



CHANGE IN RELATION TO INNOVATIVE WAYS OF WORKING & EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

BASED ON THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OF
ACTIVITY BASED WORKING AT ASTRAZENECA MÖLNDAL

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ABSTRACT

Organizational change is a heavily debated area that can become a challenge for any organization. How well the change is received by the employees is one important factor that will determine the success of the implementation. In order to account for the employee perspective of a change implementation, this study focuses on how the intentions of an implementation of Activity Based Working (ABW) at AstraZeneca Mölndal have been experienced by a group of employees in an early phase of the implementation. The intentions were in part practical in terms of cutting costs by fitting more persons in less space, but also to create an office environment that supports flexibility, collaboration and creativity with the aim to foster innovation capabilities in ways of working. At the start of this study, the employees participating in this study had been working Activity Based for 2–5 months.

This is a qualitative study where a processual perspective on change has been taken in order to create a more holistic view of the progression. The processual perspective suggests that the context of where the change has taken place should be accounted for, as well as the decision and implementation process as they impact the experience of the employees, and thus the development of the change itself. Accordingly, the study commence with an indicative investigation of the corporate culture at AstraZeneca Mölndal, followed by the decision and implementation process explained by members of the managing project group of Activity Based Working. To understand the employee experience, 32 employees working Activity Based at the site participated in discussions and interviews on their experience and perceptions of the new office environment. The design approach of contextualizing and sense-making was later applied.

The study showed that the practical intent of fitting more persons in less space was experienced as well functioning. The experience of flexibility as defined by the concept of ABW was not strengthened by this study, but argues for that some flexibility has been achieved through being able

to choose seat based on personal preferences. This study provides support for that the environment is experienced as creating more visibility and flow, which has had an impact on more casual interactions that might promote more collaboration over time. The study showed that the concept is currently not experienced as promoting creativity. Key factors for what impacts actions and perceptions in the environment were identified as relatedness, association, relevance, personal space, clarity, social identity and place identity.

Keywords: change, contextualizing, employee experience, collaboration, flexibility, creativity, activity based working

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Kind Regards,
Johanna Pihlgren

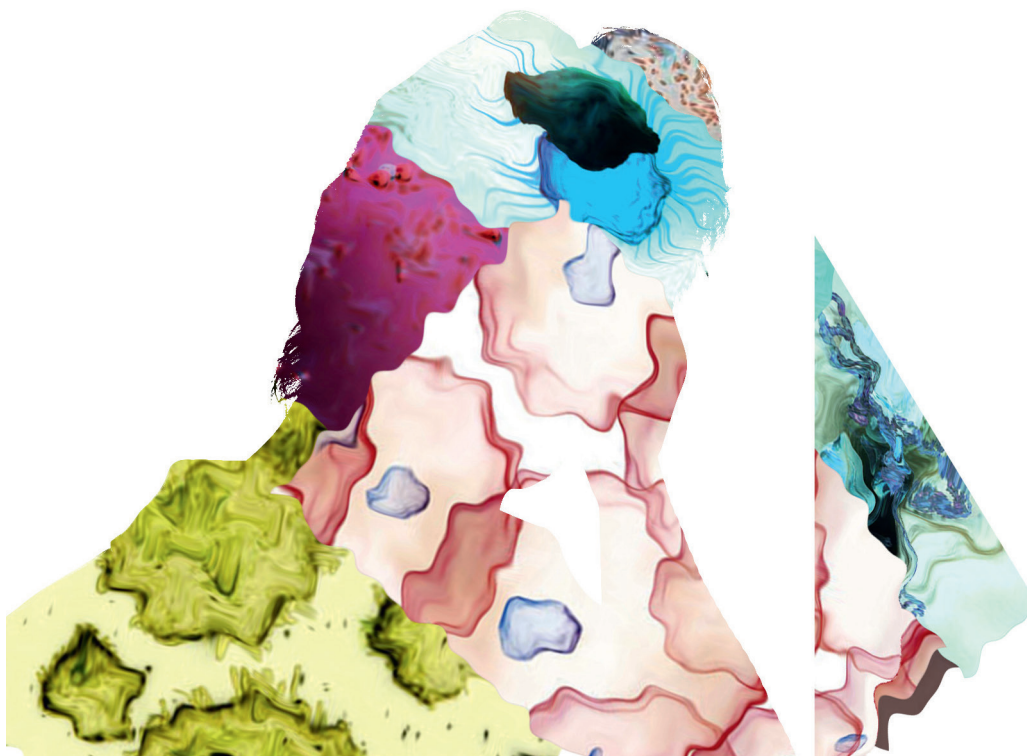


























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DEFINITIONS

Activity Based Working [ac·tiv·i·ty base·d work·ing]

“An office space where there are no set placements for the employees, but instead offers several types of seats to support the operations, and thereby the employees’ needs to perform daily work tasks.”

(Månsson & Nyberg, 2014, p. 12)

Experience [ex·pe·ri·ence]

“The totality of the cognitions given by perception”

(Dictionary.com, 2016)

Organizational change [or·ga·ni·za·tion·al change]

“A process in which a large company or organization changes its working methods or aims, for example in order to develop and deal with new situations or markets” (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, 2016)

Organizational culture [or·ga·ni·za·tion·al cul·ture]

“The pattern of beliefs, values and learned ways of coping with experience that have developed during the course of an organization’s history, and which tend to be manifested in its material arrangements and in the behaviors of its members”

(Brown, 1998, p. 9)

Innovation [in·no·va·tion]

“A new method or new product that becomes a new practice somewhere in the world” (Phelps, 2013, p. 20)

Innovation may refer to:

Incremental innovation: “A series of small improvements to an existing product or product line that usually helps maintain or improve its competitive position over time.” (BusinessDictionary, 2016)

Disruptive/radical innovation: “The process of developing new products or services to replace existing technologies and gain a competitive advantage.”

(BusinessDictionary, 2016)

Organizational innovation: “The implementation of a new organizational method in the firm’s business practices, workplace organization or external relations.”

(OECD, 2005)

1. INTRODUCTION

It starts with the people

Innovation: a strong word that is receiving much attention in large organizations today. The basics of the modern economy boil down to creating, developing, marketing and testing new ideas (Phelps, 2013). The ability to do these things is what engage us in our work and creates a sense of well-being (Phelps, 2013). Trying to align new efficiency and cost-reducing implementations with innovation appears to be a trend. Organizational change is a common feature of corporate life, as companies need to increase profit and be sustained on the market. The ideal outcome of a change is improved ways of working that will benefit the operations. New concepts may promise big, but how do you align the intentions with the key persons that need to adopt these concepts, i.e. the employees? Change presents both a process of adaptation, and finding new routines for the employees, which stirs up emotions and creates new perceptions (Dawson, 2003; Collins, 1998). As a result, human emotions carry high importance (Verhulst & Boks, 2014), and should be met as much as financial and practical aspects (Dawson, 2003). Factors such as how the change has been developed, communicated and implemented create the foundation of the experience of the change (Farndale & Kelliher, 2013; Verhulst & Boks, 2014). This study presents the angle of human experiences in relation to the development and intentions of an organizational change concerning Activity Based Working and innovative ways of working.

1.1 BACKGROUND

In the 19th century western companies gained more freedom from government and religion in decision-making, the result was the arise of markets (Holm, 2002). The core purpose of businesses became to produce at low-cost and with high efficiency (Phelps, 2013; Salzer-Mörling, 1998). In the 80's and 90's the network society fueled globalization, which intensified market competition and brought with it an even more significant impact on organizational change (Dawson, 2003).

Many concepts and models have been developed, suggested and discussed to reach efficiency and flexibility. For example, the term agile that gained attention in the early 90's is now one of the more widely used approaches in the attempts to accomplish adaptation in fast changing environments by using an iterative and incremental process (Cho, 2008). As the market developed and moved away from mass manufacturing, the concept of quality and balancing production became more important (Brown, 2008; Dawson, 2003; Collins, 1998). Alongside the increase of quality-focus, the interest in connecting with the employees gained attention as a way of obtaining a committed and engaged workforce, which in turn led to the increased interest in corporate culture in the 80's (Dawson, 2003; Collins 1998). In order to reach better quality, the workforce had to not only have a commitment towards the company, but also be allowed to develop their processes and be creative, which shaped a need for ability to experiment (Collins, 1998; Salzer-Mörling, 1998). Phelps (2013) talks about that the force of innovation lies within the urge to experiment, and imagine how things might be. A fundamental resource for imaginativeness is creativity, alongside having a vision, or intuition of which direction the market is moving (Phelps, 2013). However, none of these things will occur unless an environment is created where people are encouraged, empowered and motivated (Phelps, 2013).

In 2015 AstraZeneca Mölndal started the implementation of Activity Based Working (ABW) in two office buildings at the site. A decision of closing down two office buildings to cut expenses caused a move of a large number of persons into office buildings that were already fully seated, which required a new floor-plan solution. The decision of choosing ABW was made in line with a strategic decision on a global scale concerning cost reduction whilst fostering flexibility, collaboration and creativity in the office environment. The decision was further made to progress in line with other large companies. In securing and assisting the transition, the managing group of the project continuously followed the progression of the new work environment through surveys

and feedback-forums. The project has been described as a cultural project by the managing group, aiming to achieve a change in ways of working towards future business goals. The guiding principles of ABW have departed from three main areas: the behavioral environment, the physical environment and the technical environment. At the start of this study the implementation was at an early stage where the approached floors had been working Activity Based for 2–5 months. To understand the employee perspective on the intentions and the change itself, this study investigates employees' experiences in an early phase of the implementation. This study will also investigate how the intentions have been met in the outline of the design. Design here refers to the approach and layout of the environment to achieve aspired objectives.

1.2 PROBLEMATIZATION

The concept of how to manage change in the work environment has been debated over many years and can become quite problematic (Collins, 1998). If the experience of a new situation creates negative emotions and perceptions, or the intention is unclear in the design and execution of the change, a gap is created between the intention from management and the actual outcome amongst employees. For management the consequence can be a lengthy process with loss of productiveness and agitated employees, and that the change itself will not be followed as intended (Dawson, 2003). For the employees a change can in worst case cause feelings such as confusion, frustration, and being neglected, which could end up with a negative work environment and loss of confidence in the company (Farndale & Kelliher, 2013; Chang, 2005). There is also a diversity amongst organizations and individuals, which puts pressure on adapting frameworks applied (Dawson, 2003; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011).

Creating an environment that reflects the intentions of the change and induce a positive experience is necessary to get people on board with the objectives (Pullman & Gross, 2004; Farndale & Kelliher, 2013; Kristensen; 2004). Experience as a phenomenon is the result of a complex combination of factors including physical environment, communication, tools,

interactions and movement (Benz, 2016). Designing for a positive experience is a complicated matter, as every individual will perceive things through their own lenses (Benz, 2016).

Flexibility is seen as a highway to creativity and adaptability (Dawson, 2003; Collins, 1998; Salzer-Mörling, 1998; Cho, 2008) but Dawson (2003) underlines that there is a downside expressed as an increased feel of job insecurity and higher levels of stress amongst employees. Collaboration is highlighted as a fundamental factor for creativity and innovation, leading to a significant increase in collaborative activities in workplaces in recent years (Cross et al., 2016; Phelps, 2013; Denham & Kaberon, 2012). The downside of this collaborative explosion is that continuous disturbances at the office reduce time to perform work tasks, which can cause stress (Cross et al., 2016). Making new implementations with the hope of supporting creativity is difficult, as creativity can be described as a 'messy' and complex process (Haner, 2005). If not taking the complexity under consideration, chances are that the intent of inducing creativity will fail.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main research question for investigation in this study is:

How are the intentions of flexibility, collaboration and creativity experienced by the employees in an early phase of implementation within the concept of Activity Based Working?

The purpose of this study is to understand which perceptions and behavioral patterns have evolved and why, creating a deeper understanding of the progression of the change, and if it is in line with the company objectives. Contextualizing affect and outcome from a human perspective is valuable in order to bring further understanding of the development of a change process. Acknowledging design as a mindset and a sense-making activity with a human-centered focus, this study applies sense-making of the progression of the change implementation through the lenses of human experience in order to find possible explanations for impacting factors (Krippendorff, 1989; Martin & Dunne, 2006; Stephens & Boland, 2014; Brown, 2008). Experience investigated

through qualitative research has been chosen in order to gain a better understanding of triggers for different activities in a specific environment. In understanding these triggers, target areas may be revealed that can be approached to assist in strengthening the intentions of the change, furthering the following questions to be answered:

1. What factors have impacted the experience of the change and in what way have they impacted?

2. How does the design of the physical, virtual and behavioral environment match the shaping of a creative and innovative working culture, and how might it impact perceptions?

3. What areas could be approached further and how?

The outcome will be a more holistic view of mindsets in relation to the progression of the change, and further insights as to which factors that may have imposed on the intentions of the change. This study will present an example towards ways of thinking and reacting amongst employees during the implementation of a contemporary office environment that puts pressure on changing work habits.

My personal interest in this topic derives from a fascination of the idea behind change implementations for creativity and innovation, what theories lie behind, and how those theories resonate with the employees in their everyday work situation. Furthering the interest in change implementations, I also wanted to look into how the gap is bridged between the employee perception and the company objectives and intents in order to reach alignment behind a change. Finally, my curiosity also includes how the ambiguity of creativity is approached in large organizations where linear processes commonly constitute the norm.

1.4 DELIMITATIONS & LIMITATIONS

This study is conducted from a grassroots' angle with a human-centered focus. The presented literature on change is therefore based on a human-centered approach. This study concerns the development of a change that has recently been

implemented, thus accounting for a progression phase in the change cycle. This study will not contain an assessment of Activity Based Working in itself as concept, but focus on the intentions of the concept and impacting factors.

The object of study is a large company, defined as a company with more than 250 employees and having a turnover of over 50 million euro (European Commission, 2016). Thus, the content and outcome of this study is set in relation to the prerequisites of a large company.

As social interactions, values, beliefs, socio-economic structures and hierarchies influence choices (Dawson, 2003; Collins, 1998; Hofstede, 1994), it is of importance to define the national environment in which this research takes place. The user case study takes place in Mölndal, Sweden. Sweden as a country is described as being high on the scale of secular-rational values complemented with a high sense of self-expression, meaning that equality and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life are matters highly valued (World Values Survey, 2016). Accordingly, the Swedish manner of operating in organizations constitute the base of perceptions in the use case of this study. This study takes place in the pharmaceutical industry, which has been described as a highly expensive realm of business (DiMasi et al., 2003). The increased safety regulations over the years has made processes of drug development extremely long and thorough (WHO, 2016; DiMasi et al., 2003). It can thus be assumed that the business environment also has an impact on perceptions and decisions, however due to time constraints these areas have not been investigated further.

This study will only contain photographs from the work environment provided by AstraZeneca Mölndal due to strict regulations against photographing on AstraZeneca's premises. Some illustrations will be provided as additional visualization.

1.5 OUTLINE

This study focuses on human needs and experiences from a grassroots perspective in order to make sense of a changing

environment. The starting-point will be to identify the surrounding context, impacting behavior and mindset, followed by an in-depth investigation of the case, continuing with establishing correlations between context, identified factors and response. The structure of this study starts with presenting the chosen frameworks for the investigation in chapter 2, section 2.1. This part of the study presents the theory applied in determining the approach and areas of investigation. The theory continues with a theoretical introduction of the ABW-concept in section 2.2. Impacting factors for flexibility, collaboration and creativity in relation to office space and behavior are also accounted for in section 2.2.2–2.2.4. The methodology and the methods used are described in chapter 3, where the theory has functioned as a guideline for selecting areas that may have impacted the experiences of the change implementation. The investigation has involved an indicative study of the corporate culture, the decision and implementation process, and interviews and observations of the new office concept. The empirical data of the case study is presented in chapter 4, which starts with accounting for the context in section 4.1, represented by the results of the investigation of the corporate culture. The decision and implementation processes described by management follow in section 4.2. The main outcomes of the interviews on employee experience of the change are found in section 4.3. Chapter 4 ends with the observations of the office environment, which are accounted for in section 4.4. The literature and empirical data are analyzed and discussed in chapter 5, starting with the context in section 5.1, followed by the decision and implementation process in section 5.2, and intentions and experience, which are found in section 5.3. Chapter 5 approaches the search for possible explanations for experiences through the process. The study ends with the conclusion and further research suggestions in chapter 6.

2. THEORY

2.1 CHOSEN FRAMEWORKS FOR APPROACH

This study applies a creative process in capturing and making sense of experiences and understanding context, thus the purpose and framework of design thinking theory is found in section 2.1.1. The theory on organizational change in section 2.1.2 is based on Dawson's (2003) processual perspective, focusing on contextualizing through acknowledging corporate culture, decision and implementation process, human emotions and experience. This approach has been chosen as it does not confine change to a set framework, but merely encourages looking at impacting factors to understand the process. The culture theory in section 2.1.2.1 brings forth the frameworks of Johnson (1992) and Schein (2010) for how to investigate corporate culture. Section 2.1.2.2 concerns employee experience and provides an understanding of how experience can be approached and which factors that may impact the creation of it.

2.1.1 APPLYING A DESIGN MINDSET

Klaus Krippendorff (1989, p. 9) introduces interpretations of design as “design is a sense creating activity, that can claim perception, experience, and, perhaps, esthetics as its fundamental concern” or as “design is concerned with the subjective meanings of ‘objectively existing’ objects.” Through this, he concludes that design is about sense-making (Krippendorff, 1989). Designers use abductive thinking in order to solve wicked problems (i.e. open-ended and unclear), allowing themselves to imagine what could be (Martin & Dunne, 2006; Rylander, 2009) i.e. creatives embrace ambiguity (Shedroff, 4 February 2016).

Hargadon (2005, p. 37) describes the creative process as having the biggest significance of the design approach, dividing it into three main categories: “a grounding in contextual observation, an objective of human-centered frameworks, and a bias toward rapid prototyping”. These are then put in the core practices of discovery, synthesis (of patterns)

and delivery in an iterative process (Hargadon, 2005). It has an open-ended structure where different parts overlap (Buchanan, 1992). The process is called Design Thinking and is a form of conceptualization of how designers operate (Carlgren et al., 2014). The idea behind design thinking is to create a more holistic view of a certain situation/challenge by including people, processes, objects, and interactions encountered in organizations, putting different pieces together (Martin & Dunne, 2006; Stephens & Boland, 2014). Stephens and Boland (2014, p. 5) describes the dimensions of the design approach as “consolidating multidimensional and conflicting meanings, creating tangible media and representations that give life to new ways of seeing a problem, embracing discontinuity and allowing for novel ways of behaving, and engaging both the human values and concrete, commercial needs that characterize a problem”. The use of design thinking is based on engaging with employees in a manner of co-experiencing their situation and understanding how they feel about what they are experiencing (Stephens & Boland, 2014; Brown, 2008). The approach concerns finding new angles and patterns that were previously hidden (Stephens & Boland, 2014). Experience occurs in a specific space, and only becomes possible by understanding the individuals captured in real-life events (Benz, 2015). In defining the role of design in relation to experience, Buchanan (1992, p. 8) claims that “there is no area of contemporary life where design -the plan, project, or working hypothesis which constitutes the “intention” in intentional operations -is not a significant factor in shaping human experience”. Buchanan (1992) explains it as relating to connections and consequences, how different connections in the everyday experience resonates with the structure of action.

The arguments around the complexity of the creative approach and design thinking are that the mindset itself is rather abstract and difficult to explain, and that the processes are open-ended and highly flexible, both resonates poorly with an efficiency point-of-view and traditional organizational behavior as this way of thinking is not common in

traditional organizations (Stephens & Boland, 2014; Martin & Dunne, 2006). The design methods can at times be difficult for scientists to relate to as scientists are experts within certain subject matters, and the methods applied within that realm. Design problems rarely fit into these subject matters, which can result in communication problems between scientists and designers (Buchanan, 1992).

2.1.2 APPROACH TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Organizational change can include anything from entire re-organizations to the implementation of a new work process and can be defined as “new ways of organizing and working” (Dawson, 2003, p. 11). The change can be either reactive, meaning that it is made in response to new demands, or proactive, meaning that it is made to accommodate future demands (Dawson, 2003). In approaching change, the planned and emergent approaches are the two perspectives most commonly talked about (Todnem By, 2005). The main difference between the two is that the planned approach considers change to be driven from a top-down perspective, whereas the emergent approach views it as being driven from bottom-up perspective emphasizing the importance of employees in change initiatives, also describing change as continuous and open-ended (Todnem By, 2005). The planned approach was initiated by Lewin who created the 3-stage model of change, which describes the organization as being in different set phases during the change process, entailing stages of unfreezing and refreezing (Todnem By, 2005; Burnes, 2004). The planned approach has been criticized on assuming that organizations goes from one stable state to another and that there is a beginning and an end to the process, which does not match the current fast changing market. It also relies heavily on senior management, who may not be aware of all impacts of their decisions (Todnem By, 2005). It has further been said to discard company politics and conflict (Todnem By, 2005). The emergent approach underlines the importance of understanding variables impacting the change, such as context, people and strategies, and has been described as facilitating change rather than making a pre-set plan (Todnem By, 2005). The emergent approach has been criticized on lacking clarity in definition and coherence in presented models (Todnem By, 2005). As this study lies within the area of business and design,

highlighting the importance of contextualizing by including people, processes, objects, and interactions encountered in organizations (Martin & Dunne, 2006; Stephens & Boland, 2014), a framework within the realm of emergent approach has been found most suitable as it acknowledges these factors. The theory applied for creating an understanding of the progression of the change objectives in this study is based on Dawson’s processual perspective (2003).

Dawson (2003) states that it is important to understand the context of the specific organization concerned. Some changes might suit some business operations, but not others. Shaping the change internally, providing an opportunity to make adaptations to local needs is said to be important for success (Dawson 2003; Verhulst & Boks, 2014). Organizational change is ambiguous and uncertain, as change revolves around a future state in time yet unknown, and shatters old, habitual structures (Dawson, 2003). Dawson (2003) claims that finding a clear way to manage change is not likely to be attainable. He merely states that paying close attention to the process when implementing change provides better perspectives for future changes and how to actively shape the process (Dawson, 2003). Dawson (2003) furthers that facilitating organizational change requires a holistic view on all impacting factors such as scale, time, importance and characteristics. He acknowledges change as an “ongoing, dynamic process” that should be studied “as it happens” (Dawson, 2003, p. 41). Dawson’s (2003) framework brings forth consideration of the internal and external factors that has evoked the change, the type of change that needs to be made within those prerequisites, what happens after the after the implementation and potential conflicts that can arise.

The concept of change in the workplace creates a number of emotions; some find it exciting and challenging, whilst others find it uncomfortable and stressful (Dawson, 2003). Dawson (2003) argues that in order to manage change, emotions must be acknowledged and met as much as the practical and financial aspects, as he puts it: “Individuals may act as facilitators or inhibitors of change” (p. 4). Research made on change implementation has shown that human factors such as psychology and personality carries high importance, and that these factors need further investigation to gain better understanding of the process (Verhulst & Boks, 2014;

Collins, 1998). This is also supported by Dawson (2003), who states that developing frameworks that consider the employee experience and the change process itself is a valuable resource despite it being difficult to account for how to manage change in the unknown future. The continuous re-organizations and changes in the structure over recent years, in which employees have no way of impacting or steering, brings a risk of unmotivated employees with loss of morale (Dawson, 2003). Dawson (2003) stretches that there is no change that “benefits all”, and that the gain of efficiency and profit for the organization will not mean much for the employee if the change will cause more stress and uncertainty. As Dawson (2003) states that the corporate culture plays an important part in understanding the context of the processual development of a change implementation as it reflects the values and beliefs within organizations, accordingly, frameworks for investigating corporate culture follows.

2.1.2.1 Corporate Culture

Corporate (or organizational) culture reflects the values and perceptions of the workforce in relation to the current structures within a certain organization (Sun, 2008). The culture can be described as a company’s character and despite being difficult to frame, the primary idea is that it is felt whenever encountered (Campbell et al., 2000; Schein, 2010). Culture has a significant impact since it is expressed in all parts of a company’s activities (Campbell et al., 2000). It influences moral and motivation, productivity and quality, relations, as well as innovation and creativity (Campbell et al., 2000). The idea of culture as means to foster innovation has been supported by Denham et al., (2012), who highlights leadership, environment, talent and process as the four main pillars of building an innovative corporate culture, and that these need to be re-shaped into encouragement for sharing and exploring. Campbell et al., (2000, p. 45) gives the following guidelines as to what impacts corporate culture:

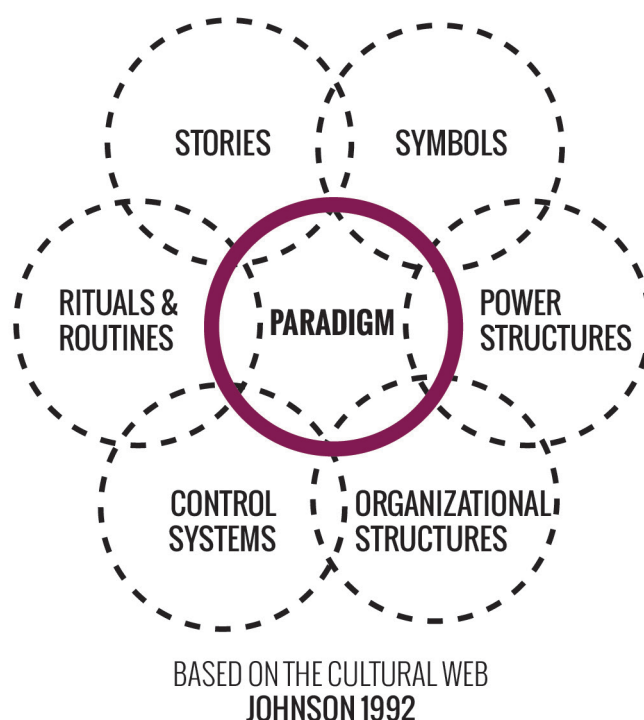
- The philosophy of the organization’s founders
- The business area and activities
- The social environment
- The management style and appliance of control
- The national context
- The organizational structure
- Type and significance of technology used

A culture provides insights to feelings and thoughts among

the employees that can assist in making organizational decisions (Sun, 2008). Sun (2008) divides the concept of culture into four main parts: (1) a learned entity, (2) a system of beliefs, (3) a strategy, and (4) a forming of the mental state. The business theory behind impacting and developing organizational culture is based on creating efficiency, which will be obtained through communication and common understanding of internal matters (Sun, 2008; Salzer-Mörling, 1998), Salzer-Mörling (1998) describes it as controlling the social processes. In corporate culture you often find subcultures (Schein, 2010). Subcultures commonly arise is silo-systems or separate units where employees have similar work and education. These subcultures can make cross-departmental collaborations difficult as definitions and perceptions may be misinterpreted (Schein, 2010).

Johnson (1992) created a model called the Cultural Web to determine what influences the cultural paradigm of a certain organization (see image 2:1):

Image 2:1



In this model, stories are described as what narratives the employees talk to each other about, i.e. what is seen as important information to share. Rituals and routines represent the set ways of procedures within the company. Symbols are events or artifacts that carries significance, such as titles or brands. Organizational structures entail both formal and informal structures, and how developed they are. The appliance of control systems reflects how performance is monitored, and power structures show who is in charge and how it is being displayed (Campbell et al., 2000; Johnson, 1992). The paradigm in the center of the model constitutes the basic assumptions and beliefs that create the culture, which is something that evolves over time (Johnson, 1992). Johnson (1992) furthers that this paradigm might be more easily detected from persons outside of the organization.

Schein's (2010) theory talks about artifacts as providing the initial reveal of an unknown culture. Artifacts in Schein's (2010) definition include physical environment, artistic creations, clothes, emotional display, language and technology. Despite providing an insight to the encountered culture, simply viewing the artifacts does not explain the meaning they hold in the given context (Schein, 2010). Schein (2010) adds two more layers into the study of cultures: beliefs and values, and basic assumptions. These two layers constitute the paradigm of Johnson's (1992) cultural web. Schein (2010) describes that in a group, those who can argue the strongest for their values and beliefs will become leaders of the group and create unity around common settings (Schein, 2010). He furthers that the basic assumptions in the group derive from repetitive successful appliance of a certain theory to the extent where it is perceived as truth and becomes the norm (Schein, 2010). Schein (2010) describes basic assumptions as very difficult to change and can make a group blind to beneficial alternatives. He states that these assumptions come from a need of seeking stability and meaning (Schein, 2010). Schein's theory has been argued against on the basis of culture being a dynamic and changing phenomenon, which is created by groups, and continuously re-created based on every-day life and should thereby be represented through flexible patterns of values and norms (Collins, 1998). As this study only concerns culture in a set time frame in relation to recent events, the frameworks of Schein (2010) and Johnson (1992) have been assessed to function as guidance for inves-

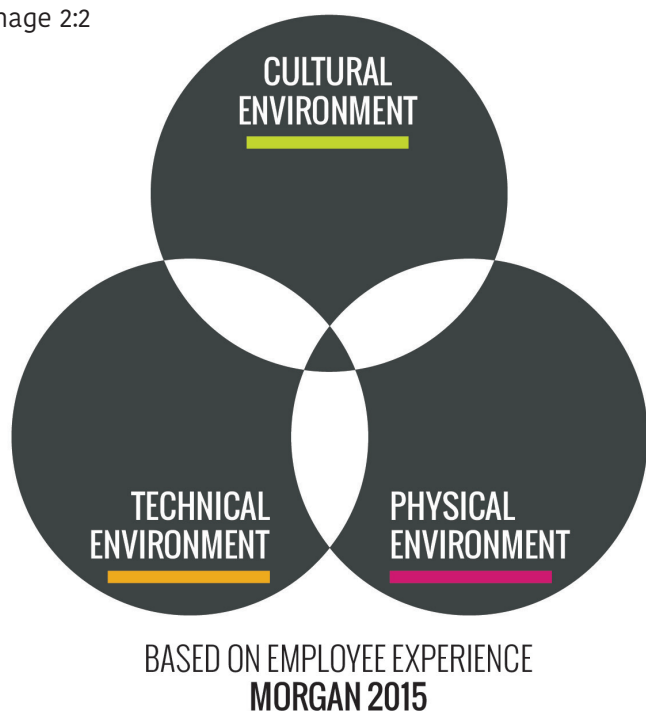
tigating the corporate culture.

2.1.2.2 Employee Experience: the Why and the How

In recent years the focus has moved away from interviewing the employees to focusing mainly on managers, and in overlooking the significance of employees, an important part of creating a holistic view of organizational changes is lost (Dawson, 2003). This relates to that employee experience is said to determine the behaviors and attitudes amongst employees (Farndale & Kelliher, 2013). How employees experience the actions and approach of their organization will have a direct effect on the level of commitment employees have to their organization, which in turn provides increased productivity (Farndale & Kelliher, 2013; Chang, 2005; Pullman & Gross, 2004; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). How employees experience certain decisions has shown to have correlations with the level of trust employees have towards management, that is in turn impacted by the level of perceived justice in management actions (Farndale & Kelliher, 2013).

Context plays an important role in creating the experience (Pullman & Gross, 2004; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010; Benz, 2015). Experience design is focused on seeing the correlations between a number of different elements that create an experience, such as physical environment, communication, tools, interactions and movement (Benz, 2015). When designing the experience, the complexity of these impacting factors must be acknowledged (Benz, 2015). As most people spend most of their time at work, the work experience and work environment becomes central (Phelps, 2013; Kamarulzaman et al., 2011; Kwallek et al., 1997). The use of design in the context of employee experience has been described as an emerging trend by the global design bureau Fjord (2016). The company states that Employee Experience Design (EX) was the fastest growing area in 2015 (Fjord, 2016). Fjord (2016) suggests that in designing the experience, empowerment is key to motivated employees, and feeling included and properly supported by their organization is part of recognition and brings a sense of reward. Morgan (15 December 2015) has stated that designing the employee experience should depart from three main areas: the cultural environment, the technical environment and the physical environment (see image 2:2).

Image 2:2



The cultural environment is described by Morgan (15 December 2015) as: “the one that you feel”, whilst the physical is the one you see, including demographic factors and workplace benefits. The technological environment includes all tools used for the work performed (Morgan, 15 December 2015). Pullman and Gross (2004) supports that the primary focus of experience design should be the context, referring to the physical and relational setting of where interactions take place. In a study made by Carlgren et al., (2014), it was stated that one way to change corporate culture into becoming more involved and empathic revolved around looking at the correlation between environment and behavior. In making the environment as simple as possible, a space can be created where things can ‘get messy’ and failure is accepted (Carlgren et al., 2014). Space in relation to experience is described by Fisher and Farshchi (1997, p. 1) as “spatial needs are resolved by the creation of architectural forms, which in turn allow the fulfillment of individual, social and psychological needs in the form of a building”, and highlights the importance of relating the space to the intended function. This is supported by Pullman and Gross (2004) stating that a key factor to designing the experience is creating an environment that reflects an intended message or theme and adhering to the emotional state of the user. Experience is subjective and dependent on factors such as cultural background, personality, mood, motivation and pre-

vious experiences (Benz, 2015). Pullman and Gross (2004) bring up the meaning of relational environment and physical environment. They define the relational environment as the interactions between different stakeholders, using these as means to create a sense of belonging and adopting the intent of the implementation. The physical environment is defined as the space that projects certain feelings, such as security or status, which entails interior design and the five senses (Pullman & Gross, 2004).

2.2 A THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPT & INTENTIONS

The managing project group started their process on investigating Activity Based Working (ABW) by reading an essay on the topic from Chalmers University written by Månsson and Nyberg (2014). Thus this essay is used to explain the defining factors of ABW in section 2.2.1. In order to bring an understanding to impacting factors for collaboration, creativity and flexibility in the office environment, section 2.2.2-2.2.4 presents statements and research connected to these areas, focusing on human action and reaction.

2.2.1 THE CONCEPT OF ACTIVITY BASED WORKING

The concept of open office environments continues to spread due to the benefits of low cost by seating more persons in less space and saving money on maintenance expenses (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011). Activity Based Working (ABW) is a type of open office environment defined by Månsson and Nyberg (2014) as an office space where there are no set placements for the employees, instead several types of spaces are created to support the operations of different work tasks. As you move from one task to another, you move to a different space to perform the new task, moving your personal items as you go, keeping a ‘clean desk’. The workspace is normally divided into three main zones: the quiet zone for work that requires high focus, the medium zone, which is organized as an open-plan office, and the active zone for meetings and discussions (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014). The zones should be adapted to the needs of the employees in each company, and might need to be

iterated over time as new needs arise (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014).

The potential advantages with ABW are stated as higher levels of creativity and inspiration, higher efficiency through customized zones for different tasks, increased collaboration, cross-department interaction and increased flexibility as a result of shifting seat according to task, and less time spent in meetings based on spontaneous interactions (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011). Risk factors concerning ABW have been defined as loss of connection within teams as it can be difficult to find team members in the flexible environment, and loss of safety due to not having a specific place that shows their presence in the office (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014). Another problematic factor is loss of identity in terms of giving the workplace a personal touch (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011). General factors that impact employees in open office spaces are disturbances caused by noise and lack of privacy (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). ABW also brings new requirements on managers on managing their teams due to the scattering in placement. The primary focus areas when implementing ABW are defined as human, IT and place (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014). The human-aspect is important in order to gain acceptance of the change. In terms of the IT-environment, it needs to adhere to the high level of flexibility required by ABW (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014). Appel-Meulenbroek et al., (2011) relates creativity in ABW to paying attention to interior design, furnishing, dressing and color. Månsson and Nyberg (2014) define creativity as individual, requiring an index of how persons experience their workplace. Månsson and Nyberg (2014) talk about that the experience amongst the employees impacts the development of both the change, and the organization as a whole. Månsson and Nyberg (2014) conclude that it is important to involve the employees early in the process and to be transparent in order for employees to find their new role in the environment, as well as finding the needs in relation to work tasks on an individual basis. The success of flexible workspaces have been said to be dependent on implementation process, how the way of working is adopted by the employees and the quality of the variation of spaces provided (Haner, 2005). Sensory factors such as temperature, light and noise have also shown to impact behavior and productivity in office environments (Kamarulzaman et

al., 2011). Appel-Meulenbroek et al., (2011) highlighted the complexity in finding one general concept suitable for the variety of individual preferences and ways of working.

2.2.2 IMPACTING FACTORS FOR FLEXIBILITY

Habits steer our behavior and actions, which also has an impact on movement and choices. The development and change of habits are in turn impacted by motivation and needs. The sections below provide further understanding of these factors.

2.2.2.1 Habits

Habits are connected to goal pursuit, as the motivation of reaching the goal will take actions in a specific direction and cause repetition of actions. The habits are then triggered from our memory to continue the pursuit of the goal (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). When negative factors such as stress or distractions lowers motivation, habits take over and make us able to continue our work as a form of autopilot-response, i.e. habits ensure efficiency in disturbing environments (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). They also fill a function of relief and relaxation from the energy that it takes to continuously be mentally present (Benz, 2015). Triggering factors of habit formation are related to the physical environment, the impact of other persons, and repetition of specific actions (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). Strong habits connected to specific contexts are triggered when encountering items or environments that are connected to that context (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). When an environment is changed, the individual's experience and behavior in that environment will also change (Beard Nelson, 2009). Habitual behavior has also been connected to insensitivity. When habits are triggered, the consequence of the action is not taken into consideration as the action is made subconsciously. If habits are strong enough, they will limit the ability to see alternative ways or actions (Wood & Rüniger, 2016).

Habits may be applied for reasons such simplicity of doing something that is familiar rather than learning something new, but also to obtaining comfort, confidence, and control (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). In changing habits, the association to a certain behavior in a specific context or environment inhibits the ability to change. Motivation and good intentions

serve as means to step away from habitual behavior, however as soon as the motivation is low or intentions weaken, habitual behavior will take over unless new, strong habits have been established (Wood & R nger, 2016). Continuous reminders of a change behavior, such as digital reminders or signs, have been proven to carry significance for triggering new association patterns. Depending on the type of reminder applied, the function might be short-term versus having a function over time (Wood & R nger, 2016).

2.2.2.2 Motivation & Needs

Maslow (1943, p. 370) wrote in his Theory of Human Motivation that “any motivated behavior, either preparatory or consummatory, must be understood to be a channel through which many basic needs may be simultaneously expressed or satisfied. Typically an act has more than one motivation”. Needs are vital for building self-confidence, personal strength, and endorsing the feel of that your existence brings value to the world. If these needs are not met, the opposite will occur where individuals feel discouraged and weak (Maslow, 1943). Maslow’s theory on needs has been criticized for not having received much further support in research and not sustaining over the course of time (Sheldon et al., 2001). In the self-determination theory of motivation by Deci and Ryan (1985) it is claimed that people’s motivation come from feeling competent, having autonomy and feeling a sense of belonging to a group (Sheldon et al., 2001). This theory gained support in a study made by Sheldon et al., (2001) involving 10 persons and 10 needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness i.e. interpersonal connection, physical thriving i.e. health and body, security, self-esteem, self-actualization, pleasure-stimulation, money-luxury, and popularity-influence i.e. being appreciated and acknowledged) identified from previous research primarily made by Deci and Ryan, Maslow, Epstein, and Derber. An unforeseen need, self-esteem topped the hierarchy of needs, and money and luxury rated very low (Sheldon et al., 2001). Another factor that became evident was the feeling of security, which became visible in times of distress (Sheldon et al., 2001).

In 2014, the British department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) published a report on Subjective Well-being (SWB), that is mainly impacted by having autonomy, purpose, variety in work tasks, opportunities to develop skills,

positive social environment, fairness in the workplace, physical security, and job security (BIS, 2014). In line with previous research (Sheldon et al., 2001; Madjar et al., 2002), wellbeing increase performance at work, adding that it also results in better health (BIS, 2014). The difficulties in defining needs has been related to whether they are based on personal motives or on reflection of experiences, as well as defining the general context in which the needs are expressed (Sheldon et al., 2001)

2.2.3 EFFECTS OF COLLABORATION

Collaborative activities in work environments have increased with more than 50% in the past 20 years (Cross et al., 2016). The claim is that in order to innovate you need to gather great minds into creative teams (Phelps, 2013; Denham & Kaberon, 2012). Schumpeter (1908), who advocated the importance of individualism, also agreed on the benefit of interactions and stated that “social influences [...] are the keys to a deeper understanding of the whole life of the functions of the body politic, and the analysis of them may lead to new and valuable results”. Fostering interactions within the company has a big impact on creativity, as a group of people can produce a significantly larger amount of insights than a single person (Phelps, 2013).

Companies that encourage their employees to work in isolated environments, such as their homes, will not do so without suffering loss of innovation capability (Phelps, 2013). Employees working from home also lose the vital ad hoc, or ‘water cooler’ interactions where the informal learning occurs (Phelps, 2013; Grebow 2002). Grebow (2002) claims that 75% of our learning comes from informal learning, the kind that is obtained by regular conversations, asking questions or in spontaneous interactions. In a study made by Waring and Bishop (2010), results showed that informal interactions gave positive effects such as exchange of knowledge and experience, creating common understanding, and opening up for critical reflection. It also created better emotional stability as it gave employees space to vent occurrences that had impacted them (Waring & Bishop, 2010). Working in teams around inventions or creative solutions has also been said to boost confidence and create a sense of self-expression, since exploration stimulates the mind and brings a sense of

having achieved something (Phelps, 2013). Professor John Sullivan at San Francisco State University claimed in an article in the U.S. News (15 march 2013) that “encouraging employees to work on site is a superior approach” in relation to innovation capabilities, further stating that “innovation is maximized when there is a high volume of serendipitous meetings between workers from different teams and functions”. The reasons named are personal growth and mental advancement through being challenged and inspired when sharing your ideas, and also fostering collaboration, which promotes tearing down the barriers of company silos (Sullivan, 15 march 2013).

The counter argument against the collaborative explosion is that a significant portion of people’s working time is being spent in meetings and answering questions and emails, at some companies the time spent in these activities is as high as 80% (Cross et al., 2016). In order to keep up, employees have to bring work home, creating higher levels of stress (Cross et al., 2016). The people who are most approachable in collaborative activities quickly become key persons in a number of projects. At the end, too many coworkers rely on the decisions and inputs of just a few people, creating a block for moving forward (Cross et al., 2016). Cross et al., (2016) claims that collaborations become a hazard when not balanced and evenly spread out, and that employees need to get better at setting boundaries and choosing which activities to take part in.

2.2.4 CREATIVITY: DEFINITION & IMPACTING FACTORS

During the Enlightenment, Hume argued for the importance of imagination and portrayed it as a driving factor for human accomplishments (Lessa, 2012). Lessa (2012) concludes in an interpretation of Hume’s work that: “imagination may be conceived as an idea without any correspondent and detectable original impression” (Lessa, 2012). Hume’s philosophy on imagination can historically be seen as the first step towards investigating human creativity (Phelps, 2013). Creativity has been described as an interpersonal phenomenon as it happens in the meeting of an individual and her or his socio-cultural context (Haner, 2005). Attempts to describe creativity using a linear process have been made, howev-

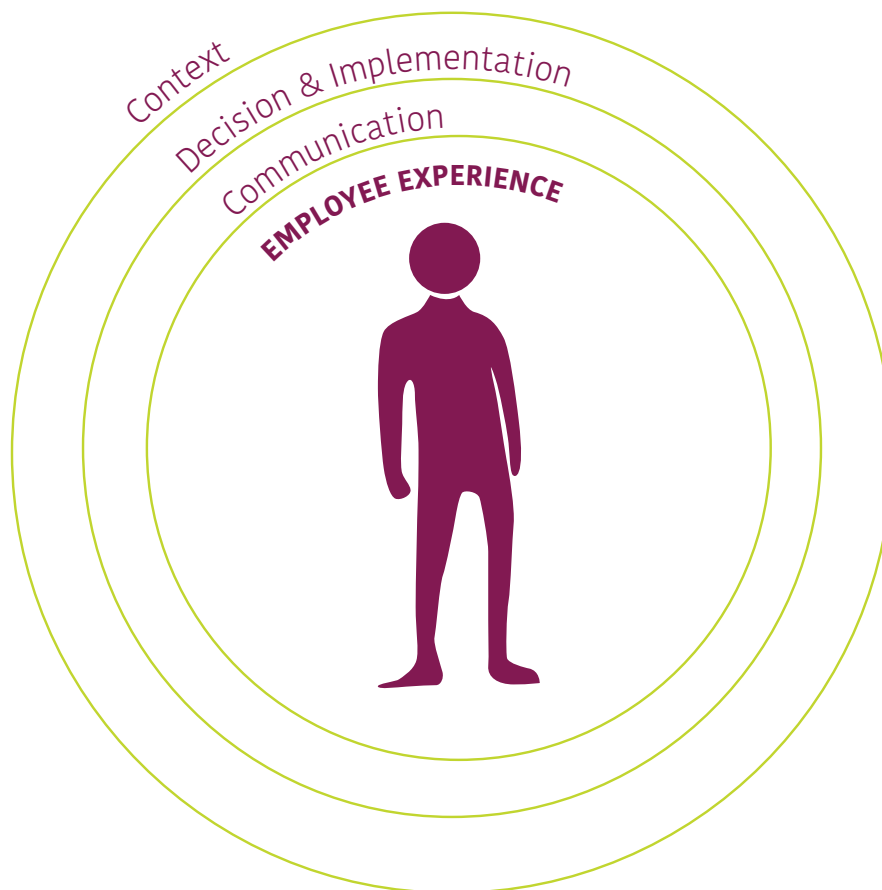
er this has been criticized on the basis of creativity being defined as an iterative, disorganized and complex process (Haner, 2005).

Studies have shown that mood play a significant role in affecting both creativity and productivity (Madjar et al., 2002; Oswald et al., 2015). Oswald et al., (2015) reference a previous study made by Isen and Reeve (2005) that also showed that individuals with a higher sense of happiness gave more time towards tasks they found interesting, which has an influence on innovation prospects, yet without compensating the less interesting tasks (Oswald et al., 2015). The “attractiveness” of the office has shown to have an impact on creativity, as it can promote motivation and inspiration (Haner, 2005). Haner (2005) described two office-layout solutions for promoting creativity and innovation. The space was divided into different spaces representing different stages in the work process. In one of the examples, each room had been colored according to the stimuli required for the intended task in each space. For example, the color yellow was chosen to induce positivity, the color red was chosen to promote flexibility and stimulation, and the color dark gray was chosen to express neutrality and formality (Haner, 2005). The importance of color in the physical environment relates to studies made on color in relation to psychological impact (Lichtenfeld et al., 2012; Kwallek et al., 1997). Color has been linked to subconscious influence on perception and motivation (Lichtenfeld et al., 2012). For example, warm colors have shown to give rise to positive connotations such as excitement, but also stress and anxiety, while cool colors have been linked to tranquility, as well as depression and passiveness (Kwallek et al., 1997). Green and plants have been shown to have a positive impact on creativity (Lichtenfeld et al., 2012). Criticism against color studies include that they commonly only target on one object taken out of context, and do not offer enough evidence to support the connection between a specific feeling and a certain color (Kwallek et al., 1997).

In order to provide a physical space for creativity, it has been said that the floor plan need to support the ongoing activities (Kristensen, 2004; Pullman and Gross, 2004; Fisher and Farshchi, 1997). A narrow passageway may for example inhibit interaction due to causing limited movement (Kris-

tensen, 2004). The structure should further support both the need for privacy and collaboration, as the processes of creativity commonly involves both sharing of ideas and individual space to process, reflect on and evolve the topic at hand (Kristensen, 2004; Haner, 2005). Visibility has been said to promote interaction since it provides a familiarity to other persons in the environment and thus opens up for collaboration (Haner, 2005). This is also what supports using glass as building material and applying an open door-policy (Haner, 2005). Having space and tools to visualize has an impact on creativity as it promotes sharing of ideas (Kristensen, 2004; Haner, 2005), and visualizing tends to assist in remembering what has been discussed (Kristensen, 2004).

Image 3:1



3. METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative study within ethnography based on grounded theory in the Straussian paradigm, which applies abductive reasoning (Cooney, 2010). A qualitative approach has been taken in order to fully account for how individuals interpret and experience their new ways of working, as well as providing meaning to events occurring in the environment (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The study entails quantitative elements in the form of a survey and a structured observation based on chronology records in order to support observed indications of ongoing activities. Ethnography is based on understanding experiences and feelings of individuals in a changing cultural context, and requires a presence in the environment as a participant-observer using oneself as a research instrument (Murchison, 2010). Abductive reasoning aims to provide a likely explanation based on the collected knowledge of a situation (Aliseda, 2006). The Straussian paradigm has been chosen as it acknowledges that there can be multiple explanations for what is revealed in the collected data, and puts emphasis on paying attention to the broader context that may impact a situation (Cooney, 2010).

3.1 METHODS

This study takes place in two office buildings at AstraZeneca Mölndal called the KD-building and the KC-building. The study was divided into two main phases:

Phase one: To account for the context of where the change has taken place according to Dawson's (2003) processual perspective, an indicative pre-study was conducted of the corporate culture at AstraZeneca Mölndal. The cultural investigation was based on the impacting factors of the cultural web created by Johnson (1992), and Schein's (2010) theory on culture. Interviews were also made with members of the managing project group of ABW to gain an understanding of the decision and implementation process (see image 3:1).

Phase two: Interviews with employees on their experiences and perceptions were made. The virtual environ-

ment, behavioral environment and physical environment were investigated in order to understand the perceived correlation to collaboration, creativity and flexibility. Activity Based Working had at the time of this study been implemented at five floors in two office buildings at AstraZeneca Mölndal, two floors in the KC-building and three floors in the KD-building. This study included four of the floors; KD3, KD4, KD5 and KC4.

3.1.1 CASE STUDY

This study is based on a single in-depth case study of the progression of the intentions behind an implementation of Activity Based Working at AstraZeneca site Mölndal. A case study has been chosen in order to gain profound knowledge of a specific area, and to create substantial understanding of human behavior and experience, as human experience and behavior are context-dependent (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The choice of doing a single in-depth study was made in order to dig deeper into impacting factors of a specific case, thus broadening the understanding of the research-topic and providing clear examples (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The case study commenced on February 23, 2016 and was concluded on April 13, 2016. During this time all interviews and observations were conducted.

AstraZeneca Mölndal was chosen because it provided a clear case for studying the employee response and perception of a recent change made to balance cost-reduction and foster innovation. The case also matched a qualitative type of research study as the managing project group had already collected a substantial amount of quantitative data during the course of the implementation process, but was lacking an in-depth qualitative study.

3.1.2 DATA COLLECTION

Both primary data in the form of interviews, a survey and

observations, and secondary data in the form of websites, printed material, public statements and articles has been gathered for this study.

3.1.3 SURVEY ON CORPORATE CULTURE

Visual communication was used for the survey as corporate culture is described as something that is intangible and felt (Campbell et al., 2000; Sun, 2008; Schein, 2010; Morgan, 15 December 2015), requiring to capture feelings and personal perception (affective processors) rather than rational evaluation (cognitive processors) of a certain situation (Murphy & Zajonc, 1993; Buchanan, 1992). Studies show that affective reactions, both positive and negative, can be triggered with very simple stimulus and a low rate of cognitive processing (Murphy & Zajonc, 1993). Images are best used as this stimuli as they trigger a reaction faster than words due to that words require a semantic decoding before processing (Murphy & Zajonc, 1993). The concept of using images in this manner is that subconscious messages from the environment itself have shaped a perception that will trigger a reaction or a preference towards a certain image (Buchanan, 1992). The survey was divided into six areas: Interaction, Values, Mood, Structure, Workflow and Feel. Each area contained three simple illustrations (see appendix 1). The first three rows were constructed by clear symbols, whereas the last three rows were formed by metaphors.

The sampling was a non-probability sampling and consisted of 42 persons between the age of 25–65; 23 women and 19 men. 7 participants had a non-Swedish background. The majority of the participants consisted of a selection of persons moving around in the main (KC) building at AstraZeneca Mölndal, primarily approached whilst sitting in the main café area Coffee lab and in the main aisle, the aorta. Others were approached in the Activity Based Working environment. The participants represented persons in office environment, laboratory environment, service/maintenance and administration. Three persons were from staffing agencies but had worked permanently at the site for the duration of at least one year. The sampling had the nature of quota sampling in regards to gender and age (Bryman & Bell, 2015). It should be noted that the amount of participants account for around 2% of the total amount of employees at the site, thus

this survey only provides an indication of the perception of the corporate culture (Bryman & Bell, 2015). However, parts of the results of this survey were strengthened by previous investigations of workplace satisfaction that have been conducted at the site and are accounted for as secondary data in this study. The risk with this type of investigation is that matters of culture and frame of reference builds our perception (Lester, 1995; Gage, 1999), which means that visuals might be interpreted in different ways by different persons. To minimize this risk, participants were encouraged to ask questions if feeling confused about the interpretation.

3.1.4 INTERVIEWS

In order to capture the experiences with little interference from predetermined perceptions, the interviews have been semi-structured based on open-ended questions (Bryman & Bell, 2015). An interview consists of both verbal and non-verbal communication, which has been taken into account (d.school, 2016). All employees interviewed remain anonymous in this study as personal integrity is respected in regards to ethical directives; only members of the managing project group for Activity Based Working are mentioned by name. Most interviews were conducted in Swedish and have been translated to English by the student.

The interviews on corporate culture consisted of approximately 19 questions (see appendix 2). They were made to capture stories, rituals and routines, symbols, organizational structures, control systems and power structures (Johnson, 1992), as well as the artifacts, beliefs and values, and basic assumptions (Schein, 2010). The intention was to gain elaborations on thoughts and perceptions of the corporate culture that would not be covered by the survey. The sampling was convenience sampling made from the selection of the survey participants. 9 persons, 4 men and 5 women were interviewed; 3 representing laboratory and 6 representing office. The in-depth interviews were made between February 23 and March 4, 2016 and the duration of the interviews were 45min–1 hour. 12 persons made further comments on corporate culture during the study of ABW as the mindset in this specific environment is the target of this study. 28 persons based on non-probability sampling answered the question of “How would you describe AstraZeneca Mölndal

to an outsider in three words”, followed by a brief discussion of the extended meaning of the words. This question aimed to trigger instant connotations to the perception of the work life at the site.

The framework for the interviews concerning the change to ABW consisted of approximately 16 questions (see appendix 3). Interactions 34 persons within the age span of 30-63 were interviewed or participated in discussions. The ‘ad hoc’ interviews took place in the coffee areas and collaborative zones and had the nature of both group discussions/ interviews and individual interviews. Table 3:2 displays the process:

TYPE	ENCLOSED 1-1	EXTENDED AD-HOC	BRIEF AD HOC
DURATION	≈60min	≈20-45min	≈10-20min
NO. PPL.	12	13	9

Table 3:2

The 12 persons who participated in enclosed one-on-one in-depth interviews was selection bias as the participants were chosen via requests from management. The questions asked in the ‘ad hoc’ interactions departed from the framework, however factors of time and context at the time of the interaction determined the number of questions asked and the direction of the conversation. Two persons from the Extended team¹ were interviewed, as well as two persons connected to the project through other group formations. Additional interviews were made with 4 members of the managing ABW-project group primarily concerning the decision and implementation process and general approach. The first floor to transition to Activity Based Working was KC2 in mid February 2015, which is not part of this study, however approximately 5 interviewees had previously been seated on KC2. The time spent in ABW is seen in table 3:3. The participants had previously been seated in either an open-plan office environment or private office, with a slightly higher representation from open-plan office. It should be noted that many engaged in conversations on this topic across the ABW-floors, but as the same information was repeated the study was assessed to be saturated by the presented material.

	Time in ABW*	In-depth	Ad hoc
KD3	≈4 months	5	9
KD4	≈4 months	0	6
KD5	≈5 months	2	5
KC4	≈2 months	5	2

Table 3:3 *Counting at the beginning of the study

3.1.5 OBSERVATIONS

Observations were made in order to bring further understanding to the correlation between statements and actions (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The corporate culture observations were based on stories, rituals and routines, symbols, control systems and power structures (Johnson, 1992), as well as the artifacts and beliefs and values (Schein, 2010). It had the nature of unstructured non-participant observations (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The main type of observation concerning the change and intentions consisted of participant observation, i.e. observing whilst working in the environment (Bryman & Bell, 2015), since understanding an experience fully requires taking part in the experience (Benz, 2015; Stephens & Boland, 2014). Departing from the main areas of the physical, behavioral and technical environments (Morgan, 15 December 2015; Månsson & Nyberg, 2014), the following was observed:

Flexibility was observed through the structure and floor-plan of the environment, based on that the physical environment should match the purpose of the ongoing tasks (Kristensen, 2004; Pullman & Gross, 2004; Fisher and Farshchi, 1997); the clean desk concept was observed since it is one of the prerequisites for offering a flexible choice in work station (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014); habitual behavior was observed, as it will impact decisions (Wood & Rüniger, 2016); as well as the visual expression of the environment since connotations to visual expressions has been said to have an impact on behavior and action in the environment (Wood & Rüniger, 2016; Kamarulzaman et al., 2011; Haner, 2005)

Collaboration was observed through interaction in relation to how people interacted and where; as well as tools and space for visualization since they carry a function for knowledge-sharing, which also promotes creativity (Kristensen, 2004; Haner 2005); observations consisting of visual artifacts were also made, which reflect socially constructed meaning in the office environment as described by Bryman and Bell (2015).

Creativity was observed through the space division between collaboration and privacy areas as both are needed for creative processes (Kristensen, 2004; Haner, 2005);

1. The function of the extended team consisted of 21 persons with the primary tasks of supporting the project team, be a channel for dialogue between the project team and employees and assisting in creating a positive change.

and visual expression was observed as it may trigger stimuli promoting creativity according to Appel-Meulenbroek et al., (2011).

Structured observations were made using chronology records. These observations were on occupancy, counting persons in the multi-seating quiet zones, and the medium-quiet zones on all floors included in this study. The data was collected during one day per floor during the first half of the week during week 14 and 15, as it was stated that more persons are at the office in the beginning of the week. A count was made every 30 minutes starting at 9:00 ending at 16:00, with a gap between 11:30-13:00 since this is commonly when employees leave the office environment for lunch.

As habitual patterns are connected to connotations from spatial expressions (Wood & Rüniger, 2016), and color has shown to have an influence on perception on a subconscious level (Lichtenfeld et al., 2012; Kwallek et al., 1997), a color scheme was assembled as visual data (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Color palettes were collected on KD5, KD3 and KC4, as well as in the Coffee Lab since this environment was stated to induce collaboration and open conversation. KD4 was left out as the color scheme is close to identical to KD3.

3.2 DATA SOURCES

Apart from the primary data collected through the methods stated above, secondary data collection has been made from the company websites in order to gain further understanding AstraZeneca and its values. The data collection has been both textual and visual.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis consists of grounded theory within the Straussian paradigm, based on factors that appeared during the course of the interviews and how they may relate to context (Silverman, 2011). Grounded theory has been applied as it aims to find explanations to social phenomenon and emphasize the nature of socially constructed reality, thus it is well suited for making sense of social complexity (Pettigrew

& Cowan, 2000). The analysis has been conducted through acknowledging repetitions, metaphors and analogies, transitions, similarities and differences and contradictions as described by Bryman and Bell (2015). The analysis process has been iterative using abductive reasoning, applying sense-making during the phases of discovery and synthesis based on contextual observations and a human-centered approach in line with the design perspective (Krippendorff, 1989; Hargadon, 2005; Stephens & Boland, 2014).

3.4 VALIDITY & RELIABILITY

In this study I have included both common topics talked about and different stated perspectives on these topics. In qualitative studies, the reliability concerns the whole process, thus I have attempted to be clear in the theoretical entrance to the study, how I have collected data and in what manner, and connect these to my interpretations in the analysis and discussion. It is of importance to note that this study is focusing on subjective experience, and this study does not attempt to state any true or false claims, but merely provide an insight to interpretations and what might have had an impact on perceptions. The topics discussed in this study concerns those that were recurring in relation to the objectives of this study, and isolated statements have been defined in text as such.

4. EMPIRICAL DATA

4.1 CONTEXT: CORPORATE CULTURE

The context investigation of this study consist of the corporate culture and commence with secondary data retrieved from the company websites in order to give an understanding of the aims and values of the company. After follows the data collected from the study on the corporate culture at site Mölndal.

4.1.1 ASTRAZENECA: CORPORATE FACTS

AstraZeneca is a global pharmaceutical company that is the result of a merge of Swedish Astra AB and British Zene-ca Group PLC in April 1999. The company has more than 50'000 employees and operates in over 100 countries. At AstraZeneca they describe their purpose as “to push the boundaries of science to deliver life-changing medicines”. The company place their primary investments within the areas of oncology, cardiovascular and metabolic disease, RIA (respiratory, inflammation and autoimmunity), and infection and neuroscience. AstraZeneca drives the whole process from discovery to distribution (AstraZeneca, 2016).

AstraZeneca Mölndal, or as the site is officially named: AstraZeneca Gothenburg, is a Research and Development center placed in Mölndal with around 2400 employees. It is described on the website as constructed for creativity, innovation and collaboration. The center accounts for every step in the development chain of the drug life cycle apart from big scale production. The site is around 235 000 square meters, consisting primarily of laboratory and office environments (AstraZeneca Mölndal, 2016).

4.1.2 ASTRAZENECA: STATED VALUES & BELIEFS

The company values are: *follow the science, we put patients first, we play to win, we do things right and we are entrepreneurial, and strongly advocates ethics and putting safe-*

ty first (AstraZeneca, 2016). AstraZeneca collaborates with scientists and institutions across the world, on the website they point out that “Collaboration is key to AstraZeneca’s success” (AstraZeneca, 2016). The three cornerstones of the company strategy consist of achieving scientific leadership, return to growth and being a great place to work. Under the headline “Be a great place to work”, the company has written the following:

Evolve our culture:

- 1. Working to improve our employee’s’ identification with our purpose and values and to promote understanding of and belief in our strategy*
- 2. Investing in and implementing tailored leadership development programmes*

Simplify our business: Developing simpler, more efficient processes and flattening our organizational structure to foster accountability and improve decision-making and communication

Attract and retain the best talent: Accelerating our efforts to attract diverse, top talent with new capabilities

In describing the corporate culture, AstraZeneca (2016) states the following on their career website:

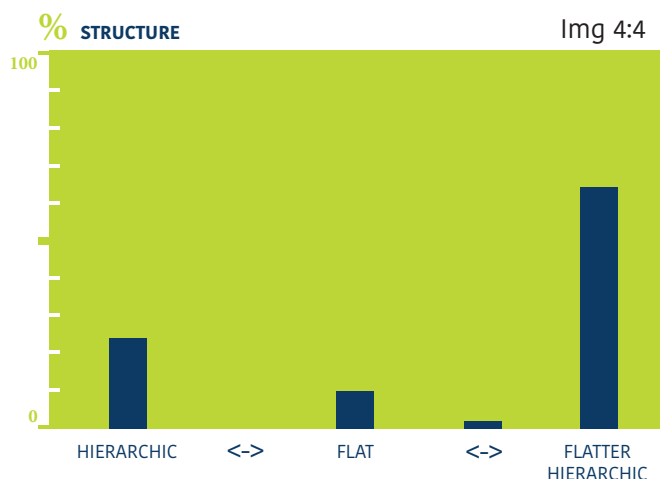
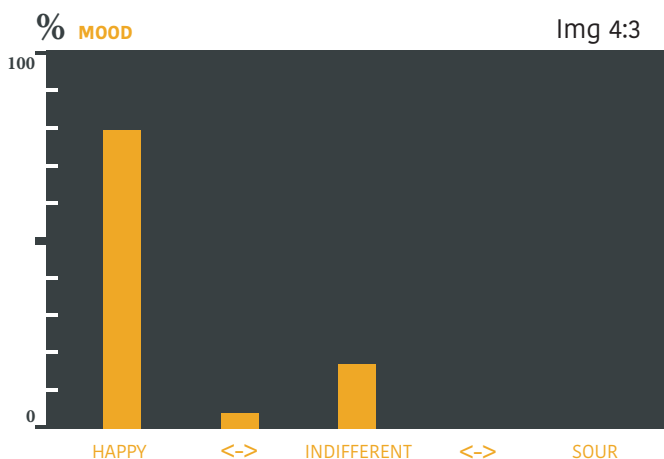
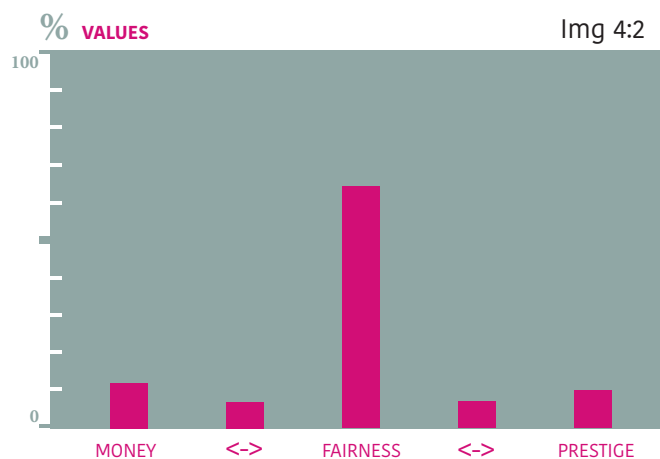
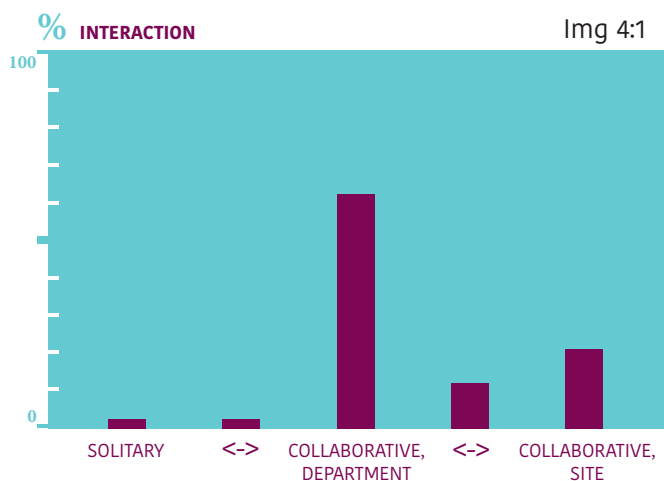
“Here we foster a culture of collaboration and smart risk taking. You’ll be able to work autonomously and receive support whenever you need it. It’s an energizing, innovative, environment where diversity is valued and individual success depends solely on personal merit and performance. A place where talented people can immerse themselves in their work and make significant contributions towards scientific excellence.”

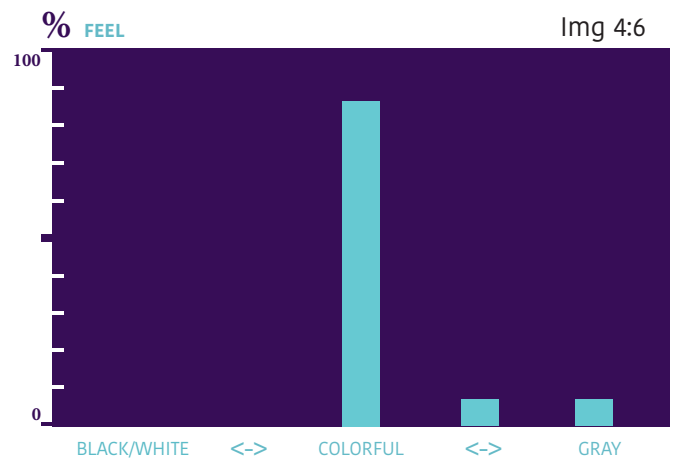
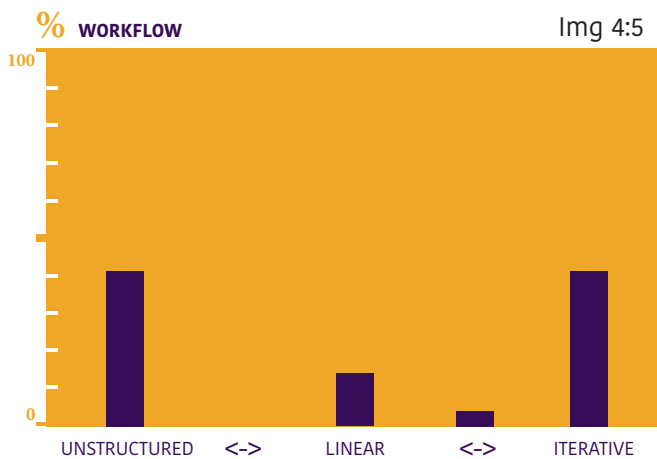
The website further state that they are agile and patient-focused with a high level of performance. AstraZeneca describes the company work environment as motivating and inspiring with an aim to engage people. It is further described that they support and develop the capabilities of their employees, and concerning the value of differences they state that diversity in teams, both in terms of culture and perception, brings out new ideas that foster innovation (AstraZeneca, 2016).

4.1.3 RESULTS OF SURVEY ON CORPORATE CULTURE

The survey had a total of 42 respondents and concerned the areas of interaction, values, mood, structure, workflow and feel. The outcome of the survey showed clear indications towards a positive and vibrant corporate culture, gaining around 80% of the responses (mood and feel: img 4:3 & 4:6). 64% had the perception of fairness as a common feature for decision-making in the everyday work (values: img 4:2). Collaboration was perceived as being the norm, primarily within the project group/department according to 62% of the respondents (interaction: img 4:1). 64% considered the organizational structure to be semi-hierarchical, indicating that there is room for communication within the

different levels of the organization (img 4:4). According to this survey, 41% of the participants perceived the workflow as unstructured. When further questions were asked around this choice, unclear or shifting decision-making was stated as reasons, creating a feel of difficulty in moving forward with certain work tasks. The iterative choice scored the same number of respondents, indicating a perception of the workflow being based on re-visiting areas before moving forward (img 4:5). No significant difference could be seen between male and female respondents, nor between respondents with a Swedish background and non-Swedish background. The results are presented in bar charts below displaying the percentage of respondents for each option in the different categories. The arrows in between options displays respondents who experienced that two options were equally valid.





4.1.4 DESCRIBING THE CULTURE: INTERVIEWS & COMMENTS

The interviews and comments made by 21 persons on the corporate culture at the site provided an understanding of the values and beliefs at AstraZeneca Mölndal. The main aspects brought forward were pride, focus on high performance, ethics and appreciation of co-workers. One person said that *“I feel like I am heard in all contexts. [...] You respect people’s knowledge and experiences”*. The ethics revolving patient safety was seen as a given prerequisite for the line of business, *“It is a fundamental value that it is for the patient that we are doing this”*. It was further commented that the company has a high level of ethics, *“the ethics is one of the things that I am most proud of. One of these Volkswagen scandals would never happen here. It would be so embarrassing that all would collapse”*, another employee stated that *“They work actively on how they wish to be perceived outside of the site”*. There was an awareness of that the corporate aspiration for profit at times stand in conflict with the patient benefit if the market for a specific drug is not financially prosperous, through being aware of that this is the reality for any company. Being productive, acknowledged and completing tasks was described as impacting factors for having a good day at work. One person said that *“We try to do a lot of things”* and the productiveness was further described by another employee as *“There is definitely a corporate culture of productivity, delivery and performance, there is a big focus on those things, and of course it should be”* furthering the downside of that *“stress and burnouts are common here”*. When describing how the AstraZeneca values are seen, the main answer was that you see

them in how people act. A comment on feel of people was *“There is a sense of being driven, a will-power here. I think it is in the walls, in the visible but also in the behavior”*, the same was said about pride by another employee. The pride was further expressed as *“You do not hesitate to tell people what you work with because you feel pride in what you are doing”* and *“You feel like you contribute to something that is important”*. Several interviewees described the culture as being prestigeless, one person framed it as that the culture represents more science than prestige. Failure was described as accepted, as long as it is not repeated.

It was stated that the company takes an interest in the well-being of its employees, a feeling that seems to be connected to the appointing of Pascal Soiro as the Chief Executive of AstraZeneca in 2010. It was said that his engagement and commitment to the company reflected onto the employees, providing a sense of empowerment and reinstating a belief in the future when he stopped Pfizer from acquiring AstraZeneca. One person described that before his entrance, the mood amongst the employees was reflecting tiredness and loss of faith in top management, and explained it as *“he started investing in science and above all he saved us from being bought by Pfizer; there somewhere things changed into ‘let’s do this! Instead of dying slowly we will move forward’”*. A comment made on the company’s interest in employee well-being was that *“They care about their employees because they know that if the employees are happy, then they will deliver”*.

Transparency and openness was stated as representing the site culture. In asking where you see the transparency, it

was described as being seen in the glass walls, the windows by the laboratories, and the display of machinery. One employee said that there is an openness on the lower levels, but that *“higher up the chain you do as you are told, it is a pretty harsh climate up there”*. One employee stated that *“there has been a lot of organizational changes here over the years”* furthering that it has created a sense of insecurity in regards to whom is in charge of what. Another employee described the organization as a metaphor by using the old chemistry lab; *“despite the attempt to change, old structures remain”*. The organization was described as hierarchical, but some also said that you do not feel that in your everyday work, others explained that it is a slow process to reach decisions higher up in the chain. It was said that you can email any higher manager up to the very top. Bringing forth ideas was described as easy and that thoughts and opinions are always taken under consideration, one employee said that *“Word and action are very closely connected”*. The common perception regarding decisions in the everyday work was that *we know that we can impact*, in regards to bigger decisions it was said that *we cannot impact if, but how*.

The acknowledgment of good performance was stated as being displayed as awards, being praised on your accomplishment, receiving benefits, being promoted and being given a bonus. Employees who have become known through certain achievements were described as key persons. One person said that possibility for advancement mainly applies to persons with a clinical background. Ethics was mentioned in relation to good performance, one employee explained it as *“It is not counted as success if it is on the expense of how you acted to get there”*. There was a common perception of that the site offers great possibility to learn and develop in your work, and to do job rotation. One person described it as important to understand the reality of other functions. A sense of unity at the site was recurrent, both expressed as respect for others but also through acknowledgment of that every part of the chain is dependent on one another. One employee explained it as *“We do individual work to help the rest of the chain forward, I feel that I am part of a whole”*. In regards to the company, another employee stated that *“It is a very good company to work at, even if we complain at times”*.

The social part of the environment was described through

common breakfasts, lunches, participation in associations, meeting up at the sports center and having coffees at the Coffee lab. The Coffee lab was stated as a representation for openness and movement, a clear signature mark of the site as it is unique for AstraZeneca Mölndal. Common events mentioned were science day, kids day, and the annual Christmas party that many attend. One employee commented on that there is a need for more forums to discuss research.

In asking the question of describing AstraZeneca Mölndal to an outsider with three words, the primary words used were diversity, openness, possibilities, innovative/creative, offers security, flexible, exciting, and global. The complete selection of words is seen in image 4:7. The larger circles represent words that were repeated more frequently.

4.1.5 CULTURAL FINDINGS THROUGH OBSERVATIONS

The visual corporate culture at AstraZeneca manifests as transparency, pride, vibrancy, community and transition. The transparency was seen in the structure of the building, both in the shape of glass walls on meeting rooms, and through windows allowing visibility into laboratory facilities. Many internal access restrictions had been removed allowing employees to move more freely around the site. The pride was seen in sculptures representing research accomplishments placed in different open areas, such as large glass sculptures of molecules and a large inhaler. In other parts, old laboratory equipment was found bringing back a sense of history and legacy. The pride was also detected by awards placed in the office environments, as well as in how persons talked about their work and the company. The vibrancy was encountered in social interactions and flow, as many greet each other and engage in casual conversations whilst moving around the building. A sense of community was detected in the many active associations at the site, the most evident one being the art association that holds public lotteries on art pieces for its members. The art association also organizes art exhibitions from various artists in the main hallway, referred to as the aorta, between the Coffee lab and the canteen. The community along with diversity could further be seen in a world map placed by the canteen holding the question *“How global is your site”*, providing pins to mark your origin. Countless

During my time at AstraZeneca Mölndal it was revealed that the site had placed itself on the top 15-list of the Swedish Greatest Places to Work-survey for large companies. A town hall meeting was held on the 21st of March 2016 in honor of the positioning, which gathered a large crowd. It was stated that over 250 employees had participated in the survey for the contest, but that there was no expectation of making the list. Justice was one of the factors that had rated high, along with team pride, wages and competence in management. Factors that rated low were also highlighted, mentioning that they strive for improvement.

4.2 BACKGROUND: DECISION & IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Interviews with the managing group of ABW were conducted. Anders Persson, Hub Director, and Christina Stahre, Clinical Director described the decision process on February 22nd, 2016. To further understand the implementation process of the change, interviews were also held with Jesper Lilja, HR Business Partner, on March 24, 2016 and Ronnie Spångberg, Space Optimisation Manager, on March 30, 2016.

4.2.1 DECISION & COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Persson and Stahre explained that AstraZeneca globally made an overview of the amount of space that was needed for the type of work conducted within the company and found that the amount of space used exceeded what was needed. An additional future goal concerning a radical increase in turnover put further pressure on innovation and changed ways of working, thus a global corporate directive was connected to the challenge of decreasing office space also aiming to evolve AstraZeneca's sites towards becoming more flexible and creative work environments. For site Mölndal this resulted in the closing of two office buildings. 230 employees had to be moved into two more recently built buildings where 900 employees were already seated. However, there was not enough space to fit the additional 230 persons in the old workspace layout where all employees had their own desk. By the fall of 2014, Persson was asked if he would like to investigate how to best organize

the transfer. He gathered a team of ten persons, including Stahre, and started to evaluate potential solutions. They ended up with three possibilities; (1) add an extra desk on each row making it three desks per row, thus minimizing space for movement (2) applying hotdesking² utilizing the fact that many employees are out of office, or (3) apply Activity Based Working. Since ABW offers an impact on corporate culture by enabling more interactions, which may lead to a more innovative and creative work environment, the option of ABW presented itself as the most attractive. Stahre also added that they are lacking forums for specialists to meet outside of their project groups and this type of flexible environment may provide more meetings. Though taking other companies' implementation of ABW under consideration, Persson pointed out that "we are experts in our own operations", thus they started the project with a thorough investigation of the work habits at AstraZeneca Mölndal. They hired a Dutch company called Veldhoen with extended experience in implementing ABW to manage the transformation. Another company named Leesman, which holds expertise in workplace surveys, made an evaluation of AstraZeneca Mölndal and the work habits at the site. AstraZeneca site Mölndal scored high in workplace satisfactory, which provided a challenge as it is more difficult to change an environment that employees are already content with. Persson and Stahre viewed it as a chance to create an even better work environment.

They further explained that as the project moved forward, an extended team was added consisting of a mix of managers and employees focusing on the functions that were directly impacted by the change. The communication of the change was managed through emails and meetings. The first indication of the change was communicated at an all-employee meeting, and was further specified in an email. The decision was later finalized and a meeting was held with all managers, who were given the task of furthering the information to all employees.

4.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS & APPROACH

Lilja described that his area of focus has been the behavioral part of the environment, where the main efforts have been placed on leadership in Activity Based Working. This area

2. Flexible office solution without personal desk space, offering fewer desks than total amount of employees relying on a certain number of employees operating out of office

has included supporting managers in the change process and assisting the transformation of ways of working in the new office environment. Lilja stated that the approach from the project side has been that the responsibility of behavioral change amongst the employees lies on the managers. He said that the managers have been highly involved in the discussions on how to move forward along with the extended team, which has functioned as a reference group towards the concept. Lilja furthered that the identified areas concerned with behavioral change were the way people collaborate, managing leadership, and increase self-management, as the environment put additional pressure on structuring and planning. He described that in order to reach the full potential of the environment, there is a need for thought around what task you have, who it should be performed with, and which zone that is best suited for the task. Lilja stated that they organized workshops and lectures to support self-management for those concerned. A change-toolkit was developed for managers to help their groups in transitioning into ABW. The toolkit consists of a number of activities to start discussions regarding the change with the intention of creating awareness and new ways of thinking. Lilja further described that an additional group of ‘ambassadors’ were appointed represented by people who were either early adopters of the change, or took a big interest in the development of the workplace. These persons have also taken a role in communicating and forwarding the change. Regarding the technology, Lilja described that there had been face-to-face IT-training available at the site, complemented with online classes for learning more about how to use the applications. Lilja said that the events gathered a large number of participants.

Lilja explained that the environment itself stimulates collaboration, which has meant that no specific actions or activities have been made from management concerning this area. However, collaboration has been of importance when determining which functions and projects that have been placed on each floor in efforts to keep related operations close to each other. The average ratio of seats per person on each ABW-floor has been counted to 1.8, including the seats in the coffee areas on the floors, as these spaces are part of ABW. On the topic of initiatives to assist in the problem of finding individuals in ABW, Lilja furthered that not much central action has been taken towards specific areas related

to ABW. The idea has been to let the teams decide themselves how they want to solve matters concerning ways of working in the new environment. He pointed out that people feel differently and react differently to changes of this kind, and that it is important to recognize emotions and impacts concerning the change.

Spångberg talked about the involvement with the architectural firm Wingårdhs. The collaboration between the two has been ongoing for many years and there is a common understanding on how things should look and what is required. Spångberg described this as making the rebuild to activity based working a rather easy process. When asking about which spaces Wingårdhs has been involved in, Spångberg described that firm has been involved in most spaces at the site, including the old coffee area³, however not the Coffee lab. In discussing the meaning of the coffee areas on KC3, Spångberg said that it was a way to create space for interaction and thereby meeting outside of each floor. The introduction of laptops at the site 4-5 years ago also played a crucial part in supporting more movement and interactivity around the site.

In discussing how the visual environment has promoted creativity, Spångberg explained that reflecting personal inspiration in the environment is a matter for the employees working on the ABW-floors. He believed that in order to create an efficient workplace, you need to be able to relate to it, and in order to relate to it employees need to create their own expression. Spångberg furthered that it is difficult to apply a common theme on the ABW-floors, as the daily tasks of employees are quite different, which should be reflected. He said that it is definitely permitted to add personal items to the environment, as well as items reflecting a team or a project. When discussing the use of whiteboards as a way of sharing knowledge, Spångberg described that most were taken down in the KD-building during the rebuild, and that they to his knowledge have not been in demand afterwards thus not being reinstated.

In regards to identity, Spångberg said that hopefully identity would appear on the different floors in time. He concluded that the gray and white environment does not cause any disturbances, but it does not provide motivation in the form of

3. Placed next to the Coffee lab on KC3

reminders as to “why we are here” either. You can survive in such an environment because nothing disturbs you, but it is important to have support from personal items relating to performances and accomplishments. Spångberg talked about the positive connotations deriving from awards or future goals, “you need to feel and see that”. He furthered that the environment needs to be intuitive in order to move to the right place for the right task. He believed that if employees keep working in the same manner as before then ABW would not be of much use, as the concept requires another type of decision-making.

Spångberg said that the latest statistics they collected on movement in the environment showed that not much had changed compared to the previous office environments. In asking around incentives for employees to move more frequently he highlighted that it should be in each person’s own interest to be aware of their bodies and minds, and chose

placement according to where they function best for the task at hand. He firmly believed that the loss of time caused by moving would be regained through the optimization that occurs when being in the right environment. He concluded that if the journey of changing behavior will not be made, it would have a negative impact on performance.

In asking about the limited involvement of employees when initially forming the ABW-layout, Spångberg explained that their voices were accounted for through a survey done by Leesman⁴, and due to the extensive nature of the project it was best to keep the planning and decision-making to a smaller group of persons. He furthered that the implementation of ABW on remaining floors had been postponed as further evaluation needs be made in adapting to the new workflow requirements.

4.3 INTERVIEWS ON EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

It was common that the persons who told me that they had work tasks that made them move around frequently had an easier time adapting to the change, whilst persons who told me that they had work tasks requiring a high level of focus

sure on effectiveness and finding relevant people. Persons describing themselves as introverted often described the environment as more exhausting.



Context: I have a highly interactive work role where I continuously move around and talk to different people. I was often sitting in different areas before the change as well.

Feeling: It is nice to see so many persons around me, I like the openness and the visibility. I feel comfortable in talkative spaces. It was easy to adapt to this environment.



Context: I need to concentrate, my work tasks demand high focus and they become difficult to perform when I am disturbed frequently. I often sit for many hours with the same task, accuracy is very important.

Feeling: This environment makes me stressed and bothered at times. I feel like it is difficult to focus. I wish I had access to a secluded personal space. I feel more tired at the end of the work day.

and spent much time in front of a screen often expressed difficulties with the movement. It was also mentioned that it could be challenging when experiencing higher levels of stress based on upcoming deliveries that put additional pres-

Everyone I spoke to told me that they could function in the new ways of working. How well they experienced themselves to function differed. The more common answer was “it works”.

4. A survey on how the space was utilized previous to the change to establish the different activities performed in a workday (AstraZeneca, 2016).

“I don’t want to say that this is the best I have ever experienced, but it is no disaster either compared to open-plan office or private offices



“I think it’s fun”
“It works pretty well”

“It works. I don’t know how well it works, but it works”

“For me it is perfect since I interact with so many people”

“You need to survive in your workplace”

“It works. It worked better before, without any effort, but it works”

4.3.1 INITIAL PROCESS

When talking about the decision process, people expressed that this type of decision is normally made by a secluded group, however it was pointed out by some that it could have been beneficial to be part of the initial layout, and that it could have saved some of the problems that were connected to the first launch at KC2. There was a rational approach to the decision itself described as that given the circumstances it had to be made and “*we need to make the best of it*”. Since the change concerned so many parts of the everyday working life, it was described that there were concerns before the change, wondering how things would turn out, where they would store all their papers, and if they would be able to work properly in the new setting.

I was told that plenty of information had been sent out on the change. It was described as a very active approach to ensure that all employees concerned were informed, but due to time constraints many only participated in one, or none of the public meetings offered on the topic. However, I was told that participating in discussions within the group functions was common. There were some who experienced the initial communication on ABW as only targeting positive outcomes presented from a management angle instead of an employee angle. This was described as not disclosing the full picture, and glorifying the concept. I was told that articles were spread showing the downsides of the concept to provide another side of it. People described some basic rules to be set in the environment (see appendix 4), for example to not leave items by a seat if away for more than one hour, and not to bring food to your seat. Employees told me that these rules were not completely followed, as they did not fit with how you function in your daily work life. Another comment was that “*the rules strangle creativity*”.

When asking about the perception of the idea behind the new concept, the answer was that it was based on a decision to close down two office buildings, a financial matter of fitting more persons in less space, and then this concept was chosen. The concept itself was described as that you have different zones to choose from depending on your tasks and that you have the freedom to move around. The intentions of collaboration and creativity had been picked up on, and some experienced this environment as opening up for more conversations. However, the idea of randomly ending up in conversations with new people was by some perceived as a bit of a simplification of interactions. The creativity aspect was not described as clearly connected to the concept.

When I asked about the feedback boards seen in the office space people told me that they had noticed changes, giving examples of more desks and screens being added. Some people also told me that the communication around what would be approached and not out of the things that had been noted it was a bit unclear. One person made the comment that “*if you write on the board, you do not know if anyone is even reading it*”. The people I spoke to who had brought forward ideas but heard nothing back experienced a feel of loss of motivation to invest time in giving feedback.

4.3.2 IMPACTING FACTORS FOR FLEXIBILITY

Many experienced the distribution of different seats as fairly well balanced. The structure of the environment was interpreted as general and it was described that it could be troublesome, as the environment does not always match the variation of ways of working. For some it fit well whilst others had a hard time adapting. One person expressed that “*you have an environment so you have to make it work for you,*

instead of creating an environment that works for different people". Many of the persons I spoke to highlighted that people are different and have different needs, and that for people with an introvert personality-type this concept can be difficult to adjust to. In asking the follow-up question "but isn't the idea of the different zones to have a place for every work task?" to an interviewee, the answer was *"I think that is a simplification of how you think different people work, concentrate and become engaged"*.

The KD-building was described as better suited for ABW in relation to floor plan, the structure of the space made it possible to get a sense of who was present in the office. When talking about the space, one person said that it was surprising to see how many others that were sitting on the floor when having a gathering in the coffee area for different events, as you did not notice it during the workday. It was said that this concept works well for fitting a lot of people in less space.

When asking about the technical part of the environment, most said that it worked fairly well and not much had changed with the new concept. Cables for charging and portable loudspeakers for conference calls had been added. Persons who were often in conference calls told me that they sometimes went into one of the larger conference rooms because the portable loudspeakers did not always provide the best sound quality. Those with special needs for keyboards etc., told me that they found a place to store their equipment in the office space because they were too large to carry around. The network was said to function well most of the time but it was described that when problems appear they become more present since you connect and disconnect more often in ABW. Several told me that they were getting more acquainted with applications for planning and structuring as a result of the clean desk-principle, giving the example of OneNote. The clean desk was by many seen as an

uplift, the environment was perceived as more calm and inviting. Some told me that they had noticed that many of the papers previously stored were not needed, and that they had gotten more organized. There was however those who told me that the transition was hard, a certain level of comfort in keeping track of work flow and a sense of order was associated with papers. One person described to me that the papers gave associations to research, carrying a symbolic meaning.

Most I spoke to who had a history of a bad back or other matters related to ergonomics had a hard time with the concept of moving around. It was related to that spending the extra time on making new settings at every new placement impacted the sense of efficiency, and was not considered feasible. This was a common perception amongst the people I spoke to, but most persons without these problems said that they did not make the settings very often. People with adapted chairs told me that they put nametags on them, and stored the chairs somewhere in the environment and then dragged them to the desk when arriving in the morning. I was told that these nametags were not always read, and that someone else at times grab the chair. One comment towards previous handling of ergonomics was that *"it was wonderful to arrive at your own office and having a professional who checked your screen, glasses and office chair"*, another person also talked about missing the benefit of having an ergonomically adapted personal chair.

Efficiency was a reoccurring topic, where many of the interviewees felt that they lost time whilst packing and unpacking, and connecting and disconnecting. Work was described as suffering primarily when having a short amount of time between meetings. Starting new work tasks on these occasions was experienced as more problematic as the time spent to set up equipment only to pack it back down a short while later reduced the operational time and created a disruption in



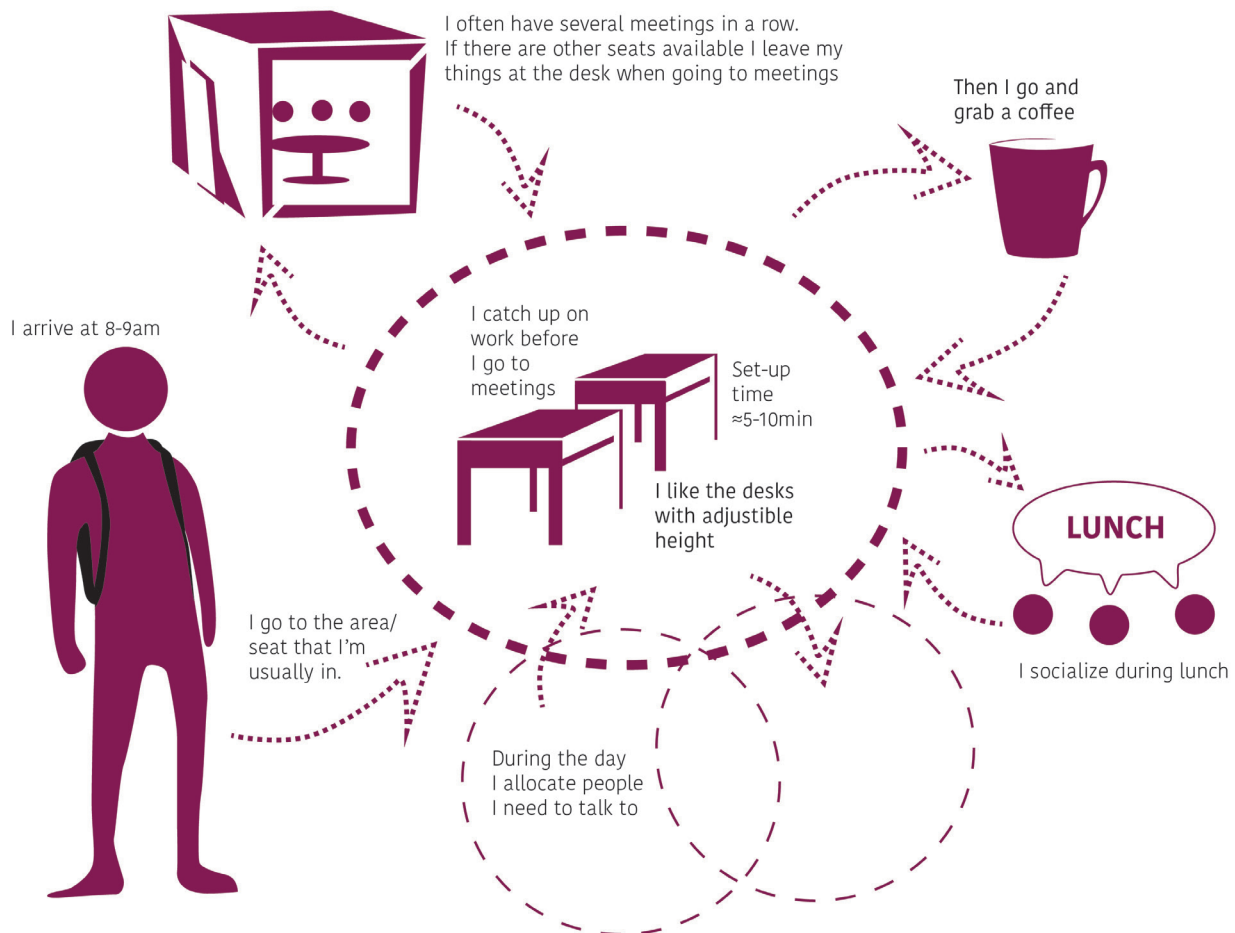
Context: I have a delivery and my calendar is filled with meetings. I need to work efficiently in between to get things done. My focus is on work and work alone. I just need to find a proper place fast where I can sit and do my tasks. What I need right now is for everything to be in place and function, there is no time for anything else.

Feeling: Am I expected to spend time on moving and making settings? I cannot be doing that, I have work to do. I don't consider this to be feasible. I am already strained with all the things I need to focus on.

focus. It was also described that the time of getting started in the morning and leaving in the evening had been extended and you had to keep that in mind. On the other end a few said that since the environment requires you to plan more, it creates a sense of being more efficient.

An example of a workday based on stories told is seen in image 4:10

Img 4:10



We spoke about the movement, and how often people move. People with flexible work roles said that they moved around frequently. Amongst others I was often told that you tend to sit in approximately the same area and quite commonly, also in the same spot. The description was that you move if a person seated in another area requests assistance or a discussion. Some said that they at times utilize the quiet areas. The smaller rooms would be used frequently if spending a lot of time in telephone conferences. Interviewees described where they were sitting, pointing at their main area and why

they chose a certain area or seat. The descriptions often talked about persons they work with tightly that sat next to them, or gave me descriptions of how light, sound and windows impacted their level of comfort by certain seats. Comments were made on that some arrive early due to feelings of stress of perhaps not getting the seat you want. Many interviewees stated that their perception was that colleagues also often stay in the same area. One person made the comment that

“it is a moving environment but it is a static moving environment, you move in clusters, you move in herds. You tend to go with the people that you work with as much as possible”.

When diving deeper into the topic of why people remain in the same area, the following reasons and elaborations were pointed out:

Moving around takes too much time:

All items must be collected and packaged, the computer needs to be disconnected and reconnected, the ergonomic settings for desk, chair and screen must be adjusted at every new seat. The result is the feeling of inefficiency and stress.

**The team sits in a specific area:**

Teammates tend to choose the same area in order to collaborate better. You want to stay close to the persons relevant to your work tasks. A comment was “like when I needed to work with this guy, who have always been sitting in the exact same place ever since we moved here, that has determined my choice of seating too”

Security:

Not knowing if, or what type of seat will be available cause a feeling of loss of security. As a result you keep your seat throughout the day.

Temperature, lighting and sound:

Some choose a seat based on preferences regarding factors of light, heat and sound in order to work properly with few disturbances. Some individuals are more heavily impacted by such factors in order to perform, thus if an optimized seat is found, this seat will be kept.

In relation to losing personal space, the role of identity became an area of discussion. I asked how you find identity in a moving environment, and it was expressed as having evolved to a stronger social belonging to teams and peers, and the feeling of being at home on your own floor. One person put it as “*you shape some kind of culture where you sit*”. Another comment regarding staying in the same area of the floor was “*I still try to create some kind of personal space within the framework provided*”. Regarding group belonging, one person made a metaphor describing it as “*It is like when you go to the square in town. The identity you are going to have there is with the people you are there with*”. A few people told me that you could disappear in ABW, as it is never fully clear where you sit. It was mentioned that this brought a concern for if a co-worker is not feeling well it will be easy to hide.

4.3.3 IMPACTING FACTORS FOR COLLABORATION & INTERACTION

When talking about interaction, some told me that since more people shares the same space, more people are in movement, which leads to more encounters. I was told that “*the intention is that you should see people, and you do*” and “*I think*

you make contact with more people with this concept, you say hi and talk to people that you’ve almost never spoken to before”. Around half of the interviewees who I discussed the matter of interaction with said to have experienced a positive effect based on more spontaneous conversations and/or ability to sit with team members. It was also mentioned that this at times resulted in booking less meetings. There were many that experienced a negative effect caused by disturbances regarding conversations that are seen as irrelevant to their work, or through the loss of connection to co-workers, which also in turn led to booking more meetings. This was also related to a common problem of not knowing where people are seated, or others not knowing where you are seated. I was told that you interact with approximately the same people as before due to the nature of the work tasks, or being placed with the same persons as in previous office environments. Different cultures were said to be noticed on different floors, primarily manifesting as how you socialize. A few comments were made regarding missing whiteboards or space to visualize ideas, thoughts and notes on work tasks. These comments concerned both lack of whiteboards as well as missing space or board where you can put things up for a longer period of time. One person told me that whiteboards also gave a feel of science.

When talking about the utilization of the different areas, many said that the collaborative zones were not used much, some even said “*they are never used*”. When asking why, reasons were described as it being too open, as well as just not being used to having that type of area in the office space. Brief conversations were held by the desk and otherwise you would be in a booked meeting room. One person said that it is common to call in external participants to meetings, which brought a need for an enclosed meeting space. In the KC-building the collaborative zone was described as being a

on occasions told that: “*I am not bothered by other persons talking, but I am worried that I bother others if I talk*”. Some told me that they were confused about what level of sound was allowed in the different spaces. On the opposite side, persons that had a hard time disconnecting from on-going conversations expressed that they were more easily disturbed by small talk in the open areas. A few people told me that over-hearing relevant conversations was sometimes useful, but that it made them lose focus on the current task at hand.



Context: I see people more, the visibility helps me to get used to the faces around me and opens up for more conversations.

Feeling: It's nice to be sociable but it is often not really related to my work.

bit separated from the other wings making it a bit of a detour to go there. The area that people talked about in regards to open group conversations was the Coffee lab, and general interactions were often said to take place in the coffee areas on the floors.

When discussing personal items at work, the people I spoke to said that they did not miss having those type of things at their desks as it is not related to work, “*I do not need them*”. They made a clear separation between personal life and work life. It should however be noted that a few of the interviewees mentioned that they had spoken to people who had said that they missed having personal items around them. A framed team picture was encountered in the coffee area on KD3 one morning. When asking about it the answer was that it probably belonged to an old team. I asked if items like this was missed in the ABW environment, and the person answered that it would be strange to place such items in the environment as it would reflect a sense of having claimed the space, which could make persons from other teams feel unwelcome. Most people that I spoke to about placing team pictures or similar in the office environment were unsure of if it was allowed or appropriate for this reason.

Some said that the environment was very quiet, and I was

In regards to moving to other floors, most interviewees told me that they tend to stay on their own floor. When asking why, one comment was “*I am not that free. I need to feel that belonging, the physical [belonging], absolutely*”. Another interviewee who tried sitting in another building pointed out that “*when you enter you feel a bit like a guest*”, and commented on that it takes a while to get familiar with new areas and people. I met a few persons who moved because they worked with people on other floors, and one person moved to another floor on occasions to get away from disturbing conversations. Others told me that the idea of having the whole building as your workplace is good, but that they had not yet utilized it. People had tried to figure out how to best function in ABW. On KD3 one remark was made concerning that the entire floor has adopted a more quiet open space environment as most need a high level of concentration for their work tasks, and that they use their quiet spaces for loud conversations.

In relation to not finding co-workers in the environment, I was told that the habit of instinctively looking for co-workers by foot was difficult to get rid of and also that being able to just to stop by someone's desk was missed. If a person could not be found by physically looking for them, Skype or email would be used. I was told by two of my interviewees

that writing the area you are seated in next to your name on Skype was an emerging trend in parts of the office environment. The digital interactions were by some experienced as less inviting to spontaneous conversations, one person described it as “a higher threshold” to send an email rather than talking to someone you meet in person.

alone, whilst others needed other persons to engage with in order to feel creative. One person told me that the feeling of being creative comes when disrupting the work with something else. The person described that doing something with your hands creates another type of engagement, giving the example of taking part in volunteer days. I was told that the



Context: I need to find a person for a brief question. I have always just gone to the person's desk. It's nice to take a walk. Now I'm not sure where to find the person though.

Feeling: I need to change habits but it's hard. It was nice just to swing by. Now I need to go on a quest, I'm not even sure what the description I received on Skype means...

4.3.4 DISCUSSING FACTORS FOR CREATIVITY

In order to understand how employees view creativity, the questions “what is creativity to you” and “when do you feel creative” were asked.

When people told me what creativity is to them they talked about spontaneity, creating new things, and finding new combinations. It was also described in terms of freedom, novelty, co-creation and change. One person explained creativity as a new way of solving something, seeing things from a new perspective and finding new ways forward. An experience of feeling more creative in groups when sharing ideas and thoughts was expressed, but then being provided with time and space to reflect on things that had been discussed. One person mentioned that the new office environment becomes inspiring because of the flow of people you have around you. There was also a difference in personality types where some felt more creative when they were left

patients “*are very far away here*”, referring to the physical distance to the people you are helping in the office environment. Diversity was brought up as a factor for bringing new perspectives, as well as sharing your ideas and being challenged on them to let them evolve. It was mentioned that creativity flourished best in an environment that is without prestige. One person highlighted AstraZeneca Mölndal as a very creative site, saying that “*If you have ideas and thoughts then they are always received extremely well, and if there seems to be anything useful in what you say, then I find that there are highly serious attempts to explore it further*”. Some of the comments on creativity are stated below.

Some persons were lacking a space to work, think and reflect in an undisturbed environment. Examples given on solving that need were taking a walk in the building, working late after most have gone home for the day, or simply just work from home on occasions. I was told that some people ‘camp out’ for a full day in the smaller meeting rooms, in relation

“Research. [...] That is why I am here, that is what I like to do, that is where I find joy



“I think certain people makes me creative”

“Thinking new thoughts, reading new things, talking to new people”

“Creativity is more about being spontaneous”

“Making something that is perceived to be unproductive and make it productive”

“When I take two things that I know and combine them into a third”

“Imagination”

“When I get time and space to think”

to that one person said that the multi-seat quiet rooms need more promotion. One person said that the bad air quality made the multi-seat quiet rooms in the KD-building less attractive. I was told that the idea with the smaller meeting rooms is that you need to have a specific work task that requires you to be there, otherwise you should not be sitting there. One person said that a manager had specifically banned the person from sitting in solitary rooms. Another person told me that you may book a solitary room for a full day to sit in an enclosed environment and work, however you may only book a room for one day at the time.

People often described the interior on the ABW-floors as pleasant, relaxing and fresh. In the KD-building the common answer regarding colors was that there were not any colors to be commented on. Many wished for more colors and plants, primarily in the coffee areas that were described as not feeling very cozy and not very inviting. One comment on KD3 was that “*you simply grab a coffee there since you have to and then leave*”. In the KC-building one person mentioned that the accent colors were nice, but that there are too many flow charts rather than other visual stimuli. One person said “*you have this kind of steady connections between the experience of things, and for me the office space is more about work to be done and concentrating*“. The person furthered that “*it’s nice but it’s still office style, that probably makes you automatically think in the area of job tasks*” also stating the Coffee lab as the most creative environment at the site as it is different and more inspirational. Others said that colors and design of space have no impact on them, and that they did not reflect on it. However, many said that they appreciate going to the Coffee lab due to the change in atmosphere and the feel of being in an inner-city café. Some of the interviewees also described that they moved from very worn-down office buildings, and that the change to new and renovated environments meant a big uplift in comfort in the office space.

4.4 OBSERVATIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The observations have been categorized according to the main intentions of the office concept.

4.4.1 FLEXIBILITY

The zones stated below have been color-coded according to the floor plan (see image 4:11):

Individual work (do not disturb)
Individual work (do not mind brief interruptions)
Collaboration/meeting 2 persons
Collaboration/meeting 3-6 persons
Collaboration/meeting +7 persons
Social/relax

Img 4:11

The individual work (do not disturb) represent the quiet zones, the individual work with brief interruptions represent the open-plan office style, also referred to as the medium-quiet zone, the three following collaboration segments consist of meeting rooms, and the collaborative open zone. The social/relax segment represents the coffee area. There was an image of the floor plan displaying the different areas on each floor. The following main areas and guiding principles were found on a board in the showroom for ABW placed between the KC and KD buildings:

Physical Environment: Stimulate creativity, allow space to think, room for lively collaborations, and being a sustainable workspace

Virtual environment: High-class IT infrastructure, virtual sharing of information, wireless solutions, and IT technology at the forefront

Behavioral environment: high-performing teams, simple ways of working, cross-functional collaborations, and innovative and entrepreneurial mindset

Definitions of the new terms in the environment were stated as:

Anchor point: Where I have a personal locker to store my computer, bags and other private items

Team storage: Functional shelves where we storage binders, reference literature and other items referred to my

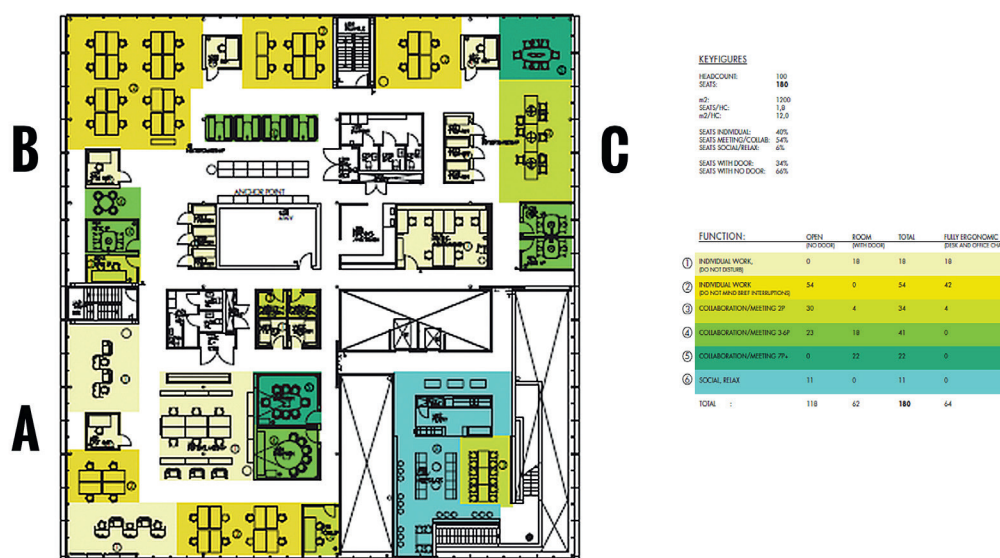
function or team

Clean desk policy: Whenever I leave a seat for the day, I make sure it is clean from any paper, coffee cups and private items.

Images and illustrations from the environment can be seen in Appendix 5.

The KD-building is a newly built building made for an open-plan office environment giving a clean and fresh expression. The walls of the building consist of glass windows providing a very bright office environment. There is an open structure inside the building around the coffee areas, connecting visually and sound-wise to all floors. The layout of the KD-floors consists of three quadrants, A, B and C, and a coffee area. The division of the zones is seen in image 4:12. The square-shaped layout of the floors gave an open impression and made it easy to move around.

Img 4:12



The physical space on KD3 and KD4 did not offer a large variety of colors, as can be seen in the color scheme (see section 4.4.1.1). All zones had the same primary colors of white and gray and approximately the same type of furniture, no visual separation between zones was detected. Two types of furniture stood out from the standard desks and meeting-tables, referred to as the ‘train compartment’ furniture and the ‘snake-type’ furniture. The ‘train compartment’ style furniture were gray cushioned couches with high framing, facing each other and attaching at the far end, creating a small, secluded space as if one were in a train compartment, offering

some sound protection (see Appendix 5). In the middle of each ‘train compartment’ there was a table with sockets. The ‘snake’ type furniture was a gray cushioned furniture with high frames that were bent, set in rows and placed in opposite directions next to each other creating a wave-shape (see Appendix 5). Some of the furniture contained a seat for reading, and some contained a desk space. The amount of space within the furniture was quite limited and made for one person. Both these types of furniture were found on KC4 as well. In the ‘low part’ of KC4 there were couches similar to the train compartment-style furniture in the color red. The train compartment furniture were observed to be used quite frequently, the snake-type furniture was observed being used on 4 instances during my time in the environments. Both these type of furniture were placed in the semi-quiet desk areas. On all floors there was a feedback-system of some

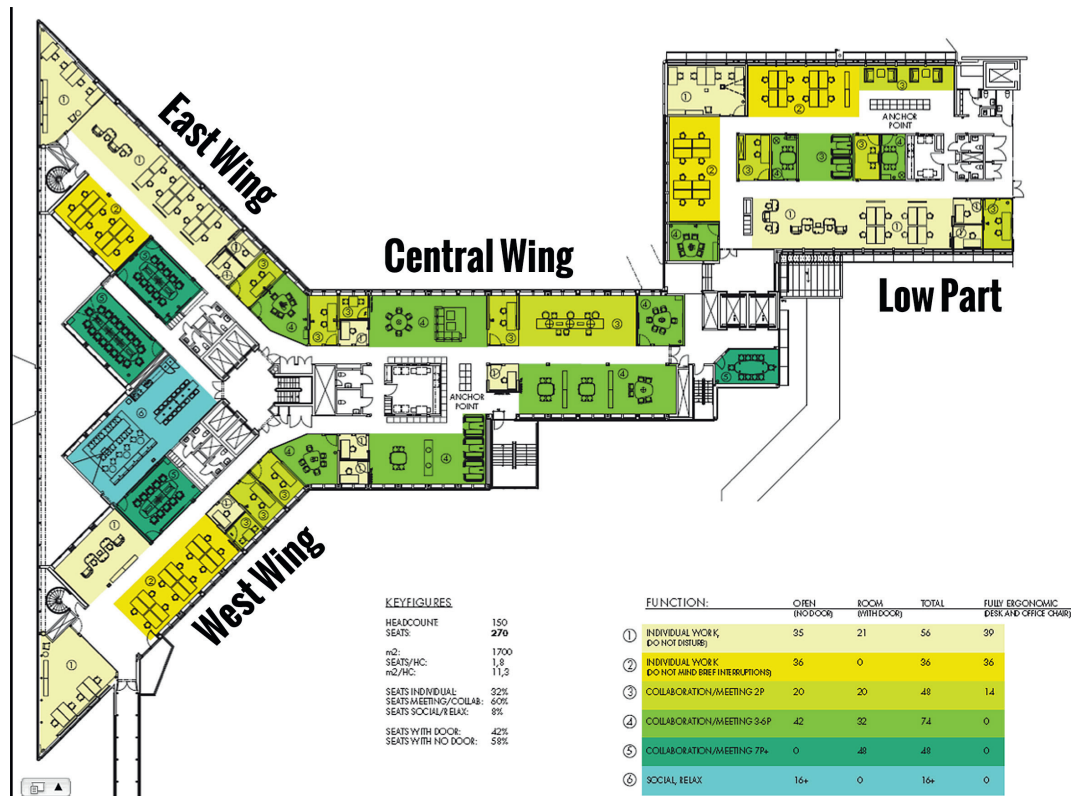
sort regarding Activity Based Working. On KD3 and KD5, there was a board for writing. On KD4, there was a box for leaving notes. A guide to ergonomic settings in the form of a pamphlet was found on all floors. Subtle artwork was found on two of the walls on KD3, as well as on KD4. The collaborative area on KD4 contained a sculpture and an exercise ball. A contrast was found on KD5, where there were more colors and more art on the walls. The coffee area on KD5 had a red accent wall in difference to the other KD-floors, and also contained more ornaments and plants.

The clean desk principle was followed on all floors. The appearance was clean on all unused seats. The technical environment offered screens and keyboards on all seats, quite often double-screens. All meeting rooms appeared to have equipment for conference calls. On one instance I observed an employee encountering difficulties in the form of lost connection when starting up a Skype-call. The person explained that using a cable instead of the wireless network for Internet connection had been said to provide better speed, however that meant losing connection when moving. This was something that was described as easy to forget when in need of shifting placement quickly, e.g. to engage in a Skype-call and moving into a meeting room, and also causing loss of time whilst connecting and disconnecting.

wing and Central wing. All wings are placed in the high part. There is also a coffee area serving both parts of the floor, but a coffee machine was also placed in the low part. The division of the zones are seen in image 4:13.

The physical separation created some disconnection between different areas. The low level was the most secluded and felt more detached as passing by a staircase was needed to reach the area. The mid area had been made into the collaborative zone, which can be seen as a natural meeting-point if moving around between areas. At the end of the East and West wing, a separation has been made towards the outer parts of the spaces to create the quiet zones. KC4 had more color features compared to the floors in the KD-building, primarily

Img 4:13



The KC-building is a slightly older building, which initially contained private offices. It was later rebuilt for open-plan office environment. The building is slightly less bright compared to the KD-building. All floors consist of two parts, the 'high part' (sv. Högdal) and the 'low part' (sv. Lågdal). An aisle and a staircase separate these parts. The layout of the high part on the floor consist of three wings, East wing, West

ly in the Central wing and the coffee area, as can be seen in the color scheme (see section 4.4.1.1). KC4 had a fairly big collection of art on the walls. Close to all meeting rooms on this floor required booking organized by a calendar outside each room.

The desk areas in the semi-quiet zones were the most used.

The flow of the movement differed as regular meeting-hours would occur and many would leave the desks. The common behavior observed was that items were left at the desk. Empty desks were during the time of these observations always available somewhere on the floor. During my observations, most persons were observed to stay in the same seat when doing tasks by the desk during their working day. A few individuals brought items with them when moving for a meeting. Persons interviewed would mostly be found in the area they had stated to primarily be seated in during the interview. On one instance one person was briefly under the impression of being on the wrong floor when spotting me in a seat in the semi-quiet desk area where the person normally sits. Some movement between floors was encountered, I met two individuals who said that they often moved to another floor, they told me that they knew people on these floors and worked together with them. Meeting rooms appeared to always be accessible somewhere on the floor in the KD-building. Meeting rooms also appeared accessible on KC4, but when taking a closer look at the booking list outside of the rooms they were most often booked beforehand. On several occasions rooms were seen empty, however registered as booked thus leaving a question around accessibility.

Chairs with nametags were detected on all floors, sometimes grouped in a specific parts of the floor. These chairs were for persons with special ergonomic needs. Persons were observed searching for their chairs and dragging them around to intended seating.

As my observations during my time on the ABW-floors suggested a lower use of the collaborative zones and the multi-seating quiet zones, a more organized type of observation of presence in these areas was made. The data collection provided an indication of how well the zones were used. Chart 4:14 display the data on employees seated in the collaborative areas on all floors where the y-axis shows number of individuals and the x-axis show the time of observation.

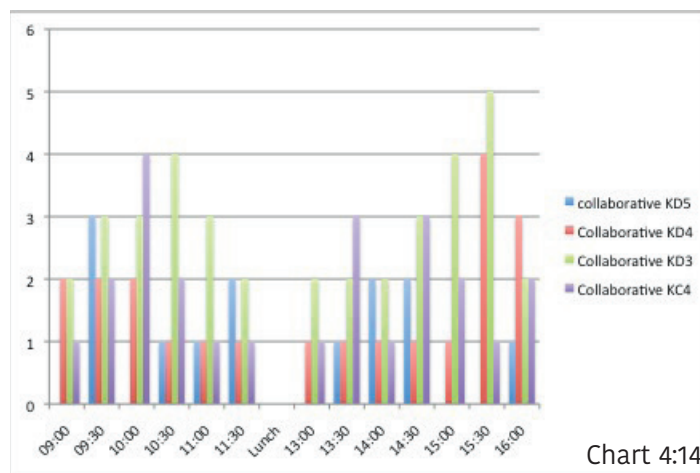


Chart 4:14

This data shows a lower rate of activity in the collaborative zones, however the employees at KD3 were seen to use it more during the time of these observations. What this table does not reveal is that on 11 of the 13 observation rounds at KD3, several or all employees seated in the collaborative zone were doing individual work. This way of working was seen on all floors when several individuals were seated in the collaborative zones. As can be seen on the chart, there are multiple occasions on KD4, KD5 and KC4 where persons were found sitting alone in the collaborative zone.

The quiet zones appeared to be more frequently occupied on KC4 compared to the KD-floors as can be seen in chart 4:15. The structure gave the impression of that the quiet zones on KC4 used to be part of the open floor plan. These rooms had the same feel as the open space outside the room and had windows providing light (see Appendix 5). The quiet rooms found on the KD-floors were placed in an inner part of the floor with no direct sunlight, although being built with a glass-wall structure allowing light to enter.

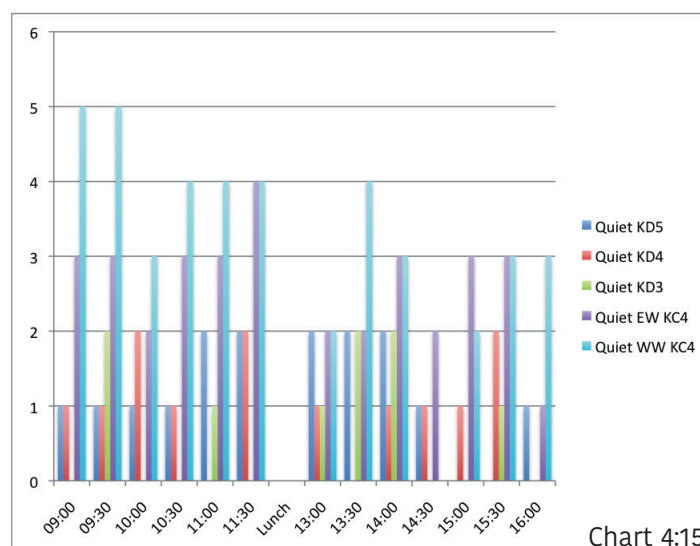
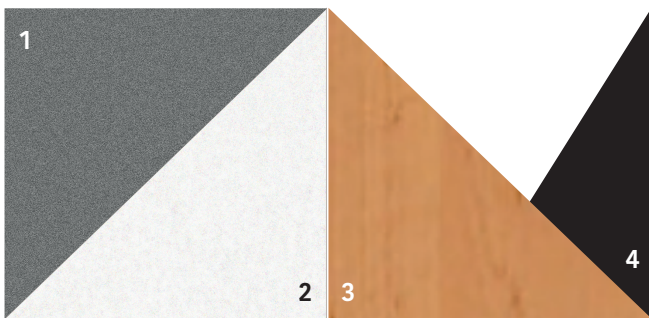


Chart 4:15

4.4.1.1 Visual Expression: Color-scheme

These are the general colors observed in the different areas on the ABW-floors with a description of approximately where they are seen. The colors are presented to give a sense of the visual expression of the spaces. The Coffee lab has been included, as it has been re-occurring in conversations as an environment for collaborative activities and open meetings.

PRIMARY, KD3

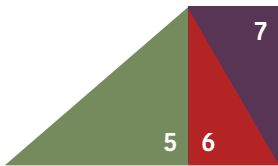


- 1. Carpets, kitchen, curtains, furniture
- 2. Walls, ceiling, lamps, tables
- 3. Floor, structure
- 4. Chairs, tables, details, lamps

Coffee Area

- 5. Couch
- 6. Cushions, blanket
- 7. Cushions

SECONDARY, Coffee Area, KD3



SECONDARY, Quadrant C, KD3



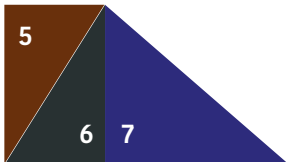
Quadrant A&B

- 5. Chairs (snake)
- 6. Chairs
- 7. Chairs

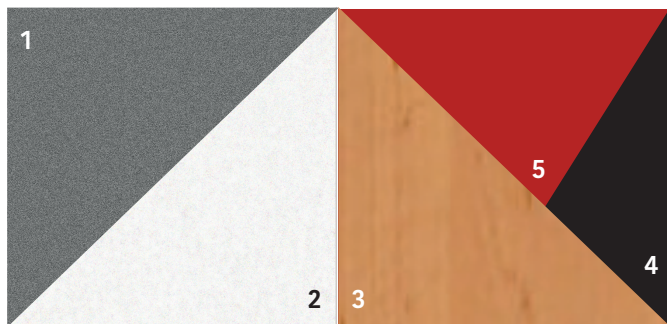
Quadrant C

- 5. Chairs (meeting room)
- 6. Chairs

SECONDARY, Quadrant A & B, KD3



PRIMARY, Coffee Area KD5



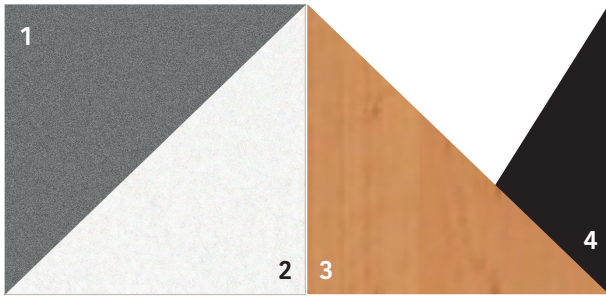
- 1. Floor, walls, kitchen, couch, chairs
- 2. Walls, ceiling
- 3. Floor, structure
- 4. Chairs, table, lamps, cushions
- 5. Accent wall, blanket

- 6. Cushions
- 7. Cushions
- 8. Cushions
- 9. Cushions

SECONDARY, COFFEE AREA, KD5



PRIMARY, Office Areas KD5

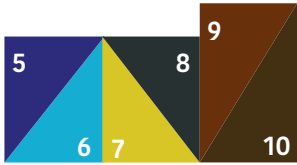


1. Floor, walls, kitchen, couch, chairs
2. Walls, ceiling
3. Floor, structure
4. Chairs, tables

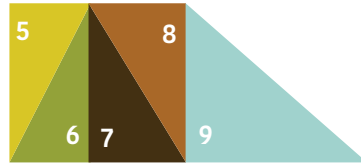
Quadrant A&B

5. Chairs, storage
6. Chairs (meeting rooms)
7. Storage
8. Chairs
9. Chairs
10. Table

SECONDARY, QUADRANT A&B, KD5



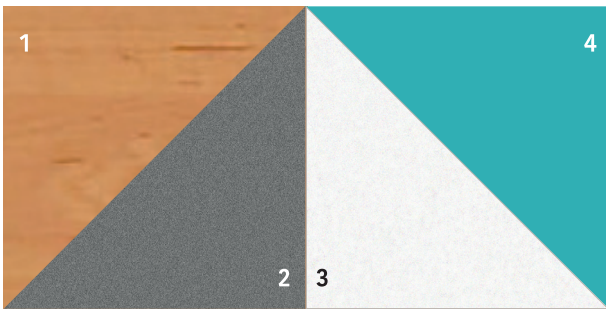
SECONDARY, QUADRANT C, KD5



Quadrant C

5. Chairs (meeting rooms)
6. Chairs (meeting rooms)
7. Table
8. Table
9. Chairs

PRIMARY, Coffee Area KC4



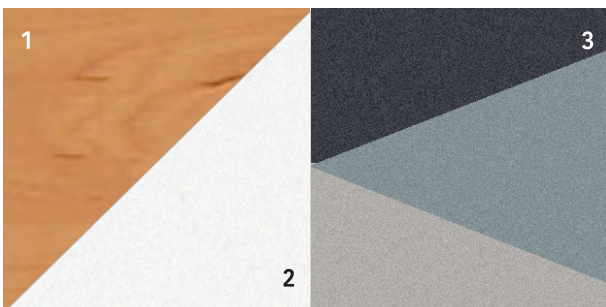
1. Floor, walls, kitchen, table
2. Floor
3. Walls, ceiling, lamps, tables
4. Couches

5. Stools
6. Stools
7. Storage
8. Whiteboard

SECONDARY, COFFEE AREA, KC4



PRIMARY, Office Areas KC4



1. Walls, table, storage
2. Walls, ceiling, lamps, curtains
3. Carpet

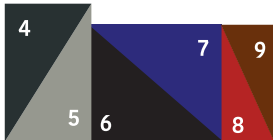
Central Wing

4. Chairs
5. Whiteboard
6. Storage
7. Chairs
8. Chairs
9. Chairs
10. Whiteboard
11. Storage
12. Storage
13. Chairs

SECONDARY, CENTRAL WING, KC4



SECONDARY, EAST WING, KC4



SECONDARY, WEST WING, KC4



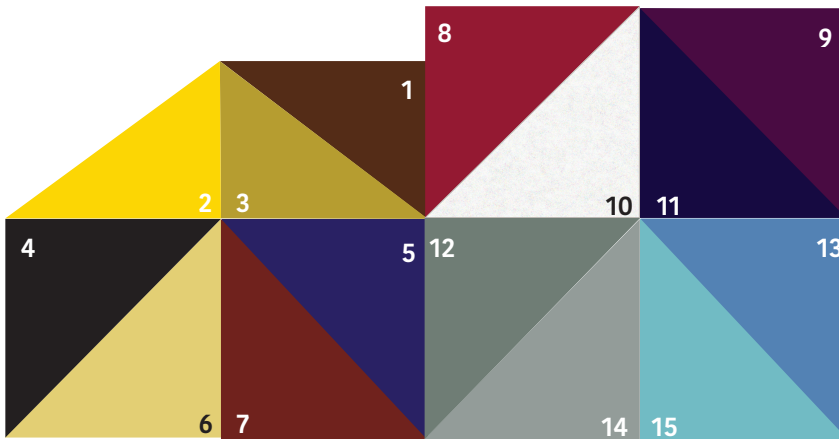
East Wing

4. Chairs
5. Snake-seats, whiteboards, chairs
6. Chairs
7. Chairs
8. Lamp, chairs
9. Chairs (snake)

West Wing

4. Chairs
5. Snake-seats, chairs
6. Chairs
7. Chairs
8. Chairs (meeting room)
9. Whiteboard, chairs (meeting room)
10. Telephone/solitary booths

Coffee Lab



1. Large table
2. Couches
3. Cushions
4. Chairs, table, lamps
5. Exercise mat
6. Tables, walls, lamp, floor
7. Curtains
8. Wall, blankets
9. Cushions, lamps, couches
10. Lamps, chairs, walls
11. Stools, couches
12. Floor, walls, couch, ceiling
13. Couches
14. Cushions, walls, curtains
15. Stools, couches

4.4.2 COLLABORATION

When I took a seat in one of the semi-quiet desk areas, the person seated next to me would normally greet me. On two out of the four floors, several employees also greeted me as I moved around the floor before knowing who I was. During the time of my study there were several instances where I overheard matters relating to ABW being discussed in the coffee areas, and an article criticizing open-style office environments was found on the dining table in the coffee area on one of the floors on my first day in the office buildings.

The overall sound level on the floors was fairly silent with brief interruptions of discussions. On some floors these dis-

cussions were louder, on others they would be whispering. In some of the open desk areas there would be more interactions and more casual conversations connected to the jargon amongst the employees sitting there. KD3 was overall the most quiet floor, appearing careful of not disturbing others or being loud. More loud conversations in the office space were encountered on KD5. The sound level varied on KC4, but plenty of small-talk was noted. Movement between desks for conversations with persons were observed and noted as common on all floors. The main part of vibrant and ad hoc-discussion were seen to take place in the coffee areas on each floor. Common breakfasts were noticed on all floors, appearing to attract many persons. Not many collaborative or sharing tools were seen in the environment other than

technical props for telephone conferences and large screens in some of the meeting rooms. Individual screens were found by the large table in the collaborative zones on all floors except KD3. On KC4 there were brightly colored whiteboards attached to the wall in some areas, which at the time of this study did not display any drawings or hand-written notes but some displayed papers such as articles or maps. In one of the wings there were traditional mobile whiteboards, which displayed notes and information. Whiteboards were not seen in any of the open areas in the KD-building.

In most areas on KC4 there were a few artifacts in the form of awards and vases. A microscope was found in the Central wing. Flowcharts and work-related prints were also seen on several walls. On KD4 and KD5 there were large papers taped to the walls of the collaborative areas displaying work-related matters. The space on KD3 had close to no personal expression representing the employees working there, whilst a couple of personalized artifacts in the form of awards or decoration could be seen on KD4. There was a poster on the wall behind the coffee area with the company values and also a poster of employees working on the floor. KD5 gave a visual expression of being more inhabited through displaying artifacts in the form of awards and personalized team-bound expressions, for example a LEGO-style box with the text “Build your own pharma” made by Clinical Operations placed in the mail and printing area, and postcards and pictures from team-events in the open-office desk areas. On each table on KD5 there were condiments as a result of collective monetary contribution to an employee who had taken upon her to purchase them for the benefit of the individuals working on the floor. The collaborative zone contained plants and awards.

The Coffee lab, which is not a part of the ABW concept, was described as a common place for open meetings. The café is placed in the central area of the main KC-building on floor 3 that provides a different kind of environment. Its design offers features contrasting the office environment, e.g. displayed by a thick mat and gymnastic rings, also providing a modern look through the design of the furniture and lamps (see image 4:16). It has couches, stools and chairs, and curtains and furniture offers a sense of secluded spaces whilst still being open and accessible. The colors are deep and dark

(see section 4.4.1.1).



Image 4:16

4.4.3 CREATIVITY

Looking at the division of spaces in the ABW-environment, most seats were in the open areas. Persons were observed working solitary in smaller rooms. The environment appeared to support interactions and overhearing conversations that happened close by. The spaces where it would be possible to sit and reflect on ideas without being disturbed were the smaller meeting rooms.

The visual expression did not provide much variation in the KD-building. The environment gave a very calm, bright and soft impression. No clear theme was seen in the different zones on KC4, but rather a bit of everything in a range of accent colors. Some difference was seen in the Central wing where there were more accent colors and slightly different furniture in the form of couches. The office environments in both buildings did not seem to extensively reflect the field of pharmaceuticals. Apart from the awards, few elements of research-related inspiration were seen on the ABW-floors, with the exception of one microscope found in the central wing on KC4 and the fun LEGO-box on KD5. This was a contrast to the public spaces in the KC-building, where artifacts reflecting the work conducted at the site were found in many places.

5. ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Krippendorff (1989) describes design as a sense-making activity. Through applying the design mindset of creating a more holistic view (Martin & Dunne, 2006; Stephens & Boland, 2014), this chapter is about making sense of a change implementation through the use of human experience to understand how it has evolved. As many factors have an impact in creating an experience (Benz, 2015), this analysis will approach the complexity of correlations. In order to answer the main question of *How are the intentions of flexibility, collaboration and creativity experienced by the employees in an early phase of implementation within the concept of Activity Based Working?* we first need to expand on the purpose with this change, i.e. the “why?”.

5.1 CONTEXTUALIZING

Following Dawson’s (2003) guidance for contextualizing to understand the process of a change implementation, the factors that has brought on the change, the corporate culture and the decision and implementation process has been investigated. In order to understand the current situation and how the experience may have been impacted, the concerned areas will now be approached, analyzed and discussed. Starting with the bigger picture, this implementation was a strategic decision, not only made to decrease cost but to change the culture towards becoming more innovative by implementing an office environment aimed at promoting flexibility, collaboration and creativity (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011; Persson & Stahre, personal communication, 22 Feb. 2016). The high level of flexibility is part of an aspiration to get employees to move around more thus interacting with persons they do not normally encounter (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011; Persson & Stahre, personal communication, 22 Feb. 2016).

The next step is to get familiarized with the impacting factors for employees perception (Farndale & Kelliher, 2013),

thus approaching the question of: *What factors have impacted the experience of the change and in what way have they impacted?* The success of a change implementation has been stated to relate to the context of where the change takes place (Dawson, 2003; Collins, 1998), which has also been argued for as a fundamental factor for the experience created (Pullman & Gross, 2004; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010; Benz, 2015). This study accounts for the corporate culture, which impacts interactions, values and perceptions (Campbell et al., 2000; Sun, 2008). Mentioning of the national context, which carries importance for perception of social interactions, values, beliefs, socio-economic structures, and hierarchies (Dawson, 2003; Collins, 1998; Hofstede, 1994), and business environment, which impacts corporate culture (Campbell et al., 2000) was made in limitations (see section 1.4), however this has not been investigated further in relation to this case study.

Context: AstraZeneca Mölndal

The study of the corporate culture was made to provide an indication for the values and beliefs at site Mölndal. Employees at AstraZeneca Mölndal can according to this study be described as happy individuals who are motivated by that they can make a change for people in this world through their work. Judging from the results of the culture-study (see section 4.1) and the presented outcomes of the Greatest Places to Work-survey (see section 4.1.5), we find highly ethical persons believing in justice and fairness in these buildings. In the best of worlds, human lives do not carry a price tag. The pride is permeated throughout the organization, displayed both visually and behaviorally. These persons listen to each other and respect each other, the level of autonomy appears to be high and employees put emphasis on being high performing. This may be interpreted as an environment where acts based on forcing and dictating will collide with the common perception of what is respectable. Transparency is proclaimed and upheld in perceived behavior and through glass walls and windows on meeting rooms and laboratories. Diversity is an appreciated feature of the

everyday working life. An alignment with the corporate description of the culture and values was found (AstraZeneca, 2016), which indicates a common understanding of intended direction, perceptions and work ethics between the company and its employees.

5.2 ADDING THE DECISION & IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

After having brought forward the indications for the mentality and feel of where the change has taken place, the next step is to look at the change implementation itself. In order to understand the initial perception of the change, the decision and implementation process should be accounted for (Dawson, 2003; Farndale & Kelliher, 2013; Verhulst & Boks, 2014). These have also been said to play an important role in determining the success of the change (Dawson, 2003; Haner, 2005; Verhulst & Boks, 2014). The implementation of Activity Based Working was an upper management decision based on cost reduction of office space and aspirations to become more innovative. The latter pushed the decision towards Activity Based Working rather than other options for fitting more persons in less space (Persson & Stahre, personal communication, 22 Feb. 2016). The involvement of employees extended to participating in quantitative investigations on ways of working and workplace satisfaction, but not in the planning of the layout of the environment. The reason was described as too comprehensive to include more persons (Spångberg, personal communication, March 30, 2016). Feedback was possible to give after the implementation, and changes were then seen to accommodate the needs of employees. In some cases it was experienced that response to feedback was unclear or not received. A common impression of the environment from an employee point-of-view was that it was a bit too generalized in relation to the diversity of individuals operating in it. This type of change is very tangible, both in the physical workplace and in daily routines concerning ways of working as they relate to needs (Maslow, 1943; Sheldon et al., 2001, Phelps, 2013). In the experience of the change, needs may be said to have been affected in regards to influence on initial layout, loss of security when losing personal space, some of the autonomy concerning how they organize and conduct

work, as well as physical matters connected to workstation in relation to ergonomics and using adapted technical tools, and social environment in times when co-workers are more difficult to find (Sheldon et al., 2001). This may have caused some hesitance towards the change itself. The risks of not including employees in a change development are lack of interest in the change, and detachment from engaging in the concept (Dawson, 2003). However the level of involvement concerning feedback appeared to have been high amongst employees. In discussing the understanding of the reasons for this change with employees, the closing of the two office buildings was the clearly stated reason. In these interviews, changing the working culture at the site did not arise as a topic. However, there was an awareness of that ABW as a concept is meant to support creativity and collaboration, but more mentioned as proclaimed positive effects of the concept. The approach to the change was rational and the mindset formed was that this change had to be made and that the intention has been to make the best of it (see section 4.3.1).

Communication is part of creating the experience of a certain situation (Benz, 2015). It was said that plenty of information about the upcoming change, what it meant, and what was to be expected was sent out to the employees concerned. The communication process was experienced as good and engaged (see section 4.3.1). It was stated by some persons that the initial communication on introducing the concept highlighted Activity Based Working as being an amazing concept through displayed examples from other organizations, and that those examples was presented through the voice of project managers and not employees working in the environment. This was by these persons perceived as bias, which resonated poorly with them (see section 4.3.1). It was mentioned that articles stating the downsides with this type of office environment were spread amongst employees in order to show another side of the story, one of these was also encountered during the observations. Here it also seems as if the intentions of creating a more creative work environment was not taken seriously but rather seen as a ‘sales-trick’.

At this point of the analysis we can conclude that a strategic decision was made by a secluded group of persons in order to secure a stable process in the decision making, and providing plenty of information to the employees about the

upcoming change. Employees acknowledged the financial aspect of the change, but the long-term change in culture was not directly mentioned. The initial reaction towards the decision itself posed as a concern for many employees due to knowing that this change would impact a number of factors in the everyday work life. There were those who experienced the benefits of this concept as over-exaggerated and for those persons, a lack of belief in the stated benefits of the concept at that time was displayed.

5.3 MATCHING THE INTENTIONS WITH EXPERIENCE

This study indicates that this change stirred up emotions, however, after the implementation it was recognized that it functions to operate in this environment (see section 4.3.1). The practical purpose of fitting more persons in less space without causing a feel of crowdedness appears to have been successful. The clear majority of the interviewees did not experience the environment as crowded, some were even surprised by how many persons the space could fit without noticing it in the physical environment.

As have been established, the idea of implementing Activity Based Working was not only based on cost reduction of office space, but also on an intent to change the working culture in order to foster innovation. ABW is stated to foster innovation by increasing flexibility, collaboration and creativity in the workplace (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011). The meaning of the physical, behavioral (cultural), and technical environment has been brought forward as determining the employee experience (Morgan, 15 December 2015), and functioning as guidelines when developing the environment (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014; showroom, AstraZeneca Mölndal, 2016). Accordingly, this section will also include an investigation of how the design of the physical, virtual and behavioral environment match the shaping of a creative and innovative working culture to further understand behavior and perception.

The concept is based on that different zones are defined for different work tasks (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014). The primary areas are the quiet zone, the medium-quiet zone and

the collaborative zone. The idea with the concept is that the flexibility will increase by not having any predetermined seats (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014; Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2011). The collaboration will then increase based on new encounters whilst moving around freely (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014), thus also increasing creativity (Phelps, 2013; Haner, 2005). The floors have been designed in the same manner so that work may be conducted on whichever floor you want independent of your role. During the analysis of the intentions of flexibility, collaboration and creativity, a discussion around what areas could be approached further and how, will follow.

5.3.1 FLEXIBILITY

The area of flexibility concerns both structure, as the structure should meet the purpose of the function (Kristensen, 2004; Pullman & Gross, 2004; Fisher & Farshchi, 1997), and habits, as they determine how we act in our everyday life (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). The structure of the environment primarily consists of an open floor plan, labeling different areas and rooms in accordance to what type of work is to be conducted there. The larger quiet areas consist of separated rooms with a door that can be closed. The collaborative zone consists of tables seating 4-12 persons in an open area connecting to the semi-quiet zones. The primary area used was the medium-quiet desk zone according to the interviews and the observations, which has the structure of a regular open-plan office environment. The floor plan in the KD-building was well suited for Activity Based Working, it was a connected and open space with easy access to all parts of the environment. The environment has been described as promoting visibility and that it is easy to scan the area for whom is present (see section 4.3.2). Despite the accessibility, the observations showed that the collaborative zones were not always used as intended in either of the buildings. What came up during the interviews concerned relating to the space and associations in the space. Extensive collaborative meetings and discussions were described as taking place in meeting rooms and coffee areas, which is the common norm in workplaces. It has been claimed that the space should reflect the intentions (Pullman and Gross, 2004; Fisher and Farshchi, 1997) and setting the context that may create an experience accordingly (Pullman & Gross, 2004;

Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010; Benz, 2015). In observing how the different zones have been designed in the KD-building, the visual expression did not offer much visual transition; they all had the same color and approximately the same furniture (see section 4.4.1.1). The only difference in the visual expression that reflected different mindsets for different zones was that the collaborative area only had tables and no desks, also complemented by two couches on KC4, and the quiet zone had a door to seclude the space. As visual connotations to previously established behavior in different environments have been said to impact how we act (Wood & Rüniger, 2016), and that changing an environment will impact our experience of it (Beard Nelson, 2009), it may be suggested that an environment that visually reflects the intended use of the environment through evoking connotations could have a positive impact in changing behavior and overthrowing habits. Creating separate visual expressions for the different zones would mark a transition (Haner, 2005), as entering an environment where all looks the same may inhibit cognitive distinctions between zones and behavior. On KC4 there was a slight difference in visual expression in the collaborative area mainly displayed as more playful accent colors (see section 4.4.1.1), these colors were seen in other areas as well but to a lower extent. The KC-building also suffered from a floor plan that physically separated the different areas thereby inhibiting movement (Kristensen, 2004). When moving towards the collaborative area from the other wings you passed by numerous meeting rooms, offering a closer opportunity for collaborative interaction.

The larger quiet rooms in the East and West Wing on KC4 appeared to be fairly well used. They were very closely connected to other ongoing activities as they were placed at the end of each wing by the semi-quiet desk areas. The larger quiet rooms on the KD-floors were observed to be less used. They were slightly separated from the areas where most were seated and the rooms were not directly placed by windows. One person said that these rooms need more promotion, and assessing the interviews it appeared as if many more would appreciate a silent space than what could be seen in the utilization of these areas on the KD-floors. On KD3 it was said that the entire floor had adapted to a more quiet atmosphere, which could have lowered the need for the larger quiet room. In assessing the level of flexibility, this study show that the

general movement does not match the intention of switching zone for each task. This was supported both in the interviews and observations (see section 4.3.2 & 4.4.1). Two factors for staying in the same area were connected to security and efficiency. If a specific preference for seating was present then a concern for not getting this seat would occur as it would impact planning, structure and perceived performance, which for some caused feelings of stress or discomfort. This may relate back to the need for control that is connected to habits (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). Concerning efficiency, the loss of time on connecting and disconnecting and making various settings throughout the day was discarded as not feasible. This relates to the cultural study where persons appear to put a lot of emphasis on high performance (see chapter 4.1.4). This way of working was by some said not to match the type of work conducted and posing as an unwelcome disturbance.

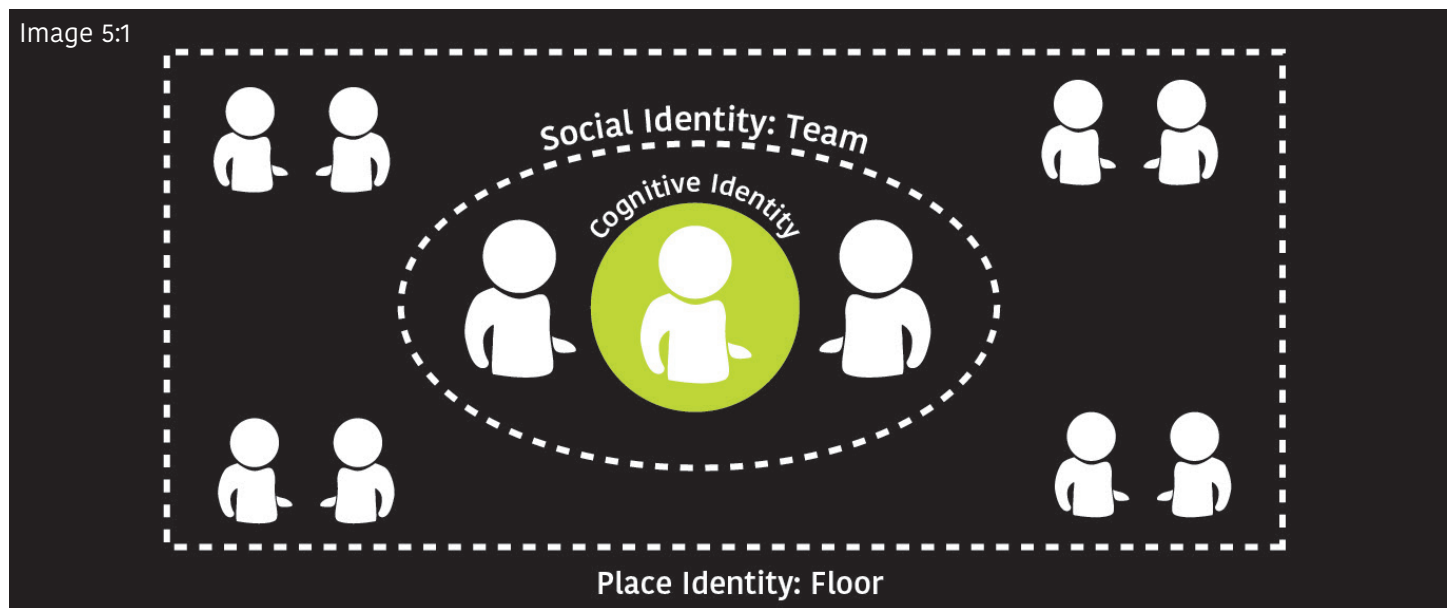
Despite the acknowledgment of ABW not being experienced as an environment with extensive movement, another perspective should be presented. Activity Based Working primarily consist of open spaces where you are meant to move around and interact with others (Månsson & Nyberg, 2014), thus it may be concluded that ABW is an extrovert environment. The concept is then to move according to what your current work task is in order to optimize your performance by sitting in the best suited zone for each task. If the concept of ABW is to be conducted as originally intended, meaning several moves for every change in activity, then ABW is a form of individual way of working. Moving depending on your own specific work tasks may optimize your individual way of working but lose effortless interactions with your teammates. By looking at the other two reasons for not moving stated in section 4.3.2, we see that placement of team members, and temperature, lighting and sound were factors for staying in the same seat and area. Due to the possibility to chose whichever seat you want, there was also a possibility for sitting next to your peers, which has been described as making work easier thus staying where people you often collaborate with are seated. This also relates to the discussion of identity, which arose early during this study when talking about the way you relate to your office environment when the place identity of your desk cease to exist. The loss of identity was a defined as a problematic factor for ABW in literature (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., (2011). What was

talked about concerning identity was that it was attached to social identity. The social identity was primarily described as the team you work with. Place identity was also explained to have expanded from the desk to the floor you work on. The need for a sense of belonging leads back to relatedness (Sheldon et al., 2001), and was described as the primary reason for not moving freely to other ABW-floors. The identities in ABW are visualized below (see image 5:1).

The description of identity supports movement in terms of choosing a seat near by team members, it also gives an explanation to the barrier of moving between different floors in

type of flexibility is being taken advantage of. Conclusively, this study argues for that a form of flexibility has been achieved at this stage in the process, however not as intended by the initial concept.

As old habits have a big impact on adaptation to a new environment (Wood & Rüniger, 2016), the topic of habits will be evaluated in relation to this change. For change, habits pose a threat. Habits have a function of triggering an “autopilot”, which ensures that the task at hand will be done despite other mental state (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). In overthrowing habits, constant presence is required in order to



the ABW-environment.

The reason of choosing a seat that match your sensory preferences have shown to be of importance for performance (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). Assessing optimization of work tasks based on level of sound alone, as these zones mainly do, is one aspect that impact our level of performance but there are also other factors that influence (BIS, 2014; Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). It may be said that the flexibility that occurs is based on providing the option of choosing a seat that suits personal needs and preferences, relating to sitting next to people of interest or allowing for sensory preferences to be fulfilled, thus providing general optimization rather than for each task. Persons do move to some extent, and despite showing a rather low occupancy, all areas were used to some degree, which indicates that this

be aware of what you are doing so that you may do things differently (Benz, 2015). In order to successfully change habits, the presence must be ongoing over an extended period of time to properly establish the new way of operating (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). Although presence is positive in most cases, it is also draining for our mental state (Benz, 2015). For those with less flexible work tasks the change of habits does not merely concern one part of how you work on an everyday basis, but it concerns many parts. The consequence of trying to change all habits previously established during a normal workday could be overwhelming and cause stress (Benz, 2015). It is possible the initial concern of all these changes in ways of working was managed through simply not adapting to some of them. It could be suggested that changing habits in this type of environment should be attempted in steps to ensure that the employees are given a

fair chance to adapt to the new setting. Proceeding with the discussion around changing habits, strong motivation has been said to constitute the incentive towards change (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). The motivation push from the managing group consist of that the benefits of individual performance will be seen if following the concept (see section 4.2). This is a type of motivation, however it might not be sufficient motivation on individual basis. This was also supported by the response from several employees where it was said that the movement was not always compatible with how they perceive that they conduct work tasks (see section 4.3.2). The persons who adapted quickly to the frequent movement were commonly identified as persons who had very flexible work tasks and moved around frequently previous to the change as well, thus having less impact on ways of working. If a change of habits is to be obtained, it may require stronger incentives that will resonate with the individuals in the environment (Wood & Rüniger, 2016). One change of habit was pushed by the concept, which was getting rid of papers. The incentive to this change was that it would simply not be possible to store or carry a large amount of paper in this type of environment. The clean desk concept has according to this study been a positive experience by many and overall, people have adapted well to the paperless way of working.

The technical environment had been adapted to a more flexible way of working. There was technical equipment by the different seats, cables had been added and portable loudspeakers connecting to cellphones had also been added for conference calls (see section 4.4.1). The experience of poor sound quality in these loudspeakers had the effect of some choosing to sit in larger conference rooms with the old conference telephones. In regards to physical restrictions, flexibility becomes more challenging for those with adapted technical equipment for ergonomic reasons who need to carry the extra gear with them. Most said that not much has changed concerning the technical aspect, however the use of OneNote seemed to have increased as a way of organizing in a paperless environment. Lilja (personal communication, March 24, 2016) described that IT-training had been held on occasions at the site to gain deeper knowledge of the applications accessible, which is positive for this type of change where increased utilization of applications and technical tools is required.

5.3.2 COLLABORATION

Collaborative environments have been described both as beneficial for social interactions and creativity (Phelps, 2013; Denham & Kaberon, 2012; Sullivan, 15 march 2013), but also as disturbing work tasks and causing stress (Cross et al., 2016). Reviewing the intent of creating a more collaborative environment, the overall experience was that you talk to approximately the same persons, but it has also been said that you engage in casual conversations with less known individuals more frequently in ABW (see section 4.3.3). Social conversations at work have shown to fill a purpose of stability, common understanding an informal learning (Waring & Bishop, 2010; Grebow 2002). There was both an appreciation of the new casual conversations, seen as a welcoming addition to the working sphere, and also a view of seeing it as a disturbance from work tasks (see section 4.3.3). The common comment from those disturbed was that the conversations overheard were not relevant to their work, although mostly appreciating the social atmosphere. Looking at the corporate culture study it may be said that AstraZeneca Mölndal is an environment where you interact and engage in cross-functional collaborations, but it is also a high focus work environment where it is likely that many will regard unrelated matters as preventing high performance. The idea behind engaging in new conversations with persons involved in other areas than your own is that something relevant might appear that could lead to a new way of doing or thinking around things (Sullivan, 15 march 2013). In not engaging in these conversations, time is saved from seemingly irrelevant matters, but the chance of finding an unexpected common denominator is also lost. In approaching this area, it is important to recognize the source of the experience, thus talking about the assessment of what is relevant, performance and the need for focus.

The experience of interaction expressed in the interviews supported that several persons have more casual conversations in the environment due to the flow of people (see section 4.3.3). The environment was said to contribute to visibility in a positive way (see section 4.3.3). The visibility plays a part in getting used to new faces, which over time will create familiarity to the persons in the area making interactions more comfortable (Haner, 2005). The visibility

seems to be somewhat disturbed by the floor plan on KC4, however, overall it may be concluded that the visibility created through ABW promotes interaction and allows people in the environment to get more familiar with one another over time. It may also be concluded that the increased flow of people opens up for more frequent interactions.

In terms of familiarity, personal items are no longer present in the ABW-environment, leaving the office rather unrevealing of the individuals working in it (see section 4.4.2). The employees I spoke to regarding this topic did not experience the loss of personal items as bothering and described it as not being related to work thus not feeling like a necessary factor to be present in the work environment. Some visual expressions were encountered, in some floors more than others. The cultural artifacts bore witness to how inhabited the different floors felt. Surprisingly the time spent working in ABW did not seem to have much impact as several artifacts were seen on KC4, which was the last floor to transition. This was compared to KD3 and KD4 where very few artifacts were encountered despite transitioning only weeks after KD5, where much more visual expressions were seen. Judging from persons spoken to regarding this subject, the artifacts may be remains from previous work environments, however still carrying a message from the persons working there. It was also expressed that team related expressions in the environment can have the effect of making others feel unwelcome through the space appearing as if it has been claimed by a certain group (see section 4.3.3). However, personal expression may fill a function of getting to know the people in the environment. As artifacts tell you something about the culture, and values and beliefs of where you are (Johnson, 1992; Schein, 2010), personal expressions can provide another way for a newcomer to get familiar with the individuals on the floor, which in turn can be beneficial for opening up for interaction in a flexible work environment. Spångberg (personal communication, March 30, 2016) also spoke of team-related artifacts functioning as motivation in the office environment and creating relatedness to the surroundings, which resonates with the culture study as feeling pride in the work conducted showed significance (see section 4.1). Team-bound visual expressions might also function as a visual form of knowledge sharing, as to what type of work is conducted by different groups. Encouraging team

related artifacts and some personal expressions could have a positive effect of creating familiarity and elements of motivation on the ABW-floors.

A factor for disturbing interactions and collaborations has been stated as having trouble finding co-workers in the environment (see section 4.3.3). A consequence of not having an individual desk is that placement of individuals is rather unknown. Persons from other floors stand little chance of navigating in the environment. The way of solving this matter differs, some book regular meetings and some use Skype. Making updates on Skype to state the area you are seated in was an emerging trend to make it easier to find one another (see section 4.3.3). It was expressed that the habit of going to look for people by foot was hard to get rid of, also mentioning that it was nice to be able to simply walk over to someone's desk. The social part of just 'stopping by' without any further efforts appeared to be missed (see section 4.3.3). It may be said that overcoming the habit of looking for co-workers by foot is a process, but ways of communicating where you are seated were appearing.

The primary manifestation of collaboration activities in ABW comes from the collaborative zone. The collaborative zone was being used to some extent, however the manner of how it was utilized was not always in line with the objective of the zone. Many experienced the zone as being very sparsely used. Assessing the observations, it appears as if the collaborative zone was often used as a 'touch-down' spot for conducting individual work (see section 4.4.1). It further appeared as if many preferred to have open meetings at the Coffee lab, or else in the coffee areas on each floor. The statements around going to the Coffee lab mainly concerned that it was a nice change of scenery from the office environment with a feel of an inner-city café (see section 4.3.3). As previously mentioned, the collaborative zones might benefit from breaking the association-pattern to common office behavior by adding elements that are connected to collaborative activities. Examples of such attempts could be adding collaborative tools (Haner, 2005; Kristensen, 2004), changing the visual expression as it might have a psychological impact on state of mind (Haner, 2005; Lichtenfeld et al., 2012; Kwallek et al., 1997), and providing some seclusion between the tables through the use of bookshelves or similar

that could help the expressed experience of these zones feeling too open (see section 4.3.3).

5.3.3 CREATIVITY

The experience of the new office concept was not described as reflecting creativity. In making a deeper assessment of the subject we need to understand how the environment is meant to promote creativity. Månsson and Nyberg (2014) mentioned that creativity is individual and requires some kind of index. Appel-Meulenbroek et al. (2011) presents it as being connected to the interior design and visual expression. Creativity is connected to innovation that may happen when unplanned meetings occur (Sullivan, 15 march 2013; Phelps, 2013; Denham & Kaberon, 2012;), and unplanned meetings are one of the cornerstones in the underlying concept of Activity Based Working. Creative research in general suggest that creativity is supported by factors of culture, design of physical environment, tools for sharing ideas, and being allowed space to think (Phelps, 2013; Lichtenfeld et al., 2012; Haner, 2005; Kristensen, 2004; Madjar et al., 2002; Campbell et al., 2000). The employees who described how they look at creativity often related it to co-creating, gaining new perspectives and finding new ways to combine things. These descriptions support knowledge sharing, which is an area that could be further explored within the concept of ABW.

As collaboration and interaction in the environment has already been accounted for, we start with assessing the culture. The culture at AstraZeneca Mölndal was described as creative and innovative, also supporting human needs such as autonomy, security, competence, and stimulation, which are important for well-being (Sheldon et al., 2001; BIS, 2014). Well-being in turn has been said to carry importance for keeping the workforce stimulated thus fostering creativity and innovation (Phelps, 2013). In this sense this study can support AstraZeneca Mölndal as having a corporate culture that foster creativity, however it is not directly related to ABW. Assessments of the physical environment have already been made, and that is an area that is suggested to be explored for further development of the ABW environments (Wood & Rünger, 2016; Beard Nelson, 2009; Lichtenfeld et al., 2012; Kwallek et al., 1997), along with tools for sharing ideas (Haner, 2005; Kristensen, 2004).

Employees described that some felt more creative when they were alone, and some felt more creative in groups. Some also expressed that when they need a private space they solve it by leaving the environment that they are in, either through going to a different place at the site or working from home. Working on hours when few are at the office was also mentioned. Allowing for space to think is an important part of the processes around being creative (Haner, 2005; Kristensen, 2004), and lack of privacy has been stated as a downside of open office environments (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). As it appears from the interviews there was a need to have personal space at times. Spaces for solitary work were found in the environment, referring to the smaller meeting and office rooms or phone booths. The physical space is there, but there is a collision with the perceived intent of the spaces. Some say you are only allowed to sit there if, and when, you have a work task that specifically requires you to be in there. Another claim was that you can stay in one of these rooms for a whole day if you feel like you need solitary space. The topic of how to utilize the rooms also seemed to be related to sub-cultures regarding the perception of the spaces. It was mentioned by the managing project group that specific matters concerning the environment are left to the teams to decide (see section 4.2), which supports autonomy, but also create room for different interpretations (Schein, 2010). Clarity in how to utilize these spaces and operate in the environment may be of importance to create a common understanding when working towards free movement between floors. Some confusion is a natural outcome when introducing a new concept and it could be beneficial to have a discussion around perceptions and investigate the option of co-creating some common ground for the new concept with employees based on their needs. Another aspect relating to the need for personal space concerns personality type. It was described that this type of environment is more straining for introvert personality types (see section 4.3.1). Since this concept offers opportunity to meet a variation of needs, it could be of interest to see how it could be evolved in terms of creating some spaces that better accommodate these persons.

The area of creativity is complex and does not follow a linear process (Haner, 2005). However, approaching some of the areas discussed above could prove beneficial whilst

adhering to the perception of creativity from the employees. This study cannot at this time of the process establish a connection between the new office environment and the experience of creativity.

5.4 DISCUSSING THE OUTCOMES

This study lies within the realm of Design and has departed from the perceptions, thoughts and experiences of the people involved in this study. The outcome has been dependent on the selected group, thus the outcome can be assumed to have been different if another group of persons would have participated. It should also be noted that the different participants in the 'ad hoc' group conversations may have influenced each other. In qualitative interviews there is always a risk in that the answers might have been impacted by whom is interviewing in accordance with the interviewer effect, which can have impacted how and what type of information that has been shared (Sears & Rowe, 2003).

6. CONCLUSION

This study has investigated employees' experiences of the intentions of creating an office environment that fits more persons in less space whilst fostering flexibility, collaboration and creativity in an early phase of an implementation of Activity Based Working at AstraZeneca Mölndal. The conclusion of this investigation is that the practical intent of fitting more persons in less space in a manner that will not make the environment feel crowded and where everyone can find a seat was overall perceived as successful. The intended flexibility of moving frequently for every changing task had not been experienced as obtained at this time, primarily based on the feel of inefficiency and not relating that type of movement to how you perform work tasks. However, this study argues for that a form of flexibility has evolved, based on that many have had the option of sitting next to members of their team or chose a seat based on sensory preferences that match their needs. This study provides support for that the visibility and flow in the environment was experienced to induce more interactions, which could promote further collaboration over time. The study cannot at this time support that the concept is experienced as creative. It has been said that the physical environment carries an impact on how we interpret and relate to our surroundings, and finding ways to reflect the intents of creativity and collaborative activities in the environment could help further progression. The main insights that were found concerning impacting factors for actions and perceptions during this study were:

Impacting factors for experience discussed in this use case are seen in image 6:1. The behavioral environment has been replaced with mindset due to that behavior is a reflection of the mindset, which in turn is created by factors from the change process.

Relatedness – How you relate to the space and how the concept relates to workflow

Association – What associations you get from the environment and where interactions take place

Relevance – Whom do you interact with

Personal space – Means and needs of creating personal space in an open, moving environment

Clarity – What is allowed and what is not

Social & Place identity – The need for belonging and security

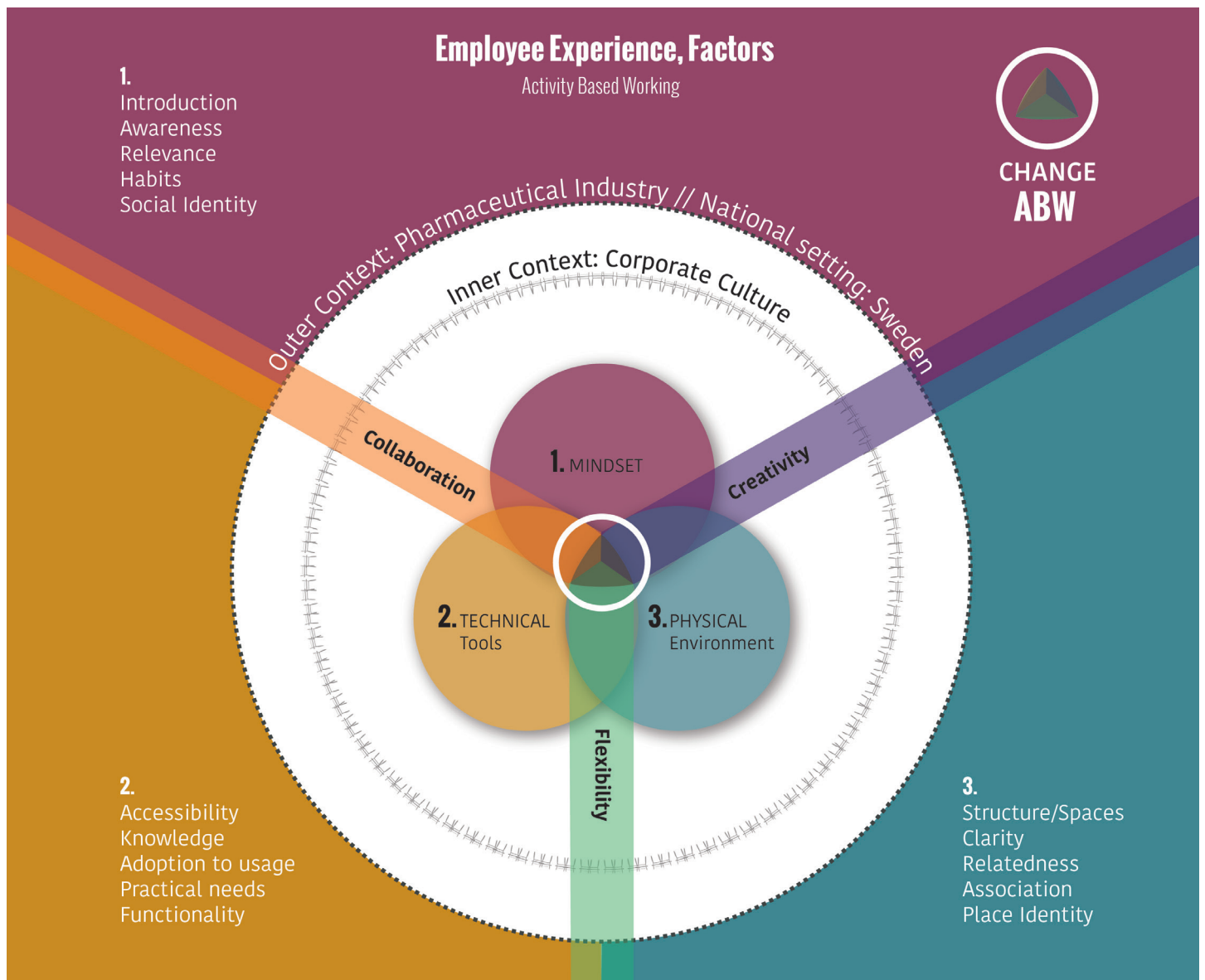


Image 6:1

(1) The mindset around the change is here based on how the change was introduced, level of awareness of the intents with the concept and why it has been implemented. Relevance concerns the interactions in the environment, and seeing how it resonates with your own work tasks. Previously established habits impacts the level of change that is required, movement and relationships, and the social identity connects to the feeling of familiarity and security.

(2) The technical tools entail the props that are needed to function in a moving environment, enabling flexibility. Factors connected to this area has been determined as how accessible they are and how much knowledge you have of utilizing them. It also concerns how well you have adopted to the usage of new tools, what practical needs there are in relation to what is offered, and how well these tools function.

(3) In terms of the physical environment, the structure and spaces provided plays an important role in facilitating movement and usage. This area further concerns the clarity of the structure and the intentions of each space, how well you can relate to them concerning work tasks and type of space, what association patterns you get from the visual expression and placement of different zones, and how place and identity relate to one another.

When moving forward with the development of the Activity Based Working concept at AstraZeneca Mölndal, this study suggest that these areas should be further approached in order to continue to build on the intentions of flexibility, collaboration and creativity in relation to the employee experience.

6.1 FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was conducted within the realm of business and design as a stepping-stone to account for the experience of employees in a changing environment. It has departed from a cultural and human-centered perspective, focusing on a single use case aiming to provide deeper knowledge as to why certain perceptions have developed around the intentions of a change implementation. The study puts focus on understanding experiences that have already been created, leaving the interesting part of how to design for the experience when first implementing the change. During the course of this study, the information found on frameworks and perceptions regarding employee experience design only concerned the organization as a whole, describing it as the experience you get from your company during the time of initial contact to eventually leaving the company, or that the employee experience reflects outwards thus impacting customer experience. It is my perception that employee experience design is an area that would also be well suited when approaching change in organizations. Implementing a new change can be defined as a wicked and ambiguous challenge, as the perception and mindset of employees will determine how well it is received. It has been suggested that understanding the context where the change takes place is of importance for the implementation and development, which is supported by this study. These types of challenges adhere to the design process, as contextualizing and acknowledging human emotions is part of the design approach. In line with the importance of aligning the intentions of a change implementation with the employees, I suggest further research on employee experience design in relation to organizational change, and what kind of value it could bring in assisting the transition. Within this area I also suggest further research on the role of a designer in facilitating the experience for employees during a change process.

Experience has also been connected to the area of service design (Pullman & Gross, 2004; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Service design can be defined as “a field focused on the creation of well thought out experiences using a combination of intangible and tangible mediums” which “generally results in the design of systems and processes aimed at providing a holistic service to the user” (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2010,

p. 30). This study has departed from the implementation of a new office environment aimed at changing ways of working into becoming more flexible, collaborative and creative, thus fostering innovation capabilities. Service design is today mainly focused on customer-centric activities, but could be well suited for approaching this type of work environment. Service design puts focus on the user and understanding the needs of the user in relation to what is aimed to be accomplished. Further research is thus also suggested on the use of service design internally in organizations in relation to forming office concepts aiming towards a change in ways of working.

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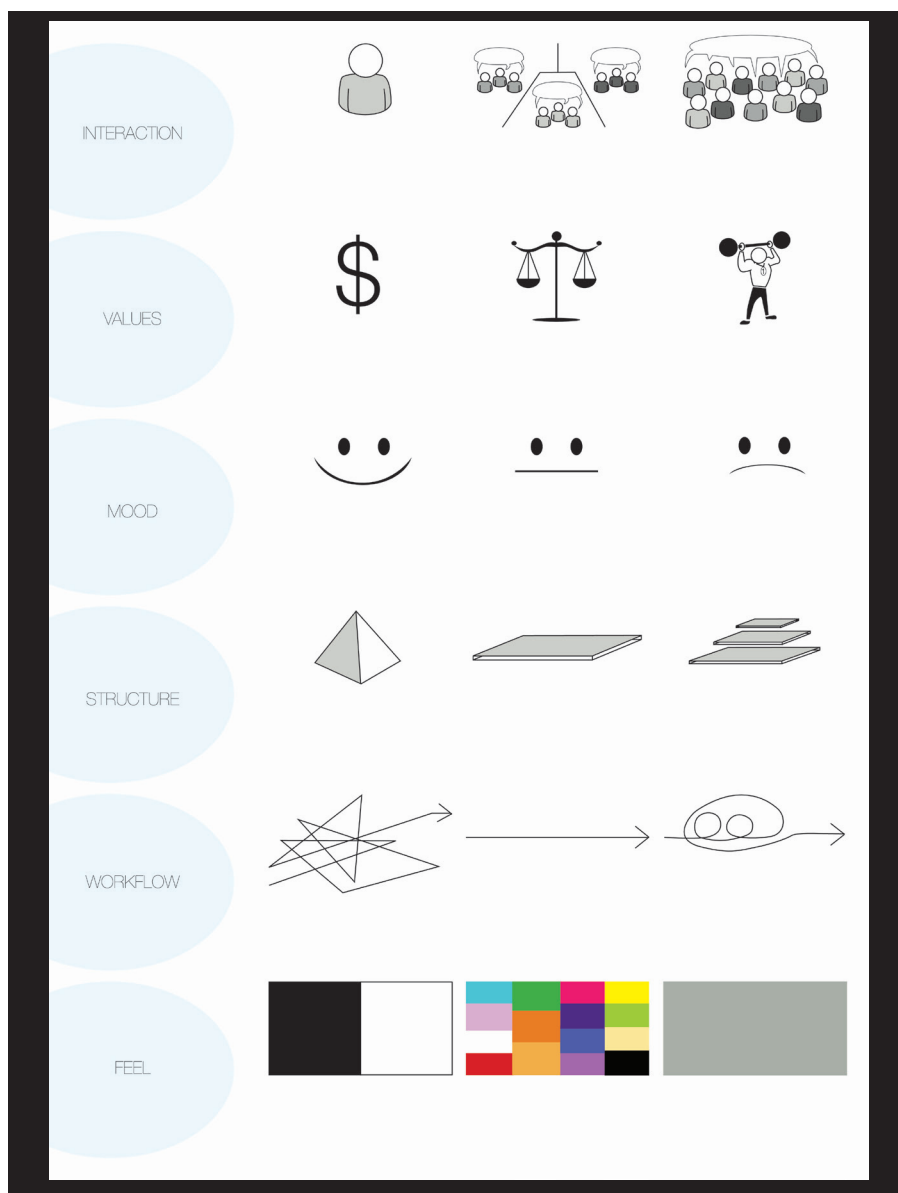
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APPENDIX 1: SURVEY TEMPLATE



Explanation of meaning and choice of images: The purpose of understanding interactions in a corporate culture relates back to the significance of relationships and behavior, which also supports creativity and innovation (Campbell et al., 2000; Denham et al., 2012). The first visual in interaction is one person, the second visual show people in groups but divided by clear lines and shade-coded bodies in each group to show unity in the confined space (Gage, 1999), the last visual show a large group without any divisions where the persons and body-shades are mixed. The value-symbols rep-

resented monetary focus, which is of importance for organizations to be sustained on the market, the scales of justice carried by lady Justice serves as a perception of fairness, which has an impact on productivity amongst employees (BIS, 2014; Farndale & Kelliher, 2013), it also resonates with the AstraZeneca-approach of ‘doing the right thing’ (AstraZeneca, 2016). The final visual of the values-symbols is a muscular person carrying heavy weight as prestige or being the best in line with the need for acknowledgment and self-esteem (Maslow, 1943; Sheldon et al., 2001), also sup-

ported by one of the AstraZeneca values of being the best (AstraZeneca, 2016). The third row represented mood, as it has an impact on creativity and productiveness (Madjar et al., 2002; Oswald et al., 2015). Facial expressions were used in the form of smiling, indifferent and sour, as studies show that expressions such as happiness or anger are interpreted the same way globally (Murphy & Zajonc, 1993). The part on organization consisted of the pyramid that is commonly associated with a hierarchical organizational structure. The image of a flat surface relates to the flat organization, the third column held an image built on a combination of the two representing a semi-hierarchical structure. Lines represented the workflow. The first line was drawn in an unstructured manner, the second line was a straight line moving forward representing a linear process, the last line was softer and looping backwards before moving forward representing an iterative process. The last row consists of color selections as metaphors of a certain feel. The first image was black and white, which signifies day and night (Lester, 1995; Gage, 1999). These colors hold the sharpest contrast in relation to one another and the metaphor is commonly associated with a strict yes or no-way of thinking (Cambridge, 2016). A range of colors, i.e. something is colorful, commonly signifies a meaning of interest and vibrancy (Cambridge, 2016). The color gray is often associated with being bland and gloomy, but can also hold the meaning of compromise and neutrality (Colour Affects, 2008).

APPENDIX 2: FRAMEWORK, CORPORATE CULTURE

GUIDING FRAMEWORK

How would you describe AstraZeneca to an outsider in three words?

What happens on a really good day at work?

What happens at a really bad day at work?

How is the brand AstraZeneca represented in these buildings?

What are the values and goals of the company? How are those displayed in your work life?

How are the organizational hierarchies here?

How do you advance in position?

What are the possibilities of impacting decisions?

How do you connect to other parts of the site?

How well are you personally connected at the site?

Are there any common procedures that everyone follows within the company?

How are you acknowledged in AstraZeneca if making a certain achievement?

What happens if you fail a task?

Who are the heroes?

How does managers communicate with employees?

How are changes or information communicated within the company?

How much time do you spend in meetings?

What events carry significance at AstraZeneca?

Are people careful what they say and how they say it? Do they avoid controversial issues?

APPENDIX 3: FRAMEWORK, ACTIVITY BASED WORKING

GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Icebreaker: What do you love to do the most in life?

Name:

Age:

Profession:

Primary work tasks:

Time in ABW:

(How many departments operate on this floor?)

Could you describe the idea behind the implementation of Activity Based Working in your experience?

How you would define the best way of operating in it?

Does this match how things work in practice?

If yes – describe

If no – describe

How do you experience working in the new environment in regards to your work assignments?

Can you describe a workday?

Which factors do you feel have impacted you the most?

In relation to: IT, Space & Ways of acting and thinking

Which factors do you feel have impacted you the least?

In relation to: IT, Space & Ways of acting and thinking

In your experience, how do you perceive that the communication was handled before the change?

How included did you feel in the dialogue/decision process?

How were questions and thoughts about the new environment handled?

What is creativity to you?

When do you feel creative?

How do you experience interactions in the new environment?

Have you made any new contacts?

Have you ended up in any conversations that you wouldn't have if still in the old environment?

Is there anything that you are missing that would simplify your work in the new environment?

APPENDIX 4: STANDARDS FOR OPERATING ACTIVITY BASED

Catharina Pieschl, email communication, April 20, 2016

- As a foundation, "clean desk policy", leave the working station as you want to find it. Ensure all peripherals, i.e. power supply, office chair, are left with the desk after use.
- For all working environments (with the exception of the bullet below), if you will be away for >1 hour, leave the workplace clean and tidy and remove all your things
- For the smaller non-bookable rooms labeled as "high focus rooms", if you will be away for >15 minutes, leave the room clean and tidy and remove all your things
- Do not bring food to the office area, let us eat and heat our food in the kitchen/coffee room area
- Private, named chairs is not a seat reservation, and should not be left by the workplace after use. Any standard chair removed, should be restored at the workplace when leaving. At a clean desk, you can remove a personal, named chair and use that workplace

APPENDIX 5: IMAGES & ILLUSTRATIONS

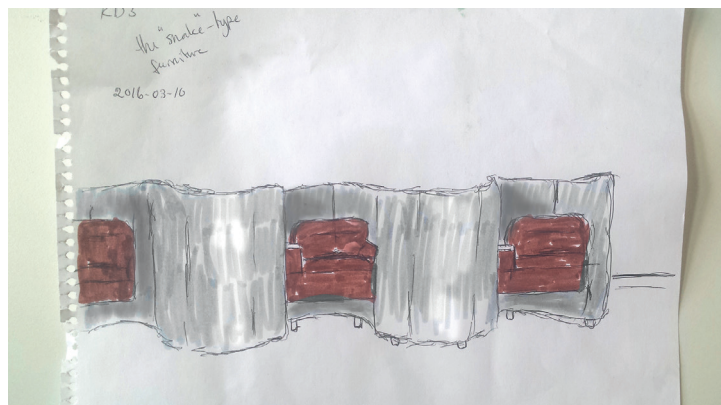
Photographs belong to AstraZeneca© 2016



Collaborative zone, KD-building



Coffee Area, KD3; Semi-quiet desk area



The 'snake'-type furniture; the 'train compartment'-style furniture



Quiet zone, East Wing KC4; Anchor point locker

YOU HAVE NOW
REACHED THE END