have measurable parameters in the change that measured before and after the change process. To determine if the result is positive the outcome should be positive for factors important for the whole organisation. In DistributeC the result should help the organisation reach their short-term goal to be considered as positive. In ServiceP and ProduceM the result should help the organisations reach their long-term goal and vision to be considered as positive. Thus, in all organisations the goal is that the result of the change should affect the overall result of the organisation.

5.2   Comparing the four consultancy firms

In this section the consultancy firms will be compared with regard to the following topics: what they are offering their clients, preparation and analysis and implementation and termination.

5.2.1   What they are offering their clients

Generally, it can be said that all the participating consultancy firms are offering the same, or very similar services. However, they do have different procedures of how they approach situations, generate ideas and implement solutions. Even though these procedures and frameworks are based in general theoretical models, they are, developed in-house and adapted to the niche of the consultancy firm and the industries that the firm are active in. All four consultancy firms have stated that some of the most common reasons that organisations hire them for projects are due to that they have a broad expertise from similar projects within other companies. Another situation could be if organisations do not have the resources to perform the job themselves, or to put external pressure and prioritization on a certain project. The consultants are not hired to work with continuous improvements over time but rather they are offering services on analysis and implementation as a project.

5.2.2   Preparation and analysis

There are some differences in the way that the consultancy firms operate. The interviews indicated that two firms are putting more emphasis on the preparation phase before approaching the client. This is because they want to be able to present a solution to the client's problem before going there. Although every consultancy firm have pointed out that every case is unique and that it requires situational attention, the two other firms do not to the same extent have pre-prepared solutions before arriving at the clients. Rather, they prepares by reading about the organisation and its industry to be up to date when approaching the client and then discuss a solution with the client. Involving the client when generating the initial solution is part of the early involvement and aimed at getting better acceptance of ideas. All the interviewed consultants usually start with interviewing key stakeholders to the problem in order to get a view of the problem and adjust the solution accordingly. Making sure to include senior and middle management in the client organisation is something that generally is seen as a necessity. If the client's own formal leaders are not engaged about the

solution the change initiatives will not be a prioritization within the organisation and as a result there is a great risk that there it will be unsuccessful.

5.2.3   Implementation and termination

In the implementation phase, all the firms want someone from the client to manage the process with them so this person easily can over the project when the consultants are leaving; involving the person that will become the next project owner when the consultants leave. This is however not always possible. When the consultants are hired due to e.g. lack of resources there is usually no person at the client's organisation to collaborate with. In such case, a new project owner has to be introduced in the termination of the project instead of being part of the implementation.

Two of the consultancy firms wanted to identify and involve informal leaders in the management of the change process since many individuals listens to them. The change should be accepted within the organisation, it is therefore necessary to have these people in alliance rather than opposition. One of the firms is using early involvement with people who may be resistance to change. Thus, instead of them going around and talking negative about it, they will be included in the development and therefore cannot blame it on others. Resistance to change is something that is always expected to some extent by all the consultants. There are both similarities and differences in how this is dealt with. For example, all the firms are taking people making resistance to change aside and give them more time to explain the need for the change and also how it will be performed and implemented. One of the firms talked more about preventing resistance, two firms focused more on identifying sources of resistance and then handled the argument differently depending on the source. The last firm talked more in terms of identifying which persons are more likely to make resistance, based on personality traits and behaviours.

All the consultancy firms consider the termination to be an essential part of the change process. Making sure that there is a project owner when the consultants are finished is important in order to make sustainable change. Three of the consultants were also working with follow-ups on the change process after they left the project. Following up previous cases are important in order to make sure that the change have had the expected effect and if it did not, the follow-up will work as a part of learning from experience. Lastly, following-up project will also strengthen the relationship with previous customers by building a long lasting network that will make sure that the consultants continue to get new projects.

5.3   Comparing organisations and consultants

In this section the content of section 5.1 and 5.2 will be compared in order to describe the similarities and differences between how the internal and external actors are working with strategy realization and implementation.

5.3.1   Developing change

Not one of the seven actors sees the strategic work as an executive only process. Thus, individuals from all levels of the organisation must be informed and involved as early as possible about the upcoming change. The reason for this is that the actors consider the implementation of the change easier to manage if the change doesn't shock the individuals. By creating awareness early the individuals' gets longer time to accept the change. However, this is not always possible as e.g. in an organisational change including layoffs which is DistributeC's situation. All seven actors are also claiming that every solution always must be

adapted to the organisation where it will be implemented. This means that there are no overall best practice solution that doesn't have to be adapted to organisation's goals and visions.

When clients are hiring consultants they want a problem they are facing to be solved. This makes the consultants mission at the organisation a clear project with a beginning and end with the purpose of solving the problem. The project starts with an analysis of the current situation and a change process that will take the organisation from its current state to a desired future state is developed. The change process is then implemented in the organisation by the consultants. Thus, the consultant is the owner of the change process during the whole project. When the new process is implemented the consultants transacts the ownership of the process to an internal actors so it will continue having a clear owner. To facilitate this transaction the consultants wants the internal actor to be involved in their project as an ambassador for the change.

In the organisations the internal actors can manage changes that are structured like projects as well. However, it's more common in the organisation that several potential improvements relative to the current state are tested at the same time. These potential improvements don't have to come from an analysis of the organisation but rather from ideas from the individuals working with the current process in their daily activities. These ideas of improvements are often incremental and are thus, improving the current process in small steps. This makes it different from the consultants' projects where the current process is often replaced by a new process. The manager of the department or departments where the process is used is the owner of the incremental improvements of the process and the individual who got the idea often becomes an ambassador for the improvement.

5.3.2 Interaction with individuals

As mentioned in the previous section early awareness among individuals of a change is achieved through early information about the change. However, this doesn't necessarily mean early involvement in developing the solution by the individuals. A difference when communicating with individuals between internal actors and consultants is that the individuals already know the role the internal actor has in the organisation. While the consultants needs to create context of what their role is and what the purpose of having them in the organisation is before approaching them in order to get them to share information about their activities with the consultants. The consultants are creating this context by sending out information about who they are and what their purpose is before interviews and workshops. Since the internal actors roles are known in the organisation this step isn't necessary for them. Another difference when communicating with individuals in the organisation is that it's easier for the internal actors to have casual conversations with the individuals when e.g. approaching them in the corridor since they have a natural connection with the individuals in their operative activities.

When communicating with different individuals the consultants claims it's important to contextualize the purpose of the change. This means that they are adapting to the vocabulary used by the individual in the organisation when explaining why the change is necessary and how it will be implemented in the organisation. This can e.g. be done by contextualizing fuzzy organisational visions into graspable goals suited for different departments. ServiceP is also contextualizing the vision into graspable goals. Two of the

consultancy firms are also putting emphasis on that the clothes should be adapted to the individual as well to have as much in common with the individual as possible.

5.3.3 Realization

The consultants are managing the implementation of a change as a project that starts first when the analysis phase is completed. In the organisations on the other hand the implementation can be a continuous process since someone usually tests the change before it's implemented in the whole organisation. Thus, the change is already in use in some department when it's time to implement it. Hence the individuals who already use the new process can act as ambassadors for the new process in other departments by e.g. educating them in the new process or by explaining the benefits of the new process.

During the implementation of a change process all actors are expecting some kind of resistance to occur. From the empirical findings two kind of resistance can be categorised. The first category is resistance to the solution. Here individuals are sceptical too if the solution will be better than the current state or if it takes the organisation in the right direction. These kinds of arguments are rational since them targeting facts about the problem and the solution. Resistance to the solution can also come from political reasons. This can e.g. occur if an individual loses a powerful position in the organisation as an outcome of the change. The other category is resistance to change. Here the individual don't want to change the current situation regardless of the outcome of the change. This kind of resistance is often emotional and occurs when the individual gets insecure and doesn't understand what a change implies for their situation.

Another shared view on the implementation of change among all the actors is the role of middle managers in the change process. The managers of different departments should constantly promote the change when interacting with the individuals in the department to show its engagement in the change and to show that the change is important for the department. However, when having a department manager as an ambassador for the change it's important that the manager and the owner of the change process have the exact same view of the change process. Otherwise there is a risk they will inform individuals differently which may confuse them. Furthermore, the consultants view informal leaders as important ambassadors as well since they already have influence in their department. The internal actors on the other hand believe it's more important to have those who have been involved in the development of the change as ambassadors since they have a good understanding of the change and they have an interest in sees their improvements come true.

5.3.4 Monitoring and follow-up

All actors consider it important to measure the result of the change process in order to determine the progress of the change process. There is a difference in what consultants and internal actors are measuring during the implementation of the change process. The consultants set up specific goals for the change that should be reached during the project. The project goals determine if the change process is successful or not. The internal actors on the other hand are measuring how the change process is affecting the short term and long term goals of the organisation to determine if the change process is successful or not. These goals can be the vision of the whole organisation or more specific department goals.

An extra step in the process necessary for the consultants is to follow up the transaction of their project. The purpose of this is to ensure the quality of the project and to see that the project is still moving in the right direction. Another purpose of this is to build connections with the organisations that can lead to new projects in the future.

6 Analysis

In this section, the empirical data will be analysed with the theoretical data. A presentation of the most central topics from the interviews are then presented and analysed separately.

6.1 Comparing empirical data with theoretical data

In this section the empirical findings of how the different actors are managing strategy formation and realisation will be related to the literature study. The purpose of this is to investigate which theories that can be found in the cases. The comparison will be divided into two parts, organisations and consultants. The comparison will roughly follow the structure of the theoretical framework.

6.1.1 The organisations in relation to theory

DistributeC is in a bit different strategic situation than ServiceP and ProduceM. DistributeC have to turn a downward trend that is a result of not having kept up with external changes. In relation to Weick and Quinn (1999) two organisational changes, DistributeC fits better with episodic changes than the continuous changes. They have a pre-planned goal that they strive towards. ProduceM also works towards a pre-planned goal of changing their sales approach. In contrast to these two, the strategic situation at organisation B would be better described as continuous changes. The description that the national manager from ServiceP gave did fit the description of continuous changes quite well. That is, they work with and iterative trial-and-error methodology that help evolve the organisation for the better. They do not, however, have a clear pre-planned goal that DistributeC are required to have. ServiceP just wants to find better ways to do the things that they already are doing. ProduceM has more similarities with ServiceP and continuous changes.

Noteworthy is that Löwstedt et al (2011) have argued that there is a need to not rely on what they refer to as the objectified version of changes. This due to that there might be a difference between how the managers view the changes, and the people who experience changes. For both in DistributeC and ServiceP, there is an apparent risk for relying more on the objectified version by managers, even though interviews have been held with middle managers as well in e.g. ServiceP. In ProduceM the people championing the change are also the ones being directly affected by the changes. Thus, their view might have the same portion of the lived change.

Other interesting perspectives on change are the differences between top-down and bottom-up approaches. In bottom-up approaches, initiatives and changes are developed with perspectives of those further down in the organisation. From the interviews, it is clear that all three organisation believes that employees within the organisations are important for the changes, but in some cases there are more emphasis on that the ideas needs to originate from within rather than above. The two approaches have different advantages. Top-down approach is often considerably faster. Although the risk with using a top-down approach could be that the change are forced upon the employees (Siverbo et al, 2013) and there is a risk that the changes do not sustain over time Beer (2003). In contrast, the bottom-up approach has a tendency to increase motivation by allowing employees to be part of the development of the organisation. Additionally, the psychosocial environment of an organisation using the bottom-up approach could be improved if it were to increase skill variety, task identity, autonomy and opportunity on feedback among employees (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

The advantages of when one approach might be favourable over the other correlates well with the three cases and the situation in which they find themselves. The only organisations that have a clear top-down approach are DistributeC, which situation requires them to change quickly due to the current struggle financially. On contrary, ServiceP works in another end and has a primarily focus on increasing customers satisfaction by encouraging employees to contribute by testing their own ideas. As a result, organisation B is the only case that has a deliberate focus on bottom-up approaches. ProduceM also uses a bottom-up approach, but it is not nearly as apparent and deliberate as in ServiceP.

Since strategic change can include changing the behaviour of others, it is necessary to be able to motivate employees within the organisation. Hofstede (1980) argue that management theories are best suited for the situation in which they were developed since people interpret situation differently due to what he calls collective mental programming. This is also related to learning in organisation, which will be further looked into in the next section.

In this study, different actors highlighted similar challenges although they did not necessarily have the same solutions. For example, when it came to goal setting there were some differences between the organisations of how much this should be emphasized. Goal setting could increase motivation and cultivate knowledge if set done effectively (Bandura and Schunk, 1981). DistributeC, which was in the process of turning a downward trend, emphasized that there was a need to work with more budget directed. Historically, the budget have not been used as a tool to set goals within the organisation and the CEO and board member that were interviewed in this study said that this lack of clear goal was one thing that needed to be changes if they were to change. ServiceP had a different approach to goal setting; partly due to their different strategic scenario. ServiceP has previously measured customer satisfaction with a number of measures, such as number of customer calls, number of "tips" for the customers etc. What they realised was that even if individuals managed to fulfil these measures, they felt like some things felt forced upon customers. As a result they left an unsatisfied customer even though they, according to the measures, did fulfil their service. Instead of using this measure as goals, they now lay more responsibility on the individual to provide the best service possible, based on experience and feeling, rather than sales measures. This might instead, increase Skill variety, Task identity, Task significance, Autonomy and Job Feedback which in turn could increase employee motivation (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

Engaging in political activities within the organisation might be useful and occasionally even necessary for e.g. managers (Pettigrew, 1977; 1974; Pinto, 2000; Sveiby, 1990). It is probably necessary to understand the context, content and process of implementation in order to succeed with the new approach (Pettigrew, 1975; Lau, 1999). Identifying, underlying motives and political activities within a study like this is not a trivial task. It is merely a peripheral aspect of the focus of this study. One interesting finding within ProduceM is that one of the managers said "the managers [top executives] do not need to know how they [sales department] reach their goals". This could indicate that the sales department, that currently are responsible for the new strategy, believe that they need to maintain their competence to themselves, in order to secure their position towards top management. Pettigrew (1975) identified that specialist groups sometimes need to engage in political

activities in order to get their way. The sales department, ProduceM, would represent such a specialist group.

Having a Professional Learning Community is complex, but is have considerable advantages (Stoll, et al, 2006), within ServiceP, leaders emphasis that individuals should be able to make decisions, and change their way of working themselves. In order to align their decisions with the overall organization's vision, they make sure that everyone is well familiar with the organisational values. The learning dilemma that Argyris (1991) identified with high-achieving individuals was that they often lacked so called double-loop learning. This learning dilemma was according to Argyris (1991) partly due to that these individuals never really experienced failure and a result; they did not question their own performance. The approaches that organisation advocates will force the employees to learn from their own mistakes and make their own decisions that they judge being within company values.

6.1.2 The consultancy firms in relation to theory

The consultancy firms provide a different aspect to change than the organisations. Instead of emphasizing one specific strategic situation, they represent an external view on how they manage change. The four consultancy firms display several similarities.

As mentioned in the method chapters, the consultancy firms within this study have been selected by the criteria that they work with realising strategies and change initiatives and are not only consulting the client organisation with their expertise. Although, the key competences among consultancy firms is that they have a wide expertise with experience from different projects.

There are a few differences between the consultancy firms that could be related to the change literature worth highlighting. The way that a consultant will approach a situation will depend on what the project is but also how and from whom the project has been assigned. For strategy projects within bigger organisations, the project owners are often top management. Consequently, such project will have a more top-down approach than project that e.g. is aimed at implementing new processes in specific departments. Generally, consultants have to engage in both bottom-up as well as top-down approaches within their projects. All consultants recognize that each case needs individual attention. From the collected data it is not possible to draw any conclusion of which of the firms' methods are more top-down or bottom-up oriented since it is so dependent what kind of project there is. The two methods have different advantages (Siverbo et al, 2013; Beer, 2003) that would also suggest that it is beneficial for consultants to be able to apply both methods. Noteworthy is that, in similarity with the organisations, all consultants pointed out that committed leadership is a necessity to sustain change, which is something that strengthen that argument by Alänge and Steiber (2009).

ProcessCon seems to be the company that has most emphasis on that ideas should be generated within the customer's organisation through as early involvement as possible. The other consultancy firms do not fail to recognize the importance of involving employees or allowing them to participate in the development of new ideas. On the contrary, all consultants argue that it is necessary to gain acceptance and securing ideas within the customer organisation in order to successfully securing sustainable change. Although, ProcessCon's

approach has more deliberate focus on a leadership where individuals to a larger extent can affect the outcome.

OrganisationalCon, ProcessCon and ManagementCon all deliberately pointed out that one of the reasons why they are hired could be due to political reasons within the company. It could be a way for an organisation to take in an external view in order to show that a third party have analysed a situation and thereby giving credibility to that solution if there would be risk that the organization questioned the management in making that decisions. Even though the underlying motive within the customer organisation might be political, the consultant's role is often just to do some kind of analysis to support an argument within the organisation. This does not mean that any of the consultancy firms were willing to present a solution that they did not stand by. As OrganisationalCon expressed it "*we need to be able to stand by this solution even in ten years from now*".

The study that Argyris (1991) performed on high-achieving individuals was in fact mainly management consultants, like the ones participated within the study, such learning dilemma that the consultant experienced in that study is not something that has been aimed at analysing within the consultancy firm. Consequently, the data collected from this study is not sufficient to either confirmed or rejected that argument.

One of the difficulties that the consultants pointed out is that it is a difficult to select and implement a best practice solution since every company is unique and not directly comparable with other companies. The community of practice that an organisation has formed may can have a proven effect on how new ideas are accepted within among people within the community (Gluch, 2009). When consultants apply an external perspective and take ideas from other companies this is something that may cause resistance within the customer organisation. Consultants have described that there sometimes is a belief that some solutions simply does not work within their organisation. In such case, it does not help if the consultants would argue that this is the best practice within the industry. Motivation and acceptance within the organisation are so important for sustainable success that is cannot be neglected. This is something that the consultants have pointed out as important. ProcessCon said that the involving employee early is one of the key approaches to overcome this reasons. Furthermore, OrganisationalCon said that they sometime needs to put considerate effort on explaining for their customers the advantages of applying this method by arguing for its advantages.

6.2 Analysis of the three topics
Both organisation and consultancy firms recognised that a strategy or change initiative rarely was accepted immediately or as it was first intended. Resistance to change seems to be expected. If resistance were neglected or if it would not exist, it would be enough to have clear communication about some pre-set goals toward the organisation. Data from this study strongly suggest that such approach is not sufficient. The means to manage resistance involves effective communication and appropriate goals.

6.2.1 Working proactively with communicating and developing goals
The advantage of having a plan for how, when and by whom information should be communicated is something that most actors have highlighted. Most of these issues are in many aspects also supported in theory. For example, the use of multiple communication

channels, the advantaged of using credible and trustworthy communicators is something that Klein (1996) argues to be some of the very key principles to effective communication. Both middle managers and informal leader have useful roles in these aspects (Uyterhoeven, 1989; Klein, 1996). How receivers will interpret a message is affected, not only by the actual message, but also of individual interpretations and preconception about the given issue (Aggerholm, et al. 2012). Findings suggest that there could be an advantage to allow individuals to reflect upon and provide opportunity to ask questions. According to Klein (1996) are face-to-face communication the most effective communication medium, partly due to that very reason. Many of issues related to realizing change seems to revolve around how well a situation is understood and also how well the goals within the organization are set in relation to this.

In addition, the findings suggest that strategy realization and implementation are not completely linear in practice. Rather, activities seem to some extent become formed and realized separately in a way that constitutes of bits and pieces to an overall strategy. Thus, a strategy will be formed as it is realized within the organisation. However, in if a strategy is formed during the realization process, the goals needs to be adjusted and developed appropriately in relation to this. Especially since the use of proximal sub goals could be a good motivator and the source of intrinsic motivation (Bandura and Schunk, 1981). Such goals needs to be set so that they are realistic and changes needs to be communicated effectively. Also initial plans are changing continuously. Having clear and appropriate goals and using proactive communication as a solution facilitator might also help overcome the seven barriers to effective team work presented by West, (2008). Resistance can occur in any part of this process, but there seems to be an agreement that it can be prevented or minimized to some extent if being dealt with as early as possible.

This suggests that communication and goal-setting needs to be managed proactively. There seems to be an agreement that a goal should take the organisation closer to its vision and in order to make it easier for receivers to understand should the message and the goals be adjusted according to the individuals being affected. This is in line with view on goals of Sternbergh and Sloan (2001) who claims that goals should be valued, supported and specific. Thus both the empirical findings and the theoretical framework put emphasis on goals both from the organisations perspective and the perspective of the individuals affected by the goal. Furthermore in accordance with Doran (1981) the goal must be specific and possible to reach. By having specific goals it will be easier for the individuals to focus their effort and thus, the change process gets easier to understand.

6.2.2 Identify the potential causes of resistance

Findings suggest that it is often difficult to predict how, when and in which forms resistance will occur. Although, if potential sources for resistance are handled during the whole strategy implementation, this could minimize or prevent resistance from happening. Another advantage of working proactively with goal development and communication is that this enables managers to create an in-group relationship with members and thus minimize the likelihood for resistance to change to occur (Dam et al. 2008). Resistance can become conflicts but it does not have to go that far in order to become costly for the organisation. Conflicts can be the source excellence as well as purely destructive, depending on how one chooses to handle them (West, 2008). Finding from the cases within this study reveals that

how one chooses to prevent resistance may vary, but there is an agreement that much time and energy will be saved if it is handled effectively. Also, having to deal with unexpected resistance will not only be time consuming, it also forces actions to be reactive which in turn could risk the outcome to deviate from what was first intended. Resistance can, however, also have positive affect if it is managed effectively (Wadell and Sohal, 1998).

How to determine root causes to resistance could be challenging. There do not seem to be any best practice of how to do that. Instead, it largely depends on how well you know your own organisation. Resistance can be rational, non-rational, political or managerial (Wadell and Sohal, 1998). According to Pinto (2013) argue the causes of conflicts either organisational or interpersonal. Similarly, West (2008) argues that causes of conflicts are either personal, process or task related. Thus, rather than trying to predict when and how resistance would occur, it might be easier to determine the root causes. In this study, three root causes have been identified.

The first is lack of understanding. That is, people either do not comprehend what should be done or fail recognize the purpose with the initiative. This is especially common in situations where managers assume that everyone have the same understanding when in fact people have interpreted the situation totally different or from another angle. This is a root cause that could be related to either managerial, or rational causes (Wadell and Sohal, 1998). Overcoming lack of understanding is closely related to how one chooses communicate. Creating a shared language based on the understanding of the receiver could in this situation be of great benefit (Heath and Heath, 2008; Gluch, 2009).

Another aspect to this is resistance on emotional ground. Any kind of change or shift in strategic direction will involve that people change their behaviour. Resistance on emotional ground often originate from that the new approach will affect the individuals negatively in some way. It could be that individuals are simply more comfortable with the current way of working, or the new approach results in a direct deterioration for the involved. It could also be that individuals argue that another approach is more favourable. Fundamental to understand is that some individuals simply are more prone to change than others. This is directly related to personality traits and should not be ignored. Leading an organization involve utilizing such personality variance. However, both individuals and organisations are formed by past event and experiences (Frost and Egri, 1994) and in order to cope with change, change makers must develop the capabilities to understand and handle challenges in relation to this.

A third aspect that has been highlighted is the importance of involving informal leaders in change initiatives. When management lacks trust within the own organization there is an immediate risk that individuals oppose decisions. The use of trustworthy people is an important part of communication (Klein, 1996). In this study, several actors have highlighted that some people could be unwilling to change without rational reasons. Part of such behaviours could be a reflection of a trust-issue.

6.2.3   What if resistance occurs?
The first step to handling resistance if it occurs is to recognize it when it happens. The obvious way that resistance could appear is when individuals immediately and explicitly express their opinions about the said issue. The second, less obvious situation is when resistance is more passive. That is, if individuals do not commit to the change even if they do

not actively object to it. The latter situation is more difficult than the former for two reasons. First, it is more time consuming and difficult to identify since it might not be recognized as a conflict. If it is not recognized as a conflict, then it is not possible to assess the situation. This brings us to the second difficulty with passive resistance which is that such resistance can result in more damage to the organisation if such behaviour is allowed to be spread throughout the organisation uncontrollably.

For that very last reason, the second step is to make sure to actively study the behaviours within the company and act immediately to resistance. The risk with postpone and ignore it is that the situation could become even worse. In many situations there could direct advantages with understanding and take in account resistance. Example of such advantages could be that the management have overlooked important aspects or that needs to be included. The sooner such aspect gets taken in account, the better for the overall outcome.

The last thing that is important to remember is that realizing a strategy often takes a lot of time. When communicating a new strategy, there is often a lot new information that needs to be set within the organisation. It could be hazardous not to allow time for reflection or allocate time for questions. Understandably, organisations often work under time pressure which means that it is not always possible to let everyone express their opinions. Although, in such case we argue that the most critical aspect of the strategy needs to be prioritized. There is, as previously pointed out, very risky to neglect the need for these issues within an organisation.

7   Conclusions

In this section the most central issues from the analysis will be highlighted and the answers to the research questions will be summarized.

The purpose of this study was to identify how different actors are working with strategy formation and realisation, and to develop suggestions for how strategic work can be more successful. To do this the following research questions was established:

How are companies working with strategic implementation and how does this way of working correlate with academic research related to strategy realization and implementation?

What could be done in order to increase the chance of successful strategy realization and implementation?

As strategies are realized, they will be formed in such ways that will fit with the organisation. During the process of breaking down a strategy and anchoring it within the organisation, that process will most likely be met with obstacles that will result in adjustment to the original. Findings regarding the first research question shows that common factors for all actors was that they put emphasis on that it should always be a clear owner of a change. They also shared the view that department managers always plays a key role in the communication of the change since they are the ones who should describe for the individuals in the organisation how the change will be performed. However, in the study two general approaches to change was identified. The first approach was to manage strategic work as a large project, consisting of an analysis of the current situation as well as an implementation of a change leading to a desired future. This approach was used by all of the consultancy firms and one organisation. The second approach was to manage change as a stream of incremental improvements based on ideas from the operational activities in the organisation leading the organisation closer to its visions. This approach was used by two of the organisations. Thus, the first approach has a more top-down characteristic while the second approach is more bottoms-up. Another difference identified in the strategic work was that the consultants projects was have clear project goal while the organisations' are using their organisational goals and visions as goals for both larger projects and incremental improvements.

The findings related to the first research question to some extent confirm the width of the research performed regarding strategy realization and organisational change. From the empirical data four categories of literature are covered. The first category is organisational change where different views on change are given. The second category is teams and organisations, covering sub-parts of organisations in relation to change. The third category is the individual in relation to change and the fourth category is communication in relation to strategy realization.

Regarding the second research question, the three most recurring topics was how to manage resistance, how to develop appropriate goals and how to communicate effectively. Working with strategy is not a task without obstacles. To answer the second research question of how to increase the chance of successful strategy formation and realization, we

argue that companies needs to have more emphasis on those three things. First, companies need to work proactively with goal development and communication. One of the major reasons that strategy formation and realization is difficult is due to the resistance that will occur within the organisation in relation to changes. Resistance can occur whenever during the strategy process which means that it also needs to be taken in consideration continuously. Developing appropriate goals and managing communication are two crucial elements in which resistance needs to be accounted for. Secondly, in order to manage resistance, managers need to understand what the reasons to why resistance could occur. It is difficult to predict when, how and in which forms resistance will play out but if the root causes are understood and identified, managing resistance will more likely be handled more effectively. The three most common root causes within that was identified within this study was lack of understanding, lack of trust or resistance on emotional grounds.

8 Discussion

In this section the analysis part of the report will be discussed and links to the theoretical framework will be made. In this section it will be judged how the empirical and theoretical data is used to answer the research questions. Furthermore a suggestion for a model for how proactive work with strategy realization can be performed and a discussion on when this kind of model is applicable will be presented.

8.1 Analysis discussion

From the analysis section it can be concluded that it's easier to generalise the work performed by consultants regarding strategy formation and realisation, since their work process was clear and similar to each other. Even though the consultants are using different approaches and models in their work they are following similar structures. The organisations on the other hand are more different to each other in their way of working with strategic issues and implementation. Organisations have to work with operational activities in addition to strategic issue whereas consultants could put more emphasize on strategy formation and realization in particular. Consultants therefore need to put more effort on standardising such processes.

Many of the issues with realising strategies depends on how well managers know the own organisation. Thus, it the effectiveness of strategy realisation could be increase it organisations develop clear processes that allow leaders to monitor and study how the own organisation evolve. Some aspect, such as e.g. political behaviour and certain root causes to resistance, is problematic to assess since it is not possible to simply ask questions to the involved parties.

We therefore suggest that organisations would benefit from applying some type of Strategy Impact Analysis (SIA). The focus of such analysis would be to review how the realisation of a strategy did affect the individuals within the organisation. Strategies are often evaluated on the criteria of how well it fitted with the set goals, although less effort are put on how these change have affected the individuals concerned with the change. The advantages with such analysis would be that manager would learn more about the own organisational culture which in turn will minimize the risk of unexpected resistance and thereby increase the likelihood of success.

8.2 Model suggestion of a Strategy Impact Analysis (SIA)

In order to more effectively and more successfully manage the issue that has been brought up in this study, we argue that it would be beneficial to develop a model by which the effect of strategies can be more thoroughly evaluated. To perform a *Strategy impact analysis (SIA)* would essentially entail making an analysis of how the realization of a strategy will affect and be met within the organization. Strategy formation and realization is, as repeatedly mentioned, a complex process which often involve managing unexpected setbacks. Forming and realizing new strategies will not only change the new direction of the company, but it will most likely also affect the individuals within the organisation and the organisational culture. By having an understanding how individuals behave, what individuals are motivated by and what they value, managers will be better equipped to manage resistance and thereby also increase their likelihood to successfully develop the company. Monitoring how the organisation evolves during changes will be the key to that learning.

In order to develop a SIA, there are certain criteria that need to be fulfilled. This study contributes with some learning that could be beneficial in development of such model. The aim with applying such analysis would be to evaluate how the strategy process will most likely play out and thereby be able prepare how to handle potential thresholds by answer questions like e.g. "How are the strategy accepted?", "What is the likelihood that the initiative will be met with resistance?", "Will everyone be able to understand?" and "Will there be any emotional concerns?". When developing a model for analysing the impact of the strategy, there are a few questions that need to be considered.

How could a SIA be applied?
Our findings: Strategies are not necessarily linear. How organisations' view and work with strategies is closely connected to organisational culture and how the organisation has evolved up to this point.
Strategy Impact analysis: A model for analysing and monitoring strategy impact needs to be easy to applicable to different companies as well as different levels within the organisation. Anyone must be able to apply it if individuals' are affected by changes should be able to benefit from performing it.

What should be solved with a SIA?
Our findings: Resistance could occur during the whole strategy process, it is therefore important to understand the potential causes to resistance needs to be identified.
Strategy Impact analysis: Address the resistance and find a faster way towards the goal.

How can the results be applicable?
Our findings: The most time consuming part of a strategy process is with no doubt to realize it. To this adds that the pre-defined strategy will most likely not be possible to realize in direct accordance with the plan.
Strategy Impact analysis: It must be possible to prioritize solutions. Findings must be possible to convert into concrete actions.

With regards to the aforesaid, it is suggested that the most suitable would be a proactive approach consisting of three parts: (1) Forming hypotheses about how new initiative will be met, (2) Testing those hypotheses and monitoring the effects, (3) Analyse feedback and evaluate the results.

8.3   When is SIA applicable?

In this master thesis strategy realization and implementation are viewed from a quite rational perspective where strategies are initiatives to change processes from managers or consultants. In this view the strategies can be ideas from employees as well but still the managers' needs to back up those ideas before implementation. In accordance with this view the strategy realization can be seen as implementation of change processes performed by a change owner. If the change process encounters resistance the change owner needs to choose between adapting the strategy or try to adapt the individual making resistance to the strategy. A third option is to compromise both the strategy and the individual. If the change owner wants to adapt an individual to the strategy internal power is needed. According to Pinto (2000) there are three different modes of power: authority, status and influence. Thus to successfully implement a change the change owner should these three modes of power over the individuals the change regards to be able to adapt individuals to the change if needed. It's therefore recommended that the individual with the highest power takes the role as the change leader. In most organisations the department manager has this power position but in some organisations the hierarchy can be different. E.g. in organisations consisting of experts in its field the individual with the highest knowledge in the field has the most power. In this case it would be beneficial to make that individual the change owner. If the change owner is aware of that other individuals have higher power the only option is to adapt the change.

As earlier mentioned the SIA model and this kind of work processes are applicable when a rational approach to strategy realization is used in the organisation. However, There are organisations where a rational approach to strategy is not used. E.g. there are organisations where strategy is viewed as social structures. In these kinds of organisations a model based on the rational approach will not be applicable.

9   Further research

To be able to better generalize from the first research question more consultancy firms and organisations should be interviewed. As described in the method section all internal actors had different operational activities besides their strategy related activities. Thus, it would be interesting to further research how different operational focuses affects the strategy activities among actors in different organisations. Furthermore, in this study no consideration has been made regarding the different industries the organisations are operating in. Thus, it would be interesting to research how strategic work differs between different industries as well.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph a complementary observational study would be beneficial to better be able to research the political aspect of strategy formation and realisation. Also this additional research would help to better answer the second research question since all of the three topics researched have a possibility to be affected by political behaviour. Furthermore, an observational study would be beneficial to research the change process more in depth and thus investigate how different models for the change process are carried out.

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