



Middle Manager's Skillset and Organizational Change in the Supply Chain

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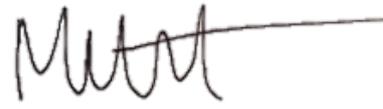
Thank you!

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Abstract

Title	Middle Manager's Skillset and Organizational Change in the Supply Chain
Authors	Malin Bengtsson and Matilda Westerblad
Keywords	Organizational change; middle managers; supply chain; leadership; phases of transition; mobilize; move; sustain.
Background	The globalized world is acknowledged by increased competition, and since competition today is between supply chains there is an importance of controlling the supply chain. The globalization is one of the factors for the increasing need for organizational change, and the process of implementing strategic change is affected by skills for effective leadership; conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills.
Research Question	What skillsets are important for middle managers through the process of organizational change in supply chain?
Purpose	The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of the middle manager's skillset and how it differs through the phases of organizational change in supply chain. By focusing on middle managers, we put emphasis on the individuals involved in putting the plan for organizational change into practice. A model is developed explain the utilization of skills in the phases of transition.
Method	For this study we used a qualitative research method with a single case study design, by interviewing seven middle managers in an international organization. The empirical data were based on semi-structured interviews with respondents in middle managerial positions in supply chain. An abductive approach was applied through the process of writing the thesis.
Theoretical Framework	Environmental factors as a reason for organizational changes in supply chain were initially described. Change and the phases in change processes as well as the middle manager's role in the change process were further explained. Required skills for effective leadership when presenting, implementing and embedding organizational change initiatives were further described.
Findings	This thesis shows that a middle manager who faces an organizational change in supply chain are required to focus on specific skills at different points of time, when operating in the different phases of transition.

Sammanfattning

Titel	Mellanchefens Färdigheter och Organisationsförändringar i Supply Chain
Författare	Malin Bengtsson and Matilda Westerblad
Keywords:	Organisationsförändring; mellanchefer; supply chain; ledarskap; faser genom processen; förbereda (mobilize); förändra (move); fastslå (sustain).
Bakgrund	Den globaliserade världen kännetecknas av ökad konkurrens och globaliseringen är en av anledningarna till ett behov av organisationsförändringar. Att kontrollera sin supply chain, då konkurrens idag framför allt är mellan organisationers supply chains, har visat sig bli viktigt. Processen av att implementera dessa organisationsförändringar påverkas av färdigheter förändringsledaren besitter.
Forskningsfråga	Vilka färdigheter är viktiga för mellanchefer under processen av organisationsförändring i supply chain?
Syfte	Syftet med studien var att utveckla en förståelse för mellanchefers färdigheter och hur de skiljer sig genom de olika faserna i organisationsförändringar i supply chain. Genom att fokusera på mellanchefer, och inte på ledningsgruppen, la vi vikt vid de personer som är involverade i implementeringen av organisationsförändringar. En modell för att öka förståelsen för ledarens användande av färdigheter i de olika faserna har också utvecklats.
Metod	Vi använde en kvalitativ undersökningsmetod i denna studie, där vi utgick från individuella fall genom att intervjua sju stycken mellanchefer i en internationell organisation. Empirin baserades på semistrukturerade intervjuer, med respondenter på mellanchefspositioner i supply chain. Ett abduktivt förhållningssätt tillämpades genom hela processen.
Teoretisk Referensram	Först och främst beskrivs faktorer i omgivningen som kan påverka organisationsförändringar i supply chain. Organisationsförändring och faserna i denna, samt mellanchefens roll i processen förklaras sedan. Vidare belyses färdigheter för effektivt ledarskap i de olika faserna av organisationsförändring.
Slutsatser	Denna uppsats visar på att mellanchefer som ställs inför organisationsförändringar i supply chain måste fokusera på specifika färdigheter vid olika tidpunkter, i faserna av organisationsförändringen.

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1 Introduction

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. The introduction will start with presenting the importance of being aware of environmental circumstances that affects the supply chain. Organizational changes in general and the leader's role in these processes will then be highlighted. Continuously, we will describe skills for effective leadership in the phases of transition. A problem discussion will then be presented, which defines our research gap, our research question and the purpose of the study.

1.1 Problem Background

The globalized world is acknowledged by increased competition. Organizations are operating in an increasingly competitive environment which is changing quickly (Handfield, Sroufe & Walton, 2005). This intense competition forces organizations to search for innovative ways to reduce waste and its associated costs, create a flexible organizational strategy, and improve their market position (Handfield et al., 2005). The globalization has also forced companies to change focus from within the company to a wider perspective, where the supply chain plays an important role. Since the globalization trend will continue to grow, an awareness and continuous work with the supply chain is determinant (Thomas & Griffin, 1996). It is further argued that competition today is not between organizations, but between supply chains, which confirms the importance of controlling the supply chain (Heizer & Render, 2011). This means that supply chains, defined as the network of organizations that together through upstream and downstream linkages that creates value in every function of the network (Mentzer et al., 2001), need to be functional and able to respond to customer demands (Thomas & Griffin, 1996).

No organization is able to stand still in the dynamic competitive environment that today's companies act in, as change is an on-going process (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). When facing the need for change, middle managers have a responsibility to mediate and implement the change in the organization. One of the most important and crucial managerial responsibilities is to lead change, and therefore, the change leader has an important role for the implementation of change (Yukl, 2008). The process of implementing strategic change involves managers at different levels in an organization (Johnson, Whittington, Scholes, Angwin & Regnér, 2014), since middle managers act as implementers of strategic plans from top management, they are crucial to organizational change (Johnson et al., 2014; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Hence, responsibility is put on them to push through and lead change initiatives as they are key players in the process of change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008).

The ability to set up goals, to organize and to communicate both up and down in the organization, are included for middle managers in their everyday work which make middle managers a strategic asset for change. It has been shown that the process of implementing strategic change is affected by the leader's skills, which is the key to how effective the implementation process will be (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). Leadership can be explained as a mission that involves a process of influencing an organization or group which is important for the effectiveness of the organization (Yukl, 2013; Johnson et al., 2014). Meanwhile, the definition of effective leadership has varied over the years. Yukl (2013; 2008) argues that effective leader-

ship is to what extent the leader is able to reach set goals. Kegan and Laskow Lahey (2001) argue that effective leadership is to help people overcome their limitations in order to become more successful at work. Additionally, it has also been found that effective leadership is dependent on the capabilities, knowledge and skills of the leader, and to fulfill the responsibilities as a change leader, skills have to be considered (Chen & Lee, 2007).

There are several definitions of skills connected to leaders. Skills can be described as the ability to do something in an effective manner and are required for leaders (Bass, 2008; Boddy, Macbeth & Wagner, 2000; Yukl, 2013). Further, skills can also be explained as an interaction between traits and experiences (Mumford, Zaccaro, Connelly & Marks, 2000b). Additionally, Connelly et al. (2000) argue that the experiences the leader has, will affect the skills that he or she possesses. Given this, we define skills as the combination of traits and experiences that make the individual perform better compared to other individuals through the process of change. Skills identified for effective leadership has in previous research been described as conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills (Yukl, 2013). For a leader to perform effectively, it is crucial that she or he possess the right combination of skills (Mumford et al., 2000b).

Given the definitions of leadership and effectiveness, for the purpose of this study we chose to define effective leadership as the combination of conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills that are used to reach set goals. Change management and skills for effective leadership are required in the entire organization (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). By using skills for effective leadership, the organizational change will proceed through the phases of transition. Based on this, applying the skills mentioned for effective leadership should result in leading an effective organizational change, hence reach set goals.

To be able to change the supply chain is crucial for the organization's performance. Given that supply chain is of importance for the organization (Stevens, 1989) in today's global environment with increased competition, the supply chain needs to be able to adapt over time as the market structure and strategies evolve (Lee, 2004). Since competition today is between supply chains (Heizer & Render, 2011), successful changes in the supply chain leads to sustainable competitive advantage (Lee, 2004).

1.2 Problem Discussion

Previous research shows that one of the biggest challenges when it comes to strategic decisions is to change and manage the integrated supply chain in the organization (Heizer & Render, 2011). The supply chain is an integral part of an organization's strategy and also the most costly activity (Heizer & Render, 2011). An organization should therefore focus on changing the areas that are most in need for it, where the change will have the biggest payoff as an outcome (Chan Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). Additionally, environmental changes in a short and long term perspective, will affect the organization's supply chain (Tang, 2006; Tang & Nurmaya Musa, 2011).

It is also argued that supply chains are difficult to change and needs a lot of consideration before deciding on a specific strategy (e.g. Kanter, Stein & Jick, 1992). Supply chain strategies are complex since it involves both the industry structure, several countries in a global aspect, and has a long term impact (Klibi, Martel & Guitouni, 2010). Hence, an organizational

change that results in a new supply chain strategy affects the organization in a long term perspective. To implement changes in the supply chain is seen as a big challenge, which means that it requires a lot from the organization (Kanter et al., 1992). Change processes affects every part involved in the organization, which means that suppliers, distributors and customers also will be affected by an organizational change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). These functions affect the organization, as they are parts of the integrated supply chain within the organization (Stevens, 1989).

When implementing organizational change, middle managers play a strategic role since they ease the implementation by translating the top management directives into strategies for the employees (Kras et al., 2015). Although, previous research regarding leaders has been focused on operational level or in the top managerial level (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008) and the research regarding middle managers role in organizational change is limited. A lot of information on how to handle organizational changes for top-management is presented by Bass (2008). Despite this, it is argued that middle managers tend to be concerned about dealing with resistance for change, since implementation of change, vision, strategies and values are on their responsibility (Bass, 2008).

Despite middle managers crucial importance for the company, their leadership in organizational change in supply chains seems to be limitedly studied. Through research on leaders characteristics, several skills have been identified related to advancement and effectiveness of leaders, including conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills (Yukl, 2013). Leadership skills enables the organizational change, since consequences from the change is easier to handle (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs & Fleishman, 2000a). Moreover, research has shown skills in implementing plans to be required for effective leadership through the process of change (Mumford et al., 2000a). Further, it is also shown that leaders must possess high social skills such as negotiation, persuasion, conflict management, and coaching in order to understand and work with the team or the employees (Mumford et al., 2000a).

Along with a changing environment, organizations evolve and adapt to change and different skills are therefore needed for effective leadership as the situation changes (Yukl, 2013). Continuously, how the managerial level effects which category of skills that are of most importance is a well-discussed subject (e.g. Yukl, 2013; Dreyfus, 2008; Johnson et al., 2014). Research shows that middle managers are in a position of needing conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills at the same time, because of the complexity within their position (Yukl, 2013). The use of certain skills has shown to have an effect on how the leader performs, which have been extensive studied over the years (Mumford et al. 2000a).

Although more models of how to accomplish organizational change effectively increases, the majority of change programmes still fails (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008). Stanleigh (2008) explains how consolidation of industries and mergers and acquisitions has increased, and thereby the need for organizational changes. Taking the complexity of organizational changes into consideration, no wonder that 70 % of all change initiatives fail (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). To implement planned organizational changes are one of the challenges leaders encounter, and leadership characteristics and behaviors influence the suc-

cess or failure of these organizational change initiatives (Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache & Alexander, 2010).

Connected to organizational change, it is argued that there are three key activities; to communicate the need for change, to prepare others to support the change, and to evaluate the change (Battilana et al., 2010). These key activities are divided into and expressed as three different phases of transition called mobilize, move, and sustain (Burnes, 2004; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). To be effective through these phases of transition strengthens the whole process of organizational change (Klein & Sorra, 1996). Therefore, to consider the phases of transition is important to create organizational change (Klein & Sorra, 1996).

Regarding the complexity of changes in the supply chain (Klibi et al., 2010), a practical problem is discovered. Previous research made on organizational changes has been mainly focused on top managers (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008), which decreases the reliability when making the same assumptions for middle managers. Hence, an empirical problem is defined since tasks related to implementing organizational change differs from top to middle managers. Along with this, a theoretical problem has occurred due to the lack of knowledge about how to use skills in the phases of transition. It is argued that a variation in leadership skills has implications for planned organizational change, and that leaders' emphasis on the different activities depends on their competencies (Battilana et al., 2010). Key activities in organizational change are as mentioned before divided into three different phases of transition (Burnes, 2004). Additionally it is shown that the meaning of these three phases are important to consider, in order to perform better in change (Zand & Sorensen, 1975), but we express a lack of research on how different skills should be practiced in the phases of transition. Against the background presented, the knowledge gap in the research field is identified and this study will focus on what kind of leadership skills that are most effective in the phases of transition when changing the supply chain.

1.3 Research Question

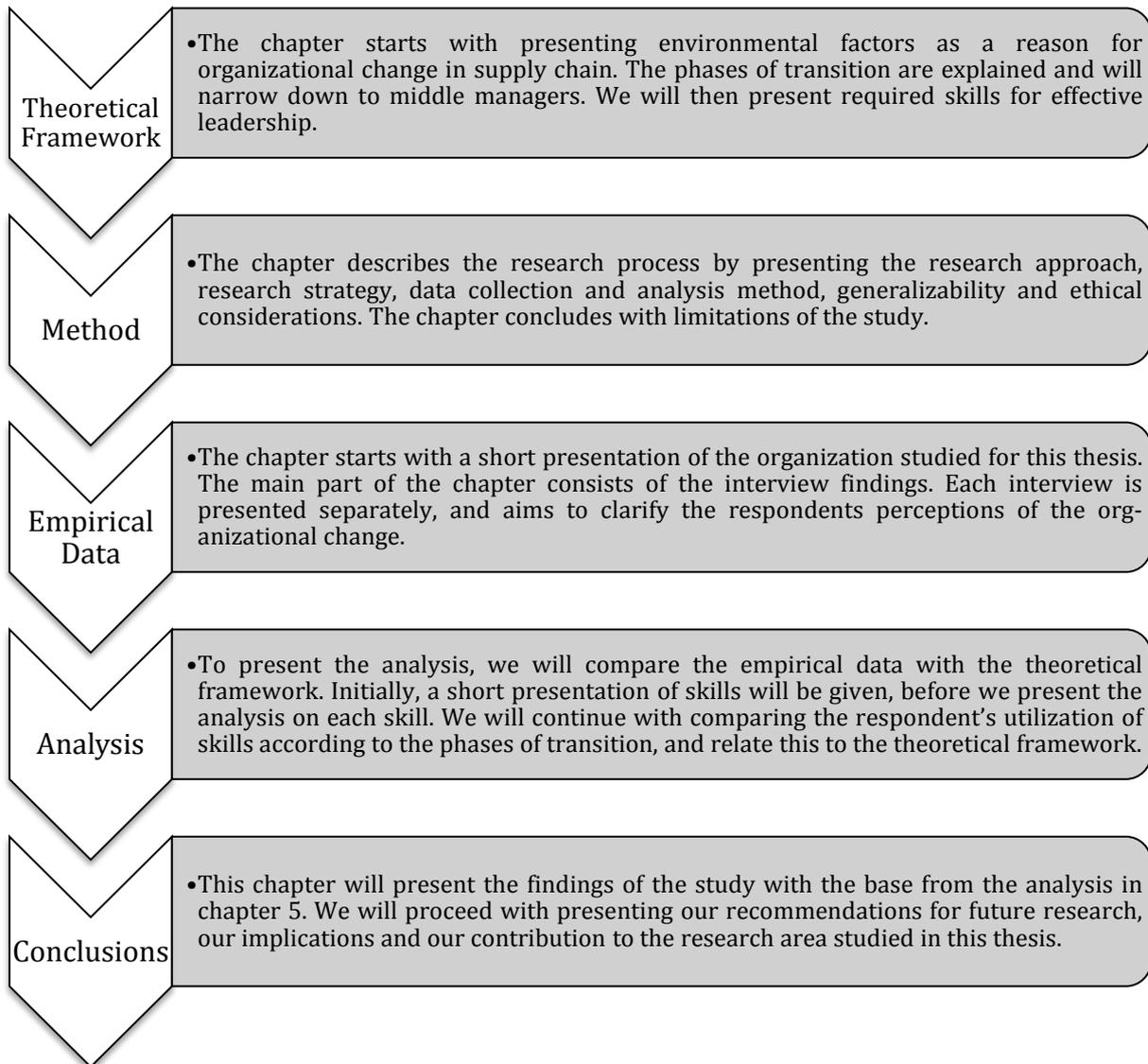
What skillsets are important for middle managers through the process of organizational change in supply chain?

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the middle manager's skillset and how it differs through the phases of organizational change in supply chain. By focusing on middle managers, and not on top management, we put emphasis on the individuals involved in putting the plan for organizational change into practice. As mentioned, skills are required for effective leadership, and therefore we are going to study what kind of skills that are most effective in the different phases in the change process. Further, the purpose of this study is therefore to develop a model in order to increase the understanding of the utilization of skills in the phases of transition.

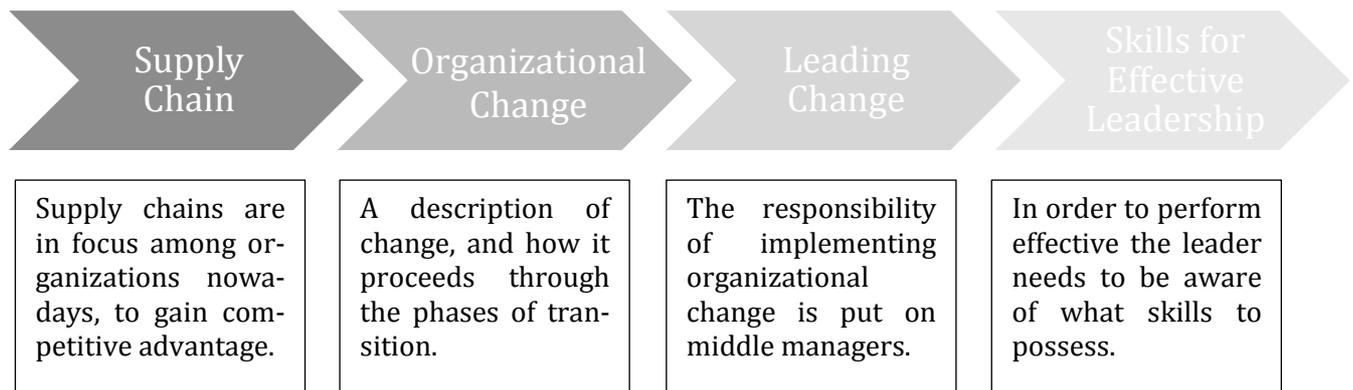
1.5 Disposition

The thesis is from now structured as followed:



2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter serves as a description of the theories studied and will provide as a base for our further research within the subject. The chapter starts with presenting environmental factors as a reason for organizational change in supply chain. Change and the phases of transition are further explained and the theory will then narrow down to middle managers role in the change process. Continuously, we will present required skills for effective leadership when presenting, implementing and embedding organizational change initiatives. The chapter concludes with an explanation of skills required for effective leadership in different situations.



*Figure 2.1
Disposition of Theoretical Framework*

2.1 Supply Chain

Environmental disruptions, such as economic cycles or natural disasters, has been experienced throughout the years, and supply chains are vulnerable to these (Tang, 2006). Organizational changes are often a result of these environmental disruptions in e.g. politics, economics and markets, since internationalization requires the organization to centralize and standardize (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008). The increasing trend in globalization and customer orientation requires more strategic alliances and is one of the factors for the increasing need for change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008; Gunasekaran, Patel & Tirtiroglu, 2001; Kotter, 2007). In a dynamic environment, the organization's supply chain is affected both in a short and long term perspective (Tang, 2006; Tang & Nurmaya Musa, 2011).

Optimization and integration of the supply chain are more in focus among organizations nowadays, due to environmental circumstances. Hence, the supply chain plays an important role in the global orientation (Jüttner, Christopher & Godsell, 2010). The system of supply chain is complex and spread over a lot of functions, which means that the coordination between these functions is of importance in the organization (Stevens, 1989). The supply chain consists of functions that collaborates with the environment and together creates an organizational flow, such as; logistics, suppliers, inventory, purchasing, and product planning (Arun Kanda & Deshmukh, 2008; Stevens, 1989). An understanding for the whole process, and the importance of knowledge about the supply chain, needs to be taken into account when imple-

menting a new strategy, since the supply chain parties are strategically integrated in the system (Jüttner et al., 2010).

Supply chain processes within and between companies are important to create competitiveness and profitability (Lambert & Cooper, 2000). Hence, to manage the supply chain and the supply chain strategy is important for organizations, and will continue to increase in importance, in order to create competitive advantage (Handfield et al., 2005). It is argued that the supply chain should be seen as a central unit of competitive analysis, and that companies therefore should focus on making the supply chain more competitive, rather than reduce costs elsewhere (Croom, Romano & Giannakis, 2000). Additionally, competition is, as mentioned in the introduction, between supply chains (Lambert & Cooper, 2000).

As described above, supply chains are difficult to manage. By using the advantages from supply chain partnering, an organization could gain competitive advantages and overcome these difficulties. It is required to integrate activities in supply chain processes (Lambert & Cooper, 2000) and to synchronize the supply chain (Croom et al., 2000). If the supply chain is not integrated, appropriately streamlined, or managed, waste of resources will occur and the supply chain will not be successful (Lambert & Cooper, 2000). Supply chain partnering is a form of integration, which occurs when organizations at related points in the supply chain agree to work in a cooperative, to lose the disadvantages of working in an extreme hierarchy (Boddy et al., 2000). To share information and openly discuss problems may lead to a more rapid product innovation and enhance the quality, which is good when companies are operating in a competitive environment (Boddy et al., 2000). A successful supply chain may also increase customer satisfaction and enable profitable growth, which is a result of changing business trends, such as internationalization and strategic alliances (Chandra & Kumar, 2000). A supply chain partnering is an organizational change that is difficult to implement, and the culture in the organization may encourage or discourage innovation and commitment to the change (Boddy, et al., 2000). Continuously, Boddy et al. (2000) claim that to implement this type of change, and thereby creating a new context, involves actors from different levels and functions in the supply chain.

To summarize this section, we would like to stress the importance of knowing and managing the organization's supply chain well, as it is shown to be a determinant part of the entire organization. Since the supply chain parties are well integrated, it is important to take this into account when implementing a new strategy, not to mention the long term impact that a change has on supply chain. Additionally, since competition is shown to be between supply chains rather than saving resources in separate functions, it is claimed that a successful supply chain enables profitable growth. Given that the supply chain is a crucial part in the organization, the process of change should be well managed to increase competitive advantage.

2.2 Organizational Change

Organizations constantly need to implement changes. The need for change is affected by environmental factors such as economic changes, political decisions or increased competition (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993). Barnett & Carroll (1995) describes how organizational change involves the transformation of an organization between two points in time. Further, they argue that the process of change involves both the speed of change and the activities

therein, as well as working with communication and resistance for the change (Barnett & Carroll, 1995). Additionally, the organizational change could be legitimized by the changes in the environment (Armenakis et al., 1993).

In the transformation of organizational change, the change needs to be context-specific. In a context sensitive change, social practices are taken into consideration, to succeed with a change that creates meaning (Beresford & Michels, 2014). Social practice is defined as the concern of activities, behaviours, values and meanings in organizations, which could be valuable to understand people's way of thinking and doing (Beresford & Michels, 2014). Continuously, in order to be successful in the process of change, it is important to work with social practises in the right context (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). It is also important to consider that individuals are affected by the organizational culture when changing an organization (Boddy et al., 2000).

The organizational culture is seen as a vital element in organizational change efforts, even though it is not targeted for change (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008). In a long term perspective the leaders might have the ability to change organizational culture through their combination of behaviours and programs, even though it has been shown that cultural changes are difficult to accomplish (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008).

It is important to consider the organizational culture when working across supply chains (Lambert & Cooper, 2000), e.g. in supply chain partnering (Boddy et al., 2000). Research has shown that organizational cultures and subcultures may have their own set of beliefs, attitudes and intentions (Lok & Crawford, 1999). Subcultures could as an example be defined by beliefs, attitudes, and intentions of the members within the subculture, or by hierarchical differentiations (Armenakis et al., 1993). In order for the organization to perform as one unit, it is important to consider both culture and attitude of the employees (Lambert & Cooper, 2000).

In organizations with an embedded culture, structural inertia is difficult to overcome, which is common to face in the process of change (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). The size of the organization that is facing a change influences inertia (Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Boeker, 1997; Yukl, 2013). The larger the organization, the greater the risk of structural inertia to occur (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). This means that larger organizations are therefore less likely to succeed with organizational changes, than smaller ones. Although, organizational change that involves changes in the top management team, is important to overcome this structural inertia and resistance to change (Boeker, 1997). Further, organizational changes in the top management helps both overcoming isolation of management and implementation of new strategies (Boeker, 1997).

Given this, it is important to both consider the cultural context and the structural inertia throughout the entire process of change. As mentioned before, the transition of organizational change takes place over time, and is divided into three phases; mobilize, move and sustain (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008; Burnes, 2004; Barnett & Carroll, 1995). The phases together create the transition of change, and are formed to understand the steps in organizational change that are needed to achieve successful change (Burnes, 2004). Research shows that organizations that take the meaning of these three phases into

consideration will perform better in change (Zand & Sorensen, 1975). In a process of organizational change, it is required to put a lot of emphasis in the mobilize phase, while it is the starting point and the base for the change (Beckhard & Harris, 1987). Therefore, the first step in the transition of change is especially important to understand, to be able to achieve further changes.

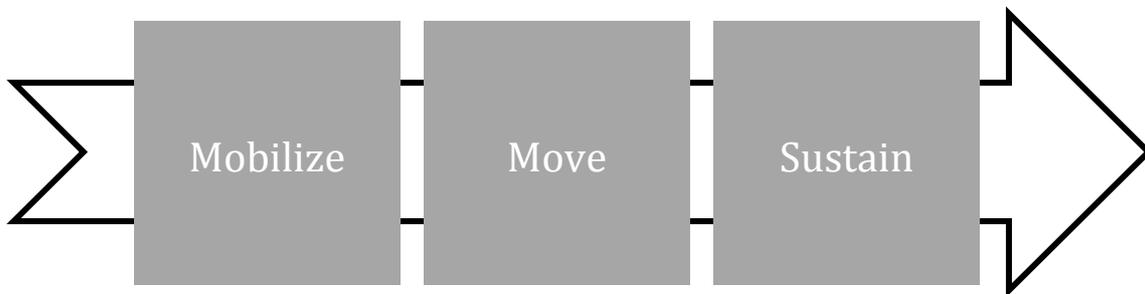


Figure 2.2
The Three Phases of Transition; Mobilize, Move and Sustain

2.2.1 Mobilize

The first step in the phases of transition is the mobilize phase, which contains a process of making the organization ready for, and creating an urgency of, that change is needed (Burnes, 2004). It is further argued that the most difficult things in turnarounds is to get people to agree on the need for change (Chan Kim & Mauborgne, 2003), and that employees need to overcome their immunity to change (Kegan & Laskow Lahey, 2001). Additionally, creating a readiness for change is important at all levels (Armenakis et al., 1993), and one reason for failing when implementing new structures is when the change leader does not establish this readiness for change (Shea, Jacobs, Esserman, Bruce & Weiner, 2014; Armenakis et al., 1993). Readiness for change refers to a psychologically and behaviorally preparation in the organization, in order to create change (Shea et al., 2014). The readiness is reflected by beliefs, attitudes and intentions regarding the change initiative, and is needed for the organization to succeed with changes (Armenakis et al., 1993). It is important for the change leader to understand the differences between individual and collective readiness, and the message of change must be adapted to the recipient (Armenakis et al., 1993). To be able to meet with the employees' beliefs, attitudes and intentions, the primary mechanism by the change leader is the message of change (Armenakis et al., 1993). To what extent staff are aware of the need for change, and the personal commitment towards changing individual beliefs, attitudes and intentions, are examples of how readiness for change may occur in organizational change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Engaged employees will feel more positive about their working life, and will be more prepared for an organizational change if these two criterias for readiness are fulfilled (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Further, employees are more likely to adopt changes when the readiness for change is high, which leads to a more effective implementation of change (Shea et al., 2014).

Along with making the employees ready for change, the leader must take the potential risk of resistance among the employees into consideration when introducing the message of change (Armenakis et al., 1993). Resistance to change can occur at all levels in an organization, just

like readiness, and should be seen as a natural part of the process (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Although, resistance to change should not be confused with a lack of readiness for change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008; Armenakis et al., 1993), but if employees are prepared for the change and know what is expected from them, they are less likely to be resistant (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). The resistance may depend on several factors, including; self-interest, emotional reasons, and the approach of the change. The employees' beliefs, attitudes and intentions for change could also be seen as factors that can create resistance (Armenakis et al., 1993). For leaders it is important to identify these factors of resistance, and consider tactics to overcome them, in order to lead the organization through the change (Yukl, 2013).

2.2.2 Move

The next step in the phases of transition is the move phase. This phase constitutes the implementation of the change through different levers and mechanisms (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Several important stages are going to be fulfilled such as recruiting, re-structuring and organizing, and the different stages must coalesce (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). For this state in the process, the change leader must decide how to implement the change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). The change design needs to be context sensitive and take all critical assumptions into consideration (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). This means, that strategies in the organizational change must be interpreted and make sense in the context (Bryant & Stensaker, 2011).

For this part of the process, it is vital that the change leader makes sense of the need for change, and how the change enables the organization to proceed (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991), since the process of sensemaking enables a shared understanding for the change (Balogun & Johnson, 2005). Sensemaking is described as a framework of comprehending events, attribute meaning and predicting the future (Tucker, Hendy & Barlow, 2015). Hence, in the move phase, special attention needs to be paid to the process of sensemaking (Tucker et al., 2015). Further, the process of sensemaking in change could be preceded through both spoken and written, and formal and informal communication, which thereby is something for the change leader to take into consideration (Balogun & Johnson, 2005).

2.2.3 Sustain

The final step in the phases of transition is the sustain phase. This phase involves embedding the changes in the organization as a whole (Burnes, 2004). To institutionalize an organizational change is important, in order for the implementation of change to stay over time (Jacobs, 2002). After implementing the change in the move phase, it is important to remember that the change has to be institutionalized and become a general action before it sticks into the organization (Kotter, 2007). What is to be sustained from the organizational change can be determined by comparing differences between before and after the change, to find out what actually happens in the process (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008). Change leaders must be aware of how individuals within the organization are affected by the change, to lead both the individuals and the organization through the final phase in the change process (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). In this phase the new changes should have become a part of the ongoing, everyday activities in the organization (Jacobs, 2002).

2.3 Leading Change

To influence and guide employees is important for the change leader in the process of organizational change. The change leader has a responsibility of explaining the current situation in the organization, where the organization wants to be, but also visualizing the desired end-state, to prepare the employees for change (Armenakis et al., 1993). Organizational change is traumatic and affects people involved in an organization (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Additionally, an organizational change may lead a to threat of personal loss for those involved (Lorenzi & Riley, 2000). This may vary from job security to the disruption of an established routine and might be either a real threat, or simply a perceived one (Lorenzi & Riley, 2000). To prevent this, change leaders can influence members within an organization, and their readiness for change (Armenakis et al., 1993). This means that leaders have an important role of helping employees manage changes (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008).

The change leader also needs to declare the urgency rate, if the change process is going to succeed. It is argued that to increase urgency, and to perceive what already has been declared, is hard to estimate for leaders as well as to drive people out of their comfort zones (Kotter, 2007). Since the leader is the key to the change, it will be a challenge if the leader does not embrace this role (Kotter, 2007).

The responsibility of implementing the change at a local level in the organization is put on middle managers. An integrated business and functional strategy cannot come from top-down communication only, the strategy need to be implemented at lower levels as well (Handfield et al., 2005). This means that difficulties occur when implementing strategies at a business unit, or at a functional level (Handfield et al., 2005). Further, it has been argued that middle managers are the only one in an organization capable of judging whether the change is in the proper context or not (Wooldridge & Floyd, 1990). To maintain a long term perspective, a leader that foresees the need for change in the right context can be crucial (Yukl, 2013).

Given the multiple roles a middle manager can adopt in the process of implementing change, there is a complexity of having this role. Middle managers acts in an in-between position in the organization, as a strategic part of the integration of change (Johnson et al., 2014; Kras et al., 2015; Tucker et al., 2015). Since they are implementers of top management strategic plans, it is their responsibility to explain and make sense of the new strategy in different contexts within the organization (Johnson et al., 2014). Maintaining relationships with customers, suppliers and employees is another vital responsibility for middle managers, since this communication is determinant for the organization's survival (Johnson et al., 2014). Also, to create a readiness for change (Armenakis et al., 1993), and to find resistance among the employees (Johnson et al., 2014) are important tasks for middle managers. Meanwhile, motivating the employees may enable the change process (Kotter, 2007).

Since the middle manager's role involves implementation of new policies and goals, and to supplement existing structures in the organization that are developed at higher levels, skills for effective leadership, i.e conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills, are necessary for the middle manager (Yukl, 2013). Skills for effective leadership may enable organizational changes, since consequences from the change are easier to handle (Mumford et al., 2000a). According to Yukl (2008) it is easier to create effectiveness if the organization's operations

are relatively stable for a period of time, rather than changing constantly. However, it is shown that organizations are constantly changing, and managing the change therefore becomes an important leadership skill (Garvin & Roberto, 2005; Boddy et al., 2000).

2.4 Skills for Effective Leadership

Given the arguments above, in order to perform effectively the leader needs to be aware of what skills to possess. We will in the following sections divide the skills presented as skills for effective leadership in the theory, into three main categories. Those sections are written to explain the different skills more in detail.

2.4.1 Conceptual Skills

Having ability in; recognizing opportunities and potential problems, involving, delegating, creativity, and analytical and logical thinking when taking decisions, are all examples of skills that goes under the category of conceptual skills. In a changing and dynamic environment it is important for organizations to position themselves to adjust to the changes (Mumford et al., 2000a). This means that change leaders must be aware of the changing environment and be capable of identifying goals and direct the employees to reach these set goals. Hence, conceptual skills are determinant for effective planning and problem solving (Yukl, 2013; Connelly et al., 2000). Heifetz and Linsky (2003) argue that a capacity to foresee what is about to happen to the organization and to understand how different actions will affect the future, is required for effective leaders.

Involvement of the employees increases the performance within the organization, and is therefore important when implementing changes (Gilley, Gilley & McMillian 2009). In order to get the organization to adapt change, the leader needs to transfer much of the work and problem solving to others, instead of providing people with the answers (Heifetz & Linsky, 2003). To provide employees with opportunities to practice desired behavior, and to encourage new ways of working and to guide and support, is another important factor for effective leadership (Garvin & Roberto, 2005). Transferring work and problem solving to the employees means delegation, which provides benefits for all involved if being effective (Muir, 1995). It is the change leader's task to work with the employees' abilities and strengths, in order to involve them in the process of change (Muir, 1995). Garvin and Roberto (2005) also argue that before giving instructions on how to change, the leader needs to make sure of acceptance among the employees. Skilled leaders therefore frame the organizational issues for employees to come up with ideas for change (Garvin & Roberto, 2005).

In the uncertain process of change, the leader's role becomes more crucial when the organization is in need for solving problems around the changes (Mumford et al., 2000a). Problem solving leads the organization to reach goals, and the leader's decisions through selection and implementation of strategies will help the organization further. Both understand and create solutions for problems are included in creative problem solving skills (Mumford, et al., 2000a). According to Alvesson and Sveningsson (2008), it is important to stress clear roles and responsibilities for everyone involved in the change process as a solution for problems.

Beside from solving and recognizing problems, another conceptual skill for an effective leader is to make decisions in an analytical and logical way (Yukl, 2013). An understanding of the organization's different parts, such as the functions in the supply chain, and how they connect to each other, are examples of analytical ability and logical thinking (Yukl, 2013).

Planning and coordinating tends to be actions more successfully performed by effective leaders (Bass, 2008). Coordination toward set goals are therefore required for an effective leader (Mumford et al., 2000a), since planning and organizing are skills known to help middle managers advance (Connelly et al., 2000). It is also important that leaders are skilled in strategy and improvement programs to ensure that the change is as effective as possible (Yukl, 2013). Further, the change leader must be able to develop plans and build up a support for the implementation in order to be aware of potential problems within the change (Mumford et al., 2000a).

It has been shown, that leaders who recognize that decision making is a process of personal opinions, make better decisions for the organization than those who do not (Garvin & Roberto, 2001). Continuously, decision making processes where the leader uses the skills of involving and taking personal opinions into consideration are more effective, than those who do not (Snowden & Boone, 2007). Snowden and Boone (2007) presents the importance of open up for discussions with employees, since the employees tend to generate innovative ideas and solutions that will help the leader to come down to decisions and strategies, which is helpful when managing a complex situation.

Skills in creativity have shown to be useful for middle managers when advancing through organizational change (Connelly et al., 2000). Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009) define creativity as the production of useful ideas. Further, innovation is defined as the implementation of these creative ideas within the organization (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009).

2.4.2 Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills include knowledge about human behavior and group processes, the ability to understand feelings, attitudes and motives of others, and to communicate clearly and convincing. Interpersonal skills are also described as social skills, such as negotiation, persuasion, social judgement and decision making. This may enable the leader to adapt to others in the organization (Mumford et al., 2000b). Further, interpersonal skills include an ability to motivate, and having social judgment skills (Connelly et al., 2000) such as how the employees react to the suggested process or solution (Mumford et al., 2000a).

Knowledge about human behavior and group processes could be explained by sensemaking, relating, visioning and inventing (Ancona, Malone, Orlikowski & Senge, 2007). A leader with skills in sensemaking can in a rapid way understand complexity (e.g. change processes) and easily explain those complexities in an understandable way to the employees. Finally, the role of embodying and create an understanding of the change at a local level, is the middle manager's responsibility (Johnson et al., 2014).

Communication is vital when talking about leaders and change. An effective leader must be able to communicate the organization's vision in order to succeed (Bass, 2008; Mumford et

al., 2000; Connelly et al., 2000). To suggest that a leader has great communication skills means that he or she is both a good listener and presenter, and by bringing those two factors together, the leader is complete in communication (Ellis, 2003). According to Britton (2010) listening is a core skill for coaching and communicating; both listening to oneself, to the employees and to the environment. An effective leader must not only listen to what is said, but also to what is not said (Britton, 2010). Communication is characterized by transmitting information, ideas, attitudes and feelings from one person to another, and it is argued that half of the interpersonal communication is mediated through nonverbal channels like body language and the tone of voice (Ellis, 2003; Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

In order to increase the understanding for change, communication is a central part. It is according to Gilley et al. (2009) important that change leaders communicate the change towards the employees, that they provide them with the right information and that they are able to answer questions the employees might have. Additionally, to accomplish change it is important to communicate the message for change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008; Armenakis et al., 1993; Shea et al., 2014). Since middle managers acts as sensemakers of the change when explaining the strategic direction of the change, Johnson et al. (2014) certainly stress communication as an important skill for middle managers. Further, specific tasks for middle managers include motivating, communicating, and to mediate visions and values (Bass, 2008; Mumford et al., 2000a; Kras et al, 2015).

Leaders must convince the employees that radical changes are required for the organization to survive (Garvin & Roberto 2005). To convince people of the new strategy in order to enable and ensure that what they do delivers to the strategy, is central to strategic change (Johnson et al., 2014). Kotter (2007) further argues that it is important with a clear organizational vision for the change to proceed in the right direction. Nonetheless, the vision has to create understanding and interest for the employees before moving to the next phase (Kotter, 2007). Besides this, the leader also has a role in embodying the core values of the organization, and to manage the mood of the organization that might get disturbed during an organizational change (Garvin & Roberto, 2005). It has been shown that organizations with strong core values are more likely to be successful over time, and that leaders at all levels must be a part of implementing these core values (Yukl, 2013).

Social skills are defined as knowledge about human behavior and group processes such as; relating, visioning and inventing (Ancona et al., 2007). It is argued that middle managers in general need to improve their social skills, since it is an important requirement at all levels in the organization (Bass, 2008). Additionally, middle managers have a lot of contact with employees, which require social skills (Bass, 2008). Along with this, it is also argued that if a leader can handle social problems that might arise in an organization, he or she tends to be an effective leader (Mumford et al., 2000a). How effective the middle manager is may also be determined by the possessed negotiation skills (Goodwin, 1993; Mumford et al., 2000a).

Skills in relating are important for listening and connecting with employees (Ancona et al., 2007). In order for a leader to be effective, it is important to have influence in the employee's work and expressions, which comes from social skills (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). Visioning is determinant in change processes, and skills in visioning help the employees understand

what the future will be like (Ancona et al., 2007). Further, skills in inventing help the leader to bring the new vision to life (Ancona et al., 2007).

Leaders motivate the employees to embrace change, and are therefore important for the change to succeed (Bryant & Stensaker, 2011; Mumford et al., 2000a). Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) explain how employees get motivated by e.g. challenging work tasks, responsibility for their work, and a development in the organization. Further, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2008) claim that leaders are encouraged to motivate the employees by pep talks, in order to prepare for the upcoming challenges. The role as an implementer of change, implies that middle managers are expected to motivate others, to be able to implement the change (Bryant & Stensaker, 2011; Battilana et al., (2010).

2.4.3 Technical Skills

Through formal education, training, or job experience an individual may possess the right type of knowledge for technical skills to perform work tasks (Yukl, 2013). Technical skills are by McLennan (1967) described as specialized skills that are forming an integrated part of the job as a middle manager, and are argued by Yukl (2013) to not only include knowledge about work tasks, but also knowledge about e.g. management systems and employee specialisations (Yukl, 2013). Further, technical skills are described as knowledge about methods, processes, procedures, and techniques for the specific organization or activity, and additionally skills required to use the tools and equipment that are needed for the activity (Yukl, 2013). To have good knowledge in technology, and to exhibit considerable initiatives from top-management seem to be crucial for middle managers (Bass, 2008).

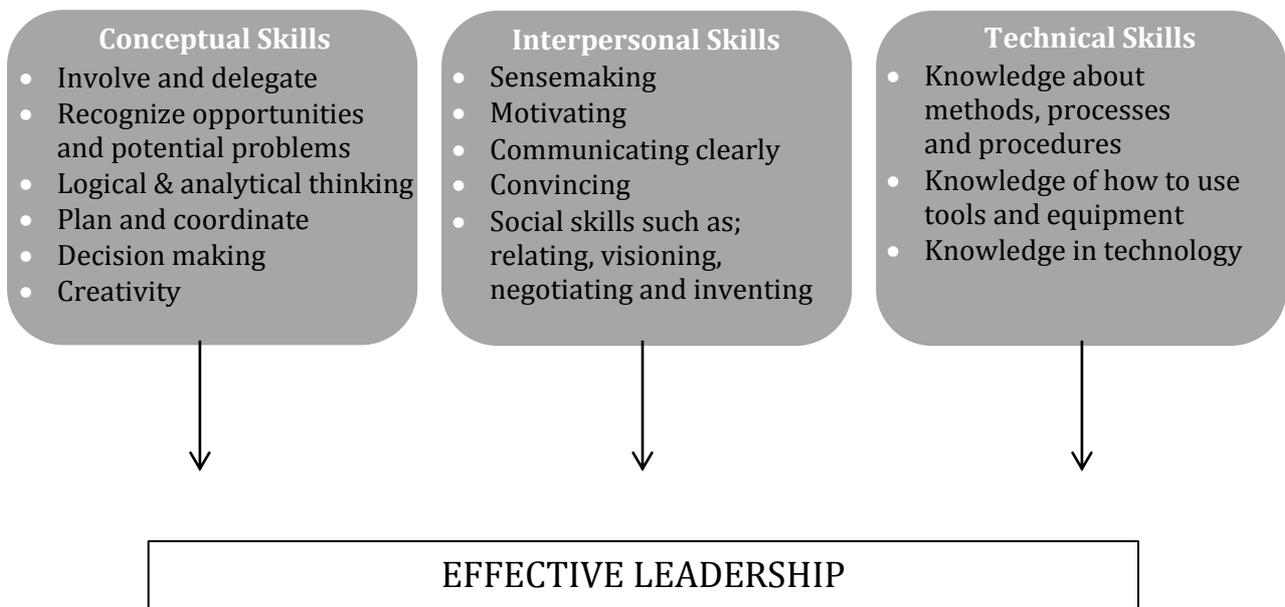


Figure 2.3
Skills for Effective Leadership

As visualized in figure 2.3, when proceeding through organizational change, conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills are required to be effective as a leader (Lorenzi & Riley, 2000). However, Goodwin (1993) also argues that technical skills have an impact on the effectiveness, but to a lesser extent than the other two skills mentioned. An effective leader may more easily reduce the resistance for change, and conceptual and interpersonal skills may be more challenging than technical (Lorenzi & Riley, 2000). Given this, we will now proceed with an explanation of how to use skills in different situations.

2.4.4 Skills in Different Situations

The importance of different skills vary to different leadership situations, and differs depending on organizational level, type of organization, and the nature of the environment (Yukl, 2013; Johnson et al., 2014). It is argued that all three above mentioned skills are important for middle managers, since they supplements the existing structure and develop ways to implement strategies established at higher levels (Yukl, 2013; Johnson et al. 2014).

Since middle managers are expected to participate in strategic planning and leading change, the conceptual skills are more needed for this type of manager (Yukl, 2013). However, Dreyfus (2008) argues that in order to be an effective middle manager, interpersonal skills are required over technical skills. Effective middle managers should therefore develop and maintain interpersonal relationships, since technical skills are not enough (Dreyfus, 2008). It is rather important to possess emotional and social skills as a middle manager (Dreyfus, 2008). Continuously, Epstein & Hundert (2002) argue that when looking for right individuals to perform a task, core knowledge and basic skills such as technical skills, are reviewed. Given this, conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills all seems to be skills for effective leadership, and thereby important for middle managers to possess in the processes of organizational change.

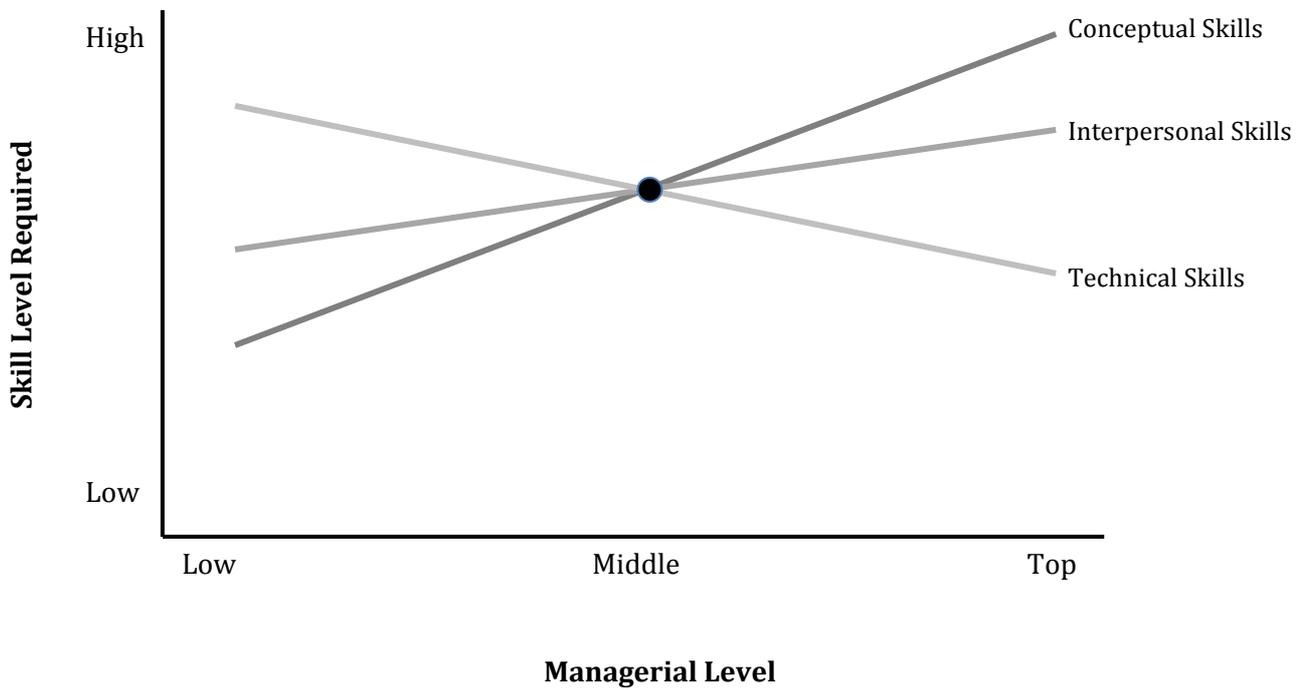


Figure 2.4
Relative Importance of Skills for Different Levels of Management (Yukl, 2013)

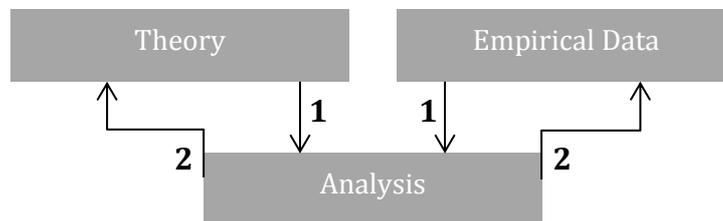
Figure 2.4 shows skills required for middle managers as conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills, due to their complexity within the position, explains that the managerial level affect what category of skills that are of importance (Yukl, 2013). Since organizational changes involve changing habits, it involves changes in the way middle managers interact with people and tools (Lorenzi & Riley, 2000). However, literature and research does not inform about the variation of different skills throughout the change process and we believe that different phases in organizational changes may require specific skillsets, which is why we would like to study this.

3 Method

The following chapter describes the research process, which is based on our research question. Since qualitative studies may hold a certain amount of subjectivity related to the author's personal values and interpretations, the research approach, research strategy, data collection and analysis method, generalizability and ethical considerations is presented in order to increase the quality and trustworthiness of this study. The chapter concludes with a short description of limitations for our study.

3.1 Research approach

For this study, we chose to use the advantages of an abductive approach to optimize the prerequisites for the analysis. The abductive approach is influenced by both inductive and deductive approaches (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008) and is proposed as a way to overcome the limitations that both inductive and deductive research brings (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This means that the abductive method is based on empirical facts, just as the inductive method, but it does not reject the theoretical approach contained in the deductive method (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). The reasoning around abductive research involves a process of seeking conditions that can make the study less complex and surprising (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It also involves a back-and-forth process to find the best explanation when comparing the findings of the research with available theory, which gives the researcher the ability to expand the understanding of both the theory, and the collected data (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).



*Figure 3.1
The Abductive Approach*

In this research process, the theoretical material was gathered as a starting point in order to understand what was necessary to collect through empirical data. To be sure that we compared the empirical data with the most suitable theory, we continued with the literature review in parallel as we gathered more information about the studied subject. We found a qualitative research to be the most suitable for this research question, and according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) the abductive research approach is usually used in practise when constructing a qualitative research. An abductive approach could help the author interpret cases in a comprehensive way to find hypothetical patterns that explains the case (Dubois & Gadde, 2002), which also is an explanation of why we chose the abductive approach as our research approach. The research question, purpose and empirical findings were chosen with our theoretical framework in mind.

3.2 Qualitative Research

Given our research question we have chosen a qualitative research approach for this study. It is argued that the qualitative research depends on the context and consists of interpretive assumptions (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). Continuously, a qualitative research is often described as a process of emphasizing words and behaviors, rather than collecting data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In this thesis we have analyzed the utilization of skills in the phases of transition, and thereby analyzed the middle managers behaviors in organizational change, which explains why a qualitative research is the most suitable approach for this study. Qualitative interviews are an example of a qualitative research with the intention to get access to information and experiences from the respondent that is relevant for the study (Ryen, 2004). These were also used in this thesis, and will be explained further on in this chapter. Qualitative research tends to give broad descriptions of different situations and may emphasize individual ideas and interests (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000).

An exploratory approach was chosen for this study, since it is suitable when conducting a qualitative study (Jacobsen, 2002). Since the empirical data in this study is based on one organization, an exploratory approach is preferred (Jacobsen, 2002). An exploratory research is adaptable to change, since the direction might need to change as new, unexpected, data appears (Saunders et al., 2016). We therefore argue that an exploratory approach enables an abductive research method.

3.3 Case study design

For this study we decided to use a single-case design as we are focusing on one specific organization, but different middle managers within the organization. Case study research is a common strategy used when constructing qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2016), and includes investigating and testing rival explanations (Yin, 2009). The case study design method enables the understanding of e.g. organizational and managerial processes (Yin, 2009) and is preferred to use in business research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is further argued by Yin (2009) that case studies illuminates a decision or set of decisions, and analyzes why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what result. The aim in single case design is to study a contextual relation (Yin, 2009).

A pattern matching technique was used for this study, where we used the abductive approach to go back-and-forth to compare the empirical data with theory. Yin (2009) describes different techniques for analyzing the case study, mentioning pattern matching as one of the most common. He explains it as comparing the empirical data with a predicted one, and this may strengthen the case study's internal validity.

We approached this study in a cross-cultural way, since the respondents operates in different countries. Differences of the implementation processes between the countries were therefore studied, since the change initiative started at different points of time in the different countries. Bryman and Bell (2011) describes that the cross-cultural approach is important to take into account when deciding which case study design to use in research, when comparing cases in different contexts or in different periods of time. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), culture is the determinant factor to influence organizational behavior in a cross-cultural ap-

proach. Further, the cross-cultural approach compares national businesses with the same type of business in other countries (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Saunders et al. (2016) explains how a case study design may refer to e.g. a change process, and how important it is to determine the boundaries of the study, which is why we decided to set up boundaries for this study early in the process. We came to the conclusion of studying one organization in an organizational change (a single-case study), but from seven middle managers perspective. The respondent selection will be further explained in section 3.4.2 Selection of Respondents.

3.4 Literature review

The literature review is done to gather information about the prospective subject and how previous studies have been constructed (Bryman & Bell, 2011), which started early in the process of this study. Scientific articles and books were primarily used, which we found through Scopus, Google Scholar and at the University library. In order to develop a conceptual framework and a theoretical contribution, a variety of data collection techniques is necessary according to Saunders et al. (2016), which we had to keep in mind when searching for literature. Articles used for the study was sorted by both number of citations and by publication year. Keywords used to find proper literature was: change, middle managers, supply chain, leadership, phases of transition, mobilize, move, and sustain.

Through our literature review, we found that change and change management has been extensively studied. Despite this, we have discovered unspoken assumptions of how to manage change. Three phases of transition are mentioned in the literature of change, and most logically, different ways to manage change in the phases should be required. Further, we decided to target change in supply chains, since background research highlighted supply chain's significance in organizations.

3.5 Empirical Data Collection

When gathering material for the empirical data, we started with collecting background information about the organization and the change initiative in order to get a better understanding for the context. One of the greatest difficulties in qualitative data collection is that it rapidly generates a large amount of data, which both attracts and complicates the process (Bryman & Bell, 2011). However, the extensiveness gives a deep understanding for the researcher to understand the underlying causes, but it also makes it difficult to pin-point key concepts and issues (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As complementing material to the interviews described in the following section, the respondents also got to self-assess their skills as a middle manager, which was handed out to the respondents in advance (Appendix 3).

3.5.1 Qualitative interview

Our main resource for empirical data was to conduct qualitative interviews. Bryman and Bell (2011) points out benefits from interviewing as reactive effects and specific focus, which are factors we took into consideration when deciding upon a qualitative method. According to

Bryman and Bell (2011) it is particularly important to structure the interview in a way that will lead to a favorable response.

In preparation for the interviews, an interview guide was therefore constructed to refer as a brief list of content of the interview. Bryman and Bell (2011) describes the interview guide as a visualization of how the interview should be implemented, and does not necessarily contains written questions. We however found it helpful to form main questions in advance to be sure to cover all parts for the study. Our interview guide (Appendix 1 & 2) was constructed based on themes connected to our research question, formed with the different sections in the theory as a base. These sections were developed to answer the research question, and by following the theoretical framework we ensured that the interview questions also would give answers to the research question. The themes were all contributing to the understanding of the research and aimed to answer the research question.

We decided to structure the questions for the interviews in a semi-structured way. Semi-structured interviews are described as interviews consisting in-depth questions, with simply a list of themes and key questions to be covered (Saunders et al., 2016). Given this, the answers and questions vary depending on the organizational context, but additional questions are required to fulfill the purpose of the interview. Semi-structured interview questions are also advantageous when making exploratory studies, since it is important to understand the reasons for different decisions taken by the respondents, or the reason for their opinion and attitudes (Saunders et al., 2016). Continuously, Alvesson and Deetz (2000) argues that interviews often are used in case studies, and that these have a loose structure and are open for what the respondent want to contribute with.

To get as accurate response as possible, a lot of consideration was required when forming the interview guide. For the interview we decided to ask the questions about skills and effective leadership at the end, since these questions might be perceived as the most sensitive. Wärneryd (1986) explains how more sensitive questions should be brought up at the end of the interview, so that the respondent are more prepared and not affected by these questions throughout the interview. During the interview we therefore found it important to capture the respondent's attitude regarding the subject by asking general questions, before moving forward against more context specific questions, which is supported by Wärneryd (1986).

To succeed optimally with the interviews, we decided to take Bryman and Bell's (2011) criteria for a successful interviewer into consideration for this study. The three criteria for fulfilling this purpose are; knowledgeable, remembering and interpreting. The knowledgeable criteria means a focus on the interview and to be well prepared by e.g. applying pilot interviews. According to Yin (2009) pilot interviews contributes to improvements and gives an opportunity to change questions in order to get as most out from the interviews as possible. The pilot interview for this study was done together with a HR-employee at Getinge Group, which helped us optimize our preparations for the interviews. However, the empirical data collected through the pilot interview is not shown in the empirical study, since it does not contribute to the study. Remembering is about being able to relate to what was said earlier in the interview, to make conclusions and ask follow-up questions, which we achieved through being focused and taking notes during the interview, but also through audio recording which

is described further in the following paragraph. The final criterion is the interpreting criteria, which means to clarify and extend meanings of respondents' statements, without value it's meaning. Considering the gathered literature review, we interpreted the respondents' answers to the questions, and understood explanations to different happenings meanwhile continuing with the interview.

Recording and transcribing the interviews helped us to correct the natural limitations, such as misunderstandings and misjudging, in the process of interviewing (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Since audio-recording was used through the interviews, we were able to replay the interview and not only understand what the respondent was saying, but also how the respondent expressed it (Saunders et al., 2016). Moreover, recorded interviews allowed us to go through and gather a deeper understanding of the respondents' answers and how they were formulated. To enable the process of analyzing we decided to develop an extensive transcribed material, written as accurate as possible considering each context as Saunders et al. (2016) suggests. Bryman and Bell (2011) mentions transcript material as a helpful tool for the researcher to create a meaningful analysis.

3.5.2 Company Selection

Getinge Group is a global company who provides solutions within healthcare and life sciences. In 2015 Getinge Group felt a need of changing the entire organization in order to enable communication and decision making processes, but moreover to get a streamlined supply chain to increase the profit. In the end of 2015, an organizational change program was implemented, and Getinge Group is therefore a highly relevant organization to study when analyzing organizational change in supply chains.

3.5.3 Selection of Respondents

The respondents for this study were chosen through a purposive sampling method. This method is what Bryman and Bell (2011) describes as a strategic way to choose respondents for the study in a non-random way, and is also the most common one. Further, the method helps the researcher to gather a proper variety in respondents to ensure a reliable result (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

According to the phases of transition, we chose respondents based on the current phase they were operating in. This gave us three different profiles of leaders in different situations which resulted in that we found suitable persons to interview. Through literature research we found that the middle manager is responsible for implementing organizational changes, which is an explanation of why we chose to interview middle managers. Change has been extensively studied from an employee perspective and from a top management perspective, but there seemed to be a lack of studies with focus on the middle manager's role in change processes. From background research we found out that both scope and responsibility for middle managers were to be changed with the new strategy. We therefore also wanted to make sure that we got a variety of middle managers in different situations, since the experience or lack thereof may affect the middle manager's skill in his or her specific role. Since Getinge Group acts on an international market, we took the cross-cultural approach into consideration, which com-

pares national businesses with the same type of business in other countries (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Table 3.1 describes the selection of respondents and serves to explain the different levels in the organization and the phases of transition that the middle managers act in. The filled boxes represents the selected respondents, since they are middle managers operating in different phases on level 3 or 4 in the organization.

	Mobilize	Move	Sustain
Level 0			
Level 1			
Level 2			
Level 3	Respondent G	Respondent A	
Level 4	Respondent F	Respondent B Respondent C	Respondent D Respondent E
Level 5			
Level 6			
Level 7			
Level 8			

*Table 3.1
Selection of Respondents*

3.6 Empirical Data Analysis

The gathered empirical data was divided into respondent headlines. To discover each case individually, a within-case analysis was done. After transcribing the data we became familiar with it, in order to engage in the analytical procedure, and then categorized data with similar meanings which also is something Saunders et al. (2016) suggests. Based on the presented themes in the theory, and the different themes the interview guide was constructed through, similar meanings were found. The process described, and also the process used for this thesis, is called coding, which divides meanings in the data into mutual single words or phrases, resulting in a unit of data (Saunders et al., 2016). The coding process was followed by searching for themes and recognizing relationships among the data, where we searched for patterns in our list of codes, which is something Saunders et al. (2016) suggests. The identified codes may ease the categorization of themes, which further can make the base for a theoretical understanding (Bryman & Bell, 2011). To actualize the subject, free translations and interpretations of some citations were made when writing the empirical data. These translations and interpretations were based on transcript material, and formed in a way that reflected the respondent's sayings.

3.7 Generalization

Different tests are used to establish the quality of an empirical research, namely; internal and external validity, and internal and external reliability (Yin, 2009). Validity is especially challenging in case study research since it is stated that subjective judgments are used to collect the data (Yin, 2009), but since we have interpreted the interviews with the literature review in

mind, we have decreased the risk of subjective judgments. Validity is defined as the ability to e.g. measure what is supposed to be measured (Eriksson & Weidersheim-Paul, 2011; Saunders et al., 2016), which we have tried to consider in order to increase the validity.

According to Yin (2009) the investigator does not need to consider all possible factors that might affect the result, but rather simply focus on the actual factors included. To increase the internal validity, i.e the match of the empirical and theoretical parts (Bryman & Bell, 2011), we have in section 3.4.2 Selection of Respondents, described and motivated the process of choosing the most suitable respondents for the study. When deciding upon whom to include in the interviews, we made a careful consideration. To increase internal validity further, it is important to carefully describe which persons or situations to analyze, and not to include neither less, nor more people in the study (Eriksson & Weidersheim-Paul, 2011). After gathering the empirical data we sorted the data with the theory in mind and chose to highlight the data that contributed the most to the study to increase the internal validity in the analysis. We also put a lot of emphasis on interpreting and analyzing the empirical data, to make sure that we did not rush into conclusions, since the internal validity often is a concern in case studies when explaining “how” and “why” (Yin, 2009).

For this thesis, we conducted our interviews with a lot of thoughts and used follow-up questions to clear some expressions, to increase the external validity. External validity can be achieved by gathering the empirical data in a correct manner, which means that it is important to control the sampling in order to prevent this (Eriksson & Weidersheim-Paul, 2011). External validity is also known as an issue in research, which considers the problem of knowing if the findings are generalizable or not (Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2009), and has become a big barrier when doing case studies (Yin, 2009). Since the study is done in an international organization in a specific context, we believe that the results will be generalizable in other international organizations in the same context as well.

To conduct reliability by using an extensive interview guide we ensured that the same questions were asked in every interview, and will ensure that the same questions are asked in a future possible replicated research. Reliability in the research process means that you should be able to do the same procedure and still be able to have the same findings and conclusions over again (Yin, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016). Hence, all material used for this thesis is presented in the appendices and the research process is described in detail throughout this chapter.

When questions were constructed we considered the risks connected to retrospective questioning to decrease the risk of less reliability. Wärneryd (1986) claims that this kind of questioning may result in a less reliable data since the respondents have a tendency to be mistaken about situations and feelings in the past. When performing the interview, a model of the change process (Appendix 4) was handed out for the respondents to more easily connect and remember the contextual situation. Wärneryd (1986) mentions both oblivion and telescoping as two types of biases that may affect the research result. Oblivion is explained as the condition of being totally forgotten, meanwhile telescoping is explained as to place an action in a time frame before or after it actually happened (Wärneryd, 1986). By the use of the change process model in the interviews, we decreased the risk of both oblivion and telescoping.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues might arise during the process of research and could be difficult problems to solve, but should not be ignored (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) present four main areas of ethical problems that could arise during business research, which might create conflicts if not dealt with. These are whether there is; harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy or whether deception is involved. During the process of this thesis, we had those main areas in mind, to decrease the risk of ethical problems to arise. Since we have no intention to harm the participants, neither invade on their privacy in this research, we decided to use pseudonyms for the respondents to be anonymous. The respondents will therefore further be named as Respondent A (RA), Respondent B (RB), etc. Bryman and Bell (2011) explains this as a common way in qualitative research to protect participants, even though there is a struggle in being totally anonymous. The respondents were well informed about the purpose and main reason for the thesis, and as a preparation for the interviews a letter of presentation were sent to them (Appendix 5). We were also having an open dialogue with the respondents during the process of writing, to be able to come back after the interview and ask further or complementing questions in order to avoid deception.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

As presented before, this is a qualitative study which focuses on one organization in particular. This limitates the possibility of statistically generalize the findings in this study. Although, we believe that analyzing one organization will result in a more extensive study, were the understanding of different actions and happenings (here; organizational change) within the organization will increase. The qualitative study depends on the context and consists of interpretive assumptions (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2008). Although, by considering the problems with validity and reliability, the results in this study are generalizable. Furthermore, previous theoretical findings were used to interpret and analyze the empirical data which makes this research trustworthy. The aim of this study was to get a general understanding and impression of how specific skills for effective leadership could be used in the phases of transition. Although, skills might not be the only variable affecting the procedure of organizational change.

4 Empirical Data

This chapter starts with a short presentation of the organization studied for this thesis. The main part of the chapter consists of the interview findings, which were accomplished within two weeks, with seven different respondents. The interview questions were developed with background in the previous chapters of this thesis. Several themes were constructed to get a clear disposition of the interview. This chapter will follow the same disposition within every interview.

4.1 One Getinge

Getinge Group is a leading global provider of products and systems within healthcare and life science. In September 2015, the CEO, Alex Myers, presented a comprehensive transformation program aimed at restoring growth and improving profitability. The transformation program was called “One Getinge” and was calculated to last for four to five years. Even though growth through acquisitions is the most common way in the medical industry, Getinge Group did not grow as fast as it did before. Only the acquisitions created the growth and it was therefore time for a change. A lot of synergies could come from synchronizing the different functions in the three business units.

Before the change program, the organization used to work within three brands with different product portfolios, suppliers and conditions with no functions other than corporate functions, in common. Through the transformation program, it was decided that Getinge Group were going to operate under the three product brands of ArjoHuntleigh, Getinge and Maquet in the name of Getinge Group. The former business units were working with their own brands and the connection between the units was limited. Further, the communication and connection between the units differed between countries and levels. These three business units needed to be incorporated to get aligned as one organization towards the stakeholders. This change initiative was particularly important for the supply chain function, since it was one of the most efficient parts to harmonize. Hence, changing from three business units into One Getinge will have the most effect on the logistics function in the supply chain.

Four months before the start of implementing the change, the initiative was presented by the CEO. Reasons for the change, the improvement plan, a transformation roadmap and the next steps were defined and discussed. Within the change process, a mutual supply chain was going to be developed to meet the customer's challenges and needs, but also to facilitate the work within the organization. Since the market required a streamlined supply chain, a lot of emphasis was put on changing the supply chain. Structural inertia was another factor that needed to be taken care of, through the creating of a new, streamlined supply chain. This was done to increase the competitiveness and continue organizational growth. By streamlining the supply chain and combining the three former business units, cost synergies were gained.

A couple of months before the change was announced, new core values were established as a result from an extensive operation of workshops during 2014 and 2015, which worked as a preparation for the organizational change. To spread the new core values within the new organization, further workshops with all employees were constructed. Since three business units

were combined into One Getinge, differences in the contextual culture occurred, which required an extensive work with core values.

Through collection of empirical data, it is clear that the previous business units contains of different types of leaders and different types of employees. There are differences between the business units and different leadership styles are being used, which might be a result from different cultures that the global organization operates in. The change will therefore have a major impact on the organization at large, and there is a lot of different aspects to work on, such as the different systems and company cultures, to get everybody in the same direction. The structural inertia is remarkable, since this kind of change has been suggested before, but not implemented.

4.2 Description of Respondents

This section will serve as a closer description of the interviews to highlight the most interesting data for this thesis. A within-case structure intends to make the description clear and easy to follow when we proceed with the analysis.

The respondents are positioned within the different business units that existed before the organizational change, and are working in different functions, at different levels. In One Getinge, a hierarchical system builds managerial levels varying from level 0 to 8 within supply chain, where level 0 represents the top management team. This thesis will focus on middle managers in level 3 and 4, in either the manufacturing or the logistics function within the supply chain.

The process of change currently operates in the different phases of mobilize, move and sustain, within the organizational change. Dependent on number of employees and size of country, the local facilities has been forced to gain market shares through working aligned as one towards the stakeholders. In smaller countries, where resources are limited, a more united front were already required before the change. Hence, some facilities were more prepared for this change to occur, and expected it to happen. Expectations for the change has led to different levels of receptiveness, which means that the local facilities has proceeded through the phases of the change in different paces. As a consequence of the different preparations, the implementation of the change started at different points of time. This means, that the local facilities are operating in different phases at the moment.

4.2.1 Respondent A

Respondent A (RA) is a middle manager at level 3 and works with logistics in Europe as a part of the global logistic function. The implementation of the change started a couple of months ago, which means that according to RA's contextual situation, he is currently active in the move phase, working with implementing the change initiative within the organization. RA has experiences from implementing changes before; in one of the three previous business units of the organization and outside the organization. The respondent has a lot of experience within logistics, but has background in a different industry. Given this, he has got a lot of experience in processes, but would like to gain some more knowledge about the products. RA

claims that the experience he has gathered throughout the years helps him with his everyday work.

Organizational Change

The change initiative is a good one, according to RA. Although, he argues that the three business units should have done the organizational change one by one, and after that, combining the units to One Getinge. This, to minimize distraction between the former units. RA understands that the need for change was urgent, and therefore time for individually streamlining the units was not an option. Also, a common change initiative will gather the organization and make sure that everyone hits the same direction, he claims. The fact that customers are changing, as well as the economy as a whole, is the main reason to implement this change program, *“which makes it not easy, because we need to stay alive”*.

There is always some kind of resistance to change, RA claims. Further, he argues that the only reason for this is that the employees are nervous and scared of how the change will affect their position in the organization, and not specifically resistance to the change itself. He mentions that there is a sense of urgency for the change to happen, and that everyone involved in the organization understand the need for a change, although they might be resistant to this unique change program. According to RA it is hard to see a pattern of those who are resistant to the change and not, more than that the resistance is between business units.

Leading Change

Working with overcoming the resistance to change has been a task for RA. His way of overcoming resistance and make the employees ready for change, is by talking to them. He makes it clear that all the information he is getting considering the change process, is shared with his employees.

The largest problem with change according to RA, is that people within a high level could be sceptic to the change. RA mentions how people at higher level sometimes refer to their way of working in the old organization, as the best way of working. He says that it is important to give those people time, and he is sure that in a couple of months they will be positive about the change as well. Continuously, he claims that *“you can not win all in this change program, you have to let some people go”*. But, in order to get people on board in this change, time must be spent with them to be able to explain why they are important for the change, but also what is expected from them in this process.

RA likes working independently. The communication towards his employees works in a structured way, which he follows. He does not think he is missing any information, since the information shares immediately in the network. Although, what the organization is missing is the bigger picture, he comments. With such a big organization, communication need to follow a structure, and make sure that all parts are getting involved, which RA think probably will be solved in the next couple of months. The communication towards RA's employees follows the structure of weekly meetings and conference calls. He also mentions the intranet as an important channel for the employees to be updated about the change.

Effective Leadership

RA considers himself having a good structure of how the communication worked in the former organization, and now he is copying this into the new organization as well. To communicate in an open and honest way what is going to happen, and how, is important for RA as a leader. Once this has been done in a good way, he claims that people will change fast.

To make the employees involved in the process has been a struggle and something for RA to work with. He mentions his training program for key individuals in the organization as an example of how he works with involving and trying to achieve a more bottom-up approach. In the beginning of the change process, RA involved the employees through town-hall meetings, whenever he could, and were allowed. In the town-hall meetings he presented the change and how it was going to proceed. He acted open and repetitive, since he argues that it is good to repeat information to create understanding. Those meetings were important for the employees, RA claims, therefore he made sure that he was being honest and let the employees know that he listened to them. The change could not proceed with only actions from the top management, the whole organization needs to be involved to reach success, he argues.

Motivating the employees could be difficult, RA claims, *“even if you are open and honest, you don’t know what they are talking about in front of the coffee machine”*. To make sure that everyone has the right information is the most important thing to keep the employees motivated and to avoid speculations, he claims. Despite this, RA works continuously with communication and sensemaking to motivate his employees.

At the current state of the process, RA finds it hard to delegate tasks to the employees. He is struggling with the new organizational structure, at the same time as he needs to close down the old structure, which he argues limits him and his possibility to delegate. Although, he finds it important to give all employees a little responsibility of their own, to let them know they are important for the process. This also forces the employees to make up their own minds about the change, which RA thinks is good.

RA considers himself to have good knowledge in the products that his former business unit were responsible for. He does not find it crucial to know all the details, since his task is to handle the logistics. His previous employments have given him experiences that are helpful every day. The experiences help him understand people, and his employees trust in him because of his many years of experience in leading positions, not only within Getinge Group.

4.2.2 Respondent B

Respondent B (RB) is a middle manager at level 4 and works with logistics in Europe as a part of the global logistic function. The implementation of the change started a couple of months ago, which means that according to RB’s contextual situation, he is currently active in the move phase, working with implementing the change initiative within the organization. RB has experiences from implementing changes before; in the same industry, in the same line of business and in the same company. In 2007 two parts of the organization was merged into one, and RB was part of the project team, working with coming up with an improved organizational structure. He mentions that this implementation of the organizational structure reminds of the one that is implemented now, although this time it is much more extensive. The

experiences from earlier change initiatives have helped RB to implement the change. He has during previous processes learned how to read and understand body language, which has helped him develop an understanding for the people, as a part of a toolbox. RB also has experiences from working in different business units and has thereby collected knowledge in the products Getinge Group provides. Continuously RB has worked in the same industry, in the same line of business, in the same company, for a long time.

Organizational Change

Employees' being resistant to change is natural, and RB claims there are *"two kind of people when talking about change; people who embrace the change and people who resist the change"*. The respondent considers himself being open to change and that he is embracing this change initiative. Changes lead to insecurity among the employees, which further might lead to a resistance to change, RB claims.

There is a high sense of urgency in implementing this change according to RB. Since the market has changed due to changing environmental circumstances, the organization needs to adapt to this RB claims. Further, RB thinks that the timing of the change is good, and that it is needed. If the change would not have been implemented right now, it might have lead to redundancies and that the company were to be sold.

Leading Change

The solution for overcoming resistance to change is to be open and transparent, RB claims. He makes sure to always share as much information as possible, *"because not knowing is probably the main reason why people get resistant and upset"*. He believes that overcoming resistance could mainly be done by open communication, which is a constant exercise as a change leader.

RB mentions the change management to be the biggest and most important task within a project, which can make it or break it. It is important for the leader to consider the change as the only right one, since the organization won't change their strategy over one person. *"Not embracing the change might turn against you"*, RB argues.

There are challenges in implementing this new structure, he claims without doubts. The three business units that now are going to combine into One Getinge, are working under different set ups, which might complicate the process of building a new organization. The people need to be prepared for changes in the workforce; *"The person I was talking to yesterday, might have a different role tomorrow"*. RB adds on that it is a challenging time, and that work needs to get done in this changing process.

RB describes that there is a frequency of meetings where information is shared together with relevant reports. RB argues that the process of change in the supply chain has lead to a more directive and straight to the point-communication. The intranet is another way of collecting relevant information, but common sense helps as well, since RB claims that people involved in the organization should understand why things are moving into a certain direction.

Effective Leadership

RB finds it important to involve the employees in the process of change, and make them sure of their importance in the organization. As a part of the supply chain, they are working with the core business, and are therefore highly important for the organization's survival, he claims. Another way to involve is to have frequent meetings and being transparent and open towards the employees. In this phase of the process, RB finds it hard to delegate tasks to the employees. Although, he finds it important to give people responsibility, and they will act accordingly.

To give clarity in the beginning of the change, RB made sure that he communicated the process as much as he could. Now, operating in the move-phase, he is continuously communicating. RB considers himself to be open and good in communication, which helps him in his everyday work of being effective as a leader. Also he is capable of handling and dealing with changes, because of his experiences.

To be effective as a leader, RB tries to make sure that every time he meets with people, he clarifies messages, guidelines, strategies or goals. With openness and transparency he repeats the message, which hopefully will lead to that *“people start to eat, breath and sleep with it”*. RB claims that when the employees are well informed about the change, they will feel a part of it, and then starts to own and embrace the change. This is also his way to motivate them to continuous work. As said before, RB claims that it is of importance that the employees are feeling needed and important for the change to go through.

With background from other parts of the company, RB consider himself to have good knowledge in the products Getinge Group are providing. But since products are developed, the knowledge must be constantly refreshed, and frequently education should be provided for the employees to accomplish good technical skills. The respondent is convinced that his skill-set has evolved during this change process, that he has come across new factors and problems. *“You gain more experiences every day, and you can also use that experiences almost every day”*.

4.2.3 Respondent C

Respondent C (RC) is a middle manager at level 4 and works with logistics in Europe as a part of the global logistic function. The implementation of the change started a couple of months ago, which means that according to RC's contextual situation, he is currently active in the move phase, working with implementing the change initiative within the organization. RC claims that he has limited experiences from organizational changes, since he has been operating in other functions and not at managerial level for a long time. Although, he has worked in one of the business units for a very long time, in different functions of the supply chain.

Organizational Change

Although the respondent recognizes some resistance for change due to lack of information, he does not see the resistance as a problem or challenge, but claims that the thoughts and reactions of this change are mainly positive. Additionally, RC does underline that this is the beginning of the change, and he is positive to things he does not agree on will occur later in the

process instead. Despite the fact that the change requires a lot of work and a lot of transformations for the three business units to operate as one organization, RC are positive about the change initiative and claims that he *“sees some opportunities which is better for the company”*. Of course, RC explains, some employees were afraid of losing their jobs since they did not know what positions that would remain respectively disappear.

He is also sensing the expression of lack of information according to the employees, and that this has led to resistance to the change. *“They have a lot of questions which I also still have, there are unknown facts everywhere”*. The information could be clearer according to RC. *“We do not know the exact right direction to go or how it will be, it is kind of a guessing”*. At this current state of the process, RC finds it hard to be able to delegate tasks to the employees, since he himself are not sure about the how the tasks in the new organization are going to be done in a proper way.

Leading Change

To handle the unstable mood, and the employees that were afraid of losing their jobs, RC worked a lot with sharing announcements right away with the employees, which he believes was recognized and appreciated by the employees as well. Along with this, the respondent found it important to convince the employees about a safe future and that they were welcome to stay employed in Getinge Group, which he believes motivated the employees to perform at work even through the change process. RC did put a lot of emphasis in making sense of the new strategy by making presentations and explaining how the change would affect the employees. During the process of sensemaking he tried to be open and transparent to take employees thoughts and suggestions into consideration, in order to convince that the new strategy is the only and right way. RC also argues that it is important to be clear about where to go, and how it should be done.

According to the respondent, the flow of information is not as clear now as it was before the change initiative started. He claims he need to look for the right information himself and do some networking to find out what is happening and what directions to take lead upon. The main challenge for RC is, according to himself, to understand how the change is going to affect his role in the organization.

Effective Leadership

In order to involve the employees, RC tries to inform by sharing everything he knows regarding the change. He tries to keep the relationship open by asking for feedback of what information the employees would like to be a part of. RC believes that one of the most important things to do in this change is to train employees in the products that come from the other business units. To get the best results from this training, he would like someone from the other business unit to help with this process in order for them to get the procedures all figured out. The respondent stresses the importance of giving the employees responsibility in completing tasks by themselves, and says that he likes this open way of leading a group.

RC explains how he communicates through weekly conference and phone calls. He continues with explaining that the ones he is reporting to are new in their position, and he hopes for the communication to be better ones the change initiative is fulfilled. The respondent describes

himself as an open, calm person who does not panic when facing an issue. Additionally, he sees no problem in making fast decisions when there is a need for it.

RC claims to know a lot about the products and processes, due to years of experience in the organization. His former employments has helped him gain experience, which is useful in today's work since he knows a lot about methods and processes. Despite this, he is gentle to get more training in some areas, and believe that it will gain the employees development as well as to get product training.

4.2.4 Respondent D

Respondent D (RD) is a middle manager at level 4 and works with manufacturing in Europe as a part of the global manufacturing function. The implementation of the change started shortly after the announcement, which means that according to RD's contextual situation, he is currently active in the sustain phase, working with embedding the change initiative within the organization. When discussing structural changes, or organizational changes at large, respondent D claims to have no experiences within this area. The respondent although has a lot of experience from working in the logistics, since he has been working within this business line in both Getinge Group, but also in other organizations before this commission.

Organizational Change

RD claims that for the employees not much has changed through this change process. The ones that are most affected by the change, is the top management. He claims that the lower you go in the organization, the lower the awareness is.

The change initiative was expected in RD's department. Although it is an extensive organizational change, RD claims that it is not a revolution, and that people was prepared for the change to occur. The respondent stresses the need for this change initiative to occur, and explain how he and his team strived for this in their work. RD explains how his team of employees were working together even before the change initiative, and that they were very open for this change since they expected it. With this in account, he saw no resistance for the change in his group, but felt some uncertainty in other teams in the organization. The fact that the change was announced already in September last year, has led to uncertainty, especially at the lower levels of the organization, since employees at those levels have to wait longer for their new roles in the structure to be presented. *"People were focusing on their individual positions in the new organization, instead of thinking about how the change will affect the company"*. As a consequence, different work groups were on different levels of preparation, hence had different perceived readiness for change, and were affected by the change initiative in a different way.

Leading Change

RD mentions that the main concern has been to limit the people's uncertainty considering the change and the new structure. Meaning, that he has not been spending time on convincing people that this change is the right thing to do. Right now, the new organization is working on making a common standard, which has been something to take into consideration during this process of change. Three business units to gather around same standards has been taking time, but according to RD, this should be completed very soon, at least for his team.

The respondent claims his team to be well prepared for this change, since they were open to the change and expected it to happen. RD explains how he already introduced this way of thinking and working in his team before the change. He believes that if this preparation would not have existed, employees would not have listened to the proposition but continue in the same direction they were used to. Additionally, RD explains how he had to work extra with some employees who were afraid of losing their position in the organization, *“I had to explain a few times what this change was about, that it was not about the people, but the structure”*.

RD argues that the communication has not changed much due to the organizational change, since most of the people he is working with, are employees from his former organization. Although, during this process of change, RD felt a need for more intense communication, and therefore he has restructured the meetings, to increase frequency and put more focus on the internal communication. RD sense a good communication in the organization, and explains how the intranet and his own involvement in this change along with meetings gives him a lot of information.

Effective Leadership

The best way to be effective, is according to RD to delegate as much as possible; *“my personal approach is that there is no limitation in delegating tasks.”* RD continuously works with delegating tasks to his employees. He believes that the employees could be given any task, as long as they are working with self planning and explaining how they are going to achieve the given task. RD finds it important to discuss together with the employees how they can improve things. The work with delegation is important from another point of view as well, RD claims. If the organization cannot provide interesting and developing tasks for the employees, they will start looking for options. *“We need to keep them busy with interesting tasks”*, which also is a way of motivating, he says.

RD explains how he on a daily basis could have around twenty meetings with employees, and how important it is to listen and give the employees time in this change process, *“start listen, start focus on emotions”*, is something he tries to apply. Since change is a constant process, he argues that it is a constant work with the people. RD has experience from managerial work in Getinge, but specialized work in the organization. He considers himself having knowledge that is required regarding products and processes, due to his experiences. He considers the technical skills to be important in order to perform even better in the logistics area, although product training is something that he is looking for, *“when working with this kind of tasks, you need to know what products you are talking about”*.

4.2.5 Respondent E

Respondent E (RE) is a middle manager at level 3 and works with manufacturing in Europe as a part of the global manufacturing function. The implementation of the change started shortly after the announcement, which means that according to RE’s contextual situation, he is currently active in the sustain phase, working with embedding the change initiative within the organization. RE has experiences from implementing the same type of change as the one One Getinge stand before, two times earlier in other organizations. For RE, this change initiative included selection of a new team. He claims this to be no problem, while he is familiar with

the employees since he has worked with them for a long time. Continuously, RE does not only have experience from implementing a change initiative, but also from setting up structures for change.

Organizational Change

This change initiative has been suggested earlier, and RE believes that it is a good decision to make, but that the change process probably could be improved and be done both faster and better. Not only does the respondent see the positive effects from this change in the organization, but also for personal sake. Further, this change has created opportunities for organizational global growth.

The respondent finds this change to be the only one and better idea for the organization. RE were involved in planning the change process with the top-management, since he had a good commitment to the change and experiences from changes before. There was an urgency of change in the organization and what RE can say about the timing, is that it is not too late, but it could have happened before. Further, he claims that the opinions about timing will differ among the employees. The need for change seems to be more urgent at top management level, than for middle managers.

RE has recognized resistance for this change initiative within the organization. He claims that most of the people do not like changes at all, but prefer stable situations and stable environments. He believes that the fear of everybody not having a job after the implementation scares the employees and may be the main reason for resistance.

Leading Change

When implementing the change, RE focused on overcoming the resistance through meetings with the employees. By informing about the change he tried to convince them of not worrying about redundancies.

RE describes how the information about the change was general in the beginning of the process, and therefore hard to transform to the employees who were wondering about their positions in specific. RE explains when people were informed about the changes for the first time, a lot of speculations considering redundancies started. Quarterly, meetings with the directing board were arranged according to RE. Through internal intranet, regular updates and monthly reviews information were also shared. To pass as much information as possible towards the employees is important for RE. He says *“If you promise to to deliver something by the 15th, it must be by the 15th, because if you miss this date, then people think that something is wrong”*.

When comparing the level of communication within the organization as it is today with how it was before the change, RE believes that the information is more available and easier to access. The change has lead to a more sharing of information and common meetings within the supply chain area. A challenge that RE noticed in the current phase is when in institutionalizing the organizational structure that has been created through the process of change. RE mentions how the change will help the organization to perform better through learning by each other. Knowledge and different ways of working in the three former business units will be beneficial, as this will help them develop further.

Effective Leadership

RE tries to communicate the change to the employees, and also to convince them about the change initiative, although he claims that *“it is actually quite difficult to meet and work with people every day”*. Hence, the respondent is satisfied with the communication, but still stressing that communication can always be improved. RE has an individual goal of coaching and teaching employees in communication. To prevent bad things connected to the change initiative, such as misunderstanding and false conclusions, RE believe that it is important to stop the discussion and share information. *“Motivation will come when the communication or the information is more specified”*. RE claims that open communication is a way to motivate the employees to work harder.

RE points out the importance of giving people freedom in the organization, and give the employees' responsibility of what they create regarding both people and structure. This eliminates the risk of blaming each other, and everybody is responsible for their own work. Involving the employees in the decision making process is important for RE, and he involves them through asking what kind of meetings that are needed, and what needs to discuss during these.

It is also important to convince people of the organization becoming one, big family instead of employees expressing work teams as “we are” or “you are”, according to RE. To do this, he explains the reason for change through presentations and meetings. For sense-making the process, RE uses examples of how the change will affect the organization in a positive manner, and thereby convince the employees that this kind of strategy is the better.

The respondent mentions that his technical skills have improved during the process of change. He considers himself having good knowledge about methods, processes and products in the different business units, but he stresses that there are always room for education.

4.2.6 Respondent F

Respondent F (RF) is a middle manager at level 4 and works with logistics in Europe as a part of the global logistic function. The implementation of the change is about to start, which means that according to RF's contextual situation, he is currently active in the mobilize phase, working with preparing for the change initiative within the organization, and creating a new team of employees. The respondent has a lot of experiences from changing organizations before, since he has both been involved in, but also responsible for, change initiatives. Additionally, RF has a lot of experience from working in this industry, with the same kind of work task.

Organizational Change

The respondent definitely recognizes a need for this change if the organization is to continue its growth. He claims that this is the right direction to take, but thinks that it will be a challenge for the organization.

RF has discovered some resistance for this change, but would rather like to categorize it as a concern of what is to happen. He believes that there in general has been a great understanding of the need for this change. The respondent believes that the implementation of the change could have come faster if information were held on and not shared as early as it was. He also

claims that this would have decreased the concern for the change, but that it did not affect the mood in the organization.

When discussing the organization's readiness for change, RF claims that a lot of employees were not ready for it. *"They are only creating resistance for this change, a bad atmosphere and mood and counteracts us"*. As a reason for this, he mentions that sense of urgency was not created, since the organization is not bleeding.

Leading Change

To handle and create readiness for change, RF claims that designed solutions for this would have enabled the process since handling everything case by case requires a lot of unnecessary time and effort.

One of the challenges in this change has been to handle information that RF has, and not being able to communicate this information to the employees. When negotiating with other parts, information about the change has been confidential which has created a concern among the employees. To overcome this concern, the respondent stress the importance of sharing as much information as possible in order to prevent employees to speculate in false conclusions. When gathering information about the supply chain and the introducing of this change, RF prefer to contact persons directly, rather than using the intranet to get information. He claims that the kind of information required to build up a new strategy that relates to the change initiative is more easily gathered through personal contacts.

Effective Leadership

The respondent has the ambition of leaving a lot of responsibility to the employees, but admit that he finds it difficult not to get involved in all tasks. RF claims that it is crucial for him to involve the employees in the change process with delegation of tasks, although the respondent claims himself to be highly involved in the process as well. *"I like to see the details and get involved in a lot, and my biggest potential of improvement is to become more effective"*.

RF claims that a clear communication will increase the employee's confidence of the middle manager. There could be improvements in the communication during the change, for the organization not to lose control according to the respondent. He has noticed a vacuum of information where the handling of report has not been optimized.

RF describes how he has extensive experience from working with logistics, and that these technical skills differs him from other individuals within the organization. RE explains how there are not a lot of other employees that possesses the same technical skills as he does when working with theses kind of tasks. Despite this, he ranks involvement as one of his strongest skills as a leader, along with the ability to analyze and structure the organizational work. He feels a need of improving his ability in motivating and handling employees, but believes that the best way to do this is to involve them more in the organizational work. Further, he argues that in this current state of the change process he does not feel comfortable about taking decisions, since it affects the employees and creates an uncertainty in the organization. The respondent claim to have good analytical skills in easily recognizing what potential the organi-

zation or business units has. Even though he claims himself not to have the best technical skills, he contributes with structural abilities.

4.2.6 Respondent G

Respondent G (RG) is a middle manager at level 3 and works with logistics in Europe as a part of the global logistic function. The implementation of the change is about to start, which means that according to RG's contextual situation, he is currently active in the mobilize phase, working with preparing for the change initiative within the organization. Currently, he is also working with creating a new team of employees. The respondent claims to have a lot of experience from organizational changes before, not only within this organization, but also from previous employments. From former work places he has gained a lot of experiences and knowledge from other things than organizational changes, such as knowledge about processes and methods. He further explains how his work within this organization has given him a lot of experience, since there has been a lot of development in Getinge Group.

Organizational Change

When talking about the change initiative, RG believes that this decision is the right one to take and also a good solution for the organization. He continues with arguing that the most extensive changes has been within the supply chain, since three business units has become one. Further, the ones most affected by this change initiative, will be the managers at higher levels. The people working in the operating core will still do the same tasks, even though the organizational structure has changed.

When preparing for the change the respondent has participated in three meetings per year arranged by the organization. Working in the supply chain within logistics requires specific knowledge and methods that are hard to collect by looking at other functions within the organization, according to RG. He therefore explains how internal information not has been gathered as much, but rather between the three business units which are now becoming one. The respondent stress information about the change as an important factor, claiming, *“you can never get too much information, and by inform you may easily decrease the concern”*.

RG has recognized some resistance for change among the employees, a concern of fear of what is to come. He continues with claiming that the synergies lies at middle manager level, and that resistance is more perceived at this level than between employees.

Leading Change

To minimize resistance in the different levels, the process could have gone faster from one level to another according to RG. He would have preferred a model for how the organization would develop to get a better understanding for the change. To overcome the fear of changing between the employees, RG has been both open with all information and open in mind, for the employees to understand that this change does not come with any threats. Continuously, regular meetings with the employees have given them opportunity to ask questions about the change.

RG sees some challenges with this change and mentions decision-making as one of them. According to him, these decisions have not been made as fast as required for the change initia-

tive to proceed. Another challenge he mentions is to introduce a completely new team with employees facing unfamiliar work tasks.

Effective Leadership

RG describes himself as a strategic leader that likes to look at the general picture. He works best in a team with specialists and doers, which complement his ability to start up a project. RG further claims that it is important to have team members whose skills opposites his own, for results to be achieved.

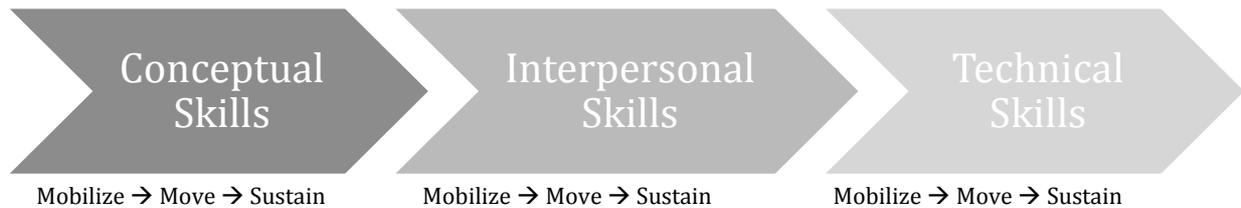
To keep himself updated about new solutions and findings for logistics, RG participates in workshops and conferences. By collect information from these, and combine them with knowledge from articles and previous experiences from earlier work places, the respondent get a good understanding for his work tasks in the supply chain.

RG claims that the communication within the organization works well, and that the communication is more extended now than before the change initiative occurred. He also sees communication as a tool for effective change, and argues that employees have the right to find answers on their questions. Further, RG also describe how he acts structural and open, for the change to become more effective.

When discussing technical skills such as knowledge about products and processes, RG sees himself skilled in this area. He believes that these skills are important to understand the background and to increase the understanding of his daily work. RG also have good abilities in discovering technical solutions for everyday problems, which has helped him preparing for this change. RG claims himself to have good analytical skills when it comes to visualizing the organizational strategy. He considers himself being skilled in mediation at large, not to mention to mediate the vision for the organization. When RG motivates his employees, he does that through delegation and wait for follow-up from the employees to be able to give them feedback on their work. The respondent considers himself to be good at both delegating and coaching, for the employees to perform their best. RG is not afraid of decision-making, and sees it as an important action to move forward with the process.

5 Analysis

To present the analysis, we will compare the empirical data regarding how middle managers use their skills in organizational change with the theoretical framework that describes the phases of transition and skills for effective leadership. Initially, a short presentation of the types of skills visualized in figure 2.3 will be given before we present the analysis on each skill. We will continue with comparing the respondent's utilization of skills according to the phases of transition, and relate this to the theoretical framework to be able to make conclusions.



*Figure 5.1
Disposition of Analysis*

As you can see from figure 5.1, the analysis will focus on the three different skills described in the theory. According to the phases the respondents' acts in, and thereby practices certain skills more frequent than others, we have divided the skills into the phases of transition and described situations when they are using these skills. By doing this, we have already taken a stand from the theory found, which did not pay any attention to the use of different skills according to the phases of transition.

5.1 Conceptual Skills

To possess conceptual skills implicates ability in recognizing opportunities and potential problems, involve and delegate, creativity, analytical ability and logical thinking when taking decisions, plan and coordinate and being a good decision maker (e.g. Yukl, 2013; Connelly et al., 2000; Heifetz & Linsky, 2003; Gilley et al., 2009).

5.1.1 Conceptual skills in the mobilize phase

When analyzing the empirical data, we tend to see a pattern in the importance of recognizing an eventual resistance for change. The respondents operating in the mobilize phase, have perceived resistance for change in the terms of concern of what is to happen in the organization, and a fear of change. To consider the employees' reactions to the change, i.e. to recognize potential problems, seems to be important in the beginning of the change process, since research show that one of the most difficult things in changes is to get people to agree on the need for change (Chan Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). This is also supported by Shea et al. (2014), who claim that the implementation of change will be more effective if the readiness for change is high. The respondents in the mobilize phase feel an absence of tools to handle resistance for change and redundancies connected to the change. This adds on to previous

research, which claims that leaders need tactics and tools to be able to identify factors to overcome resistance (Yukl, 2013).

Due to the fear and anxiety regarding the change, there is no readiness for change in the organization, despite the fact that the employees knew about the need for change. In the literature this is confirmed by Balogun and Hope Hailey (2008) and Armenakis et al. (1993), who argue that resistance to change should not be confused with a lack of readiness for change. Although, if the employees are prepared for the change and know what is expected from them, they are less likely to be resistant (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). This means, even though the employees knew about the change initiative and were informed about benefits of the change, resistance for change were still a fact. Based on this, we found that since no readiness for change was created, resistance occurred.

Despite the lack of readiness for change, the respondents in the mobilize phase perceived an acceptance for the change among the employees, which we found when analyzing the empirical data. One of the respondents explained that the change initiative did not affect the operating core in the same extent that it affected the managers at higher levels, which might be a reason for employees to be more receptive to the change. It is further explained that a leader need to make sure of acceptance before giving instructions on how to change (Garvin & Roberto, 2005), and the respondents claim that they like to involve their employees in the change process by delegating tasks. The importance of involving employees when implementing changes is expressed by Gilley et al. (2009), who claim that it increases the performance within the organization. Additionally, to involve employees in decision making processes tends to streamline the process (Snowden & Boone, 2007). Although, from our analysis we have identified that Respondent G (RG) is not afraid of decision making and sees the decision making process as an important action to take. On the other hand, Respondent F (RF) finds it quite inconvenient to take decisions in this phase of the change process.

Through the analysis we found out that the respondents in the mobilize phase possess' skills in logical thinking and analytical ability. RG works in a strategic way with involving the right people and resources, and tends to see the general picture. Meanwhile, RF describes how he easily recognizes the potential the organization has, which means he has good analytical skills. To have an understanding for the organizations different parts is supported as a conceptual skill by the theory, and are examples of analytical ability and logical thinking (Yukl, 2013).

5.1.2 Conceptual skills in the move phase

The respondents in this phase are struggling with closing down the old structure and at the same time re-structuring the new one. Even though the respondents find it important to delegate tasks to the employees, they find it difficult and claim that this phase of the change limits their possibilities of delegating tasks in the move phase. This complements previous research, explained by Balogun and Hope Hailey (2008), who argue that several important stages are going to be fulfilled when implementing a change. Hence, in the process of re-organizing the structure and direction, it might be difficult to focus on delegation.

We tend to see a consciousness in logical and analytical thinking from all respondents that currently are acting in the move phase. Respondent C (RC) explains that he might not feel positive about all the changes the new structure brings, although he understands that this is the better for the organization. When changing an organization, Respondent A (RA) claims that it is important to see the bigger picture, which he claims that the organization at large is missing. Additionally, Respondent B (RB) argues that the organizational change is right on time and is needed for the survival of the organization. Based on our analysis, to realize what is best for the organization, to see the bigger picture and to understand the urgency rate in a change initiative, are examples of skills in analytical and logical thinking. According to previous research, these skills are needed for effective leadership, since an understanding of the different organizational functions and how they are connected to each other is important (Yukl, 2013).

5.1.3 Conceptual skills in the sustain phase

Through the analysis we found that the respondents operating in the sustain phase were prepared for this change initiative and expected it to appear. The well preparation within the team is probably one of the reasons for why they have managed to succeed to the sustain phase faster than others. This can be explained by Connelly et al. (2000) who claims that middle managers need to possess skills in planning and organizing in order to advance. Both respondents that operated in the sustain phase, explain how they strived for this change and how they and their teams worked together with the other business units at a local level even before the change initiative was introduced. Additionally, Jacobs (2002) argues that new changes needs to become everyday activities in the organization in this phase, which they with planning probably will be.

Respondent D (RD) explains how the change was expected in his team since he already had introduced this way of thinking, meanwhile Respondent E (RE) claims that the idea of One Getinge is a perfect idea and something that he has suggested for a long time. According to previous research, a leader that foresees the need for change in the right context can be crucial to maintain a long term perspective (Yukl, 2013; Wooldridge & Floyd, 1990). Our analysis shows that the respondents operating in the sustain phase are creative due to their ability to foresee a need for change. This provides further insights to previous research, which argues that the skill of creativity has shown to be useful when advancing (Connelly et al., 2000). Continuously, it has also been shown that to create solutions for problems is an important skill (Mumford et al., 2000a), which we believe that both respondents possess through their creativity regarding organizational changes.

The analysis of empirical data shows an importance of involving employees. The respondents in the sustain phase works with delegation a lot, and RD claims that this is the best way to be effective. RE involves the employees in the decision making process by asking them for advices and opinions. Continuously, RE stress the importance of giving his employees freedom and responsibility in their daily work. This is supported by Garvin and Roberto (2005), who claim that it is important to provide employees with opportunities and to encourage new ways of working, to achieve effective leadership. Additionally, RD claims that he involves his employees by discussing together how they can improve things now after the change is implemented. Since the employees are involved in the planning of new ways to work, these new

ways becomes more accepted within the organization and thereby a general action, as Kotter (2007) explain as institutionalizing the change. This is also supported by Burnes (2004), who claims that to embed the changes is a core action in the sustain phase.

Through the analysis we found that the respondents in the sustain phase look bright at the future. They are operating in the sustain phase with embedding the new structures and values within the organization, and they believe that this change will help the organization as a whole to grow, and become more flexible. This change will also release the people potential, and help the organization to become more streamlined, the respondents operating in the sustain phase claims. The literature stresses the importance of that change leaders compares differences between before and after the change to find out what actually happens in the process (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008), which the respondents does through evaluating the advantages from the change initiative, and how that will affect the organization.

Mobilize	Move	Sustain
High	Medium	High

*Table 5.1
Utilization of Conceptual Skills in the Phases of Transition*

5.2 Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are characterized as social skills, such as; relating, visioning, negotiating and inventing, along with motivating, convincing and communicating clearly (e.g. Ancona et al., 2007; Bass, 2008) Additionally, to be a good sensemaker is also an interpersonal skill that enables the change to proceed (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991).

5.2.1 Interpersonal skills in the mobilize phase

During the process of analyzing we found that the respondents in the mobilize phase found it important to communicate the message of change continuously. They both want to have an open and informative communication with their employees, which are supported in the theory by Balogun and Hope Hailey (2008), who claim that in this phase of change it is vital to communicate the message of change. Despite this, the respondents in the mobilize phase explains how some information has been confidential which has lead to limitations in what to communicate further to the employees. This complements previous research, which argues that the message of change must be adapted to the recipient (Armenakis et al., 1993). The information that the respondents have received from top management was only intended for his level, which created an obstacle when passing the information onto the employees. Hence, we have found that to communicate the information was not only about translating the message of change so that the employees understood it, but also to limit the information, since some of it was confidential. We believe that this is a common difficult situation for middle managers to be put in, since they are in a position of being involved in both top-management's plans and the daily work with the employees. In other words, to communicate as a middle manager has been shown to be a difficult task.

Continuously, the respondents find it important to share as much information as possible and to be open in mind in this phase, for employees not to speculate in false conclusions regarding the change. Along with this, we can see from the analysis that the respondents find it important with personal contact. This is shown by several examples of how the respondents favor an open climate where no questions are stupid questions. To create valuable relationships in the team is supported by previous research that how important it is to connect with the employees through relating and listening (Ancona et al., 2007).

5.2.2 Interpersonal skills in the move phase

What the respondents have in common is their attitude regarding repeating information. They agree on to create understanding for the change demands repetitive information. What we could see when studying the empirical data, is that the respondents were convinced that well informed employees will ease the process of making sense of the change. Once they have enough information about the change, they will feel that it makes sense and will be the better for the organization. Additionally, the respondents stress the importance of taking employees thoughts and suggestions into consideration, and to be clear about where to go, and how it should be done. They all believe that it is important to convince the employees about that the new strategy is the right one to follow. To make sense of the strategy and need for change is also shown as important in previous research, and is argued to be vital in the process of change (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991; Bryant & Stensaker, 2011). This is also supported by Tucker et al. (2015), who claim that special attention needs to be paid to sensemaking in the move phase. Since middle managers are implementers of top management strategic plans, it is their responsibility to explain and make sense of the new strategy (Johnson et al., 2014).

During the process of analyzing we found that all respondents in the move phase found it crucial to explain and be open and transparent regarding the change. RC claims that he shares everything that he knows with the employees, and that he practice an open way of leading a group. RA adds on to this by claiming that it is important to communicate in an open way what is going to happen. Further, RB makes sure that he shares as much information as possible by being open in his way of communicating. The respondents in the move phase works a lot with sharing announcements right away, which seems to be appreciated by the employees. Clarifying messages and strategies is something RB tries to do every time he meet with concerned employees, which he hopes will lead to an extensive understanding for the change. It has been shown that the leader has a responsibility of explaining the change according to Armenakis et al. (1993), who argues that this is a good way to ease the change for both the employees and the change leader.

In the analysis we found that the leaders operating in the move phase motivates their employees through communication and sensemaking in the process of change. They argue that this way of motivating will keep them feel part of the continuous work within the organizational change. As an example, we found that RC motivates his employees by ensuring them about a safe employment even after the change process. According to him, employees get more motivated to perform at work if they know that they are able to keep the work in the future as well. Previous research shows that middle managers are expected to motivate others, to be able to perform successful in an organizational change (Bryant & Stensaker, 2011; Battilana et al., 2010), which is something that all three respondents in the move phase are doing.

All respondents are good listeners and prioritize employees' personal will and opinions. When interpreting the analysis we found that RC to is a good listener, since he describes how he often consider employees requests and tries to respond to these in the best manner. RB does also possess social skills, which is shown in the analysis by his awareness of the concerns the employees have regarding the change. He tries to convince them that change is good and necessary, and negotiates the best alternatives and solutions for both the organization and the employees. When analyzing what kind of social skills RA possess, we found that he respect people's attitude to the change and gives them time to react upon the new strategy. Hence, to be a good listener and to handle questions from employees is described as social skills and important to use in a change process in order to handle the social problems that might arise (Mumford et al., 2000a).

5.2.3 Interpersonal skills in the sustain phase

Through the analysis we found that the respondents operating in the sustain phase were well known in the organization before, which lead to a higher trustworthiness in the change leader. This leads to a more open receptiveness against the organizational change among the employees. The fact that RE is a well known leader in the organization, lead to a more easy communication and implementation of the change initiative, since his employees knew that he would do what is best for the organization. Although, RD felt a need for more intense communication during the change despite a well established structure of communication before the change, which has forced him to change the structure. To know the employees well, and to be aware of how they react upon organizational changes, is important according to Balogun and Hope Hailey (2008), who claim that this is crucial to lead the individuals and the organization through the final phase in the change process.

The respondents in the sustain phase have tried to explain what the desired outcome of this change is, and this has been shown to be important when embedding organizational change. RE expresses the importance of working in teams, and tries to create a mantra of "we are", instead of "us" and "them", among the employees. We tend to see the same focus in RD, who claims that he has worked with explaining what the change was about to the employees. To visualize the desired end-state of the change, and create a vision, is an important leadership skill according to the literature as well (Armenakis et al., 1993)

Mobilize	Move	Sustain
Low	High	Medium

*Table 5.2
Utilization of Interpersonal Skills in the Phases of Transition*

5.3 Technical skills

To possess the right type of knowledge to perform specific work tasks, and to have experience in methods, processes and products, are explained as technical skills (Yukl, 2013). Along with this, to have good knowledge in technology is also a technical skill (Bass, 2008).

5.3.1 Technical skills in the mobilize phase

When analyzing the empirical data we recognize a pattern in the importance of experiences. The respondents in the mobilize phase have extensive experience from earlier commissions in similar work tasks, which they consider being a tool when handling daily work tasks. Further, both respondents have a lot of experience in organizational changes, both within and outside of Getinge Group. Research show that if leaders possess technical skills gained through experience, they can more easily perform in their work tasks and proceed through organizational changes (Yukl, 2013).

Through experience, the respondents have gained knowledge about methods required to succeed when working with the supply chain, which makes them specialists within their area of work. A continuous interest in training themselves in new methods keeps their technical skills updated and RG describes how he participates in conferences and workshop to gain this knowledge. The importance of having knowledge in methods is described by (Yukl, 2013). Additionally, McLennan (1967) argues that these specialized skills are needed for a middle manager.

Since both of the respondents got to design and create their own teams of employees, they had the privilege of choosing what kind of specialists they needed in their team. By this, they were a part of shaping the new structure, which required a lot of knowledge about their new team members. This is supported by (Yukl, 2013), who argues that knowledge about the employees' specializations is a technical skill.

5.3.2 Technical skills in the move phase

When analyzing the empirical data in the move phase we have found differences in type of experiences. RC has extensive experience within the organization, and his many years in different functions indicates that he has gained a lot of knowledge about processes and products. RA also has a lot of experience, but from working in other organizations in a different industry. Although, he has a lot of experience from the same type of work tasks, involved in logistics, and has more knowledge in processes. RB has worked in the same industry, in the same line of business, and in the same organization and has thereby gained a lot of experience within his specific work area. Research show that it is important to possess the right type of knowledge for technical skills to be able to perform work tasks (Yukl, 2013). All respondents that operates in the move phase, are possessing technical skills, but different ones. This indicates that the need for the right technical skills for each work task may vary.

All respondents in the move phase have experience from implementing changes before, although the involvement in the organizational changes varies among the respondents. RA has implemented changes in one of the three previous business units, as well as RB, when combining two business units at a local level. RC has experienced organizational changes from a different angle, working in the operative core. It is argued that the implementation of change

can be done by different mechanisms (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). We tend to see that different experiences, and thereby perceptions of change processes, may affect how the respondent works with implementing the organizational change that he stands before.

5.3.3 Technical skills in the sustain phase

Through the process of analyzing, we found that the respondents in the sustain phase have major experience within the organization. They have been working in Getinge Group for a long time, which means they are familiar with the employees and the knowledge they possess. Further, the respondents claim that they possess technical skills in processes and methods, but that they would like to gain some product training to enhance their daily work. RE’s experiences in implementing changes and new structures before, is also an example of how he through training and experiences possess technical skills. Although, his skillset has evolved during the process of change, he claims. RD has no experiences from being involved in an organizational change before, but has extensive experience from working within the logistics function in other organizations as well, which gives him technical skills in these types of tasks. The importance of experience, knowledge about methods, processes and products is in the literature described by Yukl (2013) as technical skills. However, these technical skills are required to perform as an effective leader (Yukl, 2013).

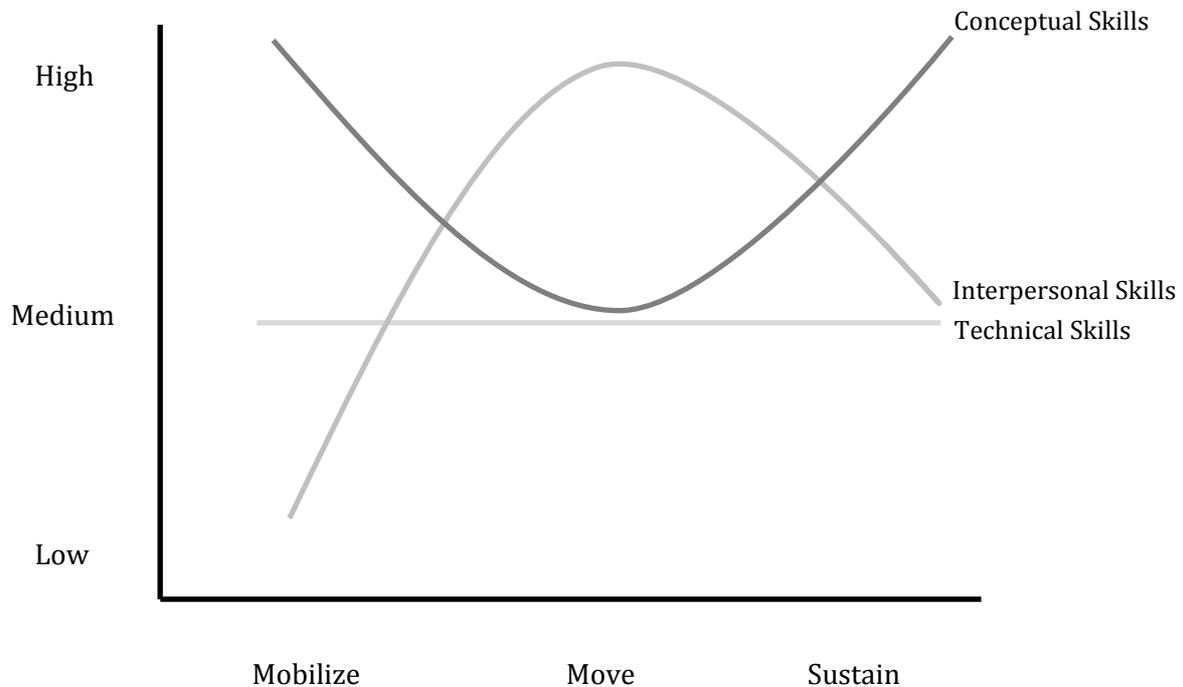
As mentioned before, the respondents in the sustain phase have a well-established relationship with their employees, since their many years of experience in the organization. This has made the process of change easier for them, since they were able to predict reactions among the employees. These well-established relationships has probably also enabled the process of communication, to be able to proceed through the phases of transition, and complements previous research claiming that knowledge about the employees and their specialization is vital for leaders in organizational change (Yukl, 2013).

Mobilize	Move	Sustain
Medium	Medium	Medium

*Table 5.3
Utilization of Technical Skills in the Phases of Transition*

5.4 Skills in the Phases of Transition

Given the analysis above, we would like to present the findings in Figure 5.2. This figure is designed to explain and summarize the utilization of skills in the phases of transition in organizational change. The figure will be further explained in the following section.



*Figure 5.2
Utilization of Skills in the Phases of Transition*

As shown in figure 5.2 it is most crucial to possess conceptual skills in the beginning of the change process, in the mobilize phase, when the middle manager needs to use these skills in order to prepare and make the employees ready for the change initiative. Interpersonal skills have been shown to be of less importance in the mobilize phase, since this phase requires more focus on conceptual skills. On the other hand, interpersonal skills are of more importance in the next phase of transition, the move phase, when more emphasis is put on social skills in order to make sense of the change initiative. As consequence, less emphasis is put on conceptual skills in the move phase, since there are more focus on interpersonal skills and relating with the employees. In the final phase of transition, the sustain phase, conceptual skills are once again in more focus. Since this phase of transition is about embedding and institutionalizing the change initiative, skills such as coordinating and planning for this are required. Interpersonal skills are more required in this phase than in the mobilize phase, but not as important as the conceptual skills. Additionally, figure 5.2 also shows that technical skills are equally required through the phases of transition and serves as a complement to the conceptual and interpersonal skills.

6 Conclusions

This chapter will present the findings of the study with the base from the analysis, which explains the utilization of skills in the phases of transition. We will proceed with presenting our recommendations for future research in this area, our practical implications, a guideline for middle managers, and our contribution to the research area studied in this thesis.

6.1 Findings

In the introduction it was presented that the globalized world is acknowledged by increased competition, which forces organizations to create a flexible organizational strategy. Further, there is an importance of controlling the supply chain, since it is argued that competition today is between supply chains. It was also presented that the increasing trend in globalization is one of the factors for the increasing need for change, and that the change process is divided into three phases; mobilize, move, and sustain, which are important to consider in organizational change. Middle managers have been the focus in this study, since it was argued that they have a responsibility to mediate and implement change in organizations. Additionally, research regarding middle managers role and his or her skills in organizational change is limitedly studied. Despite this, research has shown that the process of implementing strategic change is affected by the leader's skills, which is the key to how effective the implementation process will be. More detailed, conceptual, interpersonal and technical skills seemed to be skills identified for effective leadership. Skills for effective leaders and the phases of transition are subjects studied separately. Although, we have recognized a lack of identification on what skills are most suitable in the three phases of transition, which may be one of the explanations for not succeeding with organizational change. Accordingly, this study is based on the following research question:

What skillsets are important for middle managers through the process of organizational change in supply chain?

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of what role the middle manager's skillset play through the phases of organizational change in supply chain. We have found that there is a connection between the middle managers skillset and what phase they are operating in. This was fulfilled through developing an understanding of what kind of skills that were focused on and utilized in the three phases, and a discussion of the results will be presented in the following sections.

Previous research states that to possess and use specific skills are crucial to be effective as a leader. As mentioned before, skills identified for effective leadership has been characterized into conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills and it has been shown that these are important to consider and crucial to use when implementing an organizational change as a middle manager. Although, this study shows that it is not only required to use the possessed skills, but also to use the specific skills with reference to what phase of transition the leader operates in. Given this, the presentation of the results will be divided into the three types of skills connected to its importance in the specific phase.

As presented in the theoretical framework, an example of a conceptual skill can be to recognize potential problems, which we have identified as to perceive resistance for change through registering fear and concern among the employees. Further, when analyzing the data we found it important to involve the employees through delegating tasks, which also is an example of a conceptual skill that the respondents in the mobilize phase practices. Analytical ability and logical thinking are also categorized as conceptual skills and are practiced by the respondents through an awareness of the bigger picture. Given this, to recognize potential problems, to involve the employees, and to have analytical and logical thinking are all skills recognized as most crucial in the mobilize phase. In the move phase, we have identified an importance of using analytical abilities, but not as crucial as in the mobilize phase. Additionally, operating in the move phase seems to make it difficult to delegate tasks. To be creative is also characterized as a conceptual skill. The middle managers in the sustain phase introduced new ways of working to proceed through the phases. Involvement through delegation is frequently used by the respondents in the sustain phase as well, and when embedding an organizational change it seems crucial that all employees feel involved in the organization.

An example of an interpersonal skill is to communicate which is practiced by the middle managers in the mobilize phase through adapting the message of change to the employees. Additionally, when communicating it is important to share as much information as possible, and the respondents applies to this by being open about the changes. On the other hand, when proceeding to the move phase, to practice the interpersonal skill of making sense of the change seems to be the most crucial skill, even though communicating information has showed to be of importance as well. To share announcements about the change has been appreciated by the employees. Another interpersonal skill is to motivate the employees, and the middle managers in the move phase motivate their employees through this kind of communication and sense making. When embedding the change and operating in the sustain phase, the middle managers seems to benefit from having a good relationship with their employees. Hence, interpersonal social skills such as relating are of importance as well, but not as important as communicate and make sense in the move phase.

The third categorized skill presented in the theoretical framework is technical skill, which is described as to possess knowledge about products, processes and methods that can be gained through experiences from previous work tasks. All of the interviewed respondents have extensive experience from earlier commissions, and we have noticed that technical skills can be showed in different ways, either knowledge in processes, products, or methods. We have not recognized any differences in the use of technical skills through all phases of transition, and they seem to be equally required to perform as an effective leader.

The result of the study demonstrates that when preparing and planning the organizational change, conceptual skills are most required to be effective as a middle manager in mobilize phase. Further, interpersonal skills have been shown to be of less importance in this phase. When proceeding to the move phase with implementing the change initiative, the use of interpersonal skills has been shown to be the most significant. Meanwhile, conceptual skills are of less importance but still complements the interpersonal skills in this phase. When embedding the change initiative in the sustain phase, the great importance of conceptual skills seems to

return, and instead interpersonal skills works as a complement. Technical skills have shown to be of same importance through all phases of transition.

We therefore conclude that a middle manager, who faces an organizational change in supply chain, should focus on specific skills at different points of time, when operating in the different phases of transition. The specific skills to use in the mobilize phase are conceptual skills, meanwhile interpersonal skills are of specific importance in the move phase. Finally, when operating in the sustain phase, conceptual skills are of specific importance. The conclusion is also visualized in figure 5.2.

When searching for information on how leaders handle organizational change, we recognized a lack of studies focusing on middle managers role in this. A lot of research has been done based on top managers and how they act in organizational change, even though it was expressed that middle managers have a crucial responsibility in the process of change. It is also described how the process of change can be divided into three phases of transition. Additionally, we discovered extensive research regarding skills for effective leadership. This study contributes with connecting skills for effective leadership to the phases of transition. By bringing the two research areas together, the theoretical gap of what skills that are most effective in the three phases of transition is filled. The findings implies that there is a lack of research regarding this area, since we have recognized differences in the use of skills through the phases of transition, and could therefore be further studied.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Research on the use of skills for effective leadership related to the phases of transition in organizational change is scarcely. We therefore suggest further studies within this area of research. Since similar studies do not exist, a research with the same extent could be done with different respondents, which may increase the reliability. Another suggestion for further research could be to extend the scope and thereby include a larger amount of respondents. A research like this would increase the statistical generalization and may give a deeper understanding of the studied subject.

Nonetheless, to apply the same type of study in a different context could be interesting and contribute with an understanding of other functions than the supply chain as well. This would provide an insight in what different skills for effective leadership that is of importance in different kind of contexts. It would be fascinating to find a pattern in different contexts regarding skills for effective leadership through the phases of transition.

A triangulation of the data could also be done through further research, which would include both top managers, middle managers and employees. This could result in a better understanding of the middle managers skillset from different angles in the organization. In this way, research will not only show what skills the middle manager claims to use, but also how the use of these skills is perceived by top management and employees.

6.3 Practical Implications

The research findings will contribute to an understanding of what kind of skills that are preferred to possess in order to succeed with effective leadership, and how the needed skills vary in the different phases of organizational change. The results will thereby enable for middle managers whose task is to implement a change initiative, since they will have a greater understanding of what different skills they should focus on in the different phases of organizational change. To use the skills suitable for the phase the middle manager acts in, will lead to a more effective leadership. Further, this will take the process into the next phase, hence lead to a more effective organizational change overall.

The findings in this thesis are of practical relevance for middle managers working with implementing organizational change in supply chain. It has been shown that focus on skills for effective leadership ease to proceed through the phases of transition in organizational change. Different skills are identified with activities for middle managers, such as to plan and coordinate, motivate, involve and delegate. A focus on these skills and thereby specific activities will enable for middle managers to proceed through organizational change.

Furthermore, this thesis shows the importance of focusing on specific skills at different points of time in organizational change. To plan, coordinate and have a logical thinking (conceptual skills) is shown to be most crucial when presenting and making the organization ready for change (mobilize phase). Continuously, to make sense of the change, to communicate, and to motivate the employees (interpersonal skills) is of greater importance when implementing organizational change (move phase). When embedding and institutionalizing (sustain phase) the change, skills in visualizing, delegation, and involvement (conceptual skills) has been shown to be the most crucial to focus on.

In addition to possess conceptual and interpersonal skills, we have found that technical skills are required through all phases of transition. Even though the middle manager should focus on specific skills in different phases, our findings show that all skills are required to lead organizational change through the phases of transition. Hence, to possess the three types of skills can be compared with having all the tools required in the toolbox and thereby be able to utilize these at the right point of time to succeed through the phases of transition as a middle manager.

Guidelines for middle managers

- ✓ Focus on skills for effective leadership (conceptual, interpersonal and technical) to proceed through organizational change.
- ✓ Make sure of that your toolbox is filled with required skills (conceptual, interpersonal and technical) and that you have the ability to use them in the right point of time.
- ✓ Focus on specific skills at different points of time in organizational change:
 - Mobilize phase; conceptual skills
 - Move phase; interpersonal skills
 - Sustain phase; conceptual skills

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Introduction, general description of the contextual culture:

Describe your role in the organization. *What area are you responsible for today? How many employees serves under your responsibility? Have you implemented any change initiatives before?*

Supply Chain Management

1. What does the supply chain for Getinge Group looks like?
2. Can you describe how you work with supply chain management?
3. How do you find the right information and knowledge about the activities in the organization's supply chain?

Change and Change Management

1. Do you find people to be resistance to this organizational change? Do you have any specific examples of how this is expressed? How did you prepare to respond to this?
2. How have you worked to over-come this resistance? Have you used any specific methods or tactics?

Readiness for change occurs when the employees within the organization are ready for change, i.e. that they feel involved in and well informed about the change process.

3. Can you recognize any specific pattern for those people who were ready for change, respectively those who were not?
4. In general, have the employees been open and receptive to the change initiative? How has this been showed? Have you discovered any differences of reactions in different divisions or levels of the organization?
5. How do you think that the implementation process would have proceed if readiness for change would not have been taken into consideration?
6. What are your personal perceptions of the change initiative? Do you feel that the change is motivated and necessary for the organization's development? What do you think about the timing?

Leading Change

1. What is your attitude to the change?
2. How long time do you think that the implementation of the change will take? Is it crucial for the change to occur immediately? Do you think that the employees share these opinions? How did you make them understand the urgency rate?
3. What was your perception of receiving an already planned strategy for you to implement?

Leadership in Change Processes

1. How did you involve employees in the beginning of the change process?
2. How much responsibility was delegated to the employees? Did the employees had the possibility to affect the change initiative?
3. Do you believe that the employees are clear about the new organizational vision? Do they understand what strategy is used to achieve this vision?
4. How is the new-implemented core values communicated to the employees?

5. What reactions has the implementation of the change brought? Any specific reactions that has affected the mood of the organization?
6. Do you feel like you have had the right resources for implementing the change? For example: the right employees, budget and time horizon?
7. How are the employees prepared for the upcoming challenges that the change initiative means?

Middle Managers

1. How do you work with reporting upwards and downwards? Do you feel like the communication works well in the organization?
2. Have you noticed any difference in the communication after the change initiative?
3. How have you worked with explaining and sensemaking of the new strategy?
4. How have you been involved in the strategic planning process?

Effective Leadership

1. Give some examples of how you act effective in your managerial work!
2. What industries do you have experiences from? Given that you have experiences from leading in another company or industry, have you noticed any differences?
3. What experience do you have from working in this organization? Do you consider yourself having enough knowledge about rules, structure, products and services?
4. Give example of knowledge you possess about methods, processes and procedures needed in the organization.
5. How do you use your skills to get the best results for the change process?
6. Choose your top-three skills, describe how you possess these in your everyday work.
7. How has your skillset evolved during the organizational change? Are there skills you didn't had before the implementation of the change? Were there other skills that were of more importance before the change?
8. How do you motivate your employees to perform their best in this change?
9. What other problems have you encountered and how have you worked with solving these?
10. What do you think about the future? How do you think that Getinge Group will develop? What differences are to be encountered and what will remain?

Appendix 2: Interview Guide (Swedish Version)

Inledning, allmän beskrivning av kontexten:

Beskriv din roll i organisationen. *Vilket område är du ansvarig för idag? Hur många anställda är under ditt ansvar? Har du genomfört några organisationsförändringar tidigare?*

Supply Chain Management

1. Hur ser Supply Chain för GetingeGroup ut?
2. Kan du beskriva hur du arbetar med Supply Chain Management?
3. Hur får du rätt information och kunskap om organisationens Supply Chain?

Förändring och att leda förändring

1. Har du upplevt något motstånd till denna organisationsförändring?
2. Har du några konkreta exempel på hur detta har uttrycks? Hur förberedde du dig att möta på detta?
3. Hur har du arbetat för att över komma detta motstånd? Har du använt några specifika metoder eller taktiker?

“Readiness for Change” eller “beredskap för förändring” sker när de anställda inom organisationen är redo för förändring, det vill säga att de känner sig delaktiga i och väl informerad om förändringsarbetet.

1. Kan du se något specifikt mönster för de personer som var redo för förändring, respektive de som inte var?
2. Har de anställda varit öppna och mottagliga för förändringen? Hur har detta visat sig i så fall? Har du upptäckt några skillnader i reaktioner i olika divisioner eller nivåer i organisationen?
3. Hur tror du att implementeringen skulle fortsätta om “beredskap för förändring” inte skulle ha beaktats?
4. Vilka är dina personliga uppfattningar om förändringsarbetet? Känner du att förändringen är motiverad och nödvändig för organisationens utveckling? Vad tycker du om tidpunkten för förändringen?

Ledaren i förändring

1. Vad är din inställning till förändringen?
2. Hur lång tid tror du att genomförandet av förändringen kommer att ta? Är det viktigt att förändringen ska ske omedelbart? Tror du att de anställda håller med om detta? Hur gjorde du få dem att förstå hur brådskande det är?
3. Vad är din uppfattning om att ta emot en redan planerad strategi för dig att genomföra?

Ledarskap i förändring

1. Hur engagerade du medarbetarna i början av förändringsprocessen?
2. Hur mycket ansvar har delegerats till de anställda? Har de anställda haft möjlighet att påverka förändringsarbetet?
3. Tror du att de anställda är medvetna om den nya organisationens vision? Förstår de vilken strategi som används för att uppnå denna vision?
4. Hur har de nya kärnvärdena kommunicerats till de anställda?
5. Vilka reaktioner har genomförandet av denna förändring gett? Några särskilda reaktioner som har påverkat stämningen i organisationen?

6. Känner du att du har haft de rätta resurserna för att genomföra förändringen? Till exempel: rätt antal anställda, budget och tid?

Genomförande

1. Hur har de anställda förberetts för de kommande utmaningar som förändringsarbetet innebär? *Med workshops? Genom att inspirera och kommunicera?*

Mellanchefer

1. Hur arbetar du med att rapportera uppåt och nedåt? Känner du att kommunikationen fungerar bra i organisationen?
2. Har du märkt någon skillnad i kommunikationen efter förändringen?
3. Hur har ni arbetat med att förklara den nya strategin för de anställda?
4. Hur har du varit involverad i den strategiska planeringen av förändringen?

Effektivt ledarskap

1. Ge några exempel på hur du agerar effektivt i din chefsarbete!
 2. Vilka branscher har du erfarenheter från? Om du har erfarenhet från ledande i ett annat företag eller bransch, har du märkt några skillnader i hur ledarskapet fungerar?
 3. Vad har du för erfarenhet av att arbeta i denna organisationen? Anser du dig själv ha tillräcklig kunskap om struktur, produkter och tjänster som Getinge tillhandahåller?
 4. Ge exempel på kunskap du har om; metoder och processer som behövs i organisationen.
 5. Hur använder du dina kunskaper för att få de bästa resultaten för förändringsarbetet?
 6. Välj din topp-tre färdigheter, beskriv hur du använder dessa i ditt dagliga arbete.
 7. Hur har dina färdigheter utvecklats under organisations-förändringen? Finns det färdigheter du inte hade innan genomförandet av förändringen? Fanns det färdigheter som var av större vikt innan förändringen?
 8. Hur motiverar du dina medarbetare att prestera sitt bästa i förändringen?
 9. Vilka andra problem har du stött på under förändringen och hur har du arbetat med att lösa dessa?
-
10. Vad tror du om framtiden? Hur tror du att Getinge Group kommer att utvecklas?

Appendix 3: Self Assessment

Describe yourself and your leadership style

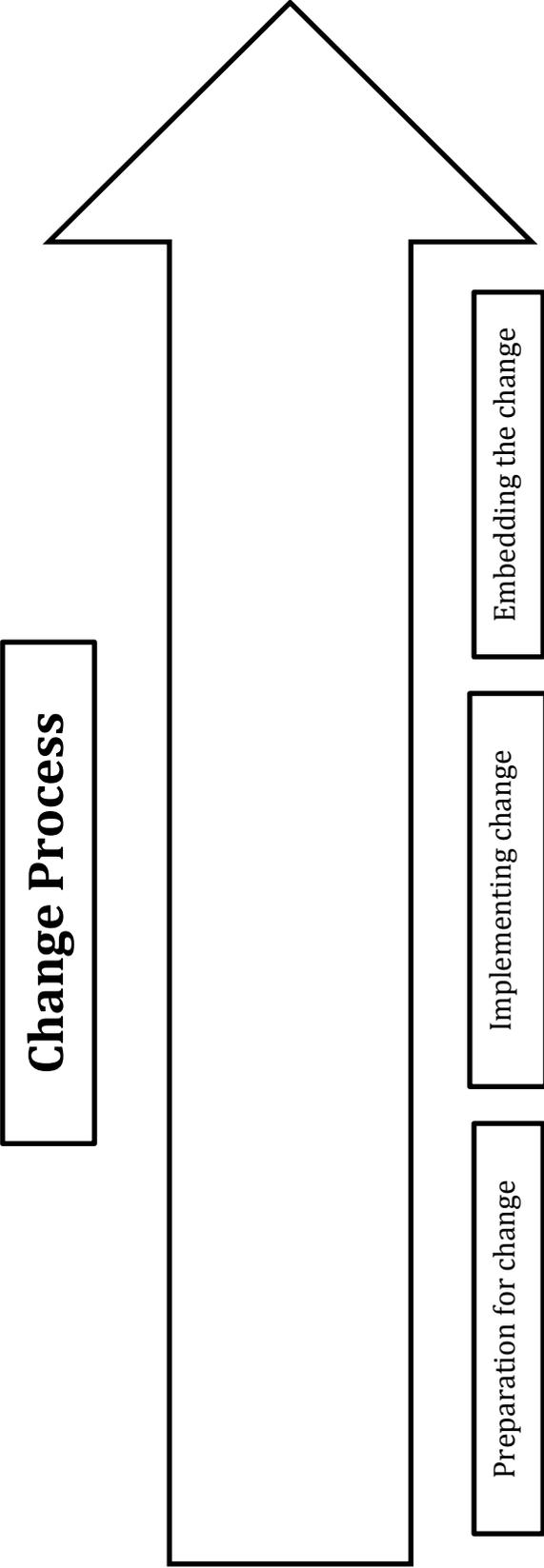
The following words or expressions are used in previous research to measure leaders and their skills. We do not evaluate the marks and will simply use it to get a perception of you as a leader. Since there are different types of leaders, different patterns of marks will occur and there is neither right or wrong, nor good or bad patterns.

How would you estimate your capacity of the different skills? Put a cross on the line to mark.

Example:			
Being happy	LESS	-----x----->	MORE

Knowledge about products and services	----->
Knowledge about organizational methods and processes	----->
Experience in the organization	----->
Communicating towards employees	----->
Motivating employees	----->
Convincing employees	----->
Confidence in decision making	----->
Understanding for attitudes	----->
Coordination through set goals	----->
Being aware of environmental circumstances	----->
Developing plans for solution	----->
Creative in problem solving	----->
Involving employees	----->
Delegating to employees	----->

Appendix 4: Change Process



Appendix 5: Presentation Letter

We are Matilda Westerblad and Malin Bengtsson, 22 years old and will graduate with a Master of Science in Business and Economics in June 2016, from Halmstad University.

This spring, from January to May, we will be working with our thesis, which focuses on strategy and organizational change. Our targets for the thesis will be middle managers in different scopes, within the same organization. Our hope is to find both differences and similarities between these, to create a deep and useful thesis.

Research has showed that leaders has a determinant role, and **communication** is a central tool when **changing** an organization. One leadership task is to **convince** the employees that their work contributes to the new strategy, which is central to change. Based on this, the need for an **effective** leader is necessary when implementing and **managing change**. One of the most important and crucial **responsibilities** as a manager in an organization is to lead change. Leadership is often explained as a **mission** that involves a process of influencing an organization or group, and guide them towards a specific strategy and/or goal.

The interview questions will be based on above assumptions, in a semi-structured way. Which means, there will be room for explanations and supplementaries. We plan to gather our primary data through open ended interview questions where the leaders themselves can share their expression of the change and the reactions of the employees.

For example;

- How do you work with your employees during the change process?
- Do you feel that there was resistance to change among the employees?
- How would you describe your leadership style?

We are currently working on the theoretical framework of the thesis, and will eventually start with the interviews. Once we have enough material for the theory, the interview questions will be formed gradually and the interviews can start. You will receive a copy of the questions before the interview for preparation.

The interviews are estimated to take about one to two hours, and we hope to have an open dialogue with you during our thesis process, to gather additional information if needed. If there is a possibility to meet in person to accomplish the interviews, we would appreciate this opportunity. Otherwise, the interviews could be accomplished through for example Skype.

Getinge Group is a highly appropriate company for us to study, since the organizational change is in its implementing process. We wish to create a deep, qualitative analysis, which hopefully will be able to contribute to the future, both for you and for us. We appreciate your interest in participating in and contributing to this research and are looking forward to meet with you.

You are of course welcome to contact us with any further questions!

Regards,
Malin Bengtsson och Matilda Westerblad

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