UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW

Master Degree Project in Management

Good Intentions, Vague Ideas:

A study about an Organizational change project being implemented

Cecilia Drott

Supervisor: Kajsa Lindberg
Master Degree Project No. 2013:48
Graduate School

Abstract
The purpose of this thesis is to describe and analyze a change project that is not embedded in any clear issue and that lack a distinct purpose. HighTech tries to imitate a change project conducted at a former work place of a manager however imitations are rare and the project is easier explained as a translation. The reason to why the managers decided to implement the project was due to a positive belief in the process of conducting it and a hope of transforming their own private identities and the identity of the organization into something better and more beautiful. The process is not managed by a *change agent* and the project lack an action plan thus the managers, assigned to participate in the process, feel unsecure about the expectations and their responsibilities. Hence the managers are told to communicate that improvements will be implemented at the same time as they are instructed to do nothing. The organization use hypocrisy as a management tool to avoid conflict and make the employees more satisfied.

Keywords: Change Project, Change Agent, Imitation, Identity, Hypocrisy

Introduction
It is a widely held assumption that organizations spend a lot of time and resources on finding the best management models. This assumption is often proven to be wrong (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003). Many organizational changes occur because employees within the organization feel that something need to be changed, often due to internal or external events that the organization need to act on (Hayes, 2010), or because an employee or the organization just decide to do so (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003). The case presented in this thesis describes how an organization initiates a change project at the production department mainly due to one idea mentioned by a manager at the department. The change project consists of a questionnaire planned to be distributed to all employees that works on the production department. The project was initiated even though it lacked a distinct purpose or was aimed to solve any detected issues. The managers claimed that they only wanted to get valuable information about how the employees experience their work place; hence the intentions of performing the change project were good however the ideas around the process are very vague.

The purpose of this thesis is to describe and analyze a change project that is not based on a problem and that lacks a distinct purpose. The study shows how organizations do not use much time, resources or effort to find the best management ideas to solve a defined problem rather how an organization implement a change project because the managers felt for it. The normative literature (e.g. Hayes, 2010 or Heckscher, Maccoby, Ramirez, Tixier, 2003) suggests different models for how change project successfully can be performed. A model constructed by Hayes (2010) suggests that the state of an organization should be diagnosed in order to enable a good problem description about the existing issues. The problem description should then function as guidance when choosing the best management model. The organization need to have a good knowledge about management models and how to conduct a successful change project to succeed. Normative models can function as guidance if the actors conducting the project lack own action plan or knowledge about how to proceed. However another solution if the organization lacks needed knowledge is to hire consultants (Heckscher, Maccoby, Ramirez, Tixier, 2003), or assign a special project group that possess the needed skills to perform the change project properly; the project gets a responsible *change agent*. This is important hence it makes sure that the goals are reached, that someone takes the responsibility, and that the change project actually proceeds and results in accordance with the action plan.

This thesis will closely observe and investigate how the case company (from now called HighTech) manages a change project without goal and/or action plan. To be able to conduct the research in a reliable way is previous research within the field reviewed to increase the knowledge of the area for the researcher. To enhance the understanding of the studied project appropriate theories and models are applied in the discussions and these theories are introduced below. After the theoretical framework is the methodology, used when conducting this research, described and thereafter is the setting of the studied company and the field material presented. The case study is divided into three different themes; 1, *the initiative and purpose of the project,* 2, *to move a project forward; responsibility and division of work* and 3, *talk is easier than act*. Every theme is followed by a discussion part where the story presented in the theme is closely discussed with help of relevant theories. The thesis is ended by a conclusion that presents the main ideas of the study.

Theoretical Framework

The studied case is an example of a change project where the organization has tried to imitate another organization. Organizations are often organized in similar ways which might be explained by the fact that corporate managers have attended the same business schools and read the same business journals (Rövik, 2008). Universities and consultants spread research and the managers use the ideas because they hope it will make their organizations more efficient and successful. Another way of viewing the similarities of organizations are suggested by Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón (2003), they argue that organizations often try to imitate *other* organizations to save time and resources; however it might not always be functioning because it is hard to know what actually caused the success in the first time. The ideas of Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón (2003) are influenced by ideas formulated by DiMaggio and Powell (1983/2000). DiMaggio and Powell (1983/2000) emphasize the importance of the environment and they have identified three different pressures that lead to isomorphism. Isomorphism is a concept that described different triggers that makes companies adopt similar management ideas hence they become similar.

Among practitioners and researches exist different approaches of how to view changes. Some believe that a change follows a predefined model and that ideas can be imitated and transferred between organizations. In the normative view is changes described as linear and mobile. Against this view has a reaction being established that view changes as ambiguous and nonlinear. Such an approach mean that one model cannot possible be copied from one organization to another hence the context, the conductors and the final result will always differ and the intended imitation is not an imitation, thus it can be explained as a *translation*.

A normative way of conducting a change project

Most planed change processes starts with careful planning which results in an actions describing how to implement the project. The market is full of "how to implement a change project" books and many are quite similar, most of them agree on the importance of careful planning. Hayes (2010) is an author that has formed a step-by-step model that explains how to successfully manage a change project. This model consists of five steps and these steps are similar to many other normative change models. Step one includes a narrow recognition of the need for change, then should a diagnosis of the present state be conducted. For the second step can different methods be used, e.g. questionnaires, interviews and/or observations. The third step include making a plan about how to initiate the change project, the plan should be detailed and describe the different actions the project group need to take, when and how. The fourth step includes implementation of the plan and this step together with the last step needs to be performed in cooperation with all employees at the organization. It is important that all employees understand the change and are willing to accept the new state of the organization. Hence that is required to enables the last step that includes sustainment of the change in the organization. This can only be done if the employees work in accordance with the new routines.

Organizations often recognize a need for a change independently but perform the change project in cooperation with consultants or dedicate a specific project group that act as *change agents* (described below) thus a change agent conduct the work to make sure the right competence is available and that the project proceeds as needed. The change agent performs the different steps in the model.

A Change Agent

To enable an efficient precedence of a change project, someone or a group, has to take the responsibility and lead the work i.e. a change agent. The normative approach describes what characteristics a change agent should possess to be successful and efficient. Weiss (2003) has written a whole book (*Organizational Consulting: How to Be an Effective Internal Change Agent*) about characteristics that a change agent should bear and how a change agent should act. Hayes (2010) has defined four characteristics that successful change agents should possess, these four characteristics is close to identical to those presented by Weiss (2003). First, they should have the confidence in their own ability to make a change. If they do not have that, they are not likely to try to implement a change. Second, they should have the motivation to change, which those, according to Pugh (1993), who are successful but are experiencing tensions of failure in some particular part of their work are most likely to have. Third, have the conceptual models and action tools/interventions to enable change. These models are often sorted into two groups; process models and diagnostic models. Process models focus on *the how* of change management, diagnostic models on identifying *what* it is that need to be changed. Four, they need to have change management skills. A change agent need to be communicative, offer leadership, be able to work with teams and have the ability to confront, negotiate, motivate and manage relationships with others. To manage a change is not easy and sometimes is above skills not present in the change agent, or not properly applied hence the project may not proceed as expected.

Above theories are examples of how researches and consultants try to simplify the process of a change and make it accessible for many different organizations and conductors. Below follows theories that describes the change process in a more complex and ambiguous way.

Change from an ambiguous point of view

As on reaction to above presented approach has another view emerged that approach change processes differently. This view emphasizes the environment, the context, the complexity and the ambiguity that changes are embedded in. Some examples of ideas from this approach, and that also facilitate the analysis of this thesis, are those of DiMaggion and Powell (1983/2000) who emphasizes the pressures in the environment that makes organizations become similar. These ideas has influenced the ideas of Czarniawska and Sevón (1996), they describe how ideas that are interpreted and carried around by actors are always evolving and not static. Their ideas are followed by ideas formulated by Sahlin-Anderson and Sevón (2003) who has created three editing rules about how prototypes change contents when being carried around and retold to actors. The also explain how a desire for a better and more beautiful identity can drive a change project. This section is ended by a presentation of hypocrisy as in the definition of Brunsson (2003).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983/2000) have formed a model about how the environment contributes to organizational changes. They have identified three different pressures that lead to isomorphism i.e. the similarities of organizations. These pressures are the coercive-, the mimetic- and the normative-isomorphism. The coercive isomorphism refers to the pressure that organizations respond to from other organizations or authorities. One organization that is dependent on other organizations might have to be similar structured to enable an efficient collaboration and authorities might implement new legislations that organizations have to respond to. Mimetic isomorphism occurs in ambiguous situations where goals are vague or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty. As a response to the ambiguous situation are organizations looking at other organizations that they consider as stable and/or successful and try to imitate their ideas. Normative isomorphism refers to the professionalism within different professions and how these actors have similar ideas hence they structure and manage their organizations in similar ways. The field material is an example of an ambiguous situation where the goals are vague, which is similar to the mimetic isomorphism, hence the other pressures will not be further explained.

Mimetic isomorphism occurs unintentionally, indirectly due to employee transfers/turnover or explicitly by consultancy firms or industry trade associations. DiMaggio and Powell (2000) mention that in the process of imitating a model, the organization unconsciously might innovate new ways of implementing the process or handling a part of the projects and an imitation-innovation process is invented. Other organization might thereafter try to imitate the uniqueness of the implemented model and the original imitated model might unintentionally slightly change every time it is imitated. The finding of the imitation-innovation process is something that can be paralleled to the ideas presented by Czarniawska and Sevón (1996) that concerns the translation of ideas.

Translation

Czarniawska and Sevón (1996) explain translation as something that occurs during interaction between actors i.e. when ideas travel through time and space from one actor to another. Ideas that are written down in text, or stored on a shelf are not changing its contents as long as they are not read and interpreted by anyone. Ideas are translated when they are interpreted and carried around by someone or something that later interact with other actors and try to explain or implement the idea. A translation process is not something that is limited to human actors thus it includes *everything* and in a business context is information technology an important actor. One management model conducted at one company might be formed in a special way due to their technical possibilities; another company might have other technical conditions hence they have to adapt the idea to fit their requirements. Thus companies translate ideas into something own.

One part of the translation, according to Czarniawska and Sevón (1996), is how different actors understand the idea hence how they describe the idea to a third person. Different actors interpret ideas differently due to e.g. the intentions the actors have and their identities. Some ideas are interpreted by actors as a tool available to transform own identity-, or the identity of the organization- with, into something better and more appropriate.

An appropriate identity

Projects are often initiated due to a will among employees to transform their own identity into something considered as better and more appropriate or the identity of the organization into something that they easier can identify themselves with. Most often the organization or employees search for changes that are considered “appropriate” and March (1981) label this “the logic of appropriateness”. Czarniawska and Joerges (1994) stresses that identities are formed by interaction between actors and to achieve appropriateness, one must make a comparison with appropriate others. Sevón (1996) has elaborated further on the “logic of appropriateness” to explain how a transformation of identification may come and argue that the reason for why imitations of a special model occur is because it matches own (and others) desired identities. The organization or employee has a desired state to transform into and the management model is considered as an appropriate action to take i.e. it is something that is institutionalized and widely accepted by others and it is described as if it gives the desired effect. A change of an identity is a try to become something better and more beautiful, organizations and individuals change identities to gain respect and legitimacy among stakeholders (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003).

In the attempt to become something better and more beautiful is often a special model chosen due to its appropriateness among actors. The models are explained as successful and easily accessible, often because the original idea is edited many times.

Transformation of an original idea- three editing rules

Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón (2003) argue that stories are told and re-told many times as they circulate among organizations and employees which result in modifications. These modifications can be explained as a cause of three editing processes that the ideas pass through. These three editing processes concern; 1, the context, 2, the way the prototype is presented and called and 3, the plot.

When a story is retold is the idea disembedded i.e. distanced or decoupled from time and space and the context is not described as settling for the project. That means that time- and organization-specific factors are left out on behalf of more general aspects to make the idea possible to imitate.

The second set of editing rules concern the presentation and labeling of the prototype. Accountable employees are often travelling to other organizations to learn about a desired prototype. When doing this, the stories are retold by employees hence it might be edited to fit its purpose; to tell a successful story about an implemented prototype. The third set of editing rules concerns the plot, the prototype is described as following a rationale order and one or a few persons are recognized as the initiators. Results are presented as if they were caused by identifiable actions and through this kind of narration is the project described as something possible to imitate. When ideas are edited to something less ambiguous, context dependent and complex are the interest of the prototype emphasized and that gives it legitimacy because of its spread, which is desirable for all involved.

When Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón (2003) describe how practitioners try to imitate a retold story they conclude that the original project is edited by the three editing rules and the intended imitation is not a complete copy of the prototype. Thus the intention is to imitate and the process is most likely communicated as such. However, organizations are often communicating one thing but act in another way. This is, by Brunsson (2003), called hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy

Talk, decisions and actions, according to Brunsson (2003) have not always strong connections thus they can be loosely coupled or completely de-coupled (concept from the new institutionalism discussed by e.g. Mayer & Rowan, 1977). It is one thing to talk, it is a second thing to take a decision and actions are a third thing. To take a decision and to act is two separate events and a person can take a decision without acting thus a person can act without a decision. Brunsson (2003) presents a model about how hypocrisy may work and defend it as an efficient way for a business to handle some situations. Hypocrisy is a kind of inconsistency within an actor and is generally considered as problematic, actors are assumed to be consistent in what they say, decide and do (Brunsson, 2003). The model is composed by two basic assumptions: one regarding conflict and one regarding the output of organizations. Organizations today operate under pressure from many different stakeholders and can’t satisfy all interests, especially not because different people have different interests and these interests may also change over time. Hypocrisy is only meaningful if stakeholders consider talk and decisions as carrying intrinsic value, a traditional assumption within decision theory is that action is of highest importance and that talk and decisions do not have any independent value. However modern organizations do not seem to operate under this assumption, instead there is a strong interest not only for the actions of organizations but also for what they say and decide. Organizations today produce talk to satisfy audience and modern companies have communication departments that are specialized in communicating strategies, ideas and decisions to make the audience feel satisfied. Publicity is sometimes considered as more important than the actual product that the company sells (ibid).

Traditionally, talk and decisions aimed in one direction increase the likelihood of actions in the same line, in the case of hypocrisy, the causality exist, however in the reversed way; talk and decisions pointing in one direction decrease the chance of actions in the same direction (Brunsson, 2003).

The authors above, presented as belonging to a second approach that emphasizes the environment, the context, the ambiguity and complexity, use different terms for the management model that they focus theirs ideas around. DiMaggio and Powell (1983/2000) call it *the mode;* an organization try to implement the same model as another company already use due to one of the isomorphistic pressures. Czarniawska and Sevón (1996) talk about *ideas*; how these ideas travel from one time and space to another thus it leads to translation. Sahlin-Anderson and Sevón (2003) call the management model that is edited due to the editing rules for *a prototype.* All authors mean the management model that one organization recognize from another organization and want to implement due to different reasons. In the following text, to avoid confusions, this phenomenon will be called; *the idea* or *the change project*. Another important part of doing a reliable study is to use an efficient methodology. The studied change project is performed at an organization and the ideas are collected through different methods which will be presented further below.

Methodology

In order to enable a thorough and fair investigation of the change project performed at HighTech is mainly observations, interviews and document studies conducted. The change project is planned to continue for an undefined period which made access to all actions and information settling. I am an employee at HighTech thus not at the studied department. The organization has approved unlimited access to all material and actions concerning the project as long as no individuals are mentioned or business secrets are exposed. Being a member of the organization has helped me to gain the access needed for conducting this study.

Since I work part time at another department have I been able to study the change project closely. I have participated at lunch- and coffee-breaks which have helped me gain a better understanding of the project thus also given me an opportunity to discuss the situation of the employees informally and experience the context of the project. The research has been enabled by a trustful mutually relationship and professionalism from all involved parts. I have tried to keep distance to the organization and the precedence of the project to enable a good investigation.

During my study was five different project meetings observed, seven different formal interviews performed, all information that has been distributed by e-mail within the project has been forwarded to me, I have had unlimited access to the internal business portal and many informal interviews/conversations has been conducted.

Observations

Observations has been conducted to get access to information expressed with own words, without answering questions, by employees engaged in the project. I have mainly observed planning meetings and evaluation meetings, these meetings have been hold among either the project group or a manager and his work team. My participation has been announced and explained in the beginning of all meetings to make all participants aware of who I am and what I aimed to do at the meeting. I believe it makes the participants feel more secure and this is argued as important from an ethical point of view by e.g. Wiles (2013). I experienced the environment at all meetings as open and that all participants felt free to talk even though I was present. All observation sessions were recorded on tape (which I had permission to do) and I took notes during the sessions. My observation technique is similar to what Gold (1958) call complete observer, or Gorman and Clayton (2005) call unobtrusive observer; I had a passive role during the meetings thus I observed everything that occurred during the meeting but didn’t interact with anyone at the meeting. To be able to also ask question and interact with the participants I held interviews.

Interviews

I conducted seven interviews to gather accurate data which enable a good reproduction of the case and a good analysis of the situation. Four of the respondents were team managers, one was the HR-manager and two was employees. Besides these seven formal interviews has several informal interviews been conducted. All formal interviews have been planned days ahead and the respondents have been invited to the meeting through the appointment booking system provided at the organization. The purpose of the interview and practical details about the participation and length of the interview have been presented in the initial invitation and the reason for that is to make the respondent aware of why they are asked to participate and what it means, which Gillham (2000) consider as important to make the participants feel confident. The interviews have been held either at the office belonging to the respondent or in a conference room located somewhere close to where the respondent works. Gillham (2000) argue that it is important that the respondent are familiar with the location and know where it is to save valuable time but most importantly to communicate that the interviewee is important and that I try to adjust place and time to make it fit her. All interviews have been recorded to enable a more conversation-like session thus it also enables me to not have to take notes during the session. I have had an interview guide with openly formulated questions as a help during the interviews however the interviews have been close to unstructured which make the respondent speak more freely (Kvale, Brinkmann, 2009).

Informal conversations have been occurring at different locations and with different participants in the project including employees. I tried to always note everything said during an informal chat/conversation afterwards to help me remember everything said. These conversations enabled me to ask questions about the project in an informal way however I always notified the person about my involvement in the project, to make sure the respondent is clear about my intentions concerning the questions and the answers/information that I gained. Both formal and informal interviews/conversations are settling to make a fair analysis of the project thus it enables a more comprehensive many-sided story (Kvale, Brinkmann, 2009). To make my research more versatile is also written communication studied.

Document Studies

Another important source of information during my study has been documents and emails. I have had access to all documents that has been shared on the internal intranet, documents posted at different billboards at HighTech and documents distributed by e-mail. Since all participants have agreed on having me on the send list I believe I have received all information relevant for the study. However it has not been distributed a large amount of document. These documents have been used mainly to create a better understanding about the situation and how the employees are experiencing the project. Written information is more explicit than oral communication however I am considering the fact that everyone creating documents are aware that the project is a target for research. To structure all gathered information were an analysis model used.

Analyzing data

In the analysis model was all gathered information categorized into different themes depending on what the information was an example of. I could, by processing the data many times, finally form three themes that felt fair and represented the collected information in a good way. It was very hard to understand all the information from the beginning however by writing keywords on papers could I start to group the words into different headings, these headings could then be merged or divided and it required a lot of thoughtfulness before I decided on three main themes. This thesis is then structured by these themes; *the absence of a goal and plan*, *the division of responsibility* and *legitimacy*. These themes were then structured by subthemes. These sub themes existed already as different keywords grouped under the headings, however these keywords were then prioritized and some could be merged and/or change name, others were dropped. To organize data as mentioned above is effective because it enables me as a researcher to reflect over what the information actually is an example of (Martin and Turner 1986). The text of this thesis is organized by the themes. Every theme has its own section and the text within every section is structured by the sub themes. The findings are discussed in three discussion sections, following every theme, and in a conclusion at the end. I chose this way of presenting the findings because I believe it helps the reader to understand every theme easier.

The performed change project and the setting

The studied change project takes place at the production department at a multinational company in Gothenburg, Sweden. The change project was composed by a survey and the team managers at the production department were the initiators of it. The managers wanted to get an indication about how the employees' experienced their work place hence a survey that the company group distributes every third year allows only permanently hires to participate. The managers at the O-department wanted to get information about the situation more often and from *all* workers at the department.

HighTech

HighTech is a big company with a turnover of about SEK 1,2 billion and it operates within the high-tech production industry. Research and development is performed in Sweden and its production is mainly exported (98 %). The company is owned by a great fortune 500 American company group. HighTech has about 450 employees, 180 of these work at the O-department, O is divided into four head divisions; OM, OR, OE and OP. OM has four sub units, OP has two sub units hence the O-department is composed by 10 different work teams. Every work team has one manager, the sub work team managers are reporting to the head of the division, the division managers for the four main divisions report to the head of O. HighTech has a pressure from the owner to grow and as a step in this arrogation is the company moving into a new location that the company is building within 2 years. The conducted change project includeed a survey composed by a questionnaire distributed to all employees at the O-department.

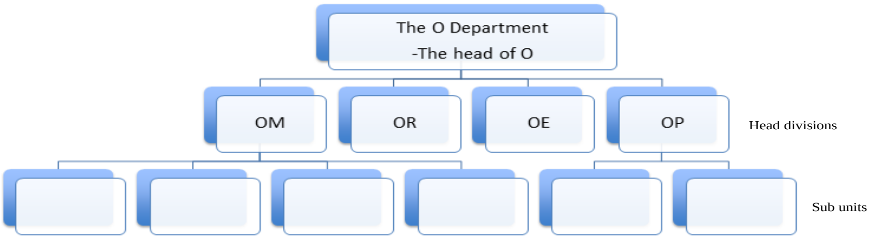

Figure 1: Organization chart for the O-department

The Survey

The survey was designed independently by the managers at the O-department. The managers had used the company group Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) (which is a questionnaire performed by the company group every third year, the EOS is only distributed to permanently hired employees) and the experiences that the initiator had from performing a similar project before as templates. The managers formulated 9 different questions and the questions where later approved by the HR-manager. The O-managers wanted to compose the questionnaire with different questions that investigate the level of job satisfaction among the employees. The managers designed a question about every aspect that they considered as a component contributing to job satisfaction. The first question concern the steering of the business, the second is about the working environment, the third about relations with colleagues, fourth about relation to the closest manager, fifth about the content of the job, sixth about feedback concerning job output, seventh is about availability of resources, eighth concern information about changes and the last questions is about the possibilities to influence. All questions are openly formulated and have five answer alternatives, three positive and two negative; very satisfied, satisfied, more satisfied than dissatisfied, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied. The intention is that this questionnaire will be distributed at the O-department every third month to get continuously updates about how the employees at the department experience their situation.

The idea

One manager at the O-department suggested that the project should be initiated. The idea was introduced at an annual planning meeting and all managers for the main divisions at the O-department participated at the meeting. The idea was to conduct a questionnaire to all employees at their department, including consultants and temporary hires, to get information about how they experience their situation. The manager that initiated the idea (the initiator) had performed a similar project at his previous workplace and experienced the project as successful that time. The idea with the project was not to solve an existing issue or reach a defined goal instead the project aimed to get valuable information about how the employees experienced their situation to enable improvements. The survey also includs one question, among the total nine, treating the relation to the closest manager and the managers view this as an opportunity to get valuable feedback about how they perform and what they should focus on in their daily work. The project was conducted in cooperation with the HR-department even though the initiative and the ideas were from the O-managers solely.

The division of the responsibility within the project was unclear. The managers at the O-department initiated the project and contacted the HR-department to get access to their expertise regarding similar project and also advise about how to manage the project. However the responsibilities among the managers at the O-department and between the O-department and the HR-department were unclear thus the division of work was not decided upon.

The project was initiated even though the purpose was vague and the project lacked an action plan, which questions why the project is initiated in the first place. The survey was launched as different and better compared to previous conducted questionnaires at the department by the managers. The employees experience the project as different initially, hence they mentioned that something needed to happen to make it different, otherwise is it only the story around the questionnaire that is different. The managers, as well, talked about how they will conduct the survey differently compared to the EOS, however no manager mentioned actions that were *planned*, instead many talked about ideas concerning different thinkable course of actions that they *could* conduct if they had access to the right resources and tools/competence.

The initiative and the purpose of the project

In order to know how the employees experienced their situation was the survey initiated. The aim of the survey, according to the managers, was to get a hint about how the employees experienced their workplace and by that enable improvement at the department for the employees.

To solve a none existing problem

The managers have not detected any problems at the department that they try to gather information about and the managers have no defined vision about something they will improve i.e. no goal to reach. The questionnaire is send out to give the employees a voice and to collect valuable information about how the working environment is experienced. The explicit aim of the project was coherent among the managers; to see how the employees experience their work place. The HR-department, in the other hand, had a slightly different picture about why the project should be conducted; it has occurred many changes at the O-department lately thus it can be valuable to get feedback about how these changes has been experienced by those working in the middle of it. The HR-manager said;

"Managers have started and resigned, schedules have been changed from one shift to two shifts and back to one shift again, two groups are reorganized into one, some employees have been degraded, it might have affected someone or maybe one specific group? Also we are soon moving to new facilities, it would of course be good to know now if something is wrong at the department today, that enable us to get this problem/s solved before we move, or if it is about the working environment we can make it better at the new production plant" (Respondent 5).

The HR-manager found the project as a great way to gather valuable information about how the employees have experienced these different changes. According to her, it is good to know if any groups or employees experience issues or problems with all the previous changes or if the present state does not work as it is supposed. She continued that it is also important to be aware of the problems before even greater changes are implemented, as e.g. the relocation. The HR-manager had wished for some more comments to be noted at the questionnaires however she explained that she interpreted the few comments as if the employees are quite satisfied and did not have much to complain about. The managers at the O-department did not mention anything about the reasons that the HR-department presents. The O-managers' mentioned though the fact that many employees that work at the O-department are young, some works within the company only for a while and then they move on to another employer. The department hires also some consultants contracted from a consultancy firm and these individuals may change over time as well. Hence, the O-managers meant that it is important to investigate how all employees experience their work situation due to the employee turnover, Respondent 3 said;

"*It is important to see how the employees experience their situation, things may happen and we* [the management] *may not notice everything, therefore is it important that all employees answer this survey, the EOS is only distributed to permanently hired employees"*

The EOS is excluding all the temporary employees and the managers considered it important to get the opinions of all employees working at the department. Another manager expresseed it as a good way to actually get to know what the employees want;

"*It is a great way to meet expectations, a way for me to influence the work at the department, something I could not do when I was, myself, working on the floor" (Respondent 2).*

Respondent 2 has worked within the company for many years and is now a team manager thus he remembered when he worked as a regular employee that he experienced that he could not influence his situation much. He is now a manager and he wants to improve the work situation for his work team and for all employees at the O-department. The manager said that the aim of the project was to investigate how the employees experienced their situation; however he also wanted to contribute to improvements to make his own conscience better. The perception about the aim of the project among the two departments differs and a third picture is painted by the employees.

Externals experience of the project

The HR-manager supported the project because she thought it was good to investigate how the employees experience their situation. At the same time was she emphasizing that the project *"…is no big thing* [for us], *it is nothing initiated by us* [the HR-department]*"*. She said that she considered the project worth all the effort because it gives valuable data. She believes that the data can explain much about how the employees are experiencing their employer. She likes the idea of the project and she believes it is good that the project was initiated and that the two departments cooperate even though she emphasized that the HR-department did not propose the project thus they only supports it.

When talking to the employees who are the ones that the project concerns, the most, no of the interviewed persons seems to understand or know why the project is started, one said;

"If I try to guess why the project is initiated, it might be due to the fact that we are moving to a new location soon, however that is only a thought that I have, no one have indicated anything about it" (Respondent 6).

Respondent 6 has no idea about why the project was initiated, he meant that it was hard to know the reason but if he really tried to guess, he thought it could be due to the planned relocation of the company. Another employee mentioned another possible reason;

"they care about us, they know that if we are happy, if we can work as we are supposed to, we produce better products and we do it faster" (Respondent 7).

Respondent 7 thought it could possibly be because the managers wanted to enable production of products holding a higher quality and to secure efficiency. Both respondent 6 and 7 supports that the project is initiated and hope it will result in improvements. They currently experience the department as a good work place however they believe that the working environment and conditions can be improved.

According to the O-managers have none of the employees expressed any specific enthusiasm about the project however no one has expressed any negative feelings neither. The HR-manager has a different view; one employee from the O-department had collected all surveys from his work team and delivered the papers to her office personally and the employee expressed that the project was a good initiative and that his unit really hoped it will lead to something positive. However the employee had expressed that it is very important that the project actually leads to actions and improvements. The HR-manager agreed on everything that the employee had said but meant that the workload rests on the O-managers and that they really need to communicate that they plan to act, and that they need to act.

Control the managers

The employees hope that the survey will lead to improvement for them and the department, the manager in the other hand hope it will lead to improvements for them. The questionnaire include different question that treat different factors that contribute to work satisfaction, according to the managers that formulated the questions. One of the questions concerns the relationship to the closets manager. The managers choose to include a question about this because they view this as an opportunity to get valuable feedback about how they manage their job. One manager expressed it like this;

"*I am a competitive person and I would like to have a push in my back more often* [than every third years when the EOS is conducted] *and also opinions and feedback about what I need to improve. That helps me to not forget to work with what my group consider as important"* (Respondent 3).

Respondent 3 meant that if he gets this data quarterly he will always be reminded about what he needs to prioritize in his work concerning both himself as a leader and administrative/practical issues at his division. Respondent 3 means that all questions are valuable for different aspects, many different factors in the everyday work life is evaluated with help of the questionnaire.

Discussion: A Private Purpose

Both individuals and organizations have identities and sometimes a reason for an initiated change is that they want to transform their identities into something better and more beautiful. The initiator of the change project had most likely a vision of how he wanted to see himself and the O-department hence he wanted to use an idea that he was familiar with to increase the possibility to earn the desired identity. The logic of appropriateness, formulated by March, suggests that in order to be considered appropriate, one must compare the actor with appropriate other actors. Czarniawska, and Joerges (1994) argue that identities are formed in interaction with others and to become appropriate one should be considered to be similar to other appropriate actors. At HighTech, by using the model that the initiator had experiences of, he probably hoped that he would accomplish the same outcome as he did the first time hence earn a better and more legitimate identity. He considers the former precedence of the project and the result of it as appropriate and his colleagues consider his former work place as appropriate hence they view the initiator as an appropriate actor which makes them believe that the whole process of implementing the project is something good that can transform them and the department into something better. The change project lacks a clear purpose and/or an issue to solve however one possible reason for conducting the project anyway is the managers' desire for a more appropriate department. Another possible reason is the will of transforming their own private identities into something better and more beautiful thus a private purpose to reach something that the managers themselves wished for.

The HR-department views the O-managers as appropriate and they view employee surveys as appropriate thus they most likely considered the project as appropriate as well. However the interpreted purpose of the project differs slightly among the O-department and the HR-department, probably are the actors not aware of that, or they interpret each other's stories in a way fitting to their own view of the project. However the project was not surrounded by any goals or action plans to follow, hence if the goal differs among the actors was not settling for the process.

The imitated change project was conducted in another organization, a couple of years ago, by other employees and the initiator did not really know the formal purpose of the idea or the planning behind it, however his aim was to imitate it. The process of how the original idea travelled from the initiators previous work place to the present organization can be explained with help of the three editing rules initiated by Sahlin-Andersson and Sevon (2003). The idea is disembedded from its original context and explained by the initiator in general terms to enable the change project to fit into the context of HighTech. The initiator was not aware of why the idea was initiated at his previous work place. He cannot refer to any specific factors that were settling to make the project successful hence he explained the project as available and easy for others to imitate. The initiator labeled the project as successful however probably did it have some setbacks or problems hence nothing is mentioned except the success of it, which can be compared to the second editing rule. The third editing rule treats the plot, however this rule was not followed this time hence the initiator admitted that he did not know why the project was initiated at his former workplace and he did not explain the project in any great detail. Hence, the initiator wanted to present a good idea that he had experienced as successful thus the change project is full of good intentions but the ideas was still very vague.

The intentions of the initiator and the O-managers was probably to present themselves in an appropriate way thus transform their own private identities into something appropriate and more beautiful, maybe also the identity of the whole department. However the detail that the managers did not consider when they decided to implement the change project was the fact that the narrative about the project is edited and changed during its journey. The idea has travelled from the initiators previous workplace, to the present, along this journey is the idea interpreted and retold many times hence the change project is translated into something new. The original procedure of the idea is hard to imitate thus the context, the organization and the employees are different. The initiator explained the project as mobile and general fitting to any organization however the literature confirm that this is rarely occurring and the situation at HighTech is supporting that view (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003).

To move a project forward: responsibility and division of work

To implement a project require someone to donate time, resources and effort to the process to enable it to continue. One responsible person, group or department is often assigned to realize planned actions. The project was initiated by the managers at the O-department and the HR-department mentioned many times that they were only a supporting function to the O mangers, e.g. as Respondent 5 said;

"The responsibility rest on the O-managers now. The employees have some part in this as well; they have participated in this project, now they have to raise their voices as well. However all the responsibility, to evaluate and act on this, that rests on the managers now". [The project was not initiated] *from our side and when they came with the idea, we agreed on supporting them..."* (Respondent 5).

Thus the HR-department considered the O-department responsible for moving the project forward however the HR-department functioned as a supporting resource for the O-department. The HR-department e.g. helped the O-department with the construction of the questionnaire thus they hold a special internet tool that enables an easy distribution of the survey digitally. However, the internet tool that the HR-department worked with has differentiated prices depending on how advanced the customer whish the questionnaire to be. The HR-department chose the cheapest license which not allowed categorization questions meaning that the answers cannot be sorted automatically per work group. The HR-department wanted the groups to be separately reported but where not interested in paying the higher fee thus they decided to construct 11 different questionnaires instead, however all with the same questions. The reason for why 11 questionnaires where produced and not 10, thus there is only 10 work teams, were that the HR-department wanted the data for the managers to be independently reported to make the data more reliable and fair. Due to this could the reporting be done group by group without paying the higher fee which all involved thought was great. Every questionnaire got its own link to distribute to a work team at the O-department. The HR-department distributed the questionnaires to all the managers; every manager had one questionnaire for their work team and one for themselves. The managers distributed the links however one manager made a mistake and distributed the questionnaire made for the managers to his work team instead i.e. the idea of having separate questionnaires failed. The HR-department admitted that the information and instructions about how to handle the different links where poor i.e. they did not blame anyone else than themselves for the mistake. Respondent 5 said;

"I thought I was clear enough when I explained that one questionnaire was for the employees in the group, one for the manager to answer. One manager accidently gave the wrong questionnaire to his group and our plan didn't hold as supposed. It was not good, it delayed the whole project" (Respondent 5).

When this mistake was detected, the HR-manager was on vacation and the HR-department was not sure what to do. No one wanted to take the decision to redo the survey for those who got their data mixed. The O-manager that had made the mistake was not engaged in solving the problem quick, one consultant at the HR-department that had the responsibility for the project while the HR-manager was away, took, after some consult with colleagues and an email to the top manager at O, the decision to redistribute the questionnaire to the group that got their questionnaire mixed and the managers that the group got their survey mixed with. The responsible HR employee said;

"I had to do something, nothing was happening, I am new at this company, I do not know what way all decisions are supposed to take, what can I do? We have to finish the project; the issue can't just be left for three weeks because [the HR-manager] *is away. All the employees at the production department have donated time and effort in to this survey, we have to take our responsibility, do something, do the right thing"* (Informal chat with the HR consultant).

When the new data was reported, about four weeks delayed, the HR-department could compile all information and distribute it to all O-managers, the HR-department considered them as finished for this time, Respondent 5 said;

"The project is on group level, not company- or executive-level and therefore we have done our responsibility, the work must be conducted by the O-managers".

Depending on from whom the orders to conduct a special task comes have the departments different responsibilities and the HR-department meant that they can support the change project as much as they have resources for thus the project is not delegated from company- or executive-level and is therefore not anything they *have* to do.

Division of work

In the other hand, some of the O-manager's do not really know that all the responsibility rest upon them. The managers at the O-department were supposed to hold an evaluation meeting to present the data and to evaluate the process. Some work teams shared many comments and feedback on these meetings, other work teams did not say much at all. One manager for one of the sub units said;

"*I just got the data presented to me by my manager; he told me that I should arrange a meeting together with my work team and present the data to them. I should at the same meeting ask everyone if they have additional information to share and if they have any opinions concerning the questionnaire" (Resp. 1).*

The manager did not choose to participate in the project however he felt that he will do what he was asked to do. However he was not planning to do anything else except that because he did not consider himself having the needed competence to carry out more than that;

"I need help from the HR-department, from my manager or any other department within the company, this was not my idea, and I do not have any plan or any competence to do this myself. I think the idea is too extensive to implement on the top of all other work that we have to conduct" (Respondent 1).

The manager found the project as too extensive and he called for a tool to simplify his work or someone to help him. He felt that he did not have competence himself to take the responsibility for a project like this, and no one have offered him any help. The managers view the project differently though, another manager has big plans for how to proceed with the project. He visions how he can use the data and construct action plans to improve his unit and department, he says;

"*I will use this information to make three different plans, one short term, one medium term and one long term-plan, the data must be categorized and then prioritized to enable plans that are workable"* (Respondent 2).

He wanted to use the data to implement improvements for his unit and department. However at the same time mentioned Respondent 2 that he did not have the knowledge and tools to enable these action plans;

"I do not have the correct analysis tools yet, I do not know how to categories the data, I do not know how much resources I may use and how much I really can do before we move to our new location" (Respondent 2).

The directions from his manager were diffuse and he had a will to do something, he wanted to take responsibility for the project hence he expressed insecurity about his experienced opportunities to actually *take* actions. Thus, he found the structure of the project and the division of responsibilities as unclear.

Discussion; Absence of a responsible Change Agent and a detailed plan

The division of work and the responsibility within the project was unclear thus no one felt responsible for moving it forward. The HR-department stated clearly that they are not having any big part in the project, which was a way of marking distance and probably also to signal to the O-department that they have to be responsible. A project is often planned ahead to its implementation to make the precedence of it smoother and not risk forget any important part or get stuck without anyone feeling responsible (Hayes, 2010). Many practitioners like to stick to a normative view of implementing change projects even though this view of approaching a change do not consider the context, the complexity or the ambiguity in the environment. However it does not work to act without any plans or goal at al thus it is better to use a normative model as guidance than being paralyzed not knowing anything. One model, which is similar to many other models, is the 5-step model created by Hayes (2010). If the managers would have used this model, they would have realized that they have to manage the project from the beginning to its end and that someone has to be responsible making sure this occur. The first step in the model is to recognize a need for change and then assign consultants, a project group or someone else, i.e. a *change agent* to be responsible for managing the project. HighTech hadnot recognized any need for change hence the project was not initiated to solve an existing issue and the department had no defined goal that they wanted to reach, instead was the project initiated because the managers at the O-department wanted to. The second step in the Hayes (2010) model is to diagnose the present state, to get knowledge about strengths and weaknesses within the organization and by this also identify a desired state where they want to be after the change is implemented. The questionnaire that the O-managers have distributed can be viewed as an attempt to diagnose the organization, to get a clue about how employees experience their situation however the reason is not to find the cause of a problem thus only to see how employees feel about their situation. Thus, the O-managers diagnose the O-department through the survey and a plan, mentioned by one manager, was to use the data to form action plans to enable improvements at the department. The manager sounded like he had a model to follow, when he told his story, or at least a thought about how he wanted to proceed, but the reality proved something else. He first mentioned the intended plans that he wanted to create however he, directly after that, stated that he did not have the right tools and/or competence to realize the plans and therefore dis not plan to try. The O-managers had the data, they have ideas about what they *could* do however, all managers reason as Respondent 2; they do not have resources, or competence to create the action plans and to carry any changes forward. Thus the managers had intentions of creating action plans that states clear actions to implement, which is similar to step three in the Hayes (2010) model. However the organization lacks an appointed *change agent* that really takes the responsibility and carries such work forward hence HighTech cannot proceed further in the model.

The initiator was the person who had the original idea of the change project and would probably be the one that should take the role as change agent; however he was not showing any interest of being the change agent. According to Weiss (2003) and Hayes (2010) should a change agent possess four different characteristics to be successful. If the managers would have known about the difficulties of implementing a change project and the importance of assigning someone the actual responsibility, the project might have been more successful hence the managers could have followed the advice. The initiator does not bear or apply any of the predefined skills himself thus the project lacked someone that really pushed it forward. The first characteristic to possess is confidence in its own ability to change; if he had this trait, he should have showed a distinct leadership from the beginning, instead is he taking one step back and hope for someone else to take the lead. He might have the *will* to change, however not enough *motivation*, which is the second characteristic, because if he had, he would firstly not have taken one step back and hoped for someone else to take on the lead but he would also have had worked harder for a change. Probably tried more explicit to respond to the gathered data and enthuse his colleagues to do more with the project. The initiator initiated the model that they implemented, however he did not really have good knowledge about it. Thus he did not know the reason for implementing it at his previous work place, besides the same aim as mentioned for the project this time. He had no ideas about complimenting models or how to evaluate and take care of the collected data i.e. he lacked knowledge about conceptual models and action tools which is, by Hayes (2010) and Weiss (2003) considered as important for a change agent to manage. Finally he lacked change management skills, if he had any; he would have applied them and tried to accomplish something with the project except the idea of implementing it. The initiator is one among several others involved in the project, however he took the initiative and showed the most motivation during the process thus one might have expected him to take on the role as change agent.

HighTech lacked a change agent thus someone that divided the work among the actors and made sure the different responsibilities within the projects actually were taken care of. Without a proper change agent that takes the responsibility to create an action plan and move the project forward in accordance with, it is it preferable to follow a normative model that gives guidance in the absence of the change agent. However HighTech did not have either an action plan or a change agent, maybe is that the reason to why the project currently have not led to any actions, only *talk*. .

Talk is easier than act

The change project at HighTech was initiated even though no specific issue was supposed to be solved and no goals were formulated aimed to reach. The project was initiated due to a strong belief in the process of conducting it and the results it might conclude in. The managers at the O-department communicated the survey as something different compared to earlier performed surveys and the employees wanted to believe that the managers were right.

A new and better kind of survey

Employees at HighTech expressed a concern about whether the project would lead to any actions and/or improvements. Employees seemed to be used to participate in different workplace surveys however they did not experience that the surveys lead to any conclusions or actions. Many employees explained that they choose to participate in the current survey because they hoped that it would be different this time, that the management team had learned from previous times and actually used the gathered data to implement changes and improvements. The managers at O claimed that the survey was different compared to the previous ones in its structure and process hence it is only conducted at the O-department and it is designed by them independently. They continued by emphasizing that the aim of conducting it is solely to enable for improvements at the department.

The message communicated by the O-managers about the survey was different this time; they talked about the survey as something that was new and much better than previous surveys. The O-managers had some thought about how they should proceed with the project; Respondent 2 mentioned that 3 different action plans should be formed, one short-term, one medium-term and one long-term action plan. However at the same time talked Respondent 2 about the lack of evaluation tools, support from his manager and/or the HR-department, the lack of resources and the doubtful situation where the company soon are moving to new locations. He said that not much can be done to improve the present working environment i.e. he wanted to take actions but did not have the right competence or possibilities to do so. The HR-department had clearly stated that the responsibility rested on the O-managers, the managers at the O-department called for help from the HR-department hence no one was prepared to take the lead.

The employees emphasized the importance of someone to take the responsibility to show that this questionnaire actually will lead to improvements and *are* better than previous ones. One employee expresseed an uncertainty about the project;

"If they do not do anything now, this is like all other surveys. If something actually happen, we will start to believe that the company actually is listening, that someone actually cares about us. That would make me happy" (Respondent 7).

Respondent 7 meant that all employees felt the same about the survey, "*everyone is not engaged in the project explicitly however everyone will, of course, see the eventual improvements"*. Respondent 7 admit that this project have not showed any different characteristics, than any other surveys distributed at the department, yet, except how the management talk about the project. However no actions are noticed, yet, but Respondent 7 will not stop to hope for a difference this time.

Planned actions

All involved in the process wanted the project to result in many good solutions. The data gathered in the survey showed that the O-managers had issues to work with, e.g. was all work teams complaining about the working environment and the information given about changes within the company and at the department. This is distinctive questions that the managers could have worked with. The HR-manager said that it is important that the O-managers communicate that they know about the shortcomings and communicate that they plan to do something about the issue, even though the HR-manager said that no resources or changes can occur now, before the relocation. Thus the HR-manager meant that communicating that the issue is given attention will make the employees feel satisfied and prioritized. She said;

"If they [the managers] *let everyone know that they are working with the problems, the employees might turn from dissatisfied to satisfied because they know that something is about to happen"* (Respondent 5).

The HR-manager meant that if the managers at the O-department told the employees that they will work with the issues concerning the working environment, even though they will not, the employees will probably be more satisfied because they believe that it will result in improvements.

Discussion: Talk, decisions and actions are different things

The managers at the company introduced the change project with the intention of making it different compared to previous projects. They planned to actually listen to the opinions of the employees and to make it really result in actions and improvements. However observations of the conducted change project and conversations with participators have showed that the reality does not follow the intentions. Brunsson (2003) points out that talk, decisions and actions do not always have strong connections and the case in this thesis is a confirmation of that. It is one thing to talk, it is another thing to take a formal decision and it is a third thing to act. Brunsson (2003) argue that organizations sometimes produce talk as output to its audience, if actions cannot be made, to avoid conflicts and stakeholders claiming the organization to take actions. This can be observed happening at HighTech. The managers produce talk about how they will change the department and implement improvements, e.g. concerning the working environment, to satisfy the employees and avoid conflicts. The intentions, at least the expressed intentions, and the actions are de-coupled (Brunsson, 2003). The managers' claimed that they will implement changes even though they intrinsically planned to take no actions at all. The managers' hoped that, by communicating that this survey is new and better compared to earlier ones and that the opinions of the employees, this time, will lead to actions, would make the majority of the employees interpret the talk as a direction which can compensate for the lack of actual actions. This can be interpreted as an example of hypocrisy which is a management method where conflicts are managed by reflecting them in inconsistencies among talk, decisions and actions (ibid).

The managers produced talk as their only output. The employees expressed an acceptance for the project as long as it was, as the managers' claim, better than previous ones. The employees are used to filling out questionnaires and then not experience any changes at all. They hoped that this survey would be different and that the managers actually would act in accordance with what they promised; that this survey is better than previous ones and that the gathered data will result in improvements. However if the managers were using hypocrisy as a tool for managing the situation, their talk and promises will not lead to actions in accordance with what they say hence they will act in the opposite direction due to the reversed causality of talk, decisions and actions within hypocrisy (Brunsson, 2003). The talk might resolves some conflicts because some employees might view the promises as bearing intrinsic values hence function as a compensation for the lack of actions. Others will see through the hypocrisy and not accept anything else than actual improvements. Anyway the hypocrisy seems to work at HighTech for the moment because some of the employees actually believe in what the managers say. That is a settling presumption for hypocrisy to make sense as a management model (ibid).

Conclusion

Many believe that companies spend a lot of time and resources on finding the best management models matching the needs of the organization hence this is not always the truth (Sahlin-Adersson, Sevón, 2003). This study has showed that organizations sometimes choose to implement a management model because someone in the organization has an idea that s/he wants to realize. The underlying reason for the employee/s to suggest the project differs among employees and organizations. Rövik (2008) suggest that companies implement ideas because managers have read about them in academically journals and DiMaggio and Powell (2000) argue it is due to different environmental pressures leading to isomorphism. Findings in this thesis confirm that some organization chose to implement ideas even though they are not based on a problem and lacks a distinct purpose. One possible reason is because the employees consider the change project to be legitimate and appropriate (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003). The O-managers at HighTech considered the change project as appropriate because they considered the former work place of the initiator as appropriate, they considered the initiator as appropriate and they had a strong belief in the process of conducting the idea. They thought that the idea would present themselves as better hence change their private identities into something more appropriate. Thus this thesis concludes that change projects are not always implemented to improve the situation for the employees or the organization.

To implement and manage a change project that is supposed to be an imitation of another idea is not easy, which the findings in this thesis support. The process of doing it can be simplified, if using a normative approach, by following a step-by-step model to get support through the process. The normative models are not considering the context, the complexity of the environment and the ambiguity however it is better to have a model as guidance than no plans at all. The normative approach also suggests some specific characteristics that change agents should possess to be successful. People who not possess all characteristics are not successful change agent, according to the normative view (e.g. Weiss, 2003 or Hayes, 2010). If the O-managers would have followed a model such as the one created by Hayes (2010), they would have had a better guidance in the project about what to do and how to do it. Also if they knew *the definition* of a successful change agent, they could have recruited a person bearing the traits and the change project might have run smoother. Thus the O-managers at HighTech did not have a plan and the project led to no actions or improvements, the process was only conducted to make themselves (or the organization/department) look better and gain legitimacy. Some researches do not share the normative way of viewing changes. Many argue that these models are too general and that it is impossible to predefine how a person should behave or to imitate an idea.

Ideas are always edited when they are retold by actors and interpreted by listeners (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003). Prior to one idea has landed in an organization aimed to be implemented has it travelled from its source, during this journey is the idea edited and made accessible for implementation (Sahlin-Andersson and Sevón, 2003). While this happen has the context dependent details been exchanged for a story narrating how successful the process has been (ibid). The arrival organization has a strong belief in the process of conducting this successful change project and starts to imitate the idea. The employees working with the change project communicate the process as if it was an imitation, however they do not notice that new ideas and solutions emerge during the process of implementation. The communication about the project and the actual actions are not strongly connected and this concerns not only the narration about the change process but also other actions. Brunsson (2003) argue that stakeholders have different requirements on organizations and organizations cannot meet all requirements partly because the stakeholders are many, but also because these requirements may change over time. Instead of acting on every requirement are organizations producing talk as an output compensating for the lack of actions. This is an example of hypocrisy and it is used as a management tool by many companies to reduce conflict among stakeholders and the organization. By using hypocrisy can complex conditions be simplified without sacrificing too much time or resources. HighTech used this method to make the employees feel satisfied by e.g. telling them that the change project is new and better and that it will lead to improvements even though they, in reality, did not act at all.

Change projects are complex, ambiguous and not linear following a rational pattern. It is not possible to completely imitate an idea that someone else has created. The managers at HighTech tried to implement the same idea as the initiator had conduct at his former work place. He retold the story about how they proceeded with the project, however when the idea travel from one time and space to another, the idea was interpreted and the explanations of it changed (Czarniawska and Sevón, 1996). The intentions are to imitate an idea however the language, context and actors affect the interpretations and the performed actions. One idea that travels from one mind to another mind is not the same complete idea when it arrives into a third mind thus an intended imitation is better explained as a translation (ibid). The change project at HighTech lacked a coherent idea with a coherent goal, thus the different departments and actors interpreted the idea differently due to different interpretations and identities. The project lacked a change agent who took the responsibility of managing it and making the participators work against the same goals using the same action plan. The desired benefit of conducting the project was questionable, however the overall intentions of conducting it were good even though the ideas surrounding the process was very vague.

Acknowledgement

I would like to offer my special thanks to my supervisor Kajsa Lindberg for her support and valuable suggestions during the whole process of writing this thesis. I would also like to thank *HighTech* for offering me the opportunity to study the change project and offering me assistance. I would also like to acknowledge all those, employees and managers that donated time for interviews.

References:

Brunsson, N. (2003) Organized Hypocrisy. In B, Czarniawska & G, Sevón (Eds.) *The Northern Lights – Organizing Theory in Scandinavia.* (pp. 201-223) Malmö; Liber AB

Czarniawska, B. & Sevón, G. 1996, *Translating organizational change,* de Gruyter, Berlin.

DiMaggio, P. J., Powell, W. W., 2000. The iron cage revisited; Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. In B, Baum, J. A. C., Dobbin, F., (Eds.) *Advances in Strategic Management, Volume 17 Economics Meets Sociology in Strategic Management* (pp. 143-166) Emeralds

Gillham, B. & Ebooks Corporation 2000, *The research interview: Elektronisk resurs,* Continuum, New York.

Gorman, G. E., & Clayton, P. (2005). *Qualitative research for the information professional* (2nd ed.). London: Facet.

Hayes, J. (2010) The Theory and Practice of Change Management. (Third Edition) Hampshire; Palgrave Macmillan

Heckscher, R., Maccoby, P-E., Ramirez, C., Tixier, M. (2003) Agents of Change: Crossin g the Post-Industrial Divide. USA; Oxford University Press

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. 2009, *InterViews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing,* Sage Publications, Los Angeles.

March, J. G. 1981. Decisions in organizations and theories of choice. In *Perspectives of organizational design and behavior,* edited by A. Van de Ven and W. F. Joyce. New York: Wiley

Pugh, D. 1993. Understanding and managing organizational change, in C, Mabey and B. Mayon-White (eds) *Manageging Change* (2nd edn), London: Paul Chapman

Rövik, K-A. 2008. Management Samhället, Trender och ideer på 2000-talet. Oslo; Universitetsforlaget

Sahlin-Andersson, K. Sevón, G. 2003. Imitation and Identification as Performatives. In B, Czarniawska & G, Sevón (Eds.) *The Northern Lights – Organizing Theory in Scandinavia.* (pp. 249-267) Malmö; Liber AB

Weiss, A. & Ebooks Corporation 2003, *Organizational Consulting : How to Be an Effective Internal Change Agent: Elektronisk resurs,* John Wiley & Sons, Inc, Hoboken.

Wiles, Rose. (2013) What are qualitative Research Ethics? London; Bloomsbury.