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# **Success factors for global teams at Volvo Group IT**

“Globalization has melted national borders” - Passaris, C. E.

*Bachelor's Thesis in the Bachelor's Programme  
Economics and Manufacturing Technology*

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Gothenburg, Sweden 2018  
Report No. E 2018:085



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Bachelor's Thesis E2018: 085

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Gothenburg, Sweden 2018

## Abstract

As enterprises are becoming increasingly globalized the number of teams working distributed across geographical space, is increasing. With distributed virtual teams come a number of benefits regarding the team's competences e.g. the possibility to attain employees regardless of geographical location, with deep knowledge within requested business areas as well as know-how on current local market opportunities. However, in virtual distributed teams one must overcome some difficulties brought by aspects comprising geographical distance, time zones, language and culture related issues. In turn, the continuing trends of globalization and global virtual teams is an indication that this is a relevant field to look into. This thesis aims to identify success factors for distributed virtual project teams by examining the current state and challenges of such project teams within Volvo Group IT. A literature review was conducted in parallel with interviews, and as theoretical framework *Grounded theory* was chosen. Data was collected through 17 semi-structured interviews and through an online survey that got just over 100 responses. The results from this thesis are mainly in line with previous findings from similar studies in various geographical locations. The results point towards an increasing relevance of global teams in highly competitive global business environments. In short, the findings point to the importance of face-to-face kick-offs and face-to-face interaction in order to establish a foundation for trust to build upon in the global team. The main conclusion is that face-to-face interaction should not be underestimated in virtual teams.

Key words: *Global/ virtual teams, Globalization, Trust in virtual teams, Face-to-face interaction in global teams.*

## Acknowledgements

Finalizing this thesis means completing my Bachelor of Science in Economics and Manufacturing Technology. The years at Chalmers have been beneficial for me in multiple ways, both inside and outside of the classroom. I am thankful for my teachers' commitment and engagement as well as having had the experience of being a '*Chalmerist*'.

During my time at Volvo Group IT I have had the privilege to have had two supervisors: Boris Karlsson and Göran Johansson. Through Boris I got a connection and introduction to Volvo Group IT - thanks so much for inviting me to do my thesis within "your" project and for being there to discuss how to move forward with my thesis. Göran introduced me further to Volvo, invited me to meetings and has guided me through the organization and offered a helping hand when needed – Thank you for encouraging me along the way!

I would also like to say a big thank you to all of the interviewees for letting me have some of your time! Furthermore, I want to show my appreciation to Lisa Rodgers, Communications Officer, for giving me feed-back on the survey I sent out. Also, thank you Eie Norén, Excel-expert, who kindly helped me with creating the type of diagrams I wanted.

Finally, I want to thank my supervisor and examiner at Chalmers: Andreas Hellström, who has helped me not only with input on the report but overall as a coach during this thesis study – I am truly grateful for your support!

Sanna Lundin

2018-05-21

## Abbreviations / word meanings

<b>BPIC- ratio</b>	Brazil Poland India China – ratio of employees from Brazil, Poland, India and China compared to other nations.
<b>Change agents/ champions:</b>	people that can work to help spread a message within the organization and advocate certain intentions.
<b>F-2-F</b>	Face-to-face
<b>Fika</b>	Swedish word for a small social gathering usually with coffee/tea and a small snack
<b>Global teams</b>	When referring to virtual teams, dispersed teams, distributed teams they are in this thesis all considered to be synonymous with global teams.
<b>Resources</b>	When referring to resources in team perspective it is meant as people working in the team
<b>Tjenna</b>	Gothenburg slang for hello

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# 1 Introduction

Undeniably, our globe is quickly becoming a smaller, flatter, and a more level playing field on which every sector of business can and does compete (Milhauser, 2011). Globalization is not a new phenomenon, with globalization in contemporary time comes economic, social, political, cultural, religious, and environmental dimensions (Black, 1998). Furthermore, globalization is closely linked to the transformation of technology (Mann, 2006), where Hormats in 1999 was cited in Harvard Business Review (Cairncross, 2001) argues that the internet is a catalyst: "There has never been a commercial technology like this in the history of the world, whereby from the minute *you adopt it, it forces you to think and act globally*".

As enterprises are becoming increasingly globalized the number of teams working together but with team members spread out across geographical space, is increasing. Distributed teams have many benefits e.g. having team members with both deep knowledge within requested business areas as well as know-how on current local market opportunities, enabling the firm to best approach promising markets (Neeley, 2015). However, globally distributed teams can create difficulties. Hinders that must be overcome comprise e.g. geographical distance, time zones, language and culture (Passaris, 2006). In turn, Brede Moe and Šmite (2008) says that global teams is not only a phenomenon relevant in passing, but a reality that is here to stay. She also refers to the matter as poorly explored, which is an indication that this is a relevant field to look into.

The focal firm, Volvo Group IT, have adopted a way of working in globally distributed virtual teams. Volvo has become increasingly globalized (Olsson, 2002) and Volvo Group IT is no exception as it has become a global actor with plenty of global teams. Following a Volvo Group board decision to outsource IT infrastructure, HCL Technologies was selected as partner (Volvo Group annual report, 2015). As a direct result of the outsourcing Volvo Group IT became even more globally distributed. There is a vast resource base of highly experienced people in the focal firm that among other things lead global teams with good results. Still, there is the belief that Volvo Group as a whole can continue to improve (Volvo Group annual report, 2017). It is an idea shared with many others, which is why Volvo Group IT were interested in having this thesis work done.

## **1.1 Objective and research question**

With the given introduction in mind the aim for this thesis is to identify success factors for globally distributed teams. Furthermore, the thesis aims to observe if and how those factors can be used to mitigate the negative effects of teams being distributed globally. If identifying success factors, the everyday team work can perhaps be made more fulfilling for team members and thereby creating a higher purpose. From a company perspective having a clearer picture of what success factors there are for global teams, it can be assumed that additional business value could be unlocked. If the factors found can be used it could perhaps achieve more effective and productive global teams. With this in mind the research question is: What are success factors of globally distributed virtual project teams at Volvo Group IT?

## **1.2 Limitations**

Duarte and Snyder (2001) reason that there are many different uses of virtual teams; project or product development, network, parallel, work or production, service, management and action teams. In this thesis however, only virtual project-based teams will be handled. Therefore, when saying global teams/ virtual teams etc. this will throughout the thesis be referring to project-based teams. The thesis will handle a global team connected to a transformation project within Volvo Group IT called *Oden Transformation*. The team that was approached consists of 18 people. There is a vast amount of competent people within the firm that could be interviewed however they are not part of this thesis due to time limitation. Additionally, the generalizability of the result will be limited due to the relatively small number of interviewees and also by the method of interviewing will be used. The literary review will look into globalization and when doing so focusing solely on the of globalization of businesses. Therefore, not at all go into detail on any other potential factors of globalization. Further boundaries have been set for the literature used, only literature with references will be reviewed in an attempt to ensure the validity of the information.

## 2 Literary review

A literary review has been conducted for a couple of reasons. First of all, to attain working tools for designing the study and to ensure the academic quality. This part of the literary review can be found in the chapter on methodology. Moreover, the literature study was conducted with an outset in a theoretical framework based on the limitations previously mentioned. The review created a basis for the coming analysis of results obtained in this thesis. The main topics in the literature review are presented below in table 1.

○ <b>Globalization</b>
○ <b>Globally distributed teams</b>
○ <b>Technology in global teams</b>

Table 1. Main topics involved in the literature review.

### 2.1 Globalization

In turn, it will be looked upon what globalization stands for, why globalization is a current trend and the way technology enables globalization.

#### 2.1.1 What is globalization

Globality is the condition of being global (Scholte, 2005), which in itself does not say much unless the concept of being global is understood. The Cambridge dictionaries describes the word **global** as: “*Related to the whole world*”, and the word **globalization** as: “*A situation in which available goods and services, or social and cultural influences, gradually become more similar in all parts of the world*”. According to the National Geographic Education Encyclopedia (NGEE) globalization is the connection of different parts of the world. Resulting in the progression of worldwide cultural, economic, and political behaviours (NGEE, 2011).

#### 2.1.2 Why globalization

Still, the question remains of *why globalization* is an option. Globalization of businesses can be motivated by the need of survival and sustainability (Milhauser, 2011). She has identified three key objectives for globalization, which are presented in the table below.

<b>1. Reduction of cost e.g. driven by reducing development and production cost.</b>
<b>2. Expansion of sales into local, emerging markets.</b>
<b>3. Employ and retain top talent regardless of geography.</b>

Table 2. Key objectives for globalization.

Milhauser explains that knowledge of these three key objectives equips global team leaders with a better understanding of the environment in which their companies operate. Resulting in a business strategy comprising increased globalization. This sort of strategy can be found

among many leading companies as an aim of gaining competitive advantage. One of the immediate outcomes is distributed teams (Milhauser, 2011). With team members spread out across geographical space, the complexity of organizations is amplified. Milhauser claims that globalization as a business strategy is becoming more common. Although, the number of firms that manage to increase their business value as a result of such a strategy, is far less. However, Stevenson & McGrath (2004) claim based on (Cascio, 2000) that major firms like IBM and Hewlett Packard, respectively managed to considerably increase productivity with the use of global teams.

### **2.1.3 Technology enabling globalization of companies**

Such companies as IBM and Hewlett Packard are not alone when it comes to globalization. According to Duarte and Snyder (2001) *"The trend is clear. The world is shrinking"*. The authors continue by explaining that due to technological innovation various communication and collaboration tools are now available that have led to an increasing use of global teams because of their effectiveness. Technology that is successfully helping companies to quickly tend to customer needs, develop and deliver services/products, accumulate and retain top talent employees regardless of geographical location. With the use of internet distance is generally no longer an issue for transportation of e.g. news and information (NGEE, 2011). As mentioned in the introduction section of this report Hormats referred to the internet and said: *"There has never been a commercial technology like this in the history of the world, whereby from the minute you adopt it, it forces you to think and act globally"*. Similarly, Duarte and Snyder (2001) say that virtual teams use electronic collaboration technologies as a way to overall increase effectiveness of communication and decision-making, while decreasing traveling cost and project schedules.

## **2.2 Globally distributed teams**

For the next chapter it will be presented what a global team is, culture in global teams, leadership in global teams, trust as part of a leader's role in global teams. In turn, a wider picture of trust in global teams will be presented followed by tools for creating and sustaining trust.

### **2.2.1 What is a global team**

Zuofa et. al. (2017) describes working in global teams as: *"Working separately but together"*. It is not always possible for team members to meet, in particular those who are located far from each other geographically, which is why there is such a thing as globally distributed teams Thompson (2008). *"Distance, boundaries, and reliance on communication technology add levels of complexity that ordinary teams just don't have"* (Platt, 1999, as cited in Stevenson & McGrath, 2004). Milhauser (2011) say that by definition global teams have influences of all dimensions of cultural patterns. Milhauser (2011) goes on by referring to Thompson's (2008) perspective by saying it holds cultural undercurrents. Milhauser (2011) claim that those cultural undercurrents add a further layer of complexity when aiming for productivity in globally distributed teams.

Having distributed teams has many benefits e.g. having people with both deep knowledge within requested business areas as well as know-how on current local market opportunities, enabling the firm to best approach promising markets (Neeley, 2015). However, Dubé & Paré (2011) say that the biggest disadvantage that global teams experience is the lack of F-2-F interaction. Dubé & Paré went on by saying that the lack of F-2-F interaction can lead to trust issues within the teams. Furthermore, Dubé & Paré advocate the usefulness of videoconferences, rather than email or conferences solely relying on audio, in initial staged meetings. Dubé & Paré say that when people can see each other while being introduced it allows people to enjoy more personalized interactions. Yet, Dubé & Paré point out that if videoconferences are unstructured it may undermine the purpose of people connecting and result in team members questioning the purpose and commitment to the project.

A further aspect of global teams is that the nature of projects is that they are time limited. Due to various reasons team members may need to move into new project before a current one is finished, leading to multiple projects running in parallel or in other cases that a team member has to leave mid-project. Schwaber (2001) stated that when adding new team members to an already existing team or removing established team members it reduces the productivity established by the team. When teams are more permanent they have the chance to mature and thereby positively effecting the group's efficiency (Bruzelius and Skärvad, 2011).

### **2.2.2 Technology in global teams**

The nature of global teams is to have team members spread out globally. Therefore, they need to rely on technology in order to facilitate communication and information sharing within the team (Dubé & Paré, 2001). Project leaders has the prime responsibility when it comes to structuring a virtual office and safeguarding that the essential technologies are available, reliable, and matching the constantly changing requirements of a virtual team (Dubé & Paré, 2001). Global virtual teams have the possibility to connect via a range of technologies such as: phone, email, videoconference tools, collaborative software, intranets as well as virtual private networks (Dubé & Paré, 2001). Even though, the technology is available it doesn't mean that it will always be working as anticipated, Dubé & Paré continue by saying that managers are likely to face unpleasant technological challenges, such as hardware/software incompatibility, unreliability and/or unavailability.

### **2.2.3 Culture in global teams**

Further, Schein (2004) articulates that the nature of distributed teams entails multiple locations and therefore so called individual cultures of team members indicate a more complex situation than F-2-F teams when aiming to create a common team culture: *"Not every collection of people develops a culture; in fact, we tend to use the term group, rather than, say crowd or collection of people only when there has been enough of a shared history for some degree of culture formation to have taken place"* (Schein, 2004)

Culture has already been described as highly complex, however distributed teams add yet another layer to that complexity (Black, 1998). Several researchers e.g. (Thompson, 2008) have found that even distributed teams require some F-2-F interaction in order to create a collective identity that is representative for culture. Gross and Shichman (1987) created a formula for culture creation presented in table 3. The formula goes in line with Schein (2004) saying that not every collection of people develop culture. He seems to mean for that to happen there has to have been sufficient amount of shared history within the group.

(1)	Develop a sense of history
(2)	Creating a sense of openness
(3)	Promoting a sense of membership
(4)	Increase exchange among members

Table 3. Gross and Shichman (1987) factors for culture creation.

Milhauser (2011) concludes that this formula may be very effective but that it needs to be altered to fit the complex environment of distributed teams. She further states that these alterations are the most important part of a leader's job when managing a distributed team. Culture varies across continents resulting in barriers, language add yet another layer of hindrances and can easily create misunderstandings (Lewis, 1999). Lewis further claims that it is becoming more important for many sectors such as academia, multinational companies and even governments to learn more languages in order to better understand people and avoid misunderstandings. Schein (2004) said that when we encounter unfamiliar cultures and what might seem like senseless behaviour from people in organizations we risk feeling confused, irritated and anxious. However, Schein articulates that if the dynamics of culture is understood, the risk of feeling anxious etc. can be mitigated. The term culture holds patterns of beliefs, behaviours, assumptions and values that can both develop and remain over time within a social entity, (Schein, 2004) as well as (Marquardt & Engel, 1993) reason that culture has multiple layers. Marquardt & Engel (1993) further argue that cultural patterns can be observed on numerous levels of organizations, including corporate and global level. The artefacts, beliefs and assumptions of culture can be presumed to happen within the factors just mentioned.

#### **2.2.4 Leadership in global teams**

Milhauser (2011) states that it is crucial for leaders of distributed teams to hold an appreciation of cultural differences and to recognize and allow identities of individual team members. She writes, and many other with her, that she has noted the difficulty of changing and managing culture. However, according to Schein (2004) *“the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and to manage culture”*. Similarly, on the topic of leadership action Furst et. al. (2004) stated that a leader's role within the initial stages of group development is to advocate appropriate culture patterns. Additionally, they add that a leader must clearly communicate to the team why the team exist i.e. what project goals to be obtained in order to promote a higher purpose and an inclusive feeling of team collectiveness. In turn, Furst et. al. (2004) state that a leader's role also includes establishing a shared foundation by facilitating F-2-F team building.

In addition, Thompson (2008) declares that a leaders' roles also need to handle consistent trust and communication issues that are likely to occur in distributed teams. Abrams (2003) says that part of a leader's role is to create a commonly shared vision for the whole team. Furthermore, Abrams (2003) explains that research shows that when trust has been established it can work as a catalysator to enhance knowledge exchange and make the exchange of knowledge less costly. This is because when there is trust within a team it is more likely that people will listen to their colleagues and really take in the message and thereby ensuring that the information can be put to use.

### **2.2.5 Trust as part of a leader's role in global teams**

Building on Thompson (2008) stating the importance of leaders working for trust building within global teams. Malhotra et. al. (2007) as referred by Milhauser (2011) propose that trust is the most important factor for leadership when managing global teams. Milhauser goes on by saying that since trust is vital, leaders of global teams need to articulate and promote trust-building behaviour. She says that a leader must promote open communication within the team and also remove barriers that could hinder team members from interacting efficiently with each other. Greenberg et. al. (2007) have created a table describing action steps needed from managers and team leaders in different stages of group maturity when aiming to build and maintain trust, part of said table will be presented below in individual rows named: 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>. Greenberg et. al. (2007) have in the same table indicated what level of trust is typically present in the different stages as well as what actions leaders need to take to increase maturity. The interested reader can find the full list in the appendix.

**1<sup>st</sup> Establishing the team:** is where the foundation for the development of trust is laid. This is done by management when e.g. choosing team members for the task ahead, communicating decisions and support though software, communicating reward structure.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Inception:** this is the time to build bonds of cohesion for the development of trust within the team. Management's role is e.g. to establish 'rules of engagement' for communication and interaction. Team leader's role is at this stage to facilitate team-building exercises to begin to establish bonds.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Organizing:** Trust in teammates' ability and integrity. Managements' role is to evaluate communication patterns Team leaders's role require timely and substantive responses, and to encourage social aspects of communication.

**4<sup>th</sup> Transitioning:** At this point trust typically transitions from ability and integrity to benevolence and integrity. Management's role is to be available for support and guidance. Team leader's role is to move focus from procedures to accomplishing task and to punctuate the end of the organizing stage and the beginning of the task with an 'event'.

**5<sup>th</sup> Accomplishing the task:** At this point trust in teammates' benevolence and integrity is established. Managers role is to overall support team members. The team leader's role is to encourage supportive communication in accomplishing the task.



### **2.2.6 A wider picture of trust in global teams**

According to Milhauser (2011) trust is an inclusive term for when members of a group can communicate openly with each other as well as open communication with seniors and people in leadership positions. Chen (2012) defines trust as: “Do what you say”. Redmiles (2009) calls trust significant and that it is required to build successful and effective collaborations within teams. Redmiles goes on by saying that trust can be described as one person’s expectations of another person. If there is not trustful communication within a group the team members might end up feeling the need to monitor each other (Redmiles, 2009). Team members in a distrustful setting sometimes feel the need to work remote even when there might have been an opportunity to sit with colleagues. Redmiles mentions that for teams to be highly successful members need to establish tight bonds between each other and to be able to have an overview of what the colleagues are working on. He goes on by saying that it is hard for distributed teams to reach such a setting. This increases the risk of team members distributing a sense of distrust among them fuelled by misunderstandings, misreading of someone’s actions and neglect of what other team member’s interests. “*Distributed teams need high levels of trust, communication, interaction, and interdependence*” (Hertel et. al., 2004). Chen (2012) says that real trust is built in day-to-day interaction which is hard to do in globally distributed teams. Thompson (2008) argues that the biggest challenge when looking to achieve productivity is to coordinate team members’ efforts even when F-2-F interaction is not possible. Chen (2012) articulates that distributed teams use games instead for trust building. The games that Chen proposes can be used to diagnose possible issues within groups as well actions that are needed to sort the found issues.

### 3 Method

In this chapter the method used in this study will be described. The choice of research design, literature review, data collection, way of interviewing, how questionnaire have been used has been explained as well as how the obtained data have been analysed. At the end of the chapter there is a subchapter on ethical considerations and confidentiality followed by a reflection on the validity of sources.

#### 3.1 Research design

Bryman and Bell (2011) states that the research design is the framework chosen in order to collect data. This thesis-work began with an introductory period where observations were made to get an understanding of Volvo Group IT's work. This was followed by a qualitative study in the form of one-on-one semi-structured interviews with 17 people, parallelly with a literature review in order to see what the interviewees highlight as influencing factors for success. Based on what is stated in the interviews and found in literature, a quantitative study followed in the form of a questionnaire. Throughout the whole thesis study observations have been made when participating in F-2-F meetings and skype meetings etc. The method has been developed this way to enable identification of potential success factors via interviews and literature review followed by a questionnaire to verify the plausibility of found factors. In combination with the results from the literature review, interviews, discussion and conclusion follows.

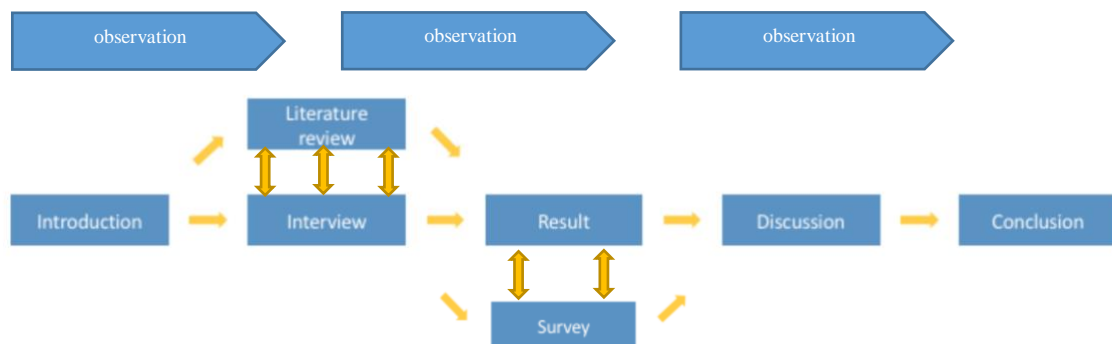


Figure 1. The intended research design.

#### 3.2 Literature review

The search for literature was initiated by looking for relevant articles, books etc. containing wording similar to the research question. Therefore, in order to begin the literature review an understanding was established on what key words to focus on. To do this a study on what topics were closely linked to the research question was initiated, Chalmers Summon and Google Scholar are the main databases that have been used. There have also been various books used recommend by the supervisors from Volvo and Chalmers. It was found that relevant searches were such as: *Definition of globalization, Globalization distributed teams, Teams, Distributed teams, Distributed team collaboration in organizations, Global teams that work, Building trust, Trust in distributed teams, Culture in distributed teams, Leadership in distributed teams.*

### 3.3 Available data and data collection

In the next chapter it will be presented what available data there was and how further data has been collected.

#### 3.3.1 The case- Volvo Group IT

Volvo Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks, busses, marina- and industry engines. Apart from products Volvo Group also offers full financial services and services such as insurances, hire services, spare parts, preventive maintenance, service agreements and IT- services. The mentioned IT- services are carried out by Volvo Group IT which is part of Group Finance. Volvo Group IT manages the whole Group's overall IT strategies and planning with an end-to-end responsibility for development, delivery, support of IT solutions and services. Volvo Group IT is operating in 36 countries worldwide and with a global set up comes global project teams. There is no right answer to what a typical global project team looks like within Group IT. However, a senior project manager said that the number of people in a global team project is usually 5-15 people, projects typically stretches out for 2 months - 2 years and people are usually not part of more than 3 projects at once. The number of times that team members meet depends on what sort of project it is, where the team members are located as well as what the current economic situation allows. In some projects team members are based in the same office, leading to them meeting perhaps multiple times a day. While, it might not at all be possible for other project teams to meet at times when the economic situation has led to a company-wide travel ban. However, currently teams typically try to meet in the initial stages of a new project and then every 3-6 months if necessary, but there is no standardization on this. (information gathered through interviews and Volvo Group Financial and sustainability report 2017). Furthermore, Volvo have been working with global teams for many years and have *Cultural ambassadors* that work with the multi-cultural aspects that come with global work. Volvo has set a standard for meetings stating that multitasking when in meetings should be avoided.

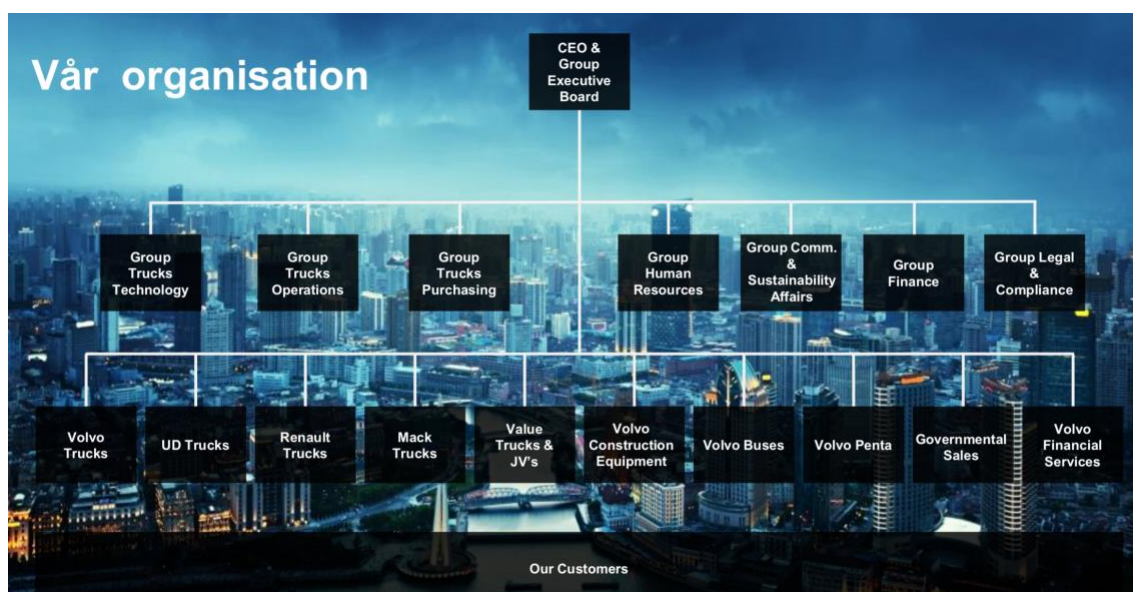


Figure 2. An image of the Volvo Group organizational structure. In the upper left corner, it says "Vår organisation" which is Swedish for "Our organization".

### 3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

An aim with interviewing was to gain understanding on factors for success that could potentially be implemented and sustained within the organization. Semi-structured interviewing was chosen as this type of interviewing focus on pre-chosen questions, while still allowing room for flexibility for follow-up question to what the interviewee was saying (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell further articulate that this method of interviewing is especially good when looking to gain information from expertise people. The interview questions used are provided in the appendixes.

The interviewees where asked to participate in an hour-long interview and made aware that any contributions were fully voluntary. 17 semi-structured interviews were conducted to get an understanding of the current situation of global team work and input on what the interviewees considered as success in such teams as well as potential success-factors when aiming to reach success in globally distributed teams. The interviewees that have had errands to the Arendal office in Gothenburg participated in F-2-F interviews while the remaining interviews were conducted via phone. One interview was carried out via email as neither the interviewee nor the interviewer had the possibility to do international calls.

<b>Swedish</b>	10
<b>French</b>	3
<b>Indian</b>	2
<b>Polish</b>	1
<b>British</b>	1

Table 4. Nationalities of interviewees

### 3.3.3 Web-based questionnaire

There are many different types of questionnaires, which can be used for various situations. However, to be able to call it a questionnaire it needs to be designed to collect data which in itself can be used as information for analysis, written list of question and gather information by asking for people's opinion on a certain matter (Denscombe, 2014). Further, Denscombe (2014) writes that web-based questionnaires can be preferred as they save time, cost and provide an environmentally friendly approach to conducting research. According to Denscombe it is important that every questionnaire provides information on to the response about who is the sponsor, what the purpose is, a return address and date, level of confidentiality, that all responses are fully voluntary, as well as a thank you for the response's time. The questionnaire was arranged in Google-survey and set to a 0-5 scale where 0 represented *Not at all important/ Not at all happy* and 5 represented *Very important/ Very happy*. A couple of questions were of a multiple-choice type, where respondents were asked to choose the alternative/alternatives they considered most relevant with an added option to complement with more alternatives if desired.

### 3.3.4 Observations

During the thesis study which was carried out over the course of five months observations were made. Observations helped the thesis-student to gain insight and understanding to what normal working days can look like for team members in global teams.

### 3.3.5 Distribution method used for the survey

In order to ensure that the questionnaire was widely spread the thesis-student asked all of her connections at Volvo Group IT to help with the distribution. Therefore, the 17 interviewees were politely asked to help distribute the survey as they have bigger networks within Volvo Group IT than the thesis-student does. It was assumed that the likelihood for a high response rate would increase if the questionnaire was distributed by them, as the interviewees have a higher level of mandate within the firm than the thesis-student. In total there were 108 responses to the online survey. Since the distribution was conducted through connections at Volvo it is not possible to say what the response rate was.

### 3.4 Data handling and analysis

In order to simplify the analysis of the semi-structured interviews the interviews were recorded and then listened to multiple times while written down, to grasp the very essence, however the full interviews are not presented in this thesis. The methodology called “Grounded theory” as described by Bryman and Bell (2011) and has been used when structuring the data obtained from interviews. A way of working with “Grounded theory” is “Open coding” which means that the obtained data is broken down in sections. Denscombe (2014) states that “Grounded theory” is an especially useful tool when doing; qualitative research, small-scale research as well as studies of human interaction.

The analysis will be based on the data received as well as comments made by the people responding to the questionnaire. As mentioned earlier the questionnaire was set up in Google-survey, a tool that automatically imports data into Sheets<sup>1</sup>. The data was downloaded into Excel and presented in pivot-tables which can be found in the result section. The analysis of the survey results was then compared to a Volvo risk analysis tool, which categorizes situations into three different levels, green=good, yellow=ok and red=not good. In this survey the colours are interpreted as, green=the desired result has been achieved, yellow= an area that needs to be considered and red=an area that absolutely needs to be worked on.

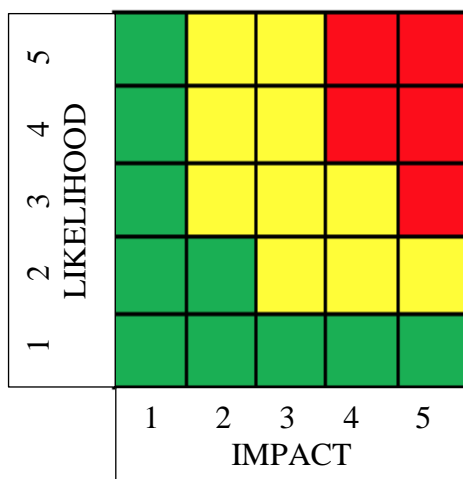


Figure 3. A Volvo risk analysis tool.

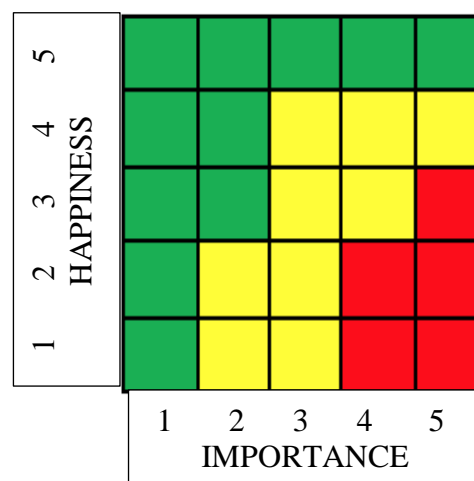


Figure 4. A modified version of Volvo risk analysis tool.

<sup>1</sup> Sheets is Google’s own web-based version of Excel.

## 4 Results

In this chapter results from interviews, survey and observations will be presented. Following the concept of *Grounded Theory*, the interviews resulted in a number of factors an overview of these are presented in the table 4. The survey validates that the majority of respondents have a similar view to the interviewees.

### 4.1 Results from interviews

The interviewees discussed a lot of various topics. However, when *Open coding* as part of *Grounded theory* was used the main findings from interviews are as presented in table 4.

○ <b>Successful leadership in global teams</b>
○ <b>Success from a team perspective: <i>Creating connections and Trust</i></b>
○ <b>Culture in global teams</b>
○ <b>Culture around meeting and technology used in meetings in global teams</b>

Table 5. Results overview.

#### 4.1.1 Successful leadership in global teams

Based on what the interviewees stated during interviews successful leadership in global teams is different every time depending on what project is currently running, what team members there are and where they come from. However, it seems that the interviewees believe that successful leadership comprises elements of decentralization of leadership, open and honest communication coming from a person that can create the mandate needed when maintaining a group geographically spread out.

○ <b>Successful leadership</b> in global teams Decentralized leadership Communication by leaders in global teams Creating a collective vision for a team Handling people questioning the business value of a project How to deal with team members coming into and leaving teams
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Table 6. Factors stated to be important by the interviewees regarding leadership in global teams.

#### **4.1.1.1 Decentralized leadership**

Many of the interviewees refer to decentralized leadership. One person explained it as: “I try to make myself superfluous. We are dealing with highly competent people, you need to expect that they do what you anticipate them to do. If they for some reason are not able to deliver, then they need to communicate that”. Another interviewee expressed: “My role as a manager is to create the foundation for the team to do their job and to remove hindrances and to communicate the vision and such so that people want to follow that track, not just because it is required of them”. One of the interviewees said what leadership styles is the most applicable depends on the level of maturity of the team. He/she went on by saying that of course the goal is for a team to be more or less self-regulating but that it takes a lot of time for a team to grow that mature. And that: “Even if we do everything by the book we might not deliver what is intended or reach success”.

#### **4.1.1.2 Communication by leaders in global teams**

Most of the interviewees have leadership aspects to their job roles. When being asked what successful leadership is in global team setting an interviewee said: *“It is my job as a project manager to make sure that people are comfortable with sharing if they feel that they are not happy. If my team doesn’t celebrate the outcome of a project, it is not a success”* Many interviewees share the view that management needs to “*be there*” for the team. An interviewee expressed that the most important thing for team leaders to do is to make people proud of the work they do and to make sure people are feeling appreciated. The interviewee was then asked what actions that need to be taken by a leader to enable a feeling of appreciation. According to the interviewee a leader has to be a good listener in order to pick up on what the team needs and then make sure to provide that. Furthermore, several interviewees expressed that a leader needs to let the team do their work without monitoring, but not forget to congratulate the team afterwards. Majority of interviewees say that communication with stakeholders takes a vast amount of time, leading to time management issues. An interviewee advocates the applicability of co-pilot and pitot method, which means that the project manager (in this case referred to as pilot) manages all external stakeholders while assisted by a so-called co-pilot that takes care of all internal stakeholders.

In addition, the leader should let the team know that they can share things with management if some things are lacking. The same interviewee said that when communicating this message, it can be very effective to use informal conversations as it makes people more comfortable sharing their thoughts. Another interviewee self-identifies as a very talkative person, so if there happen to be any difficulties or tension within the team that is managed, the interviewee will ask things in different ways depending on who it is regarding and depending on what the topic is. When discussing with yet another interviewee, the person said that as a team leader you are totally reliable on what the customer or team members are willing to share with you. *“It is like if you’re going to a doctor and just say that I have pain, but nothing else. Obviously, the doctor will find out eventually, but it will take more time than if there was full transparency between the patient and the doctor”*

#### **4.1.1.3 *Creating a collective vision for a team***

In a different interview it was expressed: “One of the key things, to really work on, is creating and visualizing a collective goal and to clarify the business-need of the given project”. Yet another interviewee voiced that: “If a clear direction is lacking the team gets a bit disrupted because they do not have a good vision to follow”. Furthermore, the interviewee expressed that there might still be issues occurring even with an actively supporting management team. But in those cases, there is according to the interviewee generally a lack of collective vision for the team as a whole. That the vision is solely a project-aim and has for some reason not been adapted by the team to make the vision theirs own.

#### **4.1.1.4 *Handling people questioning the business value of a project***

Most of the interviewees expressed that a leader must be very transparent and communicate that transparency is also expected from the team. Majority also aired that it is the leader’s responsibility to at an early stage in a newly formed team, be very clear when declaring that if someone does not agree on a major business matters that person should speak up. The majority of interviewees also expressed that if one, as a leader, needs to drive a project that is by him/her not believed to be best for the company, that must be communicated to higher management immediately. However, if established that the project will go on anyhow some people might need to step aside and let others take over the project. Furthermore, many of the interviewees say that if a person in a leading position does not believe in a project that will in itself hinder the group from adapting an engaging and enthusiastic atmosphere.

#### **4.1.1.5 *How to deal with team members coming into and leaving teams***

The interviewees were asked what actions they thought appropriate when new team members are coming into/leaving existing teams. Majority share the view that a leader should try to have a separate introductory meeting with the new person in order to introduce him/her to the project and to share the expectations on team members. A few interviewees emphasized the need to introduce to the new person what ground rules the team has set out, and make sure that it is communicated that everyone share the responsibility of transparent communication. On the mentioned topic an interviewee aired: “*If it is not a very stable team there will not be an open dialogue.*” A couple of the interviewees said that if one finds engaged people that can work as change agents/ champions to advocate the intentions of e.g. the head office one have to make sure that those people are “*taken care*” of and engaged in other projects when their main project has come to an end otherwise there is a risk to lose these people’s engagement. One person said that to ensure that competent and engaged people are sustained in the organization it is all about creating forums and using networks to communicate.

#### **4.1.2 *Success from a team perspective and how it can be obtained***

When asked what success is from a team perspective the majority of interviewees considered a project to be successful first of all when all criteria in the scope have been met. When asked what is needed for the team though, many interviewees said it is vital that the people who carried out the work should be happy and content with the work process. A few of the interviewees elaborated on this and said that it is not success if everyone is exhausted when the project ends. More than one interviewee said that their department is understaffed and that it



causes too much pressure on people and triggers problems, but the importance of every team member feeling proud of their work remains. Many say that for this to be achievable there need to be some level of connection and trust in the team. When being asked if sharing the same view of success as team members, most of the interviewees said that they do not know but guess their colleagues share a similar view. One interviewee said: *“Probably the same, but have different perspective of the same thing... It is important that people do not disagree with each other’s views, even though they might not share the same view. Then again if we know where people come from we can better understand why they act and think the way they do”*.

- **Success from a team perspective: *Creating connections* and *Trust***
  - Creating connections and trust within global teams
  - Trust building games
  - Communication in global teams
  - F-2-F Kick-off
  - Other factors for success

Table 7. Success from a team perspective, main factors mentioned.

#### **4.1.2.1 *Creating connections and Trust within global teams***

The vast majority of the interviewees say that they to a limited extent get to know team members through skype meetings, but not at a level where it is real trust. For trust to appear the team needs to meet F-2-F. A couple of the Swedish interviewees mention the importance of having shared a “fika”. Many interviewees express that the more distributed a team is the more distantly emotionally connected the team members become. An interviewee expressed: *“Regardless of how much you work with someone that is far away, if a colleague close by needs help - in the same office or such - one will always help the person sitting close by first, due to the emotional connection to that person”*. On the topic of personal connection another interviewee expressed: *“It is too hectic, to have time to get to know each other”* when referring to the work situation. A third person shared that it takes a lot of energy just to get people on the same page within a team since globality brings such a complex setup with many different tracks. People have diverse views on how business matters should be approached, which creates heated discussions sometimes.

Each and every one of the interviewees mentioned the importance of building trust in global teams. No one had an exact recipe on how to build trust, but everyone contributed with their ideas on trust building. Such as: *“Being able to be informal with each other increases the trust.”* Some interviewees say that it is hard to find moments to have informal conversation such as a casual chat by the coffee machine. A few interviewees said that trust is earned over time when you notice that people deliver what they say they will. On this topic one interviewee said: *“It is hard to build trust, but easy to demolish “*. Furthermore, the majority stated the importance of being open and honest rather than try to hide when things go wrong. Along with that goes dealing with problems right away, and if issues are regarding a certain person/ group of people to take it direct with the people in question.

#### **4.1.2.2 Trust building games**

One interviewee expressed that the work in itself should be fun enough so there should be no need to do teambuilding activities other than clearly connected to the actual work. Further the interviewee expressed, if doing a workshop, it should be very clear what the motive is and how it is connected to the work. Another interviewee expressed that it could be beneficial if a project manager lets the team know that *“We have this given time slot to get to know each other”* and ask team members what they want to do with the given time. A few interviewees mentioned a trust building game called *10 minutes for fun*. Most of them said that the tool can be added to any meeting structure and how using it has helped building trust in teams they are in at the moment. While someone else said promptly: *“NO games. I think it is good to do a round table so that everyone can introduce themselves, but that’s it!”*

#### **4.1.2.3 Communication within global teams**

The importance of communication within global teams was discussed in many of the interviews. One interviewee expressed that to make team work possible in a global setting one: *“Need to be extremely explicit in all communication, making sure that people really understand.”* Another person stated that: *“Basically, as people get to know each other’s backgrounds misunderstandings can be avoided and we can focus on the job instead.”* A few of the interviewees mentioned that it creates tension within teams when moving job opportunities to other countries without communicating it clearly. One interviewee expressed: *“Us swedes usually think that if no one opposes a proposal, that means that they agree. And that is not always correct. If it is new people, they tend to not say anything at all unless they are explicitly being asked for their opinion”*. The interviewees were asked if they had been in a situation where communication had not gone the intended way, and if they were willing to share. One interviewee shared: *“The first time I had an international experience with a colleague it was quite an old person and he was very new to English and he was trying to find his words. I found it hard to know if I should wait for him to speak because there was a lot of gaps between him saying anything. When I thought I helped him, he thought that I was questioning his competence because I was prompting him for words, which he was struggling to find. Then we laughed about, but it was a little bit tense for a bit, but after we laughed it was all good. So, in the next meeting we had a good communication”*

#### **4.1.2.4 F-2-F kick-offs and interaction**

All interviewees apart from very few expressed that teams need to meet in the initial stages of new projects. Moreover, they emphasized the importance of such kick-offs in large projects that are planned to span over a longer time. The majority of interviewees say that relationships are not easily built via phone or Skype, but that when there has been a F-2-F kick-off that makes it much easier as it allows you a better understanding of how people react to things. *“Once you have seen the face of the others you are better able to catch little phrasings in what people say”*, said one person when explaining how F-2-F kick-offs help getting a dialogue going and a foundation for a good atmosphere. Most of the interviewees said that when there has been a F-2-F introduction it is not needed to meet often or perhaps not at all during the rest of the project. One person expressed: *“You cannot have beer over skype, that is really important. You do not establish a real relation to team members only via skype, you can reach an initial level to be*

*able to get the job done. But you cannot build trust if you haven't met*". Another person described how the team he/she is in at the moment was initiated and said that an original core team had the opportunity to meet F-2-F. Afterwards there have been a number of new resources joining the team who have not had that opportunity to travel to meet the rest of the team F-2-F. However, the initial kick-off with a core team seem to have created a ripple in water effect. Following that it seems like the added resources are more easily engaged in trustful communication when joining an already somewhat trusting team. The interviewees were asked how they felt about the opportunities to do F-2-F kick-offs. Many said that it is up to the project manager to demand budget large enough to include F-2-F, but that it is sometimes hard to get it approved. An example of how this was expressed: *"I think due to cost cutting we are cutting down on F-2-F interaction."* another person said: *"Being able to meet with people should not be underestimated, which is something I think we have done here at Volvo IT"*. When an interviewee was referring to the team he/she is managing but that have never met in person it was stated: *"Maybe they feel less threatened by me because we have never met"*. One of the interviewees shared a story on how the effectiveness and quality of team work is affected when having met F-2-F. *"I was managing a team of four in India at a time when Volvo had complete travel stop, which means it took six months before I was allowed to travel there when they lifted the travel ban. During the week I was there I think we managed to achieve more than we did in the 6 months prior to that "*. Many interviewees say that their virtual meetings were more enjoyable after having met in real life.

#### **4.1.2.5 Other factors for success**

Furthermore, a couple of interviewees mentioned the importance of having a rightly sized group, that a successful team probably cannot be larger than 8-12 people to make sure that they can be engaged in trustful communication. They said the size of a group is an important factor when aiming for success from a team perspective. One interviewee said that he/she had noticed that rather than doing smarter solutions, with sub structured teams, the go-to solution to every problem is to assign more people to the project. The interviewee further elaborated that when assigning people to projects it is increasingly non-Swedes as that goes along with Volvos strategy of keeping a 60% BPIC-ratio<sup>1</sup>. This interviewee said that it takes a long time to get new resources onboard a project when they are far away and that it does not usually save cost as intended. In order to onboard new people when there are limited possibilities to meet a few interviewees advocate the usage of *change agents/ champions* <sup>2</sup>already located near the new team members that can help carry the message.

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<sup>1</sup> *BPIC-ratio*: Brazil Poland India China – ratio of employees from Brazil, Poland, India and China compared to other nations.

<sup>2</sup> *Change agents/ champions*: engaged people that can work to advocate certain intentions and help spread a message within the organization.

### 4.1.3 Culture in global teams

In the next coming chapters, it will be presented what the interviewees said about cultural aspects for global teams. Starting with National culture followed by Inter-team culture and then Meeting culture in global teams.

- **Culture in global teams**
  - National culture in global teams
  - Inter-team culture in global teams

Table 8. Culture in global teams.

#### 4.1.3.1 National culture in global teams

On the topic of culture in global teams a few interviewees mentioned how people from certain nationalities will try incredibly hard to manage an assignment, even though it is obvious that it will fail. The interviewees went on by saying that if people from these nationalities are pushed for an answer about when the assignment can be finished there will probably not be an answer, which creates a lot of frustration. One person explained that this is related to different national cultures that are being brought into the global team. Further, the interviewee said that even words can mean different things to different people depending on where they come from culturally. *“If a person says yes to everything, I need to keep asking - pushing. If I get a maybe, it might be a maybe from some people, a yes if it comes from someone else and a definite no from a third person.”*

In turn, cultural differences were aired and a couple of interviewees from various nationalities referred to the Swedish leadership style as “*very flat*” and one person said that “*decisions are taken by the coffee machine without the managers*” while the French leadership was referred to “*more hierarchal*”. Another difference that was mentioned was that within some teams /line roles people tend to include the leader in all mailing lists.

#### 4.1.3.2 Inter-team culture in global teams

One person said that it is hard to explain how they create culture. He/she went on by saying that many of the people working at Volvo Group IT have been part of a global context for such a long time that they now get a gut feeling about how to approach people from various cultural backgrounds. When discussing culture in global teams a few examples came up on when the interviewees have noticed that culture had been created in global teams. One interviewee said that: *“When a person has been ‘Volvo-fied’, that means that you can be very direct and so on”*. Another person shared how he/she has aimed at creating culture in a global team that this person is currently leading: *“I have taught my French colleagues to say Tjenna”*. In a different interview a person shared that he/she felt there have been cultural exchange as he/she has adopted at least one new word: *“I have learnt a new word which is Indian English; prepone - it is the acronym to postpone.”*

#### 4.1.4 Culture around meetings and the technology used in meetings in global teams

In the next subchapters meeting culture in global teams will be described. In turn, Skype meetings in global teams and amount of meetings will be elaborated on.

- **Culture around meetings and the technology used in meetings in global teams**
  - Skype meetings in global teams
  - Amount of meetings

Table 9. Culture around meetings and the technology used in meetings in global teams.

##### 4.1.4.1 Skype meetings in global teams

All interviewees say that they use Skype meetings as part of the global teams they are in. Many express that when in skype meetings there are some technical attributes not applicable in F-2-F meetings. One of the things mentioned is that when in skype meetings there are usually a couple of people from the same office site that can then sit in a conference room together during the otherwise virtual meeting. In such situations a so-called puck can be used, which is a speaker and microphone in one. One person said: “*Anyone who is not in that room is going to have trouble hearing those not directly next to the puck, leading to that person sounding untrustworthy*”. When speaking about skype meetings another person said that “*Either everyone should sit together in a conference room, or no one should*”. He/she then went on by saying that otherwise people are not participating in the meeting on equal terms, as those physically present have the opportunity to share glances or other types of body language which cannot be picked up on by those participating virtually. Furthermore, it was raised by many interviewees that the one leading a virtual meeting has a large responsibility to make sure that everyone are active in the meeting. One person expressed it as “*check-ins and check-outs*” and that those can be used effectively in meetings. *Check-ins* is related to a leader making sure that everyone participating in the meeting are active, for example by asking questions to everyone and making sure that each person in the meeting said something. *Checking-out* refers to asking questions like “*What do we take with us from this meeting?*”, “*What can we do differently next time?*”.

Majority of interviewees say that usually they do not use video on skype or video conference as it is too complicated. “Everyone says that video conference is great but in reality, it hardly ever happens. It is difficult enough to get hold of a conference room, if also needing to get hold of a video conference room the meeting probably wouldn’t happen”. Another interviewee expressed that video on Skype could be good sometimes, but that in majority of meetings video would not add any value as people need to present information via Power Points and since most people work and take meetings in open space offices it would be beneficial to use video. A third interviewee expressed: “Most of the time due to time restrictions we don’t use the technology; we have the video conference, we have the possibility to have skype meetings with video. I feel that when you look at a person either by video or F-2-F you kind of relate to them better, not just a voice.”

#### **4.1.4.2 Amount of meetings**

Most of the interviewees say that there are generally a lot of meetings and that many days are fully booked with meetings during all office hours. One person expressed that: *“Swedes do a lot of meeting, like a lot a lot of meetings in order to meet consensus on a topic ...”*. Another person says: *“We spend time discussing various things, sometimes I feel that we should have decision meetings. But we do not conclude on any”*. A couple of people mentioned that the reason why so many people are invited to the same meetings has to do with a sense of fear. According to them it boils down to insecurity and that when inviting many people, it increases the number of stakeholders that have the possibility to engage in decision making. If those then choose not to show up to the meeting they cannot complain about the meeting outcome.

Majority of interviewees say they believe more people than necessary are invited to meeting. *“Everyone invites everyone to all meetings, which means that many people have two or three meetings running in parallel all day, which is possible in virtual meetings. One can for instance divide the screen to attend to meetings, and then listen to a third one”*. A few interviewees expressed that it is important that the person sending out invitations to a meeting really thinks through who is needed in that specific meeting. One person expressed: *“We should literally only invite the people that have to be in the meeting”*. Many interviewees also expressed the importance of sending very precise and clear meeting invitations, clearly stating why the meeting is happening, what result is aimed for the meeting, agenda, who is invited and why. One person said that *“It is almost like you need to do a cliff-hanger in order to get people to prioritize my meetings”*. It was highlighted by some interviewees that when in skype meetings in distributed teams (as well as other form of teams) it is common that people attend parallel meetings by dividing the computer screen and/or answering emails while attending meetings. They said that because of the high work-load they needed to do administrative work while in meetings. One person expressed: *“It is easily done that one does something else while in skype meetings”*.

Many interviewees advocate the need to have formal structures with different forums for meeting invitations regarding different topics, which could be done through *Team place*. However, some interviewees say that a lot of the time information is simply being cascaded in emails to as many people as possible, which is not working at all as those who needs the updates are unlikely to read it. A few people said that they have a certain *“CC-folder”* which is programmed to move all CC-emails to a special folder where they will not clutter the rest of the inbox. It was stated that it is important to not cascade invitations, neither just invite the ones that first come to mind, but rather think through *“Who do I have in China, who do I have in India and which role can they have... to help carry out the change”* and that way create global forums and global teams with intention.

## 4.2 Results from survey

The survey reached 108 responses from people working in global teams or working with global teams at Volvo Group IT. The survey was based on things expressed by the 17 Volvo Group IT employees interviewed. People responding to the survey were made aware that the survey was indeed based on colleagues' thoughts. The respondents were then asked to rate the factors, from their personal understanding, in relation to the impact on success within global teams. When the respondents were asked to rate how important they found a certain factor, the scale was from 0 to 5 (where 0 = not at all important and 5 = very important). Similarly, the respondents were asked to rate how happy they were about the current situation regarding certain factors with a scale from 0 to 5 (where 0 = not at all happy and 5 = very happy). N is used to indicate the number of answers to each question, X is used to show the number of responses had been left blank. A full presentation of answers to the survey can be found in the appendix.

Question 1 and 2 are related in the way that the respondents were asked to rate the importance of F-2-F kick-offs (y-axis) as well as how happy they were with the current opportunities to do F-2-F kick-offs (x-axis). The results can be seen in the figure below with responses widely spread. The number within each circle in the figure represents the number of responses to each coordinate. So, for example, the large green circle with 34 inside represents that 34 respondents rated the importance of F-2-F kick-offs as a 5 as well as their rating of their own happiness with the opportunities to do F-2-F kick-off as a 5. This way of presenting results will be used throughout the *Results from survey* chapter.

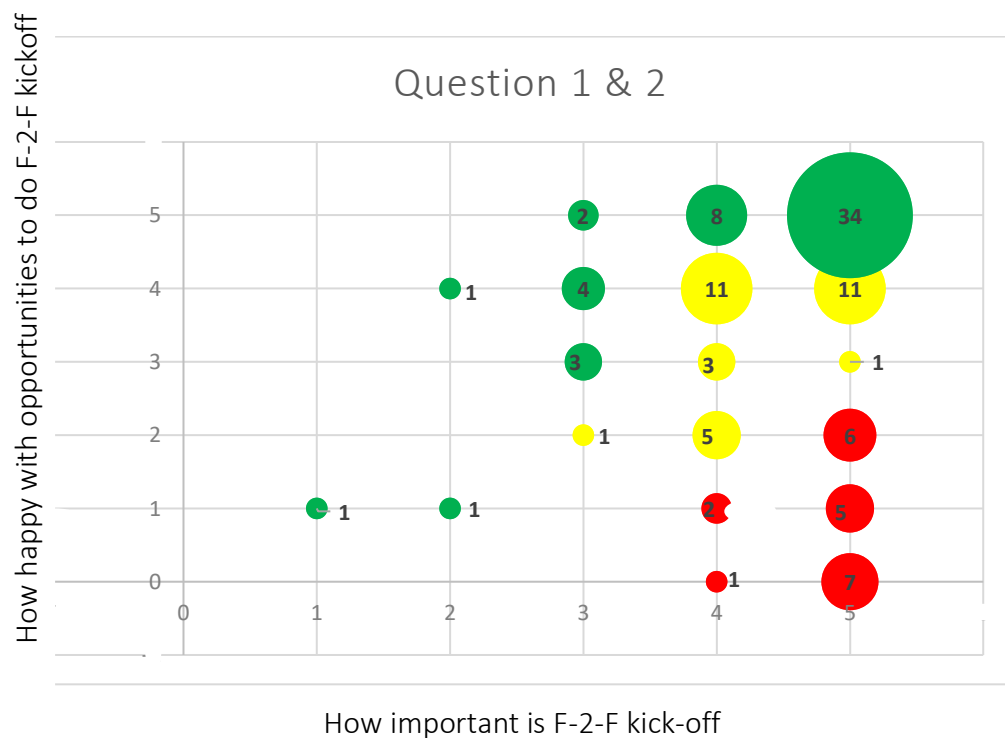


Figure 5. Distribution of answers for question 1 and 2(0= not at all important/ happy 5= very important/ happy, N=108 X=0)

Similarly, the respondents were asked how important they felt it is to know teams members on a personal level. Also, on this matter the responses were widely spread.

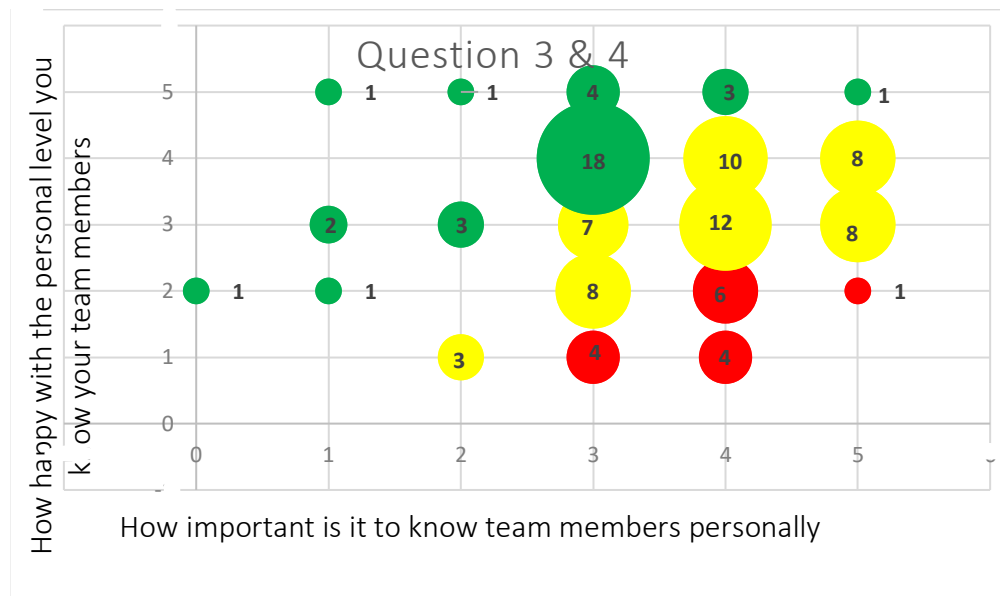


Figure 6. shows the distribution of answers for question 3 and 4. (0= not at all important/ happy 5= very important/ happy, N=108, X=0)

The next question was how important the respondents found having trust within a global team. Respondents were also asked to rate how happy they were with the current level of trust in the global team they are in at the moment and to think about their primary team if they were in more than one.

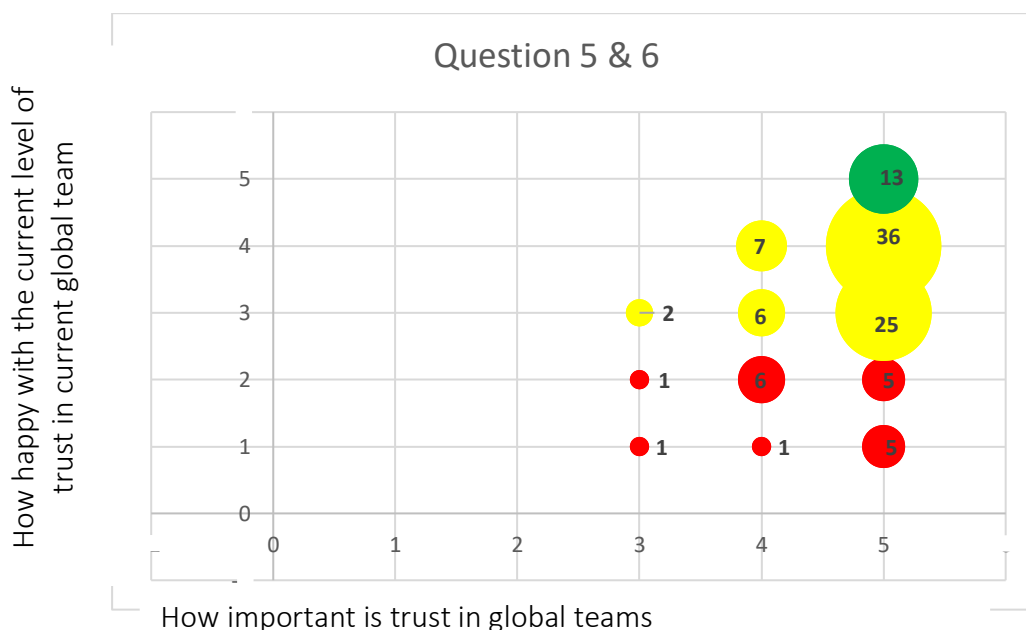


Figure 7. shows the distribution of answers for question 5 and 6. (0= not at all important/ happy 5= very important/ happy, N=108, X=0)



The respondents were asked what they thought of trust-building games and as can be seen in figure 8 the responses were widely spread. The average response however, was 3,2.

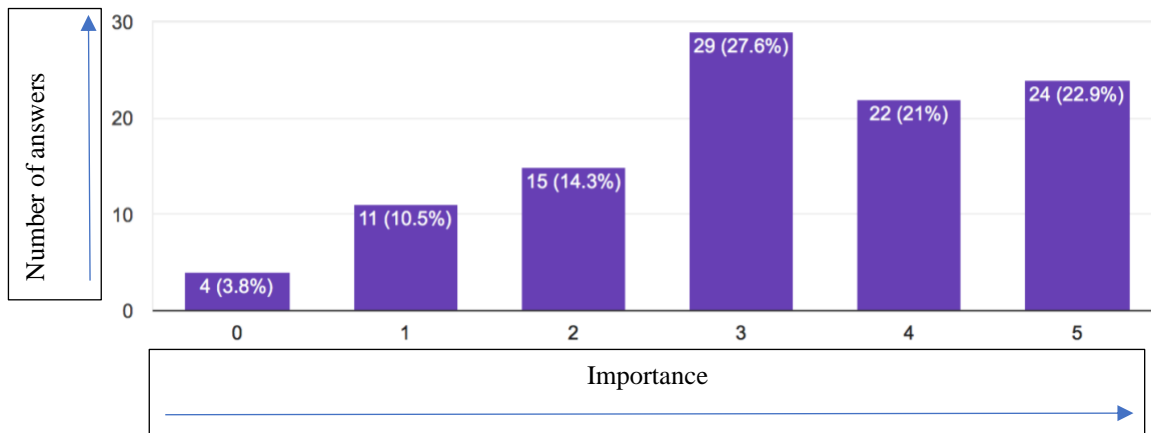


Figure 8. Shows the distribution of answers for question 7 (0= not at all important 5= very important, N=105 X=3)

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to rate how important it is for them to have an overview of the progress of other team members' work within a global team. They were also asked to rate how happy they are with the overview of the progress of team members' work in the global team they respectively are in at the moment. Respondents were asked to think of their primary team if they are in more than one team.

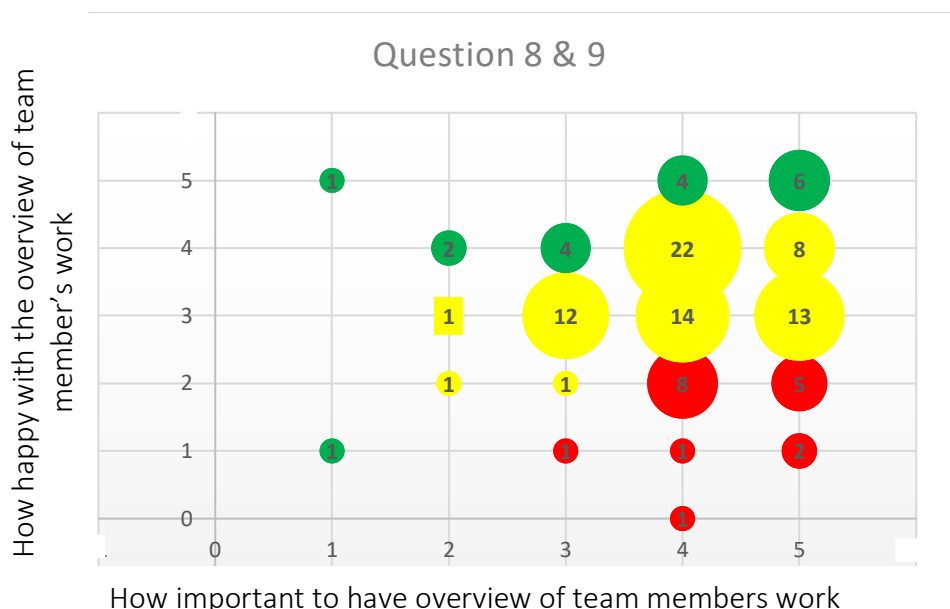


Figure 9. shows the distribution of answers for question 8 and 9. (0= not at all important/ happy 5= very important/ happy, N=108, X=0)

In the survey respondents were asked how important they felt leadership is in securing the success of a global team. The respondents were also asked to rate how happy they were with the leadership in the respective global teams they are part of. (They were asked to think about their primary team if they were in more than one team).

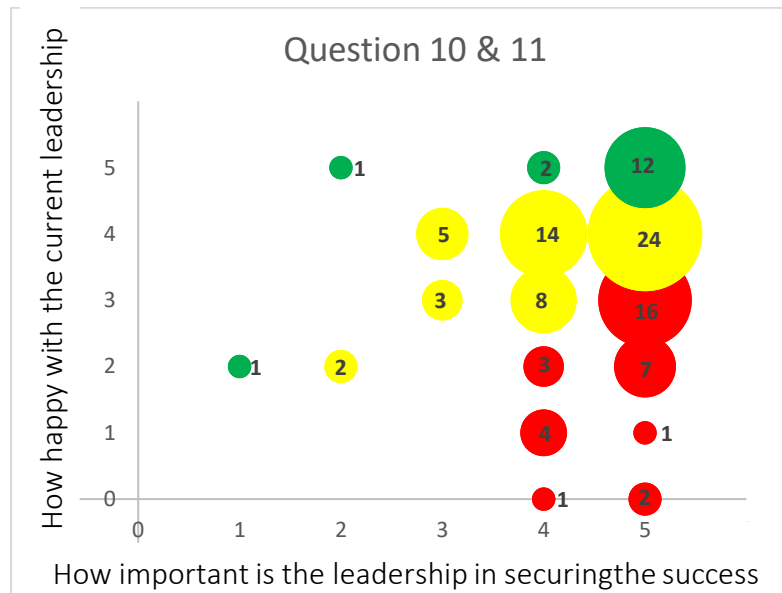


Figure 10. shows the distribution of answers for question 10 and 11. (0= not at all important/ happy 5= very important/ happy, N=108, X=0)

Moreover, the respondents were asked to indicate by choosing from a roll list which tool of communication they prefer in global teams. They had the opportunity to add more alternatives that they thought useful. The most preferred communication tool among the respondents was Skype audio together with the chat and video tool.

Skype audio + chat + video	<b>48,1%</b>
Skype audio + chat	<b>38%</b>
Email	5,6%
Video conference	5,6%
iObeya	0,9%
facetoface	0,9%
Depends on the topics andEnglish level (skype audio or email)	0,9%
Phone call	0

Table 10.Full list of tools of communication preferred by the respondents in global teams (N=106, X=2)

The respondents were asked to indicate from a roll list which tool of communication they most frequently use in global teams. Here they had the possibility to add other forms of communication tools that was not already stated as an alternative. Majority of respondents answered that their main tool of communication is Skype audio in combination with the Skype chat tool.

Skype audio + chat	<b>63,9%</b>
Skype audio + chat + video	<b>23,1%</b>
Email	12%
facetoface	0,9%
Phone call	0

Table 11. List of tools for communication most frequently use in global teams by the respondents (N=106, X=2).

Furthermore, the respondents were asked if they had ever noticed others multitasking in meeting. Large majority of respondents said that have noticed others multitasking. Some respondents said that they had not, while few responded that they did not know. They were also asked to rate how happy they felt about others multitasking in meetings in global teams. When asked how they felt about others multitasking in meetings there was a wide range of answers. Some people indicated that they were not at all happy when colleagues were multitasking during meetings, while others were very happy about the same situation. The distribution of answers on the level of happiness is presented below.

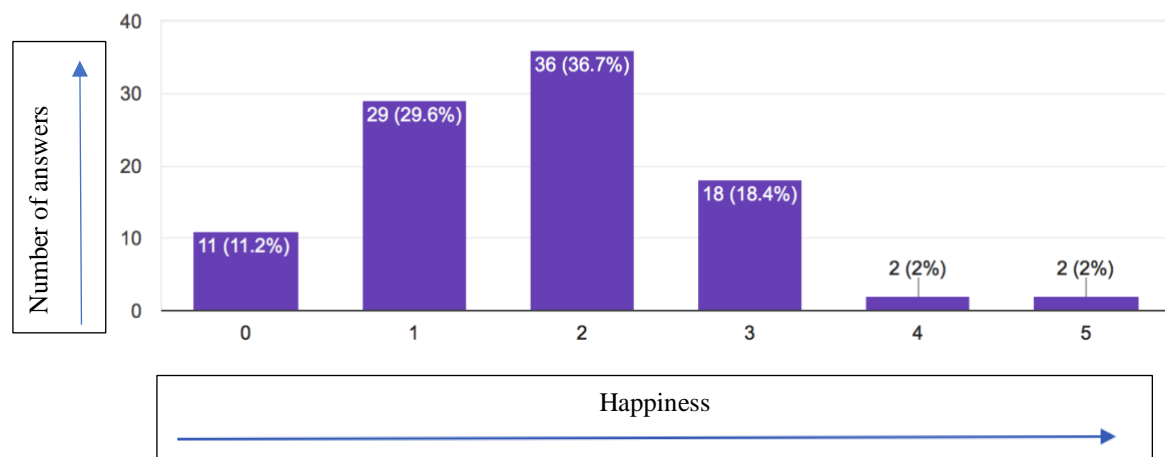


Figure 11. The responses regarding how it felt when others where multitasking during meeting. (0= not at all happy 5= very happy, N=98, X=10)

Additionally, the respondents were asked if they had ever felt the need to multitask during meetings. Large majority of respondents say that they have felt a need to multitask, whereas some respondents say that they have not experienced a need to multitask. Furthermore, people were asked to rate their happiness about needing to multitask if it had ever happened to them. Regarding the respondent's own potential multitasking there was also widely spread answers, ranging from not at all happy to very happy. The distribution of answers is presented in the figure below.

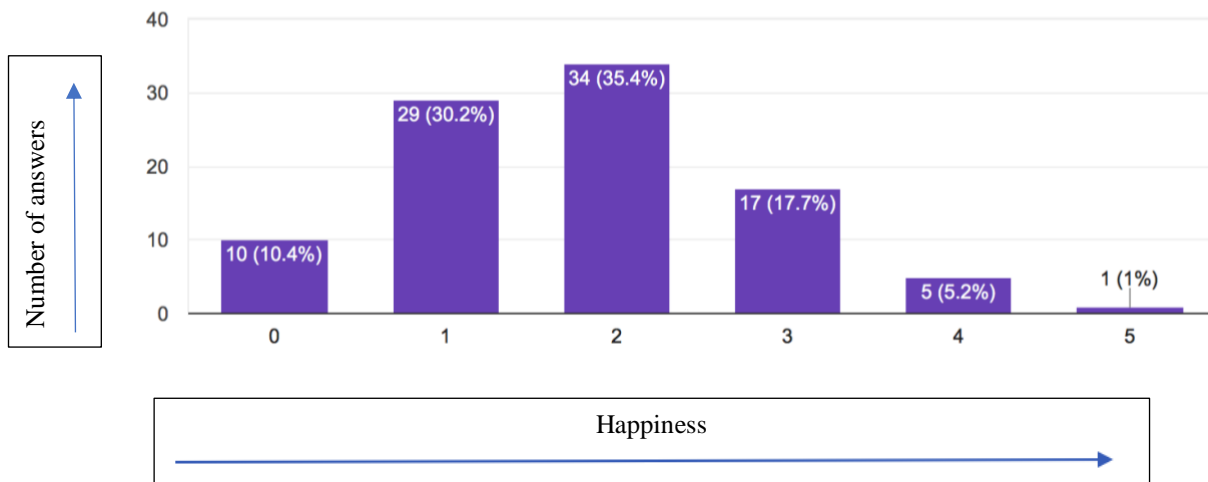


Figure 12. The responses regarding how it felt when others where multitasking during meeting. (0= not at all happy 5= very happy, N=96, X=12)

Also, the respondents were asked to rate how they perceived the amount of meetings in global teams. Half of the respondents answered that they sometimes find it challenging to manage all the meetings that need to be attended.

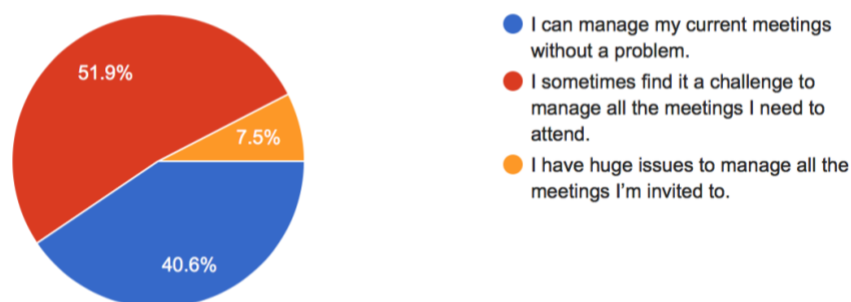


Figure 13. Distribution of answers regarding the number of meetings (N=106, X=2).

#### 4.2.1 Additional comments left on the survey

The last question on the survey was a message saying that if the respondent had any additional comments they were welcome to write in the blank paragraph that had been put there. All but few of the comments can be found in Appendixes: Answers to survey. A couple of the responses are not presented because the respondents had left their names, in order to keep all respondents anonymous their additional comments will not be presented.

Majority of responses were about multitasking in virtual meetings, a couple of the comments are presented here. For the interested reader, more responses can be found in the appendix. One person left a note saying: *“In global meetings, we must involve the participants to make them more active. It’s an easy trap to just sit there with the headset and answer to our mail instead of participating in the meeting. Which is why, its important the meeting leader involve the participants on a regular basis in order to catch their attention.”*. Also, on the topic of multitasking another person left a comment stating: *“Regarding multi-tasking: During a meeting, my feeling is that sometimes I have no choice but to multi-task due to time pressures. I understand that others may have the same time pressures so although I don't like it, I understand why it is sometimes necessary.”* While a couple of respondents advocated the effectiveness of F-2-F interaction. One person posted: *“The combination F2F, Skype calls, emails and chatting is outstanding as collaboration tool. Considering Project and Work delays, F2F meetings speed up Project progress and are cost efficient on a global level”*. Another person left a comment stating: *“One issue that we have is that we very seldom get to meet eachother in global teams. My experience is that if we have met before the trust increases a lot.”*

#### 4.3 Observations

It has been observed that most people sit in open office-landscapes and that most meetings seem to be carried out through skype. People then sit/stand by their computers with headphones. An observation is that when people participating in meetings and sit in an open office space the volume tend to rise to a level where people to some extent seem to disturb each other. Especially those who are not in a meeting at the moment but need to be at their desks to attend to work anyhow. However, it seems to be generally accepted that this is the way things work. Additionally, multitasking to some degree has been observed in many meetings. For example, when someone has been invited to parallel meetings that person might have an ear pod in one ear listening to a meeting, while watching a presentation from a different meeting. Furthermore, an observation within this study is that onboarding of new team members takes time and effort. It also takes some time for the team to get back to speed where they were before the new team member joined. However, when needing to introduce a new person it seems like the already established team members are very used to this and people are happy to slow things down and explain before catch speed again. Another observation was that when discussing or proposing trust-building games it during the study in some cases it seemed to be a stigma around the word *games*. In turn, observations have been done regarding the technology used. It seemed like the main tool of communication is Skype with audio and no video.

## 5 Discussion

In this chapter the empirical findings from interviews, observations and survey will be analysed, discussed and compared with the findings from the literature review. There is a number of factors for global teams to be successful. Based on the results from this study: leadership, F-2-F interaction and kick-offs, building trust, effects of projects being time limited, culture within global teams, handling meetings in an effective way are the main factors. These will be highlighted and discussed in this chapter.

The importance of leadership was validated through literature, survey as well as interviews. The overall message regarding leadership from the interviewees was that the more immature a team is the more important leadership is. Essentially, saying that a mature team is less sensitive to leadership and can enjoy a delegated and distributed leadership while still delivering great results. Based on the study's findings one can conclude that global teams need more structure and communication and support by management, compared to co-located teams. It goes in line with the generally accepted situational leadership. Naturally, when new teams are put together or when new members join an already existing team it is likely that the leader need to adapt into a more coaching role. However, exactly which type of leadership is applicable varies. The leadership needed is influenced by the level of maturity of the team, what personalities the team members have, their professional background and what sort of project it is etc. Due to the large number of contributing factors it is hard to determine one right way to lead a global team. However, it is evident that when possible to do F-2-F interaction and F-2-F kick-off, this may be highly beneficial (Dubé & Paré, 2001).

Regarding the building of culture, many interviewees say this involves transparent communication, which enables building and sustaining connections and trust – aspects that can be assumed to be desired attributes to a team culture. Nevertheless, when saying that the leader has an important role that is not implying that the team members doesn't have to work hard as well. It is after all global teams that is aimed at. When looking to build a team it takes great effort and especially so when it is global. Hertel et. al (2004) say that global teams must have a high level of trust and interaction. Similarly, all interviewees also consider it important to have trust in global teams in order to be successful. The conclusion is that one cannot solely rely on interaction regarding project matters to build the team's foundation for communication, there still need to be a level of personalized interaction. This could for instance be done by scheduling extra minutes in at least one team meeting every week to create a forum for informal conversations that "normal teams" would have by the coffee machine. Since it is not possible for a distributed team to have that sort of spontaneous interaction by the coffee machine the results of the present study indicate that time must be dedicated to informal conversations as some interviewees said it is difficult to find opportunities for informal chats. Therefore, it may be beneficial to schedule time to have a quick informal chat.

Based on previous reasoning it can be concluded that when teams are mature enough to have developed their own culture their will also be a level of trust. It is desired for a global team to have a high level of trust and interaction among all team members that enables direct communication to speed up the project. Thompson (2008) point out F-2-F interaction as a driver

of effectiveness and quality of team work. Furthermore, Thompson, says the biggest challenge when aiming for productivity is to coordinate team members' efforts when F-2-F interaction is not possible. Chen (2012) says that real trust is built in day-to-day interaction which understandably is hard to do in globally distributed teams as team members do not interact or meet every day. Due to distributed teams being global, team members have less possibilities to "casually" check in on each other's progress, such as walking over to a colleague's desk, it is evident that the global team members need to build and sustain trust in each other's professional ability as well as individuals. This needs to be done imminently through virtual channels. When looking to do this trust building games can be a useful tool. However, it may be preferred to not call it games as one of the observations during the study is that there seem to be a stigma around the word games. The usefulness of trust- building games was stated by a few interviewees and also by Chen (2012) who articulates that distributed teams use games for trust building when F-2-F is not possible.

Moreover, an aspect of trust that was discussed by some of the interviewees is the aspect of projects being time limited, and that people do sometimes need to move on to other projects while their "main" project is still running. This leads to new team members needing to be introduced mid-project which reduces productivity by the team (Schwaber, 2001). The temporality of projects can according to most of the interviewees be handled by effective and smooth onboarding of team members and thereby saving time and cost. However, many interviewees tell stories of teams being under constant time pressure leading to such smooth onboarding not always being the case. Even though not explicitly stated in interviewees it has been observed within this study when onboarding of new team members is not effective it takes some time for the team to get back to speed where they were before the new team member joined. Therefore, it may be desired to have more permanent teams as that gives the team a chance to mature, but due to the nature of project-based team work that is hard to maintain.

The concept of culture in itself is highly complex (Black, 1998), teams being distributed add yet another layer of complexity. The same message was suggested in interviews. Different national cultures are brought into global teams, this can create frustration as people do not always understand each other culturally. Of course, "normal teams" can also experience mis-communication, however, with the results from this thesis it is by some interviewees clearly expressed that global teams have mis-understandings to a larger extent.

Many interviewees talked about the Volvo meeting culture as intense and that there is generally a lot of meetings, not infrequently meetings running in parallel. Few people said that they have huge issues to manage all the meetings they are invited to. However, half the respondents say they sometimes find it a challenging to manage the meetings they need to attend to. Both through interviews and survey the respondents said that Skype is the main tool for communication. A few people talked about the importance of making sure people are participating in skype meetings on equal terms. An issue that was raised was that those physically located in the same office have the opportunity to share meeting rooms and thereby get an advantage in communication due to body language which cannot be picked up on by those participating virtually. Therefore, it was pointed out that either everyone should be in a

meeting room together or no one should. It can be understood that those who are located in the same office find it more rewarding to sit together rather than alone, but then perhaps everyone are not participates on equal terms.

Volvo Group IT have some meeting instructions including “no answering of emails during meetings”. Through observations during the study it was found that some of the Volvo employees seemed to be caught in returning multitasking in order to make time for all necessary tasks. Similarly, a respondent left a comment on the survey stating: “*Regarding multi-tasking: During a meeting, my feeling is that sometimes I have no choice but to multi-task due to time pressures. I understand that others may have the same time pressures so although I don't like it, I understand why it is sometimes necessary.*” The results from the survey tell the story of a large majority of respondents who say they have noticed others multitasking in meetings as well as having felt the need themselves to multitask during meetings. When asked how they felt about others multitasking in meetings there was a wide range of answers. Some people indicated that they were not at all happy when colleagues were multitasking during meetings while others were very happy about the same situation. Regarding the respondent's own potential multitasking there was also widely spread answers, ranging from not at all happy to very happy. Due to the wide variety of responses the results of the study indicate there is no consensus regarding multitasking.

The last question of the survey was open for people to leave any thoughts they wanted to share, many responses were regarding multitasking. One of the respondents to the survey left a comment stating: “*In global meetings, we must involve the participants to make them more active. It's an easy trap to just sit there with the headset and answer to our mail instead of participating in the meeting. Which is why, its important the meeting leader involve the participants on a regular basis in order to catch their attention.*”. Similarly, as stated by some interviewees who propose the importance of a person leading meetings to engage the meeting participants in conversation.

It has been stated in interviews and validated through the survey that there is a variety of technology options available to sustain communication in the complex global structures within Volvo Group IT. However, with the results from interviews and survey as well as observations it has become evident that few of the respondents use the variety of technology which is available. Therefore, it could be beneficial to make room for personalization of communication by using the video function when in skype meetings. Regarding meetings in global teams one can conclude to avoid having meetings where part of the meeting participants are F-2-F while others are joining via skype link with audio. Based on the study's results, if found in a situation where some people are in a meeting room and additional team members participate from other locations, it could be beneficial for those participating from afar if the team uses video on skype. Joining via skype link with audio and video would bring an additional dimension to the meeting. Those not present F-2F would then be able to pick up on things like body language which otherwise have passed them by.



## 6 Conclusion and success factors

Global teams can enjoy both advantages as well as be held back by hindrances. The advantages aimed at are capturing exceptional talents at a competitive price, with team members being spread out one can gain knowledge about local markets which is then brought in to the global strategy. However, to be able to gain one must first overcome the complexity of globality such as geographical distance, time zones, language and culture. In this chapter some concluding factors will be presented regarding capturing success in global teams.

Situation adapted leadership in global teams is vital as the project leader will be the hub of the team. It is up to the person in a leading position to demand project funding so that the team can meet for an initial kick-off. The team may benefit from the leader setting a clear meeting structure that takes in consideration the different time zones that the team members are having. Considering that the communication will probably be in a language which is perhaps not in any team member's native language, it is important to use very explicit communication to make sure that the message gets passed on. Again, this is a leader's task to set the scene on what communication that should be used. While aiming for great communication let's not forget the importance of the ability to be informal within a team. The results indicate that F-2-F kick-offs initially and continuous F-2-F interaction can be used to accelerate the creating of team culture and trust. This can lead to a more effective team and enable team members to have informal conversations. Trust-building games may be useful but try not to call it games, perhaps refer to it as team building. Generally, take the time to think about who to invite to a meeting. When cascading invitations, it projects a message of not having thought things through. The results indicate that this is connected to the amount of meetings that people are invited to and feel obliged to participate in. A couple of interviewees and large majority of respondents to the survey say that they have felt the need to multitask when in global team meetings.

## Success factors for global virtual project teams at Volvo Group IT

- Ideally, the leader determines a very clear meeting structure that takes into account the different time zones that the team members have, builds formal communication structures and communicates a clear direction for the project that can serve as a facilitator to keep all team members in the loop. The leader should apply situational leadership depending on the level of maturity the team has.
- Team members need to understand that they have equally important roles. They all carry an individual responsibility to contribute to open communication.
- F-2-F kick-offs in early stages of projects.
- Use of technology available when F-2-F interaction is limited, for example, video conferencing can be used as well as video on skype.
- Having pre-set meeting agendas with a clearly communicated purpose for the meeting and try to reduce the number of meetings by avoiding any "cascading" of meeting invitations.
- Use of very explicit communication, with *check-ins* and *check-outs* to make sure everyone got the message.
- Another success factor seems to be making sure to celebrate the achieved project goals. Even when acknowledgements need to happen via Skype
- Yet an important factor seem to be to then continue the efforts, in global teams one has to constantly put in effort on building relations, perhaps even more important than in regular teams.



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## Appendixes

### Action steps for creating and maintaining culture

Table 12. Action steps for creating and sustaining trust a shorter version of Greenberg et. Al. (2007).

Stage	Trust	Manager's actions	Team leader's actions
<b>1. Establishing the team</b>	Dispositional trust	Choosing members	
	Foundation for the development of trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical/functional skills</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predisposition to trust</li> </ul>	
		Training	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and decision support software</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being virtual</li> </ul>	
		Reward structure	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative not competitive</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Inception</b>	Swift trust	Introductions	Team-building exercise
	Build bonds of cohesion for the development of trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3rd party testimonials concerning past accomplishments of team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abilities</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validate technical/functional role in team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to team</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish 'rules of engagement' for communication and interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal/social component</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to establish bonds</li> </ul>
<b>3. Organizing</b>	Trust in teammates'	Evaluate participation in organizing activities	Encourage participation in organizing activities
	—Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include contribution to organizing activities in evaluation criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage participation from all members</li> </ul>
	—Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize and encourage leadership while discouraging domination and cliques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge and commend suggestions of</li> </ul>

			individual members to the whole team
		Evaluate communication patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not exclude non-contributing members</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include communication patterns in evaluation criteria</li> </ul>	Monitor communication patterns
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require timely and substantive responses</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prohibit unsanctioned subgroups from communicating without including entire appropriate group</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage social aspects of communication</li> </ul>
<b>4. Transition</b>	Trust transition	Be available	Move focus from procedures to accomplishing task
	—From ability and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuate the end of the organizing stage and the beginning of the task with an ‘event’</li> </ul>
	—To benevolence and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change focus from individual to group</li> </ul>
<b>5. Accomplishing the task</b>	Trust in teammates'	Support members	Encourage supportive communication in accomplishing the task
	—Benevolence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release members from local activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish interim deadlines and celebrate when met</li> </ul>
	—Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize that team activities have priority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage members to express their appreciation of each other's contributions</li> </ul>
		Evaluate participation in accomplishing the task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to encourage social aspects of communication</li> </ul>



		• Reward achievement of interim deadlines	• Continue to require timely and substantive responses
		• Continue to include communication patterns in evaluation criteria	

### Interview questions

Introduction
1. What is your title?
2. How long have you been with the company?
3. What does your daily work tasks involve?
4. How do you perceive the work situation? Room for improvement?
From a team perspective? The company as a whole?
Success
5. What do you consider to be success?
6. To what degree do you think your co-workers share the same view of success as you do?
7. Why differ / why do not differ?
8. How do you make people proud?
9. According to you, why are you part of a global team?
10. How can that be overcome?
(give example of the “recipes” below by Gross and Shichman (1987))
➤ developing a sense of history,
➤ creating a sense of oneness,
➤ promoting a sense of membership, and
➤ increasing exchange among members.
Team set up
11. What would you say defines a team? What is a global team?
12. To what degree do you think your co-workers share the same view of a team as you do?
13. How many people are in each team?
14. How is the team put together?
15. Are you part of more than one team?
16. Do the work methods differ between teams?
17. If you find that the teams use different work methods, can you please quickly describe in what way?
18. Why do they differ?
19. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the way I have understood it – the teams set up is to some extent temporary. What effects do you think that has on the team?
20. Can you tell me about an experience that has shaped your perception of working in global teams?

<b>Benefits/ Drawbacks</b>
<b>21.</b> Do you see any personal benefits generated from working in a global team?
<b>22.</b> Do you see any benefits for the team generated from working in a global team?
<b>23.</b> Do you see any benefits for the company as a whole generated from working in global teams?
<b>24.</b> Do you see any personal drawbacks generated from working in a global team?
<b>25.</b> Do you see any drawbacks for the team as a whole generated from working in a global team?
<b>26.</b> Do you see any drawbacks for the company as a whole generated from working in global teams?
<b>27.</b> Do you have any other comments or additions?

## Survey questions

1. When a new global team is put together how important is it to you to have a F-2-F kick-off?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

2. How happy are you with opportunities to do F-2-F kickoffs when a new global team is put together?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very happy

3. In a global team, how important is it for you to know your team members on a personal level?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

4. In your current global team, how happy are you with the personal level you know your team members? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

5. How important is it for you to have trust within a global team?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

6. How happy are you with the current level of trust in the global team you are in at the moment? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very happy

7. What do you think about trust-building games in global teams?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very useful

8. How important is it for you to have an overview of the progress of your other team members' work with in a global team?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

9. How happy are you with your overview of the progress of your team members' work in the global team you are in at the moment? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very happy

10. How important do you feel leadership is in securing the success of a global team?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

11. How happy are you with the leadership in the global team you are part of? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

0 1 2 3 4 5

Not at all happy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very happy

12. What is your preferred tool of communication in global teams?

- ☐ Skype audio + chat
- ☐ Skype audio + chat + video
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Phone call
- ☐ Video conference
- ☐ Other...

13. What is your most frequently used tool of communication in global teams?

- ☐ Skype audio + chat
- ☐ Skype audio + chat + video
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Phone call
- ☐ Other...

During the interviews prior to this questionnaire it has been highlighted that when in skype meetings in distributed teams (as well as other form of teams) it is common that people attend parallel meetings by dividing the computer screen and/or answering emails while attending meetings.

14. Have you noticed others multitasking during meetings in global teams? (If no, please go directly to number 16)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Do not know

15. How do you feel about others multitasking when in meetings in global teams?

0 1 2 3 4 5

Not at all happy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very happy

16. Have you ever felt the need to multitask when in meetings in global teams? (If no, please go directly to number 18).

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Do not know

17. How did you feel about needing to multitask during a meeting in a global team?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very happy

18. How do you feel about the amount of meetings you current attend in global teams?

- ☐ I can manage my current meetings without a problem.
- ☐ I sometimes find it a challenge to manage all the meetings I need to attend.
- ☐ I have huge issues to manage all the meetings I'm invited to.
- ☐ Other.....

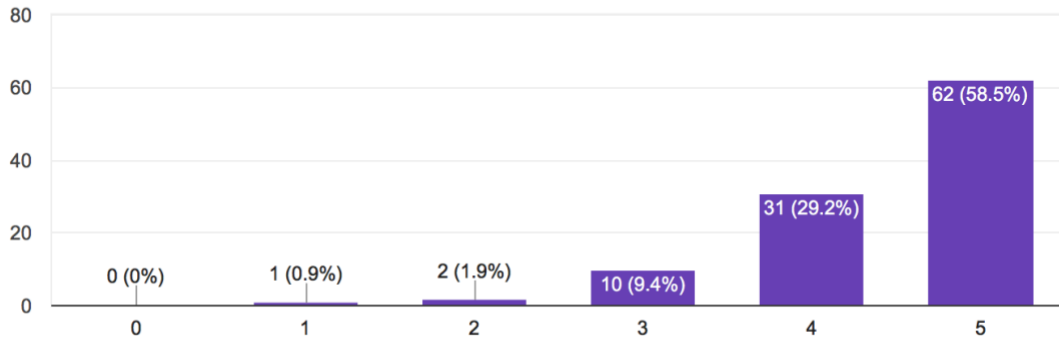
19. If you have any additional comments, please write in the paragraph below.

Long-answer text .....

## Answers to survey

### 1. When a new global team is put together how important is it to you to have a face-to-face kick-off?

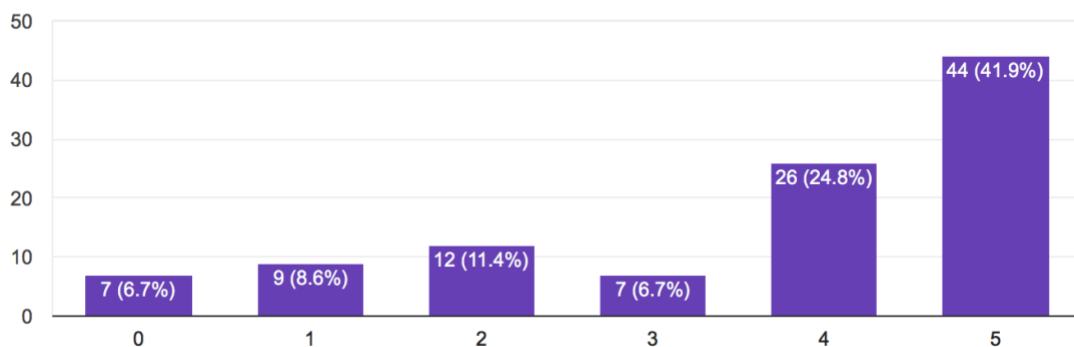
106 responses



### 2. How happy are you with opportunities to do face-to-face kickoffs when a new global team is put together?



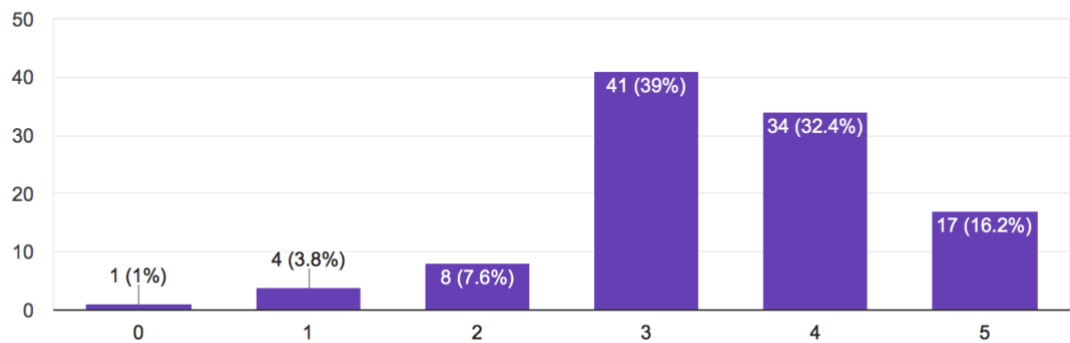
105 responses



3. In a global team, how important is it for you to know your team members on a personal level?



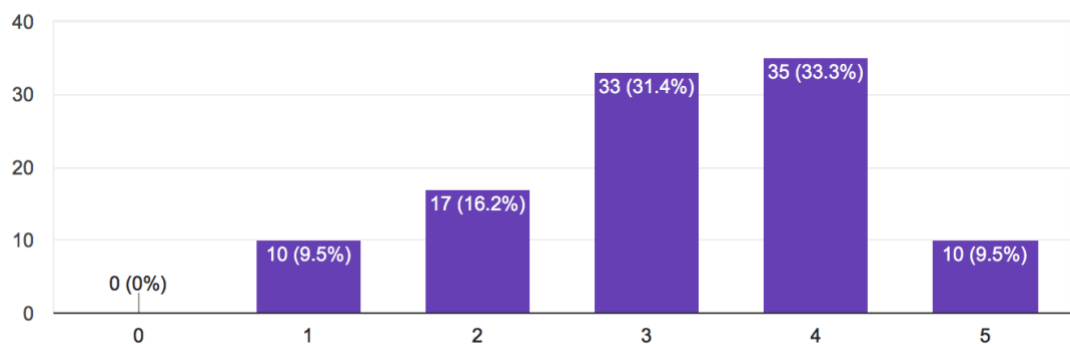
105 responses



4. In your current global team, how happy are you with the personal level you know your team members? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

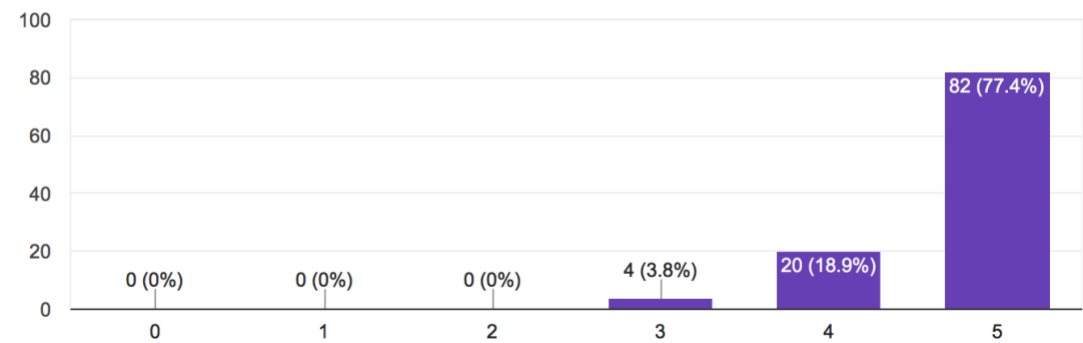


105 responses



5. How important is it for you to have trust within a global team?

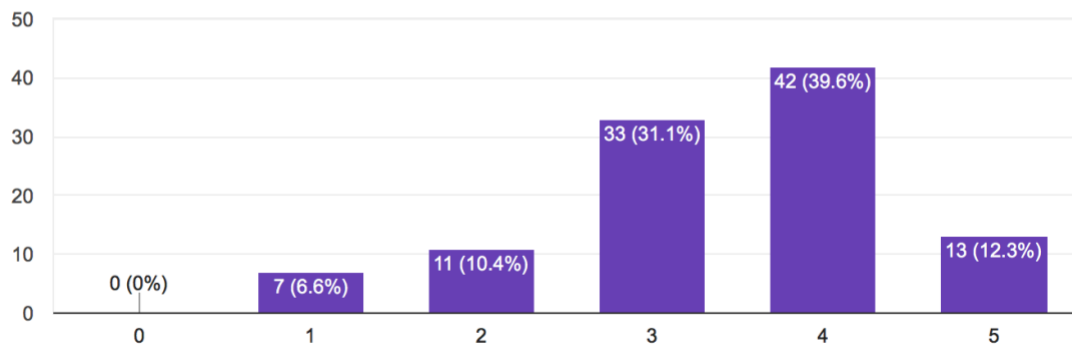
106 responses



6. How happy are you with the current level of trust in the global team you are in at the moment? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

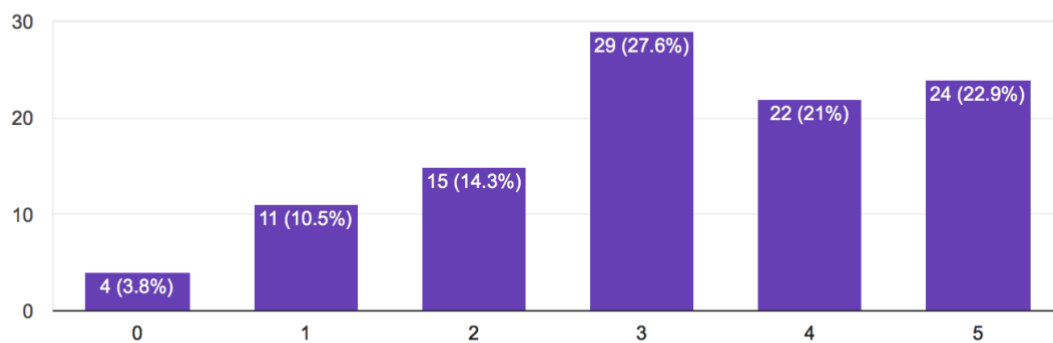


106 responses



7. What do you think about trust-building games in global teams?

105 responses

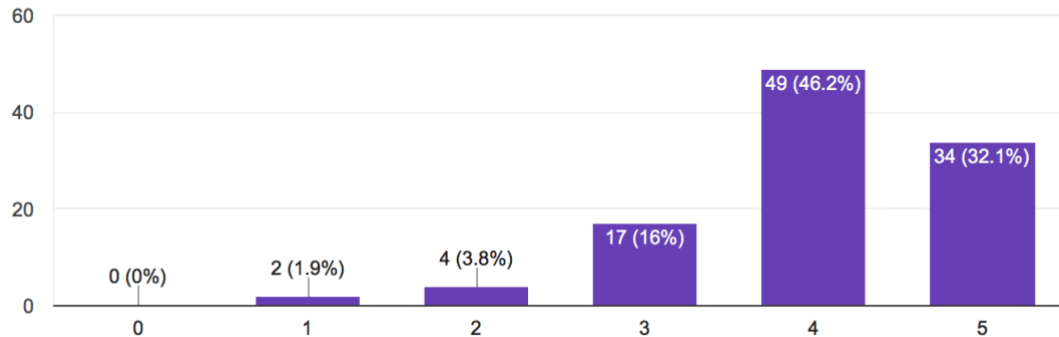




8. How important is it for you to have an overview of the progress of your other team members' work with in a global team?

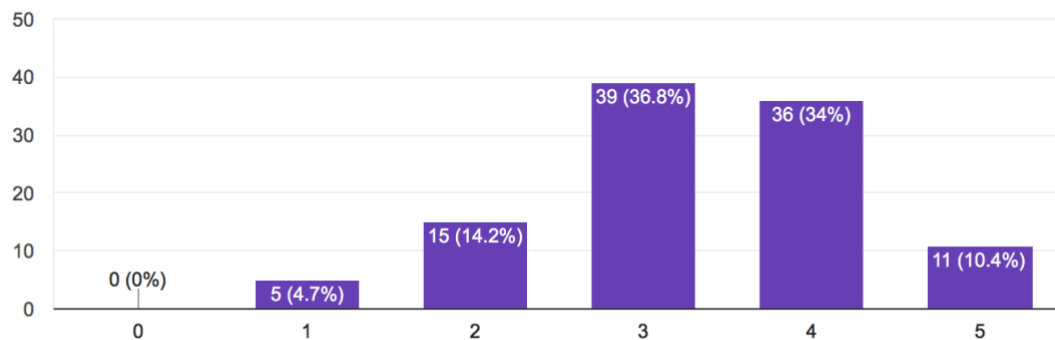


106 responses



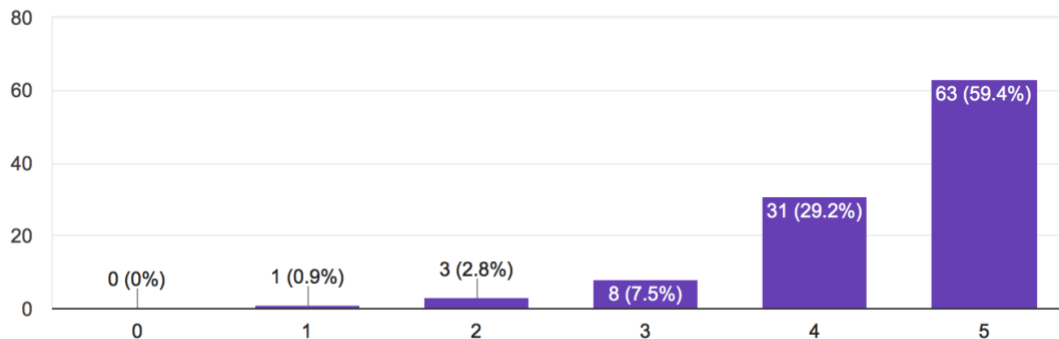
9. How happy are you with your overview of the progress of your team members' work in the global team you are in at the moment? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

106 responses



## 10. How important do you feel leadership is in securing the success of a global team?

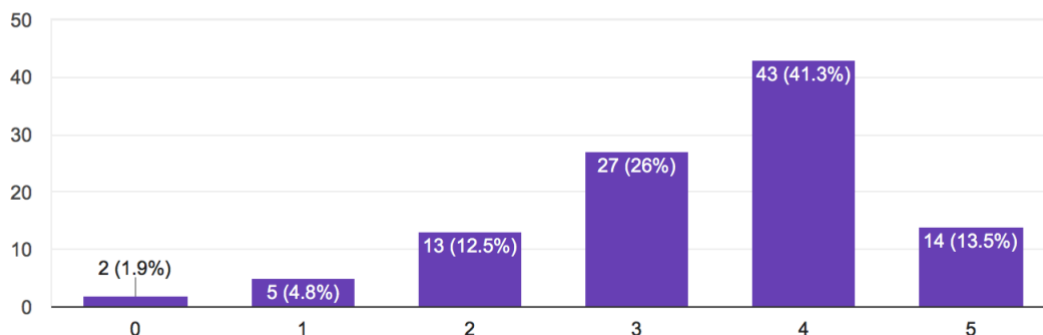
106 responses



## 11. How happy are you with the leadership in the global team you are part of? - Think about your primary team if you're in more than one team.

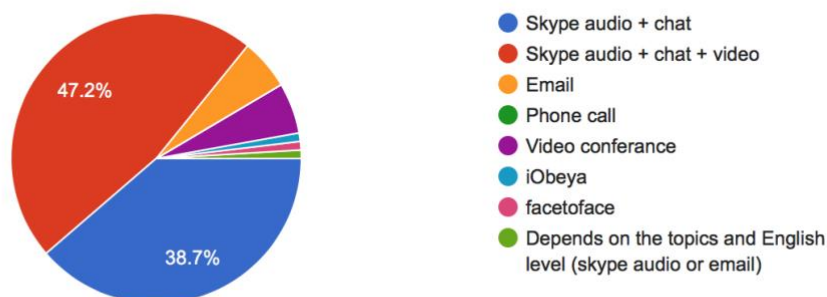


104 responses



## 12. What is your preferred tool of communication in global teams?

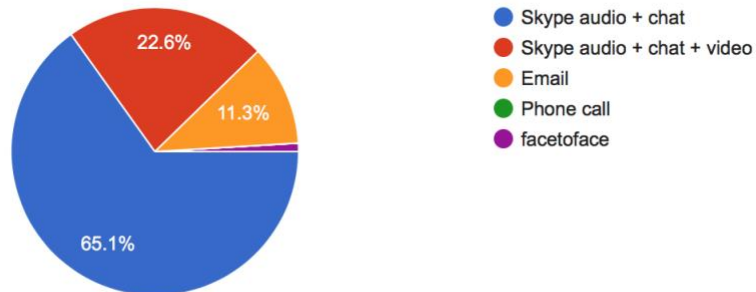
106 responses



### 13. What is your most frequently used tool of communication in global teams?

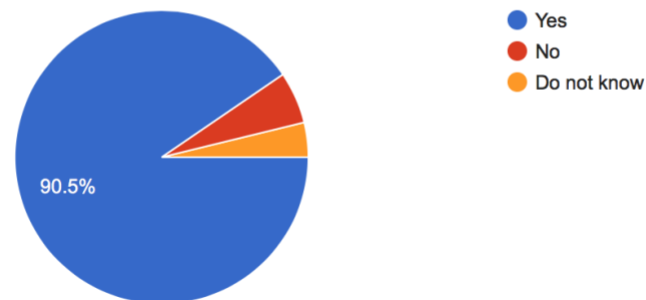


106 responses



### 14. Have you noticed others multitasking during meetings in global teams? (If no, please go directly to number 16)

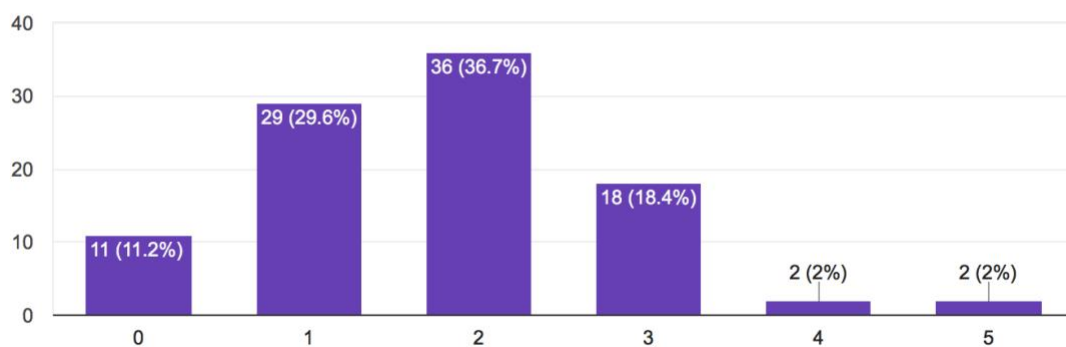
105 responses



### 15. How do you feel about others multitasking when in meetings in global teams?

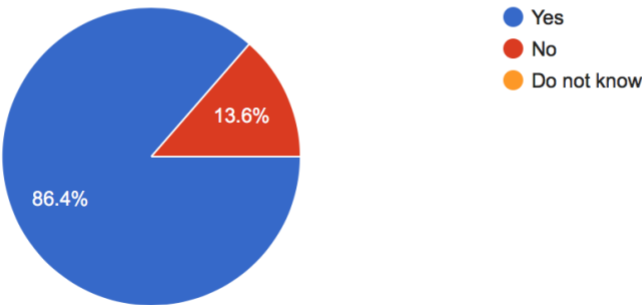


98 responses



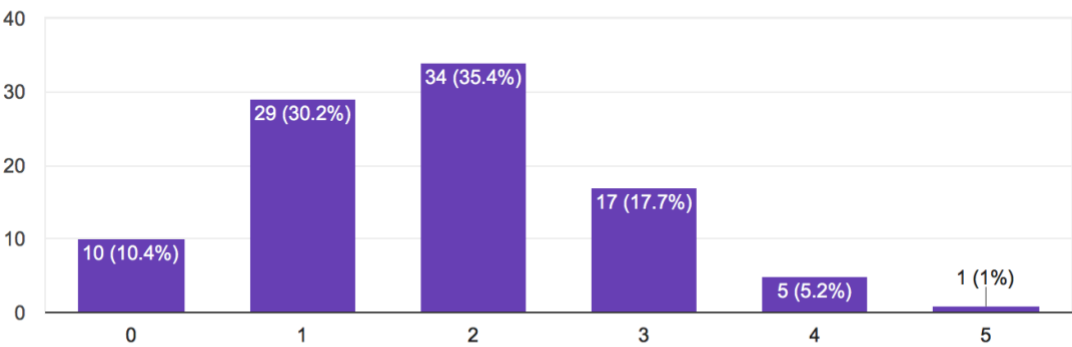
16. Have you ever felt the need to multitask when in meetings in global teams? (If no, please go directly to number 18).

103 responses



17. How did you feel about needing to multitask during a meeting in a global team?

96 responses



18. How do you feel about the amount of meetings you current attend in global teams?

106 responses



The last question (number 19), was an open question for the respondents to add things they thought valid to the questionnaire but had not been enough elaborated on. A few responses were people sending greetings, those have not been included in the results to be able to keep those who responded to the survey anonymous.

Many of the responses were about multitasking in virtual meetings.

<p>” The reason for multitasking are unnecessary/useless meetings.”</p>
<p>“When it comes to multitasking during global team meetings the issue for me is not multitasking and being unfocused. The issue is that you attend several meetings where you do not interact, if the subject is not related to you or intended to be presented to you then you multitask.”</p>
<p>“One reflection for the question about multitasking, I am pretty sure that it depends on that people are invited to meetings where they shouldn’t be invited to and they don’t know in advance if it is an important meeting. This depends in the organizers don’t really know whom to invite and therefore invites more people than necessary. I think we are not asking us in advance if the invitation I get is really where I can contribute or if it benefits me. “</p>
<p>“Regarding multi-tasking: During a meeting, my feeling is that sometimes I have no choice but to multi-task due to time pressures. I understand that others may have the same time pressures so although I don't like it, I understand why it is sometimes necessary. “</p>
<p>“In global meetings, we must involve the participants to make them more active. It’s an easy trap to just sit there with the headset and answer to our mail instead of participating in the meeting. Which is why, its important the meeting leader involve the participants on a regular basis in order to catch their attention. “</p>
<p>“When situation arise we tend do multitasking, but that is acceptable, but not always. It is very good to collaborate with global team using F2F meeting, this gives personal bonding while working an assignment. “</p>
<p>“The need or willingness to multi-task during meetings is not related to global teams. However, not sitting physically in the same room makes it easier to multitask for the ones who want to do so. “</p>

Another person aired the importance of having development teams sitting together.

“Development teams must sit together, period! Even if a team is distributed in the same country it will not work. If a global team is needed it must be splitted in subteams that sits together. Each subteam is responsible for their part of the delivery so cooperation between subteams is limited as much as possible. “

Some responses to question 19 was emphasizing the impact F-2-F meetings can have.

“Being able to meet F2F at least for the first time and then follow up every year at least makes me more motivated in both attending the meetings, answering emails and not multitasking during the meetings. The trust is already there together with the motivation when I have met the person live. “

” One issue that we have is that we very seldom get to meet eachother in global teams. My experience is that if we have met before the trust increases a lot.”

Followed by a comment about leadership

“LEADERSHIP: The more immature the team is the more important leadership is. A mature team need less leadership and can enjoy a delegated and distributed leadership. However global teams need more structure and communications support by the manager compared to smaller co located teams. “

“for Q4. I would like to add that I am relatively new to the teams and therefore haven't had as much opportunity to get to know the team members on a personal level. “

“Volvo Group Gouvernance are not global common team, they are silos. The combination F2F, Skype calls, emails and chatting is outstanding as collaboration tool. Considering Project and Work delays, F2F meetings speed up Project progress and are cost efficient on a global level. “