



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Workplace Bullying

A Study about Awareness, Preparedness and Implementation

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Prefatory note

We would like to express our gratitude to organization x who participated in surveys and shared documents in order for us to carry out this thesis. Their willingness to act as a case study made it possible for us to research on the sensitive, yet important, subject of workplace bullying.

We address a special thank you to our supervisor Alexander Almér at the Department of Applied Information Technology at the University of Gothenburg, for his guidance and feedback.

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to compare the policy and guidelines with what the management actually does in order to prevent workplace bullying and assess whether the employees perceives the preventative steps regarding workplace bullying.

Methodology: A public organization with governmental funding functioned as a case study for this research. In order to reach the study's purpose, the data collection process in this study has been conducted through three main methods: 1) a review of the selected organization's current policy and guidelines regarding workplace bullying, 2) a survey designed for employees and 3) a survey designed for management.

Findings: The results of the study showed that there is an occurrence of workplace bullying within organization x, despite a clear approach and instructions on how to handle workplace bullying. The results also indicated that the managers participating in the study have a certain lack of knowledge and preparedness when it comes to managing workplace bullying. Finally, the results showed that the employees within organization x to some extent lack awareness concerning workplace bullying.

Conclusion: The results of the study pointed to a gap between the organizations written documents concerning workplace bullying and the managers' preparedness. It also showed that the communication is lacking in informing employees in issues connected to workplace bullying. Therefore it can be stated that the implementation of policy and guidelines has not reached all organizational members.

Keywords: Workplace bullying, internal communication, crisis communication, pre-crisis, implementation, preparedness.

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1. Introduction

Bullying is a term that many connect with schools and anti-mobbing movements (Einarsen 2000). Organizations like Friends (Om Friends, 2012) and different rules and regulations have been established to prevent bullying and support schools in their work against it (Veta mer om lagen, 2012). It is not obvious that bullying ends when we are grown-up, mature and have left school behind us. Bullying might take another shape, express itself in other ways when entering into a professional life. Name-calling, pushing and alienation in school are replaced with ignorance, work overload and unclear roles in the adult world (Vad är mobbning? 2012). This type of negative special treatment that takes place in a working environment is called workplace bullying (2012).

In this study we will look at workplace bullying from three perspectives; we will look at policy and guidelines that contains anti-bullying regulations, we will survey managers in order to investigate their preparedness in issues connected to workplace bullying. We will furthermore look at how employees perceive the preventative work from the organization. Two Swedish offices within a public organization are the objects of our study. From here on the organization will be referred to as organization x.

1.1 Background

According to the survey “Work Environment 2009” by Arbetsmiljöverket (2012) nine percent or 340 000 persons has, during one year, been bullied by their coworkers or bosses. These numbers represent Sweden but Einarsen and Skogstad’s study from 1996 found similar results in Norway. Their study was conducted on 7 986 employees, with different professions from different organizations, and the results showed that 8.6 percent had experienced workplace bullying during a six months period (1996). Workplace bullying is a widespread issue – especially in Scandinavia – and the issue could benefit from further investigation (Saunders et al. 2007). Most of the conducted research in this specific study field has been concentrated to Scandinavia and Northern Europe (Einarsen, 2000).

From a review of the existing literature in the field, the authors of this thesis have found three major reasons for why the Scandinavian countries are on the front edge in research on workplace bullying. First, bullying in the schoolyard has been a research tradition in Scandinavia since the past twenty years (Olweus, 1994) and has been an observed phenomenon in schools. Second; “The Scandinavian interest in harassment at work builds on the assumption (and the everyday observation) that other kinds of harassment exist in organizations which may be as frequent and as severe as sexual harassment in terms of individual suffering and organizational costs” (Einarsen, 2000:380).

Third, Sweden was the first country to have an anti-bullying law and the other Scandinavian countries were also far ahead in comparison with for example North America, where Canada was the first country to implement a law in 2004 (Saunders et al. 2007). In 1994 the first anti-bullying law was implemented by the Ordinance of the Swedish National Board of Occupational Safety and Health (2007). The anti-bullying laws and regulations in Sweden, Finland and Norway aim to support every workers right to a healthy and safe work environment (Leymann, 1996). The Swedish anti-bullying law (Victimization at work) deals with the obligations of the employer and the core content is that the employer shall plan and organize the work so that workplace bullying is prevented to the highest possible degree. The employer shall also clearly state that workplace bullying is not accepted in the organization (second and third paragraph below). The first paragraph below describes in what settings this law is applicable and also defines workplace bullying.

Scope and definitions

1 § These Provisions apply to all activities in which employees can be subjected to victimization. By victimization is meant recurrent reprehensible or distinctly negative actions which are directed against individual employees in an offensive manner and can result in those employees being placed outside the workplace community.

General provisions

2 §The employer should plan and organize work so as to prevent victimization as far as possible.

3 § The employer shall make clear that victimization cannot be accepted in the activities.

(AFS 1993:17:3)

1.2 The concept of workplace bullying

Workplace bullying is in the stage of becoming an established term, which causes difficulties both for those who are victims, since they might not know how to describe their situation, and for organizations trying to find the right way to deal with issues related to workplace bullying. The conception of workplace bullying is in the same process that the notion of sexual harassment was in the 1980's and 1990's (Miller, 2011). The development of laws and regulations preventing sexual harassment went hand in hand with a struggle of defining the term, and it took many years before some agreement was established concerning the notion.

Moreover, the fact that some instances of workplace bullying also falls under other overlapping categories, for example varieties of discrimination and harassment, complicates the situation further as to the process of developing a suitable standard terminology. Early on Brodsky defined harassment as: "repeated and persistent attempts by a person to torment, wear down, frustrate, or get a reaction from another person; it is treatment which persistently provokes, pressures, frightens, intimidates or otherwise cause discomfort in another person" (Brodsky 1976 in Einarsen 2000: 382). The concept of harassment has later on been defined by others (Vartia 1993; Björkqvist et al. 1994) as situations or activities that repeatedly expose or cause mental, sometimes even physical, pain against one or more individuals. It should be noted that different forms of harassment, connected to sex or race for example, can be seen as specific forms of bullying (Einarsen, 2000). Scapegoating is another closely related term, applying to situations in which one or more persons who during a period of time are exposed to enduring, repeated, negative actions from one or more other individuals (Thylefors, 1987). Health endangering leadership (Kyle, 1990) and petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994) focuses on bullying from a manager towards an employee.

All these terms, including workplace bullying, are closely related in definitions and "the core dimension in these definitions is the term repeated and enduring negative

acts. Bullying and harassment is seen as systematic aggression and violence targeted towards one or more individuals by one individual or by a group” (Einarsen, 2000:381).

1.3 Definition

The term workplace bullying will be used in this study since it is primarily used by researchers in the United Kingdom, Australia and Northern Europe (Saunders et al. 2007). The term was coined by Adams (1992), to collect a broad range of harassments that employees could be exposed to under a common label, no matter differences in age, sex, position etc. The definition for workplace bullying in this study makes use of a definition of the Scandinavian term “*mobbing*”, suggested by Einarsen (2000):

In Scandinavia, the term “mobbing” is commonly used to describe all situations where a worker, supervisor, or manager is systematically and repeatedly mistreated and victimized by fellow workers, subordinates, or superiors. The term is widely used in situations where repeated aggressive and even violent behaviors are directed against an individual over some period of time. (Einarsen, 2000:380)

A conflict is not workplace bullying, neither is loosing your temper, nor taking out the aggression on your co-worker of having a bad day. Workplace bullying can also be defined through criteria’s: if they are met, workplace bullying has taken place. In this study five core criteria from Rayner and Keashly will add to the definition of workplace bullying. According to Rayner and Keashly five core criteria should be met in order to define and investigate the concept of workplace bullying experiences: *targets experience negative behavior, behaviors are experienced persistently, targets experience some harm, either psychological or physical, targets perceive they have less power than the bully and, thus have difficulty defending themselves and targets label themselves “bullied”* (2004:273).

Moreover it should be noted that workplace bullying does not only contain verbal threats or violence against persons or property. In this study workplace bullying also includes administrative punishment (like unmotivated replacement of people or divestiture of office rooms) or constantly being given work tasks that does not match the work description.

1.4 Delimitations

The five criteria from Rayner and Keashly (2004) above, contains the term “experience”, which defines exposure to workplace bullying. The interpretation of the term experience is vague in Rayner and Keashley’s definition. Experience will in this study refer to exposure, meaning that the target not consciously have to be aware of experiencing workplace bullying. In some cases workplace bullying takes place but the victim does not consider himself or herself being mistreated. Organizational members around a victim can also evaluate whether workplace bullying is present.

Sexual harassment or harassments based on race will not be examined in this study. Including it would make the topic too wide since harassments based on sex or race are much researched study fields of their own. Furthermore, we are not interested in finding out specific reasons for workplace bullying; the purpose is not to focus on specific cases of harassments. Sexual harassments will not be excluded as a specific form of workplace bullying but will not be dealt with explicitly in this study.

1.5 Problem discussion

Even if most of the research in the field of bullying has focused on school children, it can be declared that bullying in workplaces is an occurring phenomenon. Since it is an understudied field, and complicated issue to determine whether a certain situation classifies as exposure to workplace bullying, one can assume that the number of unrecorded cases are high and that these types of degrading treatments always to some extent have existed at workplaces.

If bullying nowadays is defined and discussed through a working life perspective, what does this mean for organizations and corporations? How should organizations look upon the concept workplace bullying? Mitroff (2001) explains that an internal crisis can be defined as something caused by human forces. Harassment and violence at work are two factors that could result in an internal crisis. Spurgeon (2003) moreover claims that modern health and safety practice is studied through the framework of risk management, where risk assessment is an important component. This framework is well known within the field of health and safety practice, and has

been successfully practiced on both physical and chemical *hazards*.¹ Workplace bullying could be seen as a psychosocial hazard, a hazard that emanates from the workplace. Therefore Spurgeon (2003) points to the possibility of applying risk management on workplace bullying. With these arguments in mind, it seems appropriate to define workplace bullying as an internal crisis or risk, that organizations and corporations can be expected to face. The assumption that workplace bullying could be classified as an internal crisis for an organization will be explored in this thesis. Looking at workplace bullying through this new perspective could result in conclusions that have not been taken into consideration before. This thesis can, by looking at workplace bullying through a crisis perspective, hopefully bring new angles and approaches to the field.

Mitroff (2001) argues that organizations and corporations can be expected to fall into different types of crisis during its lifetime; it is not a question of “if” but rather “when”. Workplace bullying should therefore be prevented and managed based on the fact that it can be defined as an internal crisis; a crisis not only for the individual involved but also for the organization as a whole.

To plan and prevent is crucial in order to make sure that an organization does not suffer from a crisis (Kash & Darling, 1998). Psychological health issues are commonly put in policy and guidelines (Kash & Darling, 1998), and moreover planning documents is established in connection to crisis planning and management. This argument further strengthens the connection between workplace bullying and an internal crisis perspective.

Research shows that the difference between organizations that survived a crisis without negative effects, and organizations that suffered great negative effects from crisis has to do with planning and prevention (1998). The organizations, which managed to survive a crisis, had a well structured and a well-founded plan for how the crisis should be handled. Kash and Darling (1998) found out organizations having survived crisis had in common a successful planning of the financial aspects of the business, while often falling short of effective crisis management.

¹ A hazard is explained as the potential to cause harm, where as risk is the probability for such a term to occur (Spurgeon, 2003).

According to Saunders et al. (2007) the phenomenon of workplace bullying is a relatively new concept. Furthermore the concept of workplace bullying itself is both subjective and of emotional nature: it burrows down to what a person experiences or feels. Except for the theoretical issues in defining workplace bullying there are practical aspects in organizational life that just as much complicates the concept of workplace bullying. Saunders et al. (2007) state that it is common for employers and employees to not have the same mutual understanding or definition of the concept workplace bullying. Everyone perceives the concept of workplace bullying differently, and thus it is difficult to make everyone in an organization understand what sort of behavior is accepted and what type of behavior is not. It can therefore be assumed that this fact makes it even more difficult for an employer to work strategically with employees to prevent workplace bullying.

Are organizations today prepared for the type of crisis that workplace bullying could infer? Are they aware of the complexity of the phenomenon; that it is not obvious what can be defined as workplace bullying or not? It is therefore interesting to examine to what extent organizations today are prepared for handling this type of internal crisis. How well implemented are policy and guidelines? Is it just fine but empty words or is the content incorporated into the organizational culture and among the employees.

1.6 Purpose of the study and research questions

The purpose of this study is to compare the policy and guidelines with what the management actually does in order to prevent workplace bullying and assess whether the employees perceives the preventative steps regarding workplace bullying. Two Swedish offices within the public organization x are the objects of this study. Following research questions will guide this study:

RQ1: To what extent are managers prepared for handling workplace bullying and to what degree are they aware of the policy and guidelines?

RQ2: To what extent are employees at organization x aware of the managements preventative work against workplace bullying?

RQ3: Have the policy and guidelines been implemented amongst the management and the employees?

1.7 Relevance of the study

This study deepens the understanding for the complexity of workplace bullying. It furthermore examines workplace bullying from new perspectives since we look upon the concept as a form of internal crisis for an organization. With well-tried theories, applied on an underexplored research field, this study adds to former research by viewing workplace bullying through an organizational perspective.

1.8 Disposition

In chapter 2 a review of the literature will be presented. It will focus on different models within workplace bullying research and internal crisis communication. After that the theoretical framework, chapter 3, will follow. Theories about crisis communication and strategic implementation will be submitted. The following methodology part focuses on explaining the procedure of the data collection that will come to form this quantitative study. Thereafter the result, both concerning employees and managers, will follow. In the discussion, chapter 6, we will connect the results to our research questions. The study will end with general conclusions and suggestions to further research within the field of workplace bullying.

2. Literature review

In the literature review research that has been used to study the field of workplace bullying will be reviewed. Three different models that focus on psychological and behavioral perspectives will be explained. Thereafter crisis communication, and the different focuses of internal and external crisis communication will be reviewed, in order to lead us in to the theoretical framework of this study.

2.1 Three different models used to study workplace bullying

Research in the field of workplace bullying has mainly focused on psychological and behavioral perspectives (Saunders et al. 2007). The causes to why people bully others and outcomes for the ones exposed to the bullying - like stress or work efficacy - have been explored. Some studies (Berry et al. 2012; Einarsen et al. 2003; Quine 2001) have focused on measuring the prevalence of workplace bullying. The health care sector - more specifically nurses - is a line of business that is commonly investigated (Quine, 2001). Furthermore it has been explored whether workplace bullying decrease work productivity and what kind of impact it has on occupational health outcomes (Berry et al. 2012). Research concerning nurses has shown that this specific occupational group is highly exposed to workplace bullying, and it is common that more experienced nurses' bullies the novice one's. Therefore occupation might have some impact on workplace bullying prevalence but still, studies that has involved participants with different occupations from different organizations shows clear results of an occurrence of workplace bullying (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996).

In "Harassment and Bullying at Work: a Review of the Scandinavian Approach" Einarsen (2000) presents three different causal models that have been used in Scandinavia, namely emphasizing personality traits of the exposed, general characteristics of human interaction in organizations and organizational climate. The first model explores characteristics of the victim and/or offender, and claims that some people are more in the risk zone of being bullied because of their personality. Certain personality traits, such as lower self-esteem, anxiety in social settings and suspiciousness, are claimed to be more common among victims of bullying. As for the offender authoritarian personalities that often react impulsively with aggressiveness, are examples of personality traits that have been discovered in this

field of study. Different studies have brought out different traits so there is no confirmation of some traits being more valid than others. Furthermore “the issue of personality traits in relation to harassment at work is a controversial one, especially as far as the victim is concerned and the position on personality traits as precursors of harassment has been seriously questioned” (Einarsen, 2000:389).

The second model is built on the observation that although conflict is a phenomenon found in all organizations, only in some cases interpersonal conflicts lead to battles where the goal is to demolish the other (Einarsen, 2000). Since conflicts are seen as a natural component of organizations this model claims that there are certain human characteristics that are inherent and affects organizations. Some researcher even go as far as saying that harassment is an inherent human characteristic, and therefore believes that attempts to eliminate workplace bullying is useless. Another argument is that scapegoats play an important social role for the organizational climate and it brings other organizational members together (Einarsen, 2000). It should be noted that the scapegoats does not necessarily have to be an organizational member; it can be an external person or organization, or even an object. Both Leymann (1992) and Einarsen et al. (1994) argue that unresolved interpersonal conflicts threaten to end up in harassments. Whether harassment might be an inherent human characteristic is yet to be explored. A third possibility is that harassment is triggered aftermath from other organizational conflicts (Einarsen, 2000).

The third model has received the most attention in Scandinavia, and it stresses the role that organizational factors and work conditions play, such as social environment, workload, or division of tasks. Workplace bullying - in this model – is looked upon as caused by the organization itself, that is, by structural and other problems within the organization (Einarsen, 2000). Studies have shown that some factors may be more significant than others for the presence of bullying at work (2000). Leadership, role conflicts, and work control were brought out by Einarsen et al. (1994) to be contributing factors to workplace bullying. Other factors may still be important though, bullying might for example be more likely to occur if the jargon in the workplace in general is more aggressive. The approach of organizational work environment says that organizations with ill conditions might increase workplace bullying. It also suggests that workplace bullying is more likely to occur in particular

organizational settings (Einarsen, 2000). These three different models can alone be seen as narrow and one-sided, but Einarsen (2000) stresses the importance for future research to focus on several factors, both organizational and personal.

2.2 External versus internal crisis communication

Historically research within the field of crisis communication has concentrated on external dimensions (Johansen et al. 2012). According to Frandsen and Johansen (2011), research on risk and crisis communication has mainly focused on:

[...] the external dimension of crisis communication, and in particular on the crisis response strategies applied by organizations in crisis, in their communication with external stakeholders (such as customers, media, politicians, and NGOs), to protect or restore an image or reputation that has been threatened or damaged by the crisis. (2011:348)

The image of the organization while handling a crisis has been an important aspect of crisis communication research (Falkheimer et al. 2009). Furthermore researchers have focused on the development of response strategies, and what sort of strategy that is suitable for different kinds of crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 1996). Less focus has been directed to internal crisis communication, and how organizations prepare and prevent risks or crisis that they may have caused themselves. Research touching upon internal crisis communication and management has for example involved Weicks theory about sense-making and how for example organizational members create meaning during a crisis or organizational change (Weick 1979; Weick 1988). Mitroff on the other hand has reached acknowledgement in his research on emotional crisis preparedness and how organizations use defense mechanism such as denial, projection or disavowal (2004). “The organization[al] internal dimension of crises, crisis management and crisis communication have by and large been unexplored” (Johansen et al. 2012: 271).

Moreover, studies of how stakeholders are affected or perceive the crisis management from organizations has been researched but the employees have been very much neglected (Frandsen & Johansen, 2011). Employees are usually not taken into account and are sometimes overlooked when it comes to informing or communicating about crisis situations. Since the definition of a crisis often takes the shape of for example a

natural disaster, a clumsy utterance or a manufacture production mistake, it has been more important to communicate to stakeholders than to employees (Welch & Jackson, 2007). The employees are overlooked and more focus is usually directed to media relations and informing stakeholders. Frandsen and Johansen (2011) discuss the possibility of employees as stakeholders. They claim that an employee has a more psychological dimension and closer relationship to the organization and therefore perceives the prevention and management of a crisis differently. Research that touches upon the employees rather than external stakeholders has for example examined sexual harassment or the factor of stress within an organization (Quine, 2001). Few studies have investigated internal crisis communication and its influence on organizations. Almost no research has looked upon workplace bullying as an internal crisis that strongly affects the members of an organization. The perspective of workplace bullying as an internal crisis therefore makes the upcoming theoretical framework relevant for this study.

3. Theoretical framework

In this chapter we will present the theoretical framework that will form the basis for the data collection and later on the discussion. First, we will explore the concept of pre-crisis within crisis communication. After that, three different perspectives on how to handle or manage workplace bullying will follow, namely: guidelines created specifically for workplace bullying, Kotter's Eight Step Change Model (1996) and risk management. Thirdly, we will go through strategic communication theories that touch upon implementation in organizations; internal communication and agenda setting are important components in this last part.

Since this study looks upon workplace bullying as a form of internal and organizational crisis, the concept of pre-crisis is applied. The pre-crisis focuses on strategic and preventative work and therefore we find it relevant to also let strategic communication be a building block in the theoretical framework. The different perspectives on how to manage workplace bullying provide a better understanding of how implementation works. In the discussion, these theories can help us evaluate results regarding the strategic and preventative work from organization x.

3.1 Pre-crisis communication

”An event that is an unpredictable, major threat that can have a negative effect on the organization, industry, or stakeholders if handled improperly” (Miller, 2011: 180). This quotation from Miller defines crisis (2011). Mitroff (2012) states that organizations will, during its lifetime, face different types of crisis. It can be crisis that arises both from external and internal forces, but still equally complicated for an organization. The authors continues and argue that the one thing that organizations can be sure of is that they will come across various types of crisis; it is not a matter of being able to avoid them but rather a question about how to deal with the issue when the crisis is a fact. Organizations should therefore, according to Mitroff (2012), strive to strategically prevent, plan and prepare themselves for what could be next to come. That is the only way for an organization to reduce or possibly avoid the negative effects that crisis bring with them.

A crisis can be described as including three different stages: pre-crisis, crisis event and post-crisis stage. These different stages refer to describe how the work and communication possibly can imply during each of these different phases (Frandsen & Johansen, 2011). Frandsen and Johansen (2011) argue that the initial phase - the pre-crisis stage - includes preventative and planning efforts for the organization. The authors continue and state that the crisis event stage mostly concerns how managers and the organization as a whole actually deal with the crisis. The final phase is the post crisis stage. It is during this phase that an organization has the possibility to evaluate their work regarding the crisis; was there something that possibly could have been done more efficient throughout the different stages? Apologies, explanations and disclamations are not uncommon communication efforts during this phase.

Due to the fact that this study aims to examine the preventative work for an organization regarding crisis, it is only relevant for us to go deeper into the first stage, the pre-crisis stage. As mentioned earlier it is in the pre-crisis stage where there is a possibility to actually plan for future crisis, it is only during this stage of the crisis that the organization have a chance to create possibilities and tools that could facilitate the work surrounding the crisis, and therefore hopefully reduce the negative effects of the crisis for the organization. Frandsen and Johansen (2011) explain that when it comes to managing crisis in organizations, communication can be seen as the most crucial tool. It is during the pre-crisis stage that plans, guidelines and policies can be communicated to all parties concerned. Since this study focuses on examining an organizations policy and guidelines and thereafter put it in contrast to the employee's perception and knowledge of it, it is relevant to use theory of pre-crisis communication.

Caponecchia and Wyatt (2011) state that if guidelines, policies or plans do not get communicated to all people concerned - such as employees and other stakeholders - the plan itself becomes highly ineffective. The authors continue and add that it is very important that people concerned of the plan, not only knows that it exist but actually understands its meaning, otherwise it is impossible to translate the guidelines into action. Miller (2011) means that an employer has certain responsibilities, one of them being to guide employees throughout a crisis.

3.2 Managing the processes of workplace bullying

Workplace bullying is one of several internal crises that may occur in an organization. According to the anti-bullying law AFS 1993:17 organizations must work preventative to minimize the occurrence of bullying. The law emphasize that it is the employers' responsibility to initiate this work but also to make sure that it gets implemented.

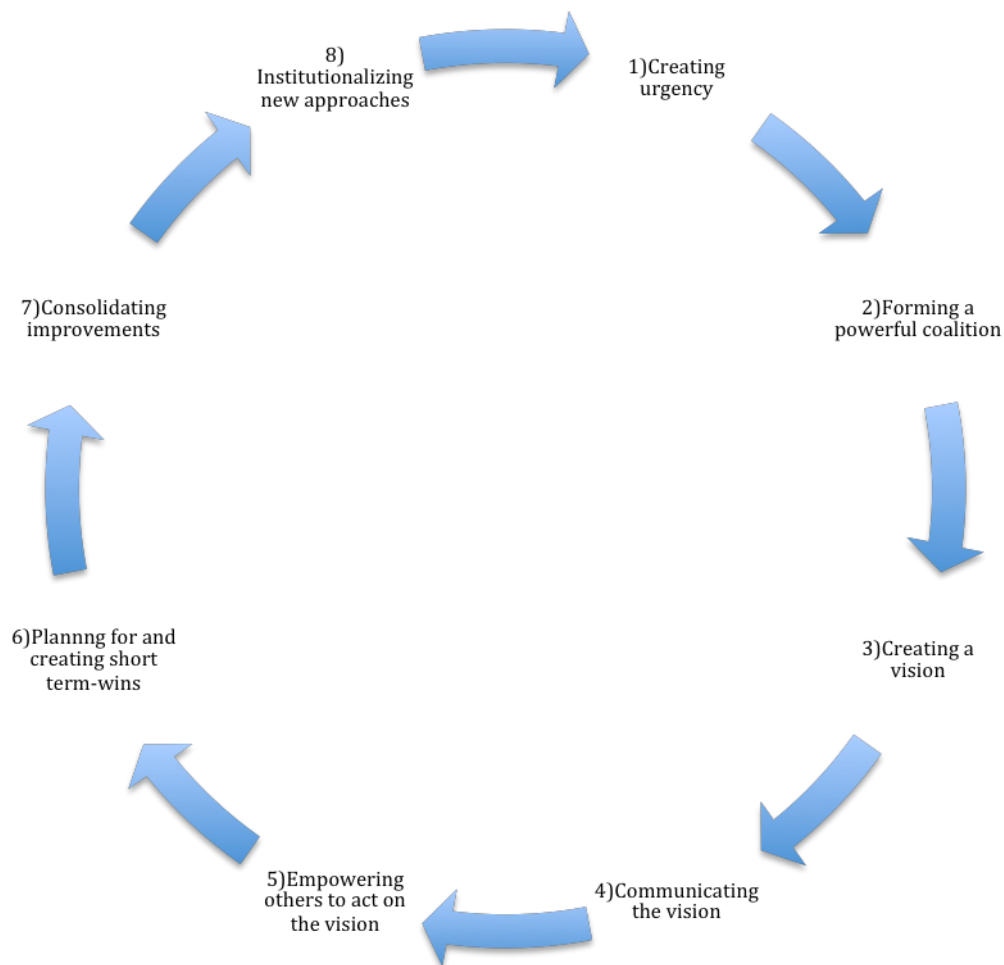
The top management of an organization should compose guidelines and policies regarding workplace bullying, (Arbetsledning, 2012). In these documents it should be stated clearly, to every employee, that bullying is not tolerated within the organization. What the organization defines as bullying and how the employees should act in the case of bullying are other parts that should be included in the organizations plan of action to prevent workplace bullying. An organization is also obligated to have distinct routines on how to act if bullying is a fact within the organization (2012).

Khan and Khan (2012) suggest a more practical effort in order to overcome the issue of workplace bullying. The authors mean that there are different strategies an employer can adapt when it comes to managing bullying at workplaces. To implement *training* and *education* in the preventative work is one aspect that could first and foremost create an awareness regarding the subject. The purpose in the long run is that these efforts will reduce the appearance of bullying. Although, if bullying despite these efforts appear in organizations, it is important to be prepared to offer *support* to victims (2012). Example of support efforts are counseling sessions and coaching.

It is also possible to use some of the steps in Kotter's Eight Step Change Model (1996), to describe and understand the processes of how to handle workplace bullying. Kotter's model is usually applied on organizational change and when information about the change is going to be established among the employees. In this study the strategic and preventative work against workplace bullying is viewed as a form of change, which shall create awareness and provide the necessary information amongst the organizational members. Kotter (1996) proposes eight steps for successful organizational change: *establishing a sense of urgency, forming a powerful coalition, creating a vision, communicating the vision, empowering others to act on*

the vision, planning for and creating short-term wins, consolidating improvements and producing still more change, and institutionalizing new approaches (Kotter, 1996). The eight steps can broadly be divided into three categories where step one to four is about preparation, step five to seven focuses on action, and the last step is about grounding (1996). The model is visualized below in “Visualization 1”.

Visualization 1:



The first step about establishing a sense of urgency is created from the factor or factors that are necessitating the change (Kotter, 1996). Internal, such as cutoffs, or external, for example laws and regulations, might have necessitated a change. According to Kotter it is the management’s responsibility to then communicate the causal factors (1996). The second step is about creating a group that should be powerful enough to lead the change (1996). The next two steps propose that a clear

vision shall be created and communicated to the organizational members. Kotter points out that working with visions takes time, energy and patience (1996). The action-steps shall, according to Kotter, start with empowering the employees. At this stage resistance is common from organizational members and it is therefore important to give power to the employees to themselves solve hinders in order for the process of change to continue. Step six and seven provide proof that the efforts are worthwhile and they provide opportunities to reward organizational members who are working with the change process (Kotter, 1996). Short-term wins are in this model necessary in order to reach the final win of the complete change. Last but not least, it is a matter of implementing the changes into the organizational culture so that they become accepted as norms. The organizational members shall look upon the results of the change as “*a way of doing*” in the organization, with subsequent sanctions or rewards (1996).

According to Caponecchia and Wyatt (2011) it is possible to look upon workplace bullying through a risk perspective; it is a risk for the organization and the employees. The authors mean that if it is possible to see bullying as a risk, a risk management framework could therefore be applied in order to manage workplace bullying.

The risk management framework is normally used to analyze other types of risks that an organization might face, (Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2011). These are often risks that can cause physical damage. The framework involves five different steps: *planning the system, identification of hazards, assessments of risks, control of risks, monitoring and evaluation of the system*, (2011). See “Visualization 2” for the process of the risk management framework.

Visualization 2:



These different steps go through what you need to do in order to plan, identify, control and evaluate bullying as a risk. The framework starts with researching to get a better understanding of the issue. The framework suggests that the best way to identify bullying in an organization is by using surveys and focus groups. In order to control the likely bullying, management should implement policies and learning strategies, and this with the aim to be more prepared of taking action. Caponecchia and Wyatt (2011) state that it is important to continuously improve and evaluate all the strategies that are used in order to plan, identify and control bullying.

These three different models on how to manage and handle workplace bullying fulfill different purposes and supplement each other. The first one from Kahn and Kahn (2012) is more general and brings up somewhat self-evident strategies like training and education. The risk management is more about planning and identifying for the unknown, while the steps in Kotter's model goes all the way to implementation. The step about implementation, is highly relevant for this study because it can be seen as a final step towards reducing workplace bullying. In Kotter's model there is a vision to be implemented while as in the risk perspective the steps are concerned with dealing with a risk. The risk perspective also takes into account the importance of evaluation and deals with the stage after implementation. The two last perspectives focus on escalating steps and are more resolute than Kahn and Kahn's general strategies.

3.3 Internal communication

One of the most important aspects of strategic communication is communication with the employees. The internal communication makes it possible for organizations to

reach their goals. One purpose of internal communication is to operate the organizational culture so that norms and values are spread and implemented amongst the organizational members (Falkheimer & Heide, 2007). According to Falkheimer and Heide internal communication consists of three founding aspects, namely: *hierarchical communication*, *media communication* and *informal communication* (2007:79).

The hierarchical communication defines the formal communication aspects within the organization. It follows the organizational structure, which traditionally was hierarchical. Organizational structures have changed and the hierarchical communication nowadays focuses more on how the management can help the employees to interpret information (Falkheimer & Heide, 2007). The media communication concerns the internal media channels, such as email, webpages, newsletters or staff meetings. It focuses on the means that organizations use to reach the organizational members (2007).

Through the informal communication organizational members creates meaning and interprets processes of the organization. It furthermore supplements the formal, or hierarchical communication, and is shown to be important for the organizations successfulness (Falkheimer & Hedie, 2007). Organizational learning is primarily accomplished through the informal communication; organizational members transport knowledge and create a common ground. According to Falkheimer & Heide (2007) not many management groups realizes the powerfulness that informal communication holds. In order to be able to establish visions and change in an organization (see Kotter's Eight Step Change Model at page 20) the informal communication is a necessary tool.

The hierarchical and informal communications are the aspects that are most relevant for this study. At the formal level visions and norms are created. This level deals with how an organization positions themselves towards workplace bullying. At the informal level, the implementation of the vision and norms takes place. Hence, in order to reach organizational members, interaction is required between formal and informal communication.

3.4 The interpersonal agenda

The concept of *agenda setting theory* was presented by Lippman (1922) over 80 years ago. The concept has thereafter been explored in several different ways and directions but the theory focuses on the relationship between different agendas, namely: *the expert agenda*, *the media agenda*, *the interpersonal agenda* and *the policy agenda* (Yang & Stone, 2003; Falkeheimer & Heide, 2007). A great deal of research has focused on the relationship between the interpersonal and media agenda. It has been stated that interpersonal communication plays an essential role when people want to make sense of new topics in the media.

Falkheimer and Heide (2007) propose that the agenda setting theory can be applied on change or implementation processes in a single organization instead of the entire society. In this study the agenda setting theory is relevant in order to see the implementation of workplace bullying in the interpersonal agenda. This agenda is where the employees discuss different topics and express their opinions with coworkers (Yang & Stone, 2003). In the interpersonal agenda we find the informal communication flow, which is one of the three building blocks of internal communication (Falkheimer & Heide, 2007). Furthermore the interpersonal agenda is the agenda that the management wants to reach in order to implement change, norms or awareness of a concept or topic, such as workplace bullying. Therefore the interpersonal agenda will be a helpful concept for this study in order to understand the setting where workplace bullying exists.

The three different components: pre-crisis communication, managing strategies and strategic communication, build the theoretical framework for this study. In the discussion part we will come back to these different theories and perspectives in order to further investigate the results.

4. Methodology

In the methodology part study-design and mode of procedures will be presented and motivated. The following chapter will furthermore discuss concepts such as validity, reliability and operationalization.

4.1 Quantitative method

Quantitative research is traditionally described, according to Bryman and Bell (2005), as a research strategy often focusing on collecting numeric data. The authors further state that the quantitative research is highly influenced by science. When approaching research of quantitative measures it is important for the researcher to maintain objective throughout the process (2005). Other concepts that characterize the quantitative research approach, according to Bryman and Bell (2005) are measuring, causality, generalization and replication.

The purpose of this study have been to examine to what extent organizations put efforts into preventative work when it comes to workplace bullying. The interest of this study was never to reach an understanding regarding emotional aspects connected to the subject workplace bullying. Through surveys it has been possible to *measure* the respondents awareness, opinions and to some extent even experiences regarding bullying. Surveys and actual measuring of concepts was seen as a strategy when approaching this study field. If the study's aim instead would have had its focus on how workplace bullying occur, to find factors to why workplace bullying actually occur, it is possible that a more interpreted research approach would have been more suitable.

4.2 Study-object and sample

A public organization with governmental funding functioned as a case study for this research. An assumption was made that public organizations to some extent are bound with more demands and regulations regarding workplace bullying compared to private organizations. At the same time one can assume that public organizations has not only more demands when it comes to these types of issues but they get more attention if they were to mishandle the prevention of workplace bullying. The assumption that public organizations to some extent are more likely to cooperate and

has a higher willingness to take part in this type of study was another argument that guided the decision of study object. The principle of public access to official documents functioned as a support for this argument.

Due to time limits it was only possible for us to investigate the conditions for preventing workplace bullying at two chosen offices of the entire organization. The decision for which offices that should act as our case study was made in consultation with a human relation- strategist within the organization. Therefore it can be stated that we, the authors did not affect the choice of what offices to investigate. From here on no consideration will be paid to the different offices. In the result chapter we will not make a distinction of the two offices. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) a convenience sample can be described as a type of sample where the researchers let the convenience steer the reason for why certain objects or respondents take part in the research. With this in mind it seems reasonable to assume that features of convenience sampling functioned as a sample method for this research when it comes to deciding for where the study was taking place.

The fact that the organization itself decided what part that should act as case study for the research could have had a certain impact on the results of the survey. One cannot ignore the fact that the organization itself may have had a conscious thought or reason behind highlighting this particular part of the organization.

4.3 Mode of procedure: data collection

The data collection process in this study has been conducted through three main methods: 1) a review of the selected organization's current guidelines and policy regarding workplace bullying, 2) a survey designed for employees and 3) a survey designed for managers. Undertaking the study in this way allowed for an accurate and comprehensive picture on how preventing workplace bullying is communicated and implemented in the organization.

The purpose of this study is to compare the policy and guidelines with what the management actually does in order to prevent workplace bullying and assess whether the employees perceives the preventative steps regarding workplace bullying. The first step for achieving this goal was to identify a point of contact at a suitable

organization. We, the authors then had the opportunity to become familiar with the organization's approach regarding workplace bullying.

Based on theory and the organization's own documents the survey questions were designed. Two different questionnaires were designed: one from the perspective of managers and the other from the employees' perspective (see appendix 1 and appendix 2). Both surveys were based on the same theory and evidence. Before the questionnaire was distributed to respondents, a pilot study was conducted to verify that the questions were understandable. The pilot study generated feedback from around ten people and the supervisor for the thesis. The content was then revised before the final questionnaire was sent out to respondents. In order to avoid adding an additional administrative burden to the organization, the surveys were sent out via email. The questionnaires were designed using Google questionnaire and were then sent out via a contact point within the organization to around 200 employees and managers.

4.4 Policy and guidelines

A policy document (see appendix 7) and a document outlining the guidelines (see appendix 8) for preventing and managing harassment and discrimination, was reviewed. These documents were provided by organization x. By looking at these documents at an early stage of the investigation, prior to engaging further with the organization, we had the opportunity to examine the contents of the documents objectively. Studying these documents early on created the evidence base for the study. It was therefore selected to do no further analysis of the contents of the documents beyond using them as a reference point. Looking at the organization's guidelines on bullying gave us the opportunity to access information that would later on inform the survey and ensure that the questions in the survey were as clear as possible and relevant to the study.

4.5 The survey

To collect the primary data in order to answer the research questions, we choose to use surveys as a method. The decision was based on the fact that the field of research, workplace bullying, can be perceived as being a sensitive and emotional subject. Because of the fact that it is possible to keep a survey completely anonymous, (Bryman & Bell, 2005) it can be assumed that the respondents felt more comfortable

by revealing more honest information through the survey. Despite the surveys advantages there are some negative aspects when using surveys as a method when it comes to collecting data. These aspects have been taken into consideration when deciding for a suitable method for this specific research. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) one issue when sending surveys to respondents is that you as a researcher is not there to clear out misunderstandings regarding the questions. This risk has been reduced due to clear instructions, definitions and formulation of questions. Another weakness with surveys is according to Bryman and Bell (2005) that there is a limitation when it comes to how much information the respondent actually can give in the format of a survey. There is a limitation not being able to talk unimpeded when answering questions regarding a complex subject such as workplace bullying. Bryman and Bell (2005) continues and argues that the answering frequency tends to be lower when using surveys.

Although there are some limitations when using surveys, the choice to use this method of data collection for this study was deemed to be the best suited. The decision was partly based on the sensitive aspect of the subject but also due to the purpose of the study. The aim was never to conduct a profound understanding surrounding the respondents' experiences of workplace bullying where personal interviews might have been a suitable method. Our aim was instead to examine the preventative work of workplace bullying and employers and employees awareness regarding the preventative efforts.

The choice was made to send out the surveys via email, a decision made mainly because of the reason that it was easier to administrate both for us as researchers but also for the examined organization. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) it is possible to reach faster response to a lower cost when using surveys administrated through email. Bryman and Bell (2005) add that there are some negative aspects when it comes to sending out surveys via email. It is easier for the respondents to ignore the email and therefore the non- responses seem to be higher when distributing surveys via email.

4.6 Design of the survey

According to Bryman and Bell (2005), there are a few different strategies of how to create and structure a survey. They continue and state that it is important to keep the formulation of the questions simple and clear in order to avoid misunderstandings. In order to give a serious impression of the survey, an introduction text covering the purpose of the study, should be incorporated in the beginning of the survey. One strategy when asking questions is to start off by asking short and simple questions in the beginning of the survey and to end with more complex and sensitive types of questions (2005). The survey was designed with these advices in mind. A short text did introduce the survey, stating the purpose and introduced us as researchers. Another concern when designing the survey was to emphasize that the questions focus only lies on internal relationships and bullying between employee and employee. This was also stated in the introductory text.

The initial questions of the survey was short and simple questions, such as age and gender questions, and the last part of the survey consisted of questions that could be described as being both sensitive and more complicated for the respondent to answer. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) it is easier to administrate and analyze closed questions. At the same time it is easier both for the respondents to answer and for the sender to ask questions structured in this format. It could have been possible to have used open questions and let the respondents have more space to further explain or clarify answers. But the aim has not been to find out underlying factors or individual cases of workplace bullying. Furthermore this would have resulted in one additional analysis. Therefore the surveys only consisted of closed questions with answering alternatives. These alternatives did vary to suit the different questions. For some questions it was possible to only give the alternative to answer “yes”, “no” or “do not know” For some more complex questions we had to present more alternatives for the respondent to choose from, the alternatives were presented on a five-point likert-scale. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) a survey with closed questions should cover all types of possible answers. The authors continue and state that a likert-scale is a good alternative for measuring attitudes and opinions. A five-step scale was designed, starting with “strongly disagree” and ending with the alternative “strongly agree”. Since some of the questions can be categorized as sensitive questions there was a point in giving the respondents the option of answering “do not know” or three, which

equals neutral on the likert-scale. Due to this, the questions in the theme about the occurrence of workplace bullying (see next sentence) were not mandatory. The survey was based on three different themes; control questions (gender, age and years of employment) questions about the strategic work and questions about the occurrence of workplace bullying.

4.7 Mode of procedure: analysis

The collected data was transferred from Google questionnaire to Excel. In Excel the data was re-coded into numbers. The reason for why the data was coded into numbers was to make better conditions when it comes to carry out statistical tests in SPSS. The re-coding was based on a coding scheme specialized for each survey, (see appendix 3 and appendix 4). In total 87 employees and 8 managers took part in the survey.

The numeric data was then transferred into IBM SPSS statistic 20. In SPSS, frequency tests were made in order to give an accurate picture of the result found in the data. A frequency test gives measures such as mode, median and mean. The result from SPSS was then presented and saved in the format of tables (see chapter 5. Result).

4.8 Validity and reliability

Validity is a term referring to if the concept actually measures what the study aims to measure, (Bryman & Bell, 2005). One could say that if a study has high validity then the theoretical concept reflects the concept that the researchers intended to measure. Bryman and Bell (2005) state that validity refers to how the theoretical definition corresponds to the operational definition of the concept. One specific definition of the concept workplace bullying was used throughout the thesis. The definition is well founded both in the theoretical part but also when it comes to composing the questions of the survey. Before designing the survey a reflection was made whether the respondents would interpret the questions and concept the same way as we did. In order to avoid misunderstandings regarding this, a choice was made to include the definition of workplace bullying in the survey. By doing this, the risk of misunderstandings got reduced. Due to both these efforts, being clear with the concept and definitions, make it possible to assume that the validity of this study is relatively high.

Reliability is connected, according to Bryman and Bell (2005), to if it is possible to achieve the same or close to the same result if the study were done again. Are the concepts included in the study consistent or do they change over time, making the research and result different every time (2005)?

A few aspects could have had a certain impact on the reliability of this study. One can assume that the result of this study to some extent might have been different if other researchers would have been involved. We, the authors of this study, are the same age, same gender and have similar backgrounds and it is therefore possible that we look upon this subject through the same viewpoint. Workplace bullying is a subject of emotional character but also a subject that can change direction due to regulations, awareness and debates. It is therefore almost certain that if this study had been carried out years from now, the result would have evolved differently. Workplace bullying is a term that is strongly connected to emotions and personal experiences. One can assume that the mood of the respondents could have had a certain impact on their answers. Therefore it could also be assumed that the results could have been different if the study were executed another day. We are aware of all these aspects but none of them will be taken into further consideration when it comes to analyzing and discussing the results.

4.9 Operationalization

Adult bullying, and specifically workplace bullying, is a complex concept with unclear definitions. One of the factors that make workplace bullying complex is that it is difficult to identify the parameters of what fits and what does not fit into the concept. We, the authors, have chosen to study workplace bullying based on a specific definition, and it was this definition that served as a basis in formulating the questions for the survey. Based on the definition chosen and other theories supporting this definition, it is clear that bullying can take many different forms. It may include ostracism, verbal threats, punitive administrative sanctions and unwarranted or unmotivated changes in the scope of work within one's job description. To get an idea of how prepared organizations are to confront this problem and to obtain a picture what employees and managers' own experiences of workplace bullying are, we elected to specify and use concrete examples from the current definition. If the survey only asked questions using the very broad term "workplace bullying", the answers

would not have generated all the incidences and examples that in fact fall under the concept of workplace bullying. It was therefore more practical and logical to convert the theoretical definition to tangible issues in order to achieve the study's purpose. Below is a detailed description of how the concept of workplace bullying was transformed into measurable terms.

In this study, the concept of workplace bullying has the following theoretical definition:

In Scandinavia, the term “mobbing” is commonly used to describe all situations where a worker, supervisor, or manager is systematically and repeatedly mistreated and victimized by fellow workers, subordinates, or superiors. The term is widely used in situations where repeated aggressive and even violent behaviors are directed against an individual over some period of time (Einarsen, 2000:380).

Based on this definition, the following words including *mistreated*, *victimized*, *aggressive and even violent behaviour* have been selected. With the help of theory, the anti-bullying law and documents from the organization regarding bullying prevention work, these concepts have been clarified and broken down even further. Punitive administrative sanctions, withholding of information, inappropriate tasks in relation to the job positions, ignoring, malicious damage to property, verbal threats and violence are all examples of how workplace bullying have been operationalized to fit into the definition and concept of workplace bullying based on the theory applied in this study. These examples were also formulated as survey questions (see appendix 1 and appendix 2). In order to present a clear and more structured discussion and to suit our purpose the questions were divided into three different themes. See “Table 1” and “Table 2” below for different themes. The uneven amount of questions to employees and managers can be explained by the third theme (occurrence of workplace bullying). There has been no interest in finding out whether the managers have experienced workplace bullying, even if that could be the case. Managers have in this thesis functioned in their role as leaders and with obliged responsibilities to spot, investigate and manage workplace bullying.

Table 1 - Employee questionnaire

Theme	Questions (see appendix 1)
Control questions.	Age, gender, years of employment
Questions about the strategic work.	Questions 1-6
Questions about the occurrence of workplace bullying.	Questions 7-15

Table 2 - Manager questionnaire

Theme	Questions (see appendix 2)
Control questions.	Age, gender, years of employment
Questions about the strategic work.	Questions 1-8
Questions about the occurrence of workplace bullying.	Question 9

5. Result

This chapter will start with a brief overview of the policy and guidelines of organization x. Thereafter the survey addressed to the employees will be examined and after that results concerning the manager survey will follow. The different themes will conduct and structure the results of the surveys. The order of the themes in this result chapter will be: control questions, occurrence of workplace bullying and strategic work – this in order to state whether there is an occurrence of workplace bullying before moving on to examining the strategic work. The results from the survey questions will be presented in tables and thereafter a short text will explain the tables' content.

5.1 Policy and guidelines

Organization x has two documents that concern workplace bullying: “Policy for equal treatment” (see appendix 7) and “Guidelines in order to prevent and handle workplace bullying” (see appendix 8). The policy-document contains the general approach to how you should treat people if you work at organization x, and bottom downs to equal rights for all human beings. The guidelines are directly connected to the Swedish anti-bullying law: Victimization at work, AFS 1993:17. Some central statements, with relevance to this study, from these documents are:

- All employees and managers shall have knowledge and competence about current laws, agreements, and internal plan of actions concerning equal treatment (see appendix 7).
- The managers at organization x are responsible for the organizations internal and external work of equal treatment and that the policy is followed (see appendix 7).
- As a manager you are responsible for observing and act on signals of workplace bullying. You are obliged to investigate, adjust and document cases of workplace bullying (see appendix 8).
- Actions connected to workplace bullying are not accepted at organization x and it is the employers responsibility to prevent potential occurrence (see appendix 8).

- A safety representative (or similar) is obliged to report and act if cases of workplace bullying take place (see appendix 8).

5.2 Age, gender and years of employment

This part maps out the control questions of age, gender and years of employment amongst the employees.

Table 3

Age				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	19	21,8	21,8
	2	19	21,8	43,7
	3	16	18,4	62,1
	4	27	31,0	93,1
	5	6	6,9	100,0
	Total	87	100,0	100,0

The total amount of employee respondents participating in this survey was 87. “Table 3” above illustrates how many respondents participating in each age group. The table shows that 27 of the 87 respondents were between 51 to 60 years old. 19 respondents represented two age groups: 18-30 years and 31-40 years. 16 people were in the age between 41-50 years old. Last, only six respondents belonged to the age group 5, which corresponds to the age 61-70 years. These figures illustrate that there was an uneven distribution between the respondents’ ages.

Table 4

Gender				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	69	79,3	79,3
	2	18	20,7	100,0
	Total	87	100,0	100,0

In this table the distribution between female and male respondents is presented. 1 in the table translates into female and 2 into male. As the table illustrates, the distribution between the genders were uneven. 69 respondents were females and 18 respondents were males.

Table 5

Years of employment				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	41	47,1	47,1	47,1
2	12	13,8	13,8	60,9
3	7	8,0	8,0	69,0
5	2	2,3	2,3	71,3
7	12	13,8	13,8	85,1
8	7	8,0	8,0	93,1
9	6	6,9	6,9	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

Of all respondents participating in this survey 41 of 87 respondents had only been employed in the organization for 0-5 years (represented by the answering alternative 1 in “Table 5”). 12 respondents had worked in the organization for 6-10 years respectively 31-35 years. This result indicate that the distribution between the respondents and for how long they been employed in the organization were uneven.

Due to the above stated results from “Table 3-5” it can be stated that there were no even spread between age, gender or years of employment. It is not possible to draw any valid conclusions from crosstabs between the control questions and the theme about occurrence of workplace bullying because of the high unevenness spread between age, gender and years of employment. Therefore the different control questions concerning age, gender and years of employment will not be taken into consideration from here on.

5.3 The occurrence of workplace bullying

The following part will focus on the occurrence of workplace bullying within organization x. The results from questions 7-15 in the employee survey (see appendix 1) and question 9 from the manager survey (see appendix 2) will be presented below.

Table 6 - Q7: I perceive that work-related information often is withheld or kept from me (information that you in your position is required to).

Q7

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	35	40,2	40,2	40,2
2	27	31,0	31,0	71,3
3	14	16,1	16,1	87,4
4	7	8,0	8,0	95,4
5	4	4,6	4,6	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

The above question was replied by all 87 respondents. The answering alternatives went from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The majority, 40,2 percent, strongly disagreed with the statement that work-related information is being kept from them. 31 percent indicated 2 on the five-point scale, while as 16,1 percent took a neutral standpoint. A minority leaned towards agreeing with the statement; eight percent indicated a 4, and 4,6 percent indicated strongly agree (answering alternative number 5 in “Table 6). The mode for this question ended up on 1, strongly disagree, while the median was 2 and the mean 2,06 percent (see appendix 5, Table 31).

Table 7 - Q8: I perceive that I am often handed work tasks that are not in coherence with my work description.

Q8

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	54	62,1	62,1	62,1
2	17	19,5	19,5	81,6
3	7	8,0	8,0	89,7
4	4	4,6	4,6	94,3
5	5	5,7	5,7	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

The above question concerns being handed work tasks that does not match the work description. The answering alternatives are the same as for Q7 above, 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 indicating “strongly agree”. 54 respondents answered strongly disagree while five employees answered strongly agree. Seven of the 87 respondents took a neutral standpoint. This gives a mean of 1,72 percent, and a median and mode of 1 (see appendix 5, Table 31). The results indicate that the majority of the employees do not get work tasks that are not in coherence with their

work description. But nine employees, the respondents that replied with a 4 or 5 (presented in “Table 7”) perceived that they often got handed work tasks that do not match their work description.

Table 8 - Q9: Have you experienced administrative negative sanctions (for example unmotivated removal of office room or work tasks or unexplainable relocation).

Q9

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	5	5,7	5,7	5,7
Valid 2	82	94,3	94,3	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

Question 9 dealt with administrative negative sanctions and all 87 respondents answered this question. The answering alternatives for this and the following questions was “yes” (1), “no” (2) and “do not know” (3). None of the respondents did not know whether they experienced administrative negative sanctions. 94,3 percent had not experienced negative punishments. 5,7 percent, or five out of 87, of the respondents replied that they had experienced some form of work-related negative sanction. This results in a mode of 2, meaning that most respondents replied with the answering alternative 2 (see appendix 5, Table 32).

Table 9 - Q10: Have you experienced ignorance/isolation at your workplace?

Q10

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	14	16,1	16,1	16,1
Valid 2	72	82,8	82,8	98,9
3	1	1,1	1,1	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

Question 10, about experiencing ignorance/isolation at the workplace, was answered by all the 87 respondents. 14 respondents had experienced ignorance/isolation at their current workplace. 72 persons replied that they had not experienced ignorance/isolation while one respondent did not know if experiencing ignorance/isolation. The results of question 10 shows that the majority of the employees have not experienced ignorance/isolation at the workplace but that a noteworthy minority of 14 people has.

Table 10 - Q11: Have you experienced verbal threats at your workplace?

Q11

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	8	9,2	9,2	9,2
Valid 2	79	90,8	90,8	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

Question 11 showed similar results as for question 10. 90,8 percent of the respondents indicated that they had not experienced any verbal threats at the workplace. But a notable minority of 9,2 percent, that is eight people out of 87, replied that they had experienced verbal threats at their current workplace. None of the respondents did not know whether they had experienced verbal threats (alternative number 3 in “Table 10”). These results shows that there are cases of verbal threats within the organization x.

Table 11 - Q12: Have you experienced vandalism towards your personal belongings at your workplace?

Q12

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2	85	97,7	100,0	100,0
Missing System	2	2,3		
Total	87	100,0		

The results presented in “Table 11” shows identical responses from the employees. There are two missing cases and therefore 85 of the 87 respondents replied that they had not experienced vandalism towards personal belongings at the workplace. The mode for question 12 about vandalism towards personal belongings therefore results in 2 (see appendix 5, Table 32).

Table 12 - Q13: Have you personally experienced violence at your workplace?

Q13

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2	87	100,0	100,0	100,0

As for the results presented in “Table 11” above, the results presented in “Table 12” follows the same pattern. For question number 13 all the 87 respondents gave the same answer; they had not experienced violence at their current workplace. There were no missing cases for this question and the yet again the mode was 2 (see

appendix 5, Table 33).

Table 13 - Q14: Have you been exposed to workplace bullying?

		Q14			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	9	10,3	10,5	10,5
	2	77	88,5	89,5	100,0
	Total	86	98,9	100,0	
Missing	System	1	1,1		
Total		87	100,0		

The two final questions to employees dealt directly with the term workplace bullying. 86 out of 87 respondents, one missing case, answered the question about being exposed to workplace bullying. Nine employees, or 10,3 percent, answered with a “yes” (represented by the number 1 in “Table 13”); they felt that they had been exposed to workplace bullying at their current workplace. 77 employees, or 88,5 percent, replied with a “no”; they had not been exposed to workplace bullying. Because of this, the mode for question 14 ended up at 2 (see appendix 5, Table 33).

Table 14 - Q15: Have you seen coworkers that have been exposed to workplace bullying?

		Q15			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	14	16,1	16,5	16,5
	2	68	78,2	80,0	96,5
	3	3	3,4	3,5	100,0
	Total	85	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	2	2,3		
Total		87	100,0		

“Table 14” presents the results from the question about having seen coworkers being exposed to workplace bullying. 14 employees had seen coworkers being exposed to workplace bullying (alternative number 1 in “Table 14”). 68 employees replied that they had not seen coworkers being bullied at their current workplace, while as three employees answered with the response “do not know” (alternative number 3). For this question there were two missing cases and once again the mode ended up at 2 (see appendix 5, Table 33). The results from question 14 and 15 shows that more employees have seen coworkers being exposed to workplace bullying, 16,1 percent

(“Table 14”), than feeling exposure to workplace bullying themselves, 10,3 percent (“Table 13”).

Table 15- Q9 (Managers): Have you seen coworkers that have been exposed to workplace bullying?

Q9

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	2	25,0	25,0	25,0
Valid 2	6	75,0	75,0	100,0
Total	8	100,0	100,0	

The last table in this part, “Table 15”, represents results from the managers. The answering alternatives were 1 for “yes”, 2 for “no” and 3 for “do not know”. This question was the same as the last question to the employees (“Table 14”) and dealt with having seen coworkers being exposed to workplace bullying. All the eight managers replied to this question and two of them had seen coworkers being bullied at the current workplace, which is 25 percent. 75 percent, six managers, had not seen coworkers being bullied. The mode ended up at 2, and therefore the mode was the same for this question both to employees and managers (see appendix 6, Table 36).

5.4 Employees’ perceptions about the strategic work

In the text below, the result of the employees’ replies of the theme “questions about the strategic work” will be presented.

Table 16 - Q1: Are you familiar with the law of victimization at work (AFS 1993:17)?

Q1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	50	57,5	57,5	57,5
Valid 2	29	33,3	33,3	90,8
3	8	9,2	9,2	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

The answering frequency for this question was high; all the 87 employees did answer question 1. The answering alternatives for this question was; “yes”, “no” and “do not know”. In “Table 16” above 1 symbolize the answer “yes”, 2 symbolize “no” and 3 stands for the answer “do not know”. The numbers presented in the table above show that 57,5 percent of the respondents were familiar with the law of victimization. Respondents not being familiar with the law were 33,3 percent and finally, the

answering alternative “do not know” measured 9,2 percent. This result shows that the mode was number 1, that is to say the answer “yes” was most frequently answered (see appendix 5, Table 30).

Table 17 - Q2: Does the organization you work for have any policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying?

Q2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	48	55,2	55,2	55,2
2	2	2,3	2,3	57,5
3	37	42,5	42,5	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

For question number two the answering alternatives were “yes”, “no” and “do not know”. Number 1 in “Table 17” above represents the answer “yes”. For this question 48 respondents answered yes, this means that 55,2 percent reckoned that their organization have policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying. Alternative “no” is presented as 2 in “Table 17”. Only 2,3 percent reasoned that their organization do not have guidelines that concerns workplace bullying. 42,5 percent of the respondents answered that they “do not know” if their organization have documents concerning workplace bullying. This is represented as 3 in the table above. The mode for this question was therefore answer 1 referring to answer “yes” (see appendix 5, Table 30).

Table 18 - Q3: Does the organization you work for have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying (for example a safety representative?)

Q3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	26	29,9	29,9	29,9
2	5	5,7	5,7	35,6
3	56	64,4	64,4	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

The answering alternatives for question 3 was, as the previous questions; “yes”, “no” and “do not know”. The majority of the respondents answered alternative 3, “do not know”. Further this means that 64,4 percent do not know if their organization has someone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying. 29,9 percent of the respondents gave the answer that their organization has someone who is educated

in these questions. Whereas 5,7 percent of the employees explicitly answered that their organization do not have anyone who is educated in workplace bullying. The majority and the mode of question number three were “do not know” (see appendix 5, Table 30).

Table 19 - Q4: Have you at some point during your employment been informed that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior?

Q4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	60	69,0	69,0	69,0
Valid 2	20	23,0	23,0	92,0
Valid 3	7	8,0	8,0	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

All 87 employees participating in this survey did reply to this question. The mode was answer “yes” represented as 1 in “Table 19” above (see appendix 5, Table 30). 60 respondents gave the answer “yes”, which means that the majority has been informed that bullying is not an accepted behavior. The answer “no” represents 23 percent of all the answers to this question and indicate that 23 percent of the employees participating in this survey have not been informed that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior. The answer “do not know” measured up to eight percent.

Table 20 - Q5: My organization has contributed with enough information about workplace bullying.

Q5

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	12	13,8	13,8	13,8
Valid 2	25	28,7	28,7	42,5
Valid 3	26	29,9	29,9	72,4
Valid 4	15	17,2	17,2	89,7
Valid 5	9	10,3	10,3	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

For this question the respondents were given a statement and were thereafter supposed to choose an alternative that suited them the most. A scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”) acted as the alternatives for this question. 29,9 percent of the respondents answered number 3 which means that they stands neutral when it comes to if the organization has contributed with enough information or not.

Alternative 2 got 28,7 percent of the answers, which indicates that the respondents to some extent disagree with the statement. Alternative number 5 (“strongly agree”) was answered by nine respondents and got 10,3 percent. This indicates that a minority of the respondents strongly agreed that the organization had contributed with enough information about workplace bullying. The mean of this result was 2,82, the median measured up to 3 as well as the mode (see appendix 5, Table 31).

Table 21 - Q6: My organization has contributed with enough information about current law and regulations about workplace bullying.

Q6

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	16	18,4	18,4	18,4
2	33	37,9	37,9	56,3
3	21	24,1	24,1	80,5
4	11	12,6	12,6	93,1
5	6	6,9	6,9	100,0
Total	87	100,0	100,0	

The alternatives for this question were as the previous presented question, a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Mean showed a result on 2,52, median 2 as well as mode (see appendix 5, Table 31). 37,9 percent of the respondents answered number 2 and 18,4 percent answered number 1 (“strongly disagree”). This indicates that to a large extent the respondents considered getting sufficient information regarding law and regulations about workplace bullying. Only 6,9 percent agrees with the statement and do to a large extent reason that they get enough information about law and regulations. 24,1 percent of the respondents were neutral in this question.

5.5 Managers' preparedness about workplace bullying

In the text below, the result of the managers' replies of the theme “questions about the strategic work” will be presented. Questions 1-8 from the manager survey (see appendix 2) will be dealt with in this part.

Table 22 - Q1: Are you familiar with the law of victimization at work (AFS 1993:17)?

Q1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	8	100,0	100,0	100,0

The eight managers that participated in the survey answered “yes” to this question. In “Table 22” above this is symbolized by 1. This unanimous answer shows that the participating managers are familiar with the law of victimization at work. Because of the solid majority for answer 1, the mode is number 1, that is to say answer “yes” (see appendix 6, table 34).

Table 23 - Q2: Does the organization you work for have any policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying?

Q2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	6	75,0	75,0	75,0
Valid 2	1	12,5	12,5	87,5
3	1	12,5	12,5	100,0
Total	8	100,0	100,0	

For this question the managers got three alternatives: “yes”, “no” and “do not know”. These alternatives were translated into numbers in “Table 23” above; 1, 2 and 3. Six managers (75 percent) out of eight answered that their organization have policies or guidelines concerning workplace bullying. 12,5 percent of the respondents answered “no” and “do not know” to this question. Because of a majority on alternative “yes” the mode for this question is 1 equal to “yes” (see appendix 6, Table 34).

Table 24 - Q3: Does the organization you work for have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying (for example a safety representative?)

Q3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	3	37,5	37,5	37,5
Valid 3	5	62,5	62,5	100,0
Total	8	100,0	100,0	

The majority of the answers to this question was “do not know” (62,5 percent in “Table 24”). This gives a mode of 3 for this question (see appendix 6, Table 34). Five

out of eight managers do not know if their organization has anyone who is educated in issues concerning workplace bullying. None of the eight managers participating in the survey answered “no” to this question and three managers (37,5 percent) reckoned that their organization have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying.

Table 25 - Q4: Have you clarified that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior at your workplace?

Q4				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1	5	62,5	62,5
Valid	2	3	37,5	100,0
	Total	8	100,0	100,0

The majority of the managers answered “yes” to question 4, which also gives a mode of 1 (see appendix 6, Table 34). 62,5 percent of the managers considered that they had clarified that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior. Three managers (37,5 percent) answered “no”. This means that 37,5 percent of the managers have not clarified that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior at their workplace.

Table 26 - Q5: Are you familiar with the routines of how to spot signals, investigate and adjust workplace bullying?

Q5				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1	4	50,0	50,0
Valid	2	3	37,5	87,5
	3	1	12,5	100,0
	Total	8	100,0	100,0

The table above shows that 50 percent of the managers are familiar with the routines of how to spot signals, investigate and adjust workplace bullying. Because of the majority for answer “yes”, number 1 also get to symbolize the measure mode (see appendix 6, Table 34). 37,5 percent of the managers are not familiar with the routines and 12,5 percent are not sure if they are familiar with the routines.

Table 27 - Q6: I work preventative against workplace bullying at my workplace.

Q6

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3	5	62,5	62,5	62,5
Valid 4	3	37,5	37,5	100,0
Total	8	100,0	100,0	

For question 6 the managers were presented a statement and were thereafter supposed to choose an alternative that suited them the most. A scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”) acted as the answering alternatives. The majority (62,5 percent) chose number 3 on a five-point scale. This means that the majority of the managers stand neutral to this statement. 37,5 percent answered alternative 4. This indicates that three out of eight to some extent think they work preventative against workplace bullying. The mean for this question measured up to 3,38 (see appendix 6, Table 35).

Table 28 - Q7: I am well prepared for handling workplace bullying situations.

Q7

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	2	25,0	25,0	25,0
Valid 3	3	37,5	37,5	62,5
4	3	37,5	37,5	100,0
Total	8	100,0	100,0	

The alternatives for this question were the same as in the previous question, a five-point likert-scale. 37,5 percent chose number 3 on the scale; this indicated that the managers took a neutral standpoint. The same amount of percent (37,5) answered number 4, which indicates that three out of eight managers to some extent think they are prepared for handling workplace bullying. 25 percent of the managers considered themselves being not well prepared for handling workplace bullying (alternative 2 in “Table 28”).

Table 29 - Q8: I have enough resources/information in order to manage workplace bullying, in case it would occur.

Q8				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	2	2	25,0	25,0
Valid	3	4	50,0	75,0
	4	2	25,0	100,0
Total	8	100,0	100,0	

50 percent of the managers answered number 3 on a five-point scale. This indicates that the majority of the managers are neutral whether they have enough resources in order to manage workplace bullying. 25 percent consider that they to some extent have enough resources in order to manage workplace bullying. The same amount (25 percent) answered that they to some extent do not agree with the statement, which could be seen as they to some extent do not have enough resources in order to manage workplace bullying.

5.6 Summary of results

From the results some central findings can be determined.

Occurrence of workplace bullying:

- 10,3 percent of 86 respondents, one missing case, perceived that they had experienced workplace bullying.
- 16,1 percent of all 87 respondents felt that they had experienced ignorance/isolation at their current workplace.
- 16,1 percent, with two missing cases, had seen co-workers being exposed to workplace bullying. Two out of eight managers had also seen coworkers being exposed to workplace bullying.
- No one in the organization had experienced vandalism towards their personal belongings, although it should be noted that there were two missing cases. No one, out of all 87 respondents, had experienced violence at their current workplace.
- The results points to that there are cases of workplace bullying within organization x.

Perceptions about the strategic work (employees):

- A majority of 57,5 percent of the respondents was familiar with the law of victimization. Nevertheless, the result shows that 33,3 percent are not familiar with the law.
- The results show that as high as 42,5 percent of the respondents answered "do not know" on the question concerning the organizations policy and guidelines. This means that 42,5 percent do not know if the organization has guidelines concerning workplace bullying.
- 64,4 percent do not know if there is anyone educated in issues relating to workplace bullying.
- The result indicates that a majority of the respondents seemed to perceive that they do not get sufficient information concerning workplace bullying.

Perception about the strategic work (managers):

- 100 percent of the managers participating in this survey answered that they are familiar with the law of victimization.
- One out of eight managers answered that the organization does not have any policies or guidelines concerning workplace bullying.
- One out of eight managers does not know if the organization has any guidelines concerning workplace bullying.
- A majority of five managers do not know if there is anyone educated in issues related to workplace bullying at their workplace.
- Five managers answered that they have declared that bullying is not an accepted behavior. At the same time three managers actually answered that they have not declared that bullying not is an accepted behavior.
- Four managers answered that they are familiar with the routines on how to spot signals, investigate and adjust workplace bullying. Nevertheless, three managers answered the opposite; that they are not familiar with these routines.

6. Discussion

In the discussion chapter, focus will lie on the strategic work about workplace bullying at organization x. As stated in our research questions (see 1.6 Purpose of the study and research questions) three perspectives have been examined in order to study the strategic work against workplace bullying, namely: policy and guidelines, the managers' preparedness about workplace bullying and the employee's perceptions about the strategic work. The same structure will guide the discussion part in order to see the different steps of implementation. The theories from chapter 3 will be applied on the results to find out whether the three perspectives are coherent and if there has been an implementation of strategic work against workplace bullying in organization x.

6.1 Policy and guidelines

In the pre-crisis stage there is a possibility for an organization to plan for future crisis (Frandsen & Johansen, 2011). It is in this stage that the organization has a chance of creating possibilities and tools that can facilitate the work surrounding the crisis. Arbetsmiljöverket state that it is mandatory for an organization to have distinct routines for how to handle workplace bullying (Arbetsledning, 2012). Organization x has followed this recommendations with clear and detailed instructions in the policy and guidelines (appendix 7 and appendix 8). In connection to survey responses it is clear that not all of the statements in the policy and guidelines have been implemented in the organization. Some of the employees as well as some managers have little or no knowledge about current laws or internal documents of the organization.

Furthermore, it is stated in the documents that some sort of safety representative, in consultation with managers, shall be present to deal with issues related to workplace bullying. Nevertheless, 64,4 percent of the employees and five out of eight managers are ignorant of such a service. If knowledge about how to get help from the organization if being exposed, or seeing someone else being exposed to workplace bullying is lacking, such a service can be seen as purposeless. The case might be that top managers, or human relations-operatives, have great knowledge in the subject of workplace bullying and have formulated the policy and guidelines (Arbetsledning, 2012). This can indicate a gap between managers and top managers and that there

within the organization is a degree of distantness that makes it hard to communicate the policy and guidelines to all managers within the organization.

6.2 Managers responsibility and preparedness

As stated in previous paragraph, Arbetsmiljöverket says that an organization is obliged to have routines on how to manage workplace bullying. This is met through written documents by organization x. But already at the manager level, according to the results of this study, 50 percent is not familiar with the routines of how to handle bullying within their organization. It is possible that half of the managers participating in this study do not have direct staff liability and assume that other managers should have knowledge about these issues. But at the same time it is stated in organization x:s policy that all managers within the organization have the responsibility for spotting signals of workplace bullying and act on these signals (appendix 8). The routines stated in organization x:s guidelines (appendix 8) are clear on how a manager shall act in case of workplace bullying. But it is evident that not all managers are aware of these routines.

Furthermore not all managers have clarified that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior within their organization. Managers do neither, to some extent, have knowledge about the routines nor have clarified that workplace bullying not is accepted. This indicates that there might be a gap between the policy and guidelines, and the managers' awareness about the organizations approach to workplace bullying. According to Miller (2011) it is a manager's responsibility to guide employees through a crisis. Since the results of this study shows that 25 percent of the managers perceive that they do not have enough resources or information on how to deal with workplace bullying, it can be worth reflecting over how prepared the managers are to guide the employees. Without awareness about the policy or guidelines, nor enough information and resources about the subject, it seems fairly difficult for a manager to fully take on the responsibility that is demanded from organization x.

6.3 Lack of communication

Since the managers knowledge is lacking it is not bewildering that the employees' awareness concerning workplace bullying is poor. The results shows that 64,4 percent of the employees do not know if organization x has a safety representative or someone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying. 42,5 percent

do not know whether the organization have a policy or guidelines that deals with issues connected to workplace bullying. There are employees within the organization who are aware of both the organizations policy, guidelines and safety representative but the goal of knowledge within the entire organization, stated in the policy (appendix 7), has not been fulfilled.

Falkheimer and Heide (2007) mean that is it through the informal communication that an organization can reach their goals. In order to reach organizational members there is a need for interaction between formal (the hierarchical communication) and informal communication (2007). The reason for the results of this study can be explained by a breach between the hierarchical and informal communication. The management has not succeeded in helping the employees' interpretation of the information (Falkheimer & Heide, 2007) given about workplace bullying. Norms and visions have been created in policy and guidelines at organization x but the implementation of these have not reached the interpersonal agenda where the employees informal communication takes place.

In Kotter's Eight Step Change model (1996) the way of reaching implementation, in this case of workplace bullying, is described. Creating urgency, forming a powerful coalition and creating a vision is fulfilled by organization x. Organization x have established that there is an urgency for the topic of workplace bullying. They have also created a plan, containing a clear vision, for how to approach workplace bullying. Step four, communicating the vision, is where organization x fails to reach the final implementation stage. Looking at the different steps in how to create change, or in this case awareness, it is the lack of communication, both communication from policy and guidelines to managers, and communication from managers to employees, that is the reason for why full implementation has not taken place. The final step in Kotter's model is reached when the new approach is implemented into the organizational culture, which is not the case for organization x.

Furthermore organization x has to a large extent followed Caponecchia and Wyatts risk management framework (2011). Plan, identify and control risks are the first steps in the risk management framework. As stated in connection to Kotter's model, organization x has through their policy and guidelines achieved these steps. They

have identified and planned for actions in case of workplace bullying, and by using written documents it can be spread within the organization. It could be that the organization as a whole is prepared for handling workplace bullying but that single employees or managers are not. The last step in the risk management framework, about evaluation, might not be fully considered by organization x. More evaluation and follow-ups about the policy and guidelines could alarm the organization that the preparedness and awareness is not as high as desired.

Because of lack of communication between managers and employees awareness about workplace bullying, is not accomplished. According to Caponecchia and Wyatt (2011) plans, policies or guidelines that is not communicated to all it concerns are ineffective. It is furthermore important that not only the existence of policies, guidelines and plans is communicated, but also the content. It is impossible to translate guidelines into action if there is no understanding of the content (2011). In the case with organization x it is too harsh to say that the policy and guidelines are ineffective, since a majority of the managers and employees do have awareness about them. Therefore it is rather the implementation and communication of the content that could and should be improved.

6.4 Zero tolerance

Despite modest implementation and communication of the organizations policy and guidelines the occurrence of workplace bullying within organization x is not remarkably high. 10,3 percent of the employees felt that they had experienced workplace bullying. This result is confirmed by former research, where a percentage of approximately nine percent of the respondents in the studies had experienced workplace bullying (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; The Work Environment 2009, 2010). Nine employees out of 86 is not alarming high, but when it comes to organizational members psychological health, zero tolerance should be the goal. Organization x has this goal but it has yet not been reached.

7. Conclusion

The research questions presented in 1.6 Purpose of the study and research questions will be connected to the results and the discussion in order to present the main conclusions of this study. Sources of error will point to impacts that could have affected the results and the study overall. Further research and reflections will end this study.

7.1 Answers to research questions

RQ1: To what extent are managers prepared for handling workplace bullying and to what degree are they aware of the policy and guidelines?

Through this study it can be stated that not all participating managers have awareness about how to manage workplace bullying. Since there is a clear approach and instructions on how to handle workplace bullying, written down in policy and guidelines, it can be assumed that there is a gap between the written documents and managers' preparedness. The results of this study shows that managers at organization x are not fully prepared for handling workplace bullying and are not completely aware of the policy and guidelines.

RQ2: To what extent are the employees at organization x aware of the managements preventative work against workplace bullying?

Since RQ1 shows a gap between policy and guidelines, and managers – it is not startling that the employees awareness is not as high as desired from organization x. The results of this study shows that employees at organization x are not fully aware of the preventative work. The approach stated in policy and guidelines have not reached all employees within the organization. Moreover the results show that employees do not think that the information concerning workplace bullying has been sufficient. This could indicate that the communication directed to employees is lacking.

RQ3: Have the policy and guidelines been implemented amongst the management and the employees?

Both managers and employees results showed a lack of knowledge about workplace bullying. Therefore it can be stated that the implementation of policy and guidelines has not reached all organizational members. The first and maybe most prevalent gap

is found at the manager level. When managers do not possess adequate knowledge, communicating the desired approach towards workplace bullying becomes absent in many aspects. This furthermore results in employees not being fully informed and also experiencing that they are not getting sufficient information.

7.2 Concluding remark

One assumption could be made that the organization neglects the pre-crisis stage, where the organization has opportunities to prepare and plan for future crisis. Organization x do plan for future crisis, this is shown in the policy document and guidelines. But to say that they are fully prepared certainly do not match the result of this study. There is an evident gap both between the policy and guidelines and managers, and managers and employees. Full implementation of awareness and preparedness has not been reached within organization x.

As previous research brings up, it is not uncommon for organizations to neglect the internal aspects of crisis and instead be well prepared for potential external crisis. One assumption could be made that when organizations image and finances are in danger, organizations to a greater extent prepares for possible threats. Internal crisis is not given as much attention. External pressure is put on organizations to develop policy and guidelines in certain matters, workplace bullying being one. But after having developed these documents the case for many organizations might be that the process stops. The implementation amongst the organizational members is forgotten and the documents do not fulfill its purposes. Speculations can be made about the reasons for why implementation does not reach everyone it concerns. It could be that organizations are afraid of exposing results that might harm them; that workplace bullying exists in their organization. It could be that organizations do not care as much about a subject like workplace bullying as they do about their finances. Workplace bullying might not be considered as an internal crisis, or a crisis at all. If taking the step towards viewing workplace bullying as an internal crisis it is through internal communication an organization can reach awareness preparedness and implementation.

7.3 Source of error

Although the definition of workplace bullying was clearly stated in the beginning of the survey, it cannot be assumed that the respondents did not interpret the concept

along with their own values and opinions. Therefore it could be that some respondents connected sexual harassment into the concept of workplace bullying. The respondents own interpretations of the concept could therefore be assumed to have had a certain influence on the results.

A sensitive subject as workplace bullying could have influenced the respondents to answer in a certain direction in order to give a more positive picture of the reality. It could therefore be worth reflecting over if the respondents' replies were of honest nature or if the answers gave a more optimistic view of the organizations real situation when it comes to workplace bullying. This is also a factor that could have had a certain influence on the results of this study.

Since there has been no direct contact with the respondents of the surveys, all information has been through a contact point, it has been hard to determine exactly how many employees and managers that had the possibility to take part in the surveys. Eight managers and 87 employees, in total 95 respondents, can be claimed to be too few respondents in order to make generalizations. The fact that only eight managers took part has been taken into consideration throughout the thesis. But it is important to point out that managers have been surveyed in their role as leaders and the aim was never to get as many managers as employees to respond.

7.4 Further research

This study has focused on the pre-crisis stage, about the strategic and preventative work. To be able to generalize the results of this study, an investigation, using the same method as in this study, of more offices within organization x would be appropriate. This would contribute to a more general picture of organization x:s preventative work against workplace bullying.

There are also other aspects in connection to workplace bullying that can be explored further. A comparison between private and public sector could give interesting results in how the different sectors deals with workplace bullying and if there is a difference in the preventative work. Furthermore different forms of data collection could bring other interesting results. Even though an ethnographic study could be difficult to carry out, it could lead to valuable observations that could add to this study's results.

Observing how an organization, through maybe education and training, tries to implement an approach towards workplace bullying, and thereafter evaluate the employees and managers preparedness and awareness could add to the understanding of workplace bullying.

For this study there was not room enough to go deeper into comparing respondents different answers. The focus of this study has been to put three different perspectives (policy and guidelines, managers and employees) in relation to each other to investigate an implementation process. Furthermore the thesis has looked upon workplace bullying from an organizational level, not an individual. But it could be of interest to investigate how the 10,3 percent of the employees responded to other questions in the survey. How did this group respond to questions of strategic work and questions related to workplace bullying? To find out correlations could further build on the results of this study.

In organization x:s policy and guidelines (appendix 7 and appendix 8), the responsibility of the employee in case of workplace bullying is brought up. This study has mainly focused on the managers' responsibility and preparedness, but an investigation of the employees' responsibility could deepen the understanding of workplace bullying processes.

7.5 Reflections

This study has only examined organization x: s preparedness and awareness when it comes to workplace bullying. The results did indicate that the managers and employees preparedness and awareness were weak to some extent. Although, it should be declared that the intention of this study never was to examine the organizations preparedness in the case of an emergent situation of workplace bullying. If this would have been the case it could be assumed that the result would have been different. When looking at a specific case of workplace bullying it could be that the managers' preparedness would have proved to be higher and therefore different from this study's result.

Although this study only had its focus on organization x it could be assumed that the result from this study could be applied to other, large organizations. Poor internal

communication within organization could of course be the case in other organizations, particularly organizations with hierarchical structure.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Employee questionnaire

Age

18-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70

Gender

Female Male

How long have you been employed within the organization?

0-5 years 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25
26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45

Q1. Are you familiar with the law of Victimization at work (AFS 1993:17)?

Yes No Do not know

Q2. Does the organization you work for have any policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying?

Yes No Do not know

Q3. Does the organization you work for have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying (for example a safety representative)?

Yes No Do not know

Q4. Have you at some point during your employment been informed that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior?

Yes No Do not know

Please click the alternative on a five-point scale that best describes how you would position yourself according to the given statements.

Q5. My organization has contributed with enough information about workplace bullying.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q6. My organization has contributed with enough information about current laws and regulations about workplace bullying.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q7. I perceive that work-related information often is withheld or kept from me (information that you in your position is required to).

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q8. I perceive that I am often handed work tasks that are not in coherence with my work description.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q9. Have you experienced administrative negative sanctions (for example unmotivated removal of office room or work tasks or unexplainable relocation)?

Yes No Do not know

Q10. Have you experienced ignorance/isolation at your workplace?

Yes No Do not know

Q11. Have you experienced verbal threats at your workplace?

Yes No Do not know

Q12. Have you experienced vandalism towards your personal belongings at your workplace?

Yes No Do not know

Q13. Have you personally experienced violence at your workplace?

Yes No Do not know

Q14. Have you been exposed to workplace bullying?

Yes No Do not know

Q15. Have you seen coworkers that have been exposed to workplace bullying?

Yes No Do not know

Appendix 2 – Manager questionnaire

Age

18-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70

Gender

Female Male

How long have you been employed within the organization?

0-5 years 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25
26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45

Q1. Are you familiar with the law of Victimization at work (AFS 1993:17)?

Yes No Do not know

Q2. Does the organization you work for have any policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying?

Yes No Do not know

Q3. Does the organization you work for have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying (for example a safety representative)?

Yes No Do not know

Q4. Have you clarified that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior at your workplace?

Yes No Do not know

Q5. Are you familiar with the routines of how to spot signals, investigate and adjust workplace bullying?

Yes No Do not know

Please click the alternative on a five-point scale that best describes how you would position yourself according to the given statements.

Q6. I work preventative against workplace bullying at my workplace.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q7. I am well prepared for handling workplace bullying situations.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q8. I have enough resources/information in order to manage workplace bullying, in case it would occur.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Q9. Have you seen coworkers that have been exposed to workplace bullying?

Yes No Do not know

Appendix 3 – Coding scheme employees

ID: 1-87

[Age]

- 1: 18-30
- 2: 31-40
- 3: 41-50
- 4: 51-60
- 5: 61-70

[Gender]

- 1: Female
- 2: Male

[Years of employment]

- 1: 0-5
- 2: 6-10
- 3: 11-15
- 4: 16-20
- 5: 21-25
- 6: 26-30
- 7: 31-35
- 8: 36-40
- 9: 41-45

Q1 [Are you familiar with the law of victimization at work (AFS 1993:17)?]

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

Q2 [Does the organization you work for have any policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying?]

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

Q3 [Does the organization you work for have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying (for example a safety representative)?]

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

Q4 [Have you at some point during your employment been informed that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior?]

- 1: Yes
- 2: No

3: Do not know

Q5 [My organization has contributed with enough information about workplace bullying]

- 1: 1 (Strongly disagree)
- 2: 2
- 3: 3
- 4: 4
- 5: 5 (Strongly agree)

Q6 [My organization has contributed with enough information about current law and regulations about workplace bullying.]

- 1: 1 (Strongly disagree)
- 2: 2
- 3: 3
- 4: 4
- 5: 5 (Strongly agree)

Q7 [I perceive that work-related information often is withheld or kept from me (information that you in your position is required to)]

- 1: 1 (Strongly disagree)
- 2: 2
- 3: 3
- 4: 4
- 5: 5 (Strongly agree)

Q8 [I perceive that I am often handed work tasks that are not in coherence with my work description.]

- 1: 1 (Strongly disagree)
- 2: 2
- 3: 3
- 4: 4
- 5: 5 (Strongly agree)

Q9 [Have you experienced administrative negative sanctions (for example unmotivated removal of office room or work tasks or unexplainable relocation)]

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

Q10 [Have you experienced ignorance/isolation at your workplace?]

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

Q11 [Have you experienced verbal threats at your workplace?]

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

Q12 [Have you experienced vandalism towards your personal belongings at your workplace?]

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

Q13 [Have you personally experienced violence at your workplace?]

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

Q14 [Have you been exposed to workplace bullying?]

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

Q15 [Have you seen coworkers that have been exposed to workplace bullying?]

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

ID: 1-8

[Age]

- 1: 18-30
- 2: 31-40
- 3: 41-50
- 4: 51-60
- 5: 61-70

[Gender]

- 1: Female
- 2: Male

[Years of employment]

- 1: 0-5
- 2: 6-10
- 3: 11-15
- 4: 16-20
- 5: 21-25
- 6: 26-30
- 7: 31-35
- 8: 36-40
- 9: 41-45

Q1 [Are you familiar with the law of victimization at work (AFS 1993:17)?]

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

Q2 [Does the organization you work for have any policies or guidelines that concerns workplace bullying?]

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

Q3 [Does the organization you work for have anyone who is educated in questions concerning workplace bullying (for example a safety representative)?]

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

Q4 [Have you clarified that workplace bullying is not an accepted behavior at your workplace?]

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

Q5 [Are you familiar with the routines of how to spot signals, investigate and adjust workplace bullying?]

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

Q6 [I work preventative against workplace bullying at my workplace]

- 1:1 (Strongly disagree)
- 2:2
- 3:3
- 4:4
- 5:5 (Strongly agree)

Q7 [I am well prepared for handling workplace bullying situations]

- 1:1 (Strongly disagree)
- 2:2
- 3:3
- 4:4
- 5:5 (Strongly agree)

Q8 [I have enough resources/information in order to manage workplace bullying, in case it would occur]

- 1:1(Strongly disagree)
- 2:2
- 3:3
- 4:4
- 5:5(Strongly agree)

Q9 [Have you seen coworkers that have been exposed to workplace bullying?]

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

Table 30

		Statistics			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
N	Valid	87	87	87	87
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mode		1	1	3	1
Std. Deviation		,662	,986	,913	,635
Skewness		,919	,259	-,746	1,397
Std. Error of Skewness		,258	,258	,258	,258
Kurtosis		-,268	-1,953	-1,394	,803
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,511	,511	,511	,511
Minimum		1	1	1	1
Maximum		3	3	3	3

Table 31

		Statistics			
		Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
N	Valid	87	87	87	87
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		2,82	2,52	2,06	1,72
Median		3,00	2,00	2,00	1,00
Mode		3	2	1	1
Std. Deviation		1,186	1,140	1,145	1,158
Skewness		,238	,559	,980	1,664
Std. Error of Skewness		,258	,258	,258	,258
Kurtosis		-,743	-,378	,191	1,856
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,511	,511	,511	,511
Minimum		1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5

Table 32

Statistics

		Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
N	Valid	87	87	87	85
	Missing	0	0	0	2
Mode		2	2	2	2
Std. Deviation		,234	,390	,291	,000
Skewness		-3,870	-1,379	-2,874	
Std. Error of Skewness		,258	,258	,258	,261
Kurtosis		13,280	1,819	6,407	
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,511	,511	,511	,517
Minimum		1	1	1	2
Maximum		2	3	2	2

Table 33

Statistics

		Q13	Q14	Q15
N	Valid	87	86	85
	Missing	0	1	2
Mode		2	2	2
Std. Deviation		,000	,308	,431
Std. Error of Skewness		,258	,260	,261
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,511	,514	,517
Minimum		2	1	1
Maximum		2	2	3
Skewness			-2,629	-,728
Kurtosis			5,029	1,702

Table 34

		Statistics				
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
N	Valid	8	8	8	8	8
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mode		1	1	3	1	1
Std. Deviation		,000	,744	1,035	,518	,744
Std. Error of Skewness		,752	,752	,752	,752	,752
Std. Error of Kurtosis		1,481	1,481	1,481	1,481	1,481
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		1	3	3	2	3
Skewness			1,951	-,644	,644	,824
Kurtosis			3,205	-2,240	-2,240	-,152

Table 35

		Statistics		
		Q6	Q7	Q8
N	Valid	8	8	8
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3,38	3,13	3,00
Median		3,00	3,00	3,00
Mode		3	3 ^a	3
Std. Deviation		,518	,835	,756
Skewness		,644	-,277	,000
Std. Error of Skewness		,752	,752	,752
Kurtosis		-2,240	-1,392	-,700
Std. Error of Kurtosis		1,481	1,481	1,481
Minimum		3	2	2
Maximum		4	4	4

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 36

Statistics

Q9

N	Valid	8
	Missing	0
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		,463
Skewness		-1,440
Std. Error of Skewness		,752
Kurtosis		,000
Std. Error of Kurtosis		1,481
Minimum		1
Maximum		2

Policy för likabehandling

Syfte

Denna policy syftar till att beskriva ett enhetligt förhållningssätt och agerande för det interna likväl som det kundorienterade arbetet för likabehandling. Utgångspunkten är alla människors lika värde.

Övergripande mål

- På "organisation x" blir och upplever sig ingen diskriminerad eller kränkt.
- På "organisation x" bemöts medarbetare och kunder professionellt på lika villkor oavsett kön, könsöverskridande identitet eller uttryck, etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller trostillhörighet, funktionsnedsättning, sexuell läggning och ålder.
- På "organisation x" har alla chefer och medarbetare kunskap och kompetens om gällande lagar, avtal och interna styrdokument för likabehandling.
- "Organisation x" är en tillgänglig arbetsplats och kundmötesorganisation.

Likabehandling

Arbete för likabehandling innebär att vi ska motverka all form av diskriminering, enligt diskrimineringslagen (2008:567) utgående från kön, könsöverskridande identitet eller uttryck, etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller annan trosuppfattning, funktionsnedsättning, sexuell läggning eller ålder. Det interna personalarbetet ska därutöver motverka andra uttryck för kränkande eller osaklig särbehandling, enligt arbetsmiljölagen (1977:1160) och föräldraledighetslagen (1995:584).

Centralt för vårt arbete med likabehandling är regeringens krav uttryckta i förordningen (2009:1174) med instruktion för "organisation x" samt riksdagens beslutade mål och styrande dokument för barnrätts-, handikapp-, integrations-, jämställdhets- och minoritetspolitiken.

Vi ska verka för likabehandling i "organisation x" genom att aktivt och systematiskt integrera ett jämställdhets-, mångfalds- och tillgänglighetsperspektiv i hela verksamheten. En arbetsmiljö präglad av respekt för allas lika värde är en förutsättning för en kundorienterad verksamhet fri från kränkningar och diskriminering. Detta arbete är baserat på ett rättighetsperspektiv, men ska också ses i perspektivet av ständiga förbättringar som vilar på "organisation x:s" värdegrund.

- "Organisation x:s" personalpolitiska arbete ska verka för allas lika värde, rätt och möjligheter. Arbetsmiljön ska präglas av ett respektfullt samspel mellan olika människor/mellan kollegor och mellan chef och medarbetare i vår organisation. Vår personalsammansättning ska spegla mångfalden i samhället och bidrar till arbetet med att vara en utvecklande arbetsplats.

Roller och ansvar

Alla medarbetare i "organisation x" ska bidra till att aktivt och systematiskt motverka all form av diskriminering eller kränkande särbehandling och främja likabehandling på arbetsplatsen likväl som i kundmötet.

"Organisation x:s" chefer ansvarar för den egna verksamhetens interna och externa arbete för likabehandling och att denna policy följs. I den årliga verksamhetsplaneringen ska likabehandlingsarbetet ingå som en del av planeringen.

"Organisation x" ska årliga följa upp likabehandlingsarbetet. Statistik, upplevelser av

bemötande, tillgänglighet och service ska redovisas utifrån denna policy.

Ytterligare utgångspunkter i lagstiftning

- Förvaltningslagen (1986:223) med krav på handläggning och serviceskyldighet.
- Språklagen (2009:600)
- Lagen (2009:724) om nationella minoriteter och minoritetsspråk

[Organization x is replacing the organizations real name in order to keep them anonymous. Furthermore some paragraphs are not presented in this document for the same reason, but this removal does not affect the core content.]

Riktlinjer för att förebygga och hantera kränkande särbehandling

Arbetsmiljön påverkar våra medarbetare och därmed också verksamhetens resultat och kvalitet. Vårt arbetsmiljö- och hälsoarbete bedrivs därför som en integrerad del i verksamheten och ingår i all ledning och styrning. Dialog och samverkan är ett arbets- och förhållningssätt, som vi använder för att nå gemensamma mål.

Arbetsgivaren har det yttersta ansvaret för arbetsmiljön och för att kränkande särbehandling inte förekommer. Enligt Arbetsmiljöverkets föreskrift (AFS 1993:17) ska arbetsgivaren planera och organisera arbetet så att kränkande särbehandling så långt det är möjligt förebyggs och klargöra att kränkande särbehandling inte kan accepteras i verksamheten. En stor del av arbetsmiljöarbetet handlar om insatser för att förebygga att personalen utsätts för ohälsa. Inom ”organisation x” har alla ett ansvar för att skapa en god arbetsmiljö med en anda av respekt och hänsyn.

”Organisation x” ska föregå med gott exempel när det gäller att förebygga och hantera kränkande särbehandling. Inom ”Organisation x” accepteras inte handlingar som kränker en medarbetares integritet och värdighet.

Om kränkande särbehandling

Vad är kränkande särbehandling?

Kränkande särbehandling är handlingar och beteenden som kränker en persons integritet och värdighet. Hit hör handlingar och beteenden som präglas av respektlöshet och som bryter mot allmänna heders- och moralbegrepp i möten med andra människor. I begreppet ingår även sexuella trakasserier och trakasserier på grund av kön, etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller annan trosuppfattning, funktionshinder, sexuell läggning samt ålder.

Kränkande handlingar och beteenden kan vara tillfälliga men det kan också handla om återkommande kränkningar som riktas mot en enskild person. Uppfattningen om vad som är kränkande kan variera från person till person, men det är alltid den som känner sig utsatt, som avgör om handlingen har varit kränkande – ingen annan.

Exempel på kränkande särbehandling

- förtal eller nedsvärning av en medarbetare eller dennes familj
- medvetet undanhålla eller lämna felaktig arbetsrelaterad information
- medvetet sabotera eller försvåra arbetet
- utfrysning, åsidosättande behandling, negligeringar förföljelse, hot, skapande av rädsla och förnedringar
- förolämpningar, olämpliga skämt, stötande kommentarer
- negativt bemötande eller förhållningssätt t.ex. hån eller ovänlighet
- kontroll av en medarbetare utan dennes vetskap och med skadande syfte.

Exempel på sexuella trakasserier

- ovälkomna förslag eller krav på sexuella tjänster
- oönskad fysisk kontakt av sexuell natur
- sexuella anspelningar, kommentarer, skämt eller bilder.

Exempel på andra trakasserier

- förlöjligande kommentarer eller skämt om kvinnliga eller manliga egenskaper, invandrare, religion, funktionshinder, sexuell läggning eller ålder
- generaliseringar om människor utifrån föreställningar som grundas på kön, etnicitet, religion, funktionshinder, sexuell läggning eller ålder.

Förebyggande åtgärder

Inom ramen för det systematiska arbetsmiljöarbetet ska den psykosociala arbetsmiljön årligen kartläggas. Detta innebär att "organisation x" regelbundet i medarbetarundersökningen mäter hur medarbetarna upplever sin arbetsmiljö. Utifrån resultaten ska lämpliga insatser planeras, genomföras och följas upp. Insatserna kan vara av såväl förebyggande som åtgärdande karaktär.

Medarbetarens ansvar i det förebyggande arbetet

En stor del av arbetsmiljöarbetet handlar om förebyggande insatser för att ingen ska utsättas för ohälsa. Här har alla medarbetare ett ansvar att aktivt verka för en god arbetsmiljö och för att skapa en anda av omtanke, där det är naturligt att vi bryr oss om varandra.

- Var tydlig med vad du accepterar respektive inte accepterar.
- Visa klart och tydligt att du inte är delaktig i negativa saker som sker, eftersom passivitet också är en form av deltagande.
- Öka medvetenheten om dina egna värderingar och attityder. Det du anser obetydligt kan andra uppfatta som kränkande.

Chefens ansvar i det förebyggande arbetet

Det är chefens ansvar att tidigt uppmärksamma och agera vid signaler om kränkande särbehandling. Sådana signaler är exempelvis sjukfrånvaro och förändringar i beteende och prestationsförmåga. Andra signaler kan vara att en person tystnar eller slutar delta i den sociala gemenskapen. Kränkande särbehandling kan ha flera orsaker och bakgrunden kan till exempel vara organisationsförändringar, bristande organisation av arbetet eller otydlig information och ledning.

Det är viktigt att du som chef verkar för ett öppet arbetsklimat, där medarbetarna är delaktiga. Ge tydlig och öppen information som förhindrar osäkerhet och ryktesspridning. Använd arbetsplatsträffen samt medarbetarsamtalet för diskussion och överenskommelser om arbetsklimat och arbetsmiljöfrågor.

- Visa en fast attityd mot förtal, skvaller eller spekulationer om enskilda personer, och lev själv upp till detta förhållningssätt.
- Ta tag i och agera snabbt vid tecken på osämja.
- Avsätt tid till att diskutera attityder och värderingar på arbetsplatsträffen.

Om någon har blivit utsatt

Några råd till dig som har blivit utsatt

Om du själv blir utsatt för kränkande särbehandling ska du tydligt säga ifrån att du inte accepterar beteendet, och att du vill att det ska upphöra. Om beteendet fortsätter trots att du sagt ifrån ska du anmäla händelsen till din chef. Om det inte är möjligt ska du vända dig till en annan chef eller "HR". Du kan också kontakta arbetsmiljöombudet, huvudskyddsombudet, din fackliga företrädare eller företagshälsovården för att få stöd och hjälp. Om kränkningarna fortsätter trots att du sagt ifrån, ska du anteckna vad som hänt, tidpunkter och eventuella vittnen.

Chefens ansvar

Som chef har du ansvar för att uppmärksamma och tidigt agera vid signaler om kränkande särbehandling. Om du misstänker eller får veta att det förekommer kränkande särbehandling på arbetsplatsen, är du skyldig att

- utreda
- åtgärda
- dokumentera.

Utreda och åtgärda

Starta utredningen med att prata dels med den som har blivit utsatt för kränkande särbehandling, dels med den eller de som har utfört handlingen, för att få en bild av vad som hänt. Därefter är det önskvärt att ha ett gemensamt samtal för att tydliggöra hur de olika parterna uppfattat situationen, och vad som behöver göras för att händelsen inte ska inträffa igen.

Lyssna på medarbetarens berättelse och reflektera tillsammans över det som har inträffat. Om medarbetaren så önskar kan arbetsmiljöombud eller facklig företrädare vara med vid samtalet. Håll samtalet i en anda av respekt och öppenhet och var observant på ditt eget beteende. Informera om att du kommer att prata med den eller de som har utfört den kränkande handlingen. Som arbetsgivare är du skyldig att utreda vad som har inträffat och måste höra båda parter.

Fortsätt utredningen med att tala med den eller de personer som påstås ha utfört den kränkande särbehandling. Om det visar sig att någon har betett sig kränkande, så ska du se till att personen inser att beteendet inte accepteras och inte får upprepas. Att utsätta någon för kränkande särbehandling är inte ett acceptabelt beteende på en arbetsplats. Informera den anställde om att fortsatt kränkning kan leda till omplacering, disciplinpåföljd eller uppsägning av personliga skäl. Rådgör med "HR".

Se till att den utsatta medarbetaren får det stöd som han eller hon behöver, t.ex. via företagshälsovården. Följ upp med samtal både i anslutning till händelsen och efter en längre tid. Om den som blivit utsatt för kränkning är sjukskriven är det viktigt att snabbt finna en lösning så att medarbetaren kan återkomma till arbetet.

Utred orsakerna till den kränkande handlingen och åtgärda dessa. Var även uppmärksam på brister i organisationen, hög arbetsbelastning, stress och önskemål om konkreta förbättringar på arbetsplatsen. Var lyhörd för arbetsgruppens behov av stöd och utveckling.

Om du behöver råd och stöd är du välkommen att kontakta "HR", som även kan medverka i utredningen.

Om en medarbetare vill ta tillbaka sin anmälan ska du ta reda på orsaken till detta och vad som hindrar en fortsatt utredning. Informera också om att arbetsgivaren i regel inte kan vidta några åtgärder mot den eller de personer som anklagas för kränkande särbehandling om anmälan dras tillbaka. I det här skedet kan du påminna om att medarbetaren kan få stöd av arbetsmiljöombud, facklig företrädare eller företagshälsovården. Om utredningen läggs ner ska du som chef vid behov se till att förebyggande åtgärder vidtas. Tag kontakt med "HR" för att diskutera hur du kan gå vidare med det förebyggande arbetet.

Dokumentera

Dokumentera alltid vad som kommit fram under utredningen. Det ska tydligt framgå vad som har hänt, vad som har bestämts samt vilka åtgärder som ska genomföras, när detta ska ske, vem som är ansvarig och när åtgärderna ska följas upp. När utredningen är avslutad ska dokumentationen förvaras i personalakten i ett förslutet kuvert märkt med texten "Prövas för sekretess". Detta innebär dock inte att samtliga dokumenterade handlingar omfattas av sekretess. Vid en begäran om att få ut handlingarna måste sekretessprövning ske på vanligt

sätt.

Arbetsmiljöombudens och de fackliga företrädarnas roll

Många gånger är det arbetsmiljöombudet, huvudskyddsombudet eller den fackliga företrädaren som först får veta att någon känner sig kränkt. Som förtroendemän är du skyldig att ge stöd, och du bör agera snabbt, om du märker något som du misstänker kan upplevas som en kränkning. Får du kännedom om att någon känner sig kränkt, tag kontakt och hör efter hur personen upplevt situationen. Uppmana personen att prata med sin chef och om personen så önskar kan du delta som stöd.

Medarbetarnas roll

Som kollega kan du vara den första som får veta att någon känner sig kränkt. Då är det viktigt att du lyssnar och visar förståelse. Prata med din kollega om hur han eller hon vill gå vidare. Uppmana kollegan till att ta kontakt med sin chef eller med "HR" för rådgivning.

Påföljder

Påföljder för arbetsgivare

Det är arbetsgivaren som har det yttersta ansvaret för arbetsmiljön och för att kränkande särbehandling inte förekommer. En arbetsgivare som inte uppfyller kraven kan bli skadeståndsskyldig. Även andra påföljder kan förekomma. Aktuella lagar är arbetsmiljölagen (1977:1160) och lagarna mot diskriminering i arbetslivet: jämställdhetslagen (1991:433), lagen (1999:130) om åtgärder mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller annan trosuppfattning, lagen (1999:132) om förbud mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av funktionshinder (1999:132) och lagen (1999:133) om förbud mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av sexuell läggning.

Påföljder för arbetstagare som kränkt en annan arbetstagare

Att utsätta någon för kränkande särbehandling är inte ett acceptabelt beteende och kan leda till omplacering, disciplinpåföljd eller uppsägning på grund av personliga skäl.

Bestämmelser i brottsbalken, som till exempel förtal och förolämpning, kan också bli aktuella. För att brottsbalkens regler ska bli tillämpliga krävs polisanmälan.

["Organization x" is replacing the organizations real name and "HR" the name of an HR-department in order to keep them anonymous. Furthermore some paragraphs are not presented in this document for the same reason, but this removal does not affect the core content.]