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**COMMUNICATION AS A TRUST BUILDER IN CHANGE
MANAGEMENT**

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ABSTRACT

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Organizations are today characterized by uncertainty, fast changes and inability to predict the future. Both trust and communication are vital when changes are implemented in an organization. The purpose of this study was to examine how a change process can be enhanced by the means of communication and trust.

This study was created by using the existing literature related to the subject.

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Epävarmuus, nopeat muutokset ja tulevaisuuden huono ennustettavuus ovat ominaisia piirteitä tämän päivän organisaatioille. Sekä luottamuksen että viestinnän on todettu olevan oleellisia tekijöitä muutoksen hallinnassa. Pro gradu -tutkielmani tarkoitus oli tutkia viestinnän merkitystä luottamuksen lisääjänä organisaation muutosprosessissa.

Tämä tutkielma rakentui tutkimusalan kirjallisuuskatsauksesta.

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Ingenium munus, discere gaudium

(Nerous on lahja, oppiminen ilo)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The famous perception “the only thing constant with organizations is the continual change of them” is widespread within the organizational and management literature. Due to continuous transforms and development, there is no way to avoid changes in organizations. Inevitably changes are taking place in organizations, probably at an even increasing rate. Researchers continue to highlight change management and the importance of trust.

Changes without any clear starting and ending point can be seen as continuous process. They are linking, overlapping and following each others in dynamic organizations. Consequently, change cannot be seen as an episodic phenomenon, but rather as endemic to the way these organizations operate. Due to the highly competitive and innovative business environment, organizations are increasingly forced to pay attention to leading these changes. Thus, change management can be found as an integral part of leadership and persons who are in charge must know how to implement changes effectively or the effort is failing. (Kirkpatrick 2002, 3.)

Although trust has not gained very much attention in the literature of change management as a separate phenomenon, there is a consensus that it is one of the most important prerequisites in successful change implementation. By definition, trust describes psychological state comprising positive expectations about the behavior and intentions of another and the previous research is clearly showing that trust is one of the explanatory factors in efficient and productive communication, commitment and cooperation in organizations. (E.g. Blomqvist 1997, Kotter 1995.) In addition to trust, communication has been found to be a key element in successful implementation of organizational change.

Communication is needed in organizations but in general, unfortunately scarce attention is paid on it. Especially the lack of internal communication is negatively reflecting to for example knowledge sharing, organizational development, capability and atmosphere in organizations. Open communication is critical antecedent to trust and trust is enhancing communication.

Successful change management plays a significant role in competitiveness and productivity of organizations. Change management is believed to offer remarkable advantage for organizations. Though trust, communication and managing organizational changes have been widely researched by several researchers, there is scarce theoretical and, even less, empirical research including all those elements by investigating the links between them. The research gap may due to many issues, but at least the fact that those phenomenon are all very complex and multidimensional, has been one reason for that gap.

In the light of these fore mentioned findings, it is interesting to study the role of communication as trust builder in organizational change and try to create understanding how should be communicated in order to increase trust during the process.

1.2 Objectives of the study

Both trust and communication have been found to be among the most important success factors in change implementation. In this study, the relations of trust and communication in organizational change are examined as well as how change management could be enhanced by building trust with the means of communication. In addition, the aim is also to provide an understandable model for change communication.

Theory of this study is based on the literature review of the previous research of communication, trust and change management. The literature review is consisting of scientific publications which are concentrating to trust and communication in organizational change context. Theory is

aiming to understand the context of this study and how communication and trust are interplaying in that.

This study is aiming to tackle some of the research gap in the previous research and to build a bridge between the researches giving an understanding what kind of change communication is creating trust. Based on theoretical findings, the aim is also to offer a set of advices of trust building communication and support the change implementation process.

1.3 Research questions

The main research question:

What is the role of communication as trust builder in change management?

The main research question can be further elaborated to the following sub-questions:

- 1) What is the role of communication in change management?*
- 2) What is the role of trust in change management?*
- 3) How can trust be build with communication in change management?*

1.4 Key definitions

To answer to the research questions, the terms of organizational change, trust and communications are defined first.

1.4.1 Organizational change

Organizational change means changes in organizational or job structures, power structures, power structures, roles, values, culture and other clearly people related issues.

It is very problematic to define what is meant by “successful change”. The basic purpose behind an organizational change is, or should be, to change the organization to create a better environment and thus more effective and efficient ways of doing or working. In the end, this should be realized as an improvement in the organization. (Salminen 2000, 11.)

The term change management is used in this study, though the more appropriate term for managing change would be “change leadership” due to the fact that change is relating so strongly with people and is requiring a true leadership.

1.4.2 Trust

There are a variety of synonyms or words with similar meaning to word trust (e.g. confidence, credibility, reliability, hope). Also the definition of trust can be seen to be very diverse and according to Blomqvist (1997, 283), the weak conceptualization of trust can be partly due to the fact that trust is always situation specific (context matters). Also Rotter (1967) found that trust is relating to specific situations (for example a competitive situation) that may not be characteristic of other kinds of interpersonal interactions. Researchers in many fields (e.g. in sociology, psychology, philosophy, economy and politics) try to find the general definition to trust, but it is still under development.

Despite of the complexity of definition of trust, there is a need to define trust for this study and the definition of Mayer et al. (1995, 712) is used:

”Trust is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party”.

1.4.3 Communication

The meaning of communication is generally recognized, but it is still one of those diverse and multifaceted human actions which are academically difficult to define academically. That may be due to the fact that communication is not a subject, but a multi-disciplinary area of study. Communication is “transferring information or knowledge by the means of speech, writing, behavior or signs in interaction between people”. Communication can be defined also as “*social interaction through messages*” or “*production and exchange of meanings*” (Fiske 1982, 2). Åberg (2000, 54) is defining communication as “*a process, which is interpreting the status of cases or things by giving the meaning and that is shared to the consciousness of the others*”.

The concepts of trust and communication are tightly linked together, iterative phenomenon and ideally supporting each others during the change process. The dynamics and interaction of them are studied more closely in the chapter 5 (Communication and trust in change management) of this study.

1.5 Overview of the literature

The main theoretical source of this study lies on the previous research of trust, communication and change management. The basis of theory is on several scientific articles and literature on that field. Organizational change, communication and trust have been widely researched for example in social and organizational psychology, human resource, economy, organization development and philosophy. Contributions to the literature on those fields have been made by number of scholars.

Particularly, change management has been among the most famous subjects in organizational development research. Several models and theories have been developed of change management but in this study, only Kurt Lewin’s change management model (1951) is presented. Kurt

Lewin theorized this three-stage model of change which is also widely known as “unfreeze-change-refreeze” model. Kurt Lewin’s change model can be found as one of the most significant change theories describing episodic change and many other models are based on his model.

Trust has been researched in many fields of science, for example in psychology, philosophy, social science, economics, the research of politics and history. The theory of trust is still under development and there is no existing consensus about the definition, dimensions, structure or conceptualization of trust.

Although trust and communication have been studied a lot in previous research, the roles and dynamics between them in organizational change context have not gained very much attention. There are also very few communication models or guidelines for change management presented by researchers. One reason for that may be that communication can be seen to be very much content specific.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The focus in this study is on intra-organizational relationships, changes, communication and trust. Thus, inter-organizational and external relations are left aside. Organization is understood as an organism, so it is seen as living, adaptive system rather than stable. One of the major assumptions is that there is no “one best way” to design or manage an organization and that the flow of information between different parts of the systems and its environment are keys to the organization’s success. (Cameron & Green 2004, 90.)

The purpose of this study is to examine the roles and dynamics of communication and trust in change management context. It is also studied how trust could be increased with change communication. As all these elements - organizational change, trust and communication - are very multidimensional and diverse phenomenon by nature, so many restrictions had to be made in order to make this study understandable and better manageable. For example, measurements of these elements are out of the scope of this study.

In this study, trust and communication are analyzed both on the individual and organizational level but still keeping the main focus on individual. That decision was made because all the changes in higher level (e.g. team, organization) are based on the changes on individual level and in order to understand something on higher level, one must start from the lower. Further, organizational trust and communication are further divided into interpersonal (between individuals) and impersonal (between an individual and non-individual, for example organization) levels. Also the evaluations and measurement of organizational change, communication and trust are excluded.

1.7.1 Organizational change

There are two schools about how change occurs in organizations. The first sees that change as continuous, and organizations are transforming an

on-going basis keeping pace with their changing environment. The second school sees change as a process of punctuated equilibrium. Many organizational changes are slow processes and incrementally or continuously implemented, including in the conventional development processes in organization which makes the studying of change and its management even more challenging. In this study, organizational change is a continuous process, but in order to make the studying better manageable, changes has to be seen more like a project bases with definable starting and ending point.

The approach to organizational change in this study is based on some assumptions. Firstly, it is based on the assumption that change resistance exists as the change is assumed to be negative (at least for employees) in the most cases and needs therefore effective change management. Secondly, there is a further assumption that there are two forces of change, driving and restraining forces (Lewin's Field Theory). Thirdly, it is assumed that change is planned.

As people are the most precious asset in the organizations and changes are always affecting to individuals on all levels of organization, the individual needs should be primarily focused when implementing organizational changes. Hence, the perspective to organizational changes is mainly on the micro level (individual perspective), though organizational level is also shortly presented in order to give a wider understanding about the whole context.

Consequently, the approach to organizational change in this study is psychodynamic (very human). It has been seen as one of the most useful approaches to help gain the understanding of individual behavioral and useful perspective for managers who want to understand the reactions of their staff during a change process and deal with them. (Cameron & Green 2004, 33, 53) and manage the change process accordingly.

This study is not concentrating in the content of change or organization change strategies, but in the change process itself (in other words: how to get there). The main attention is paid into the communication during change process and how trust can be built by the means of communication.

Also the implementation aspect in organizational change is emphasized, as it is often that phase which often fails, not the planning or deciding on new tactics or strategy. Communication and trust are acting crucial roles in the implementation phase. (Salminen 2000, 12.)

1.7.2 Change management

The study concentrates on organizational change management at an operative level, not strategic or corporate level like many of the researchers of organizational change (e.g. Kotter 1995 and Beer et al. 1991). There will not be presented any detailed techniques, strategies or processes relating to change management.

It is obvious, that there is no universal change model, which is suitable for all changes as in reality, the organizations are operating in different environments, they have different cultures and histories and each change is individual. (Salminen 2000, 71.) In this study, only Kurt Lewin's "unfreeze-change-refreeze" model is presented of several existing change management models. Communication and trust have been found to be among the most important key elements to make the organizational change implementation successful. Due to the limited possibilities, the other variables affecting to the implementation of organizational change are left aside of this study.

1.7.3 Communication

Communication in this study is limited to the internal communication in organization. Only change related communication is studied. The level of analyze is both interpersonal (between individuals) and impersonal (communication between individual and for example organization).

Interpersonal communication can be either vertical (for example employee and manager communicating) or horizontal (between for example employee and peer). Any communication strategies, tactics or models are not presented. As a result of the theoretical and empirical findings, general principles for change communication are provided in the end of this study.

1.7.4 Trust

Trust is analyzed both organizational and individual level, of which organizational is further separated to cognitive (rational) and affective (emotional) trust.

The decision of all the above mentioned limitations had to be made in order to simplify the complex phenomenon of trust, communication and change management, and make this study more understandable and better manageable. All analyzes and conclusions are based on the theory of this study and are interpretations of the writer of this study.

1.8 Structure of the study

This thesis is including six chapters and is structured in the following manner. Chapter 1 (Introduction) sets the scene to the study: background and objective of the study. The key definitions, overview of the literature and limitations of the study are also included. The structure of this study is presented.

Theoretical framework of this study is based on three chapters: 2 (Organizational change), 3 (Communication) and 4 (Trust). Synthesis and summary of the study is presented in chapter 5 (Communication and trust in change management).

Chapter 2 (Organizational change), is presenting the context of the study (organizational change) and the different stages in the change process according to the Lewinian model. Chapter 3 (Communication) is presenting the general objective and barriers in communication and its role in change management. The first sub-question “What is the role of communication in change management” is relating to this chapter.

The nature, concept and different types of trust are presented in chapter 4 (Trust). The general antecedents and consequences of trust are included, but keeping the main attention to communication related ones. Chapter 4 aims to study the second sub-question “What is the role of trust in change management”.

Chapter 5 (Communication and trust in organizational change) aims to give an understanding of the roles and dynamics of communication and trust in organizational change context and also how trust could be built and increased by the means of communications.

At the end of this study (chapter 6, Discussion and conclusions), theoretical implications and the directions for a further research are discussed.

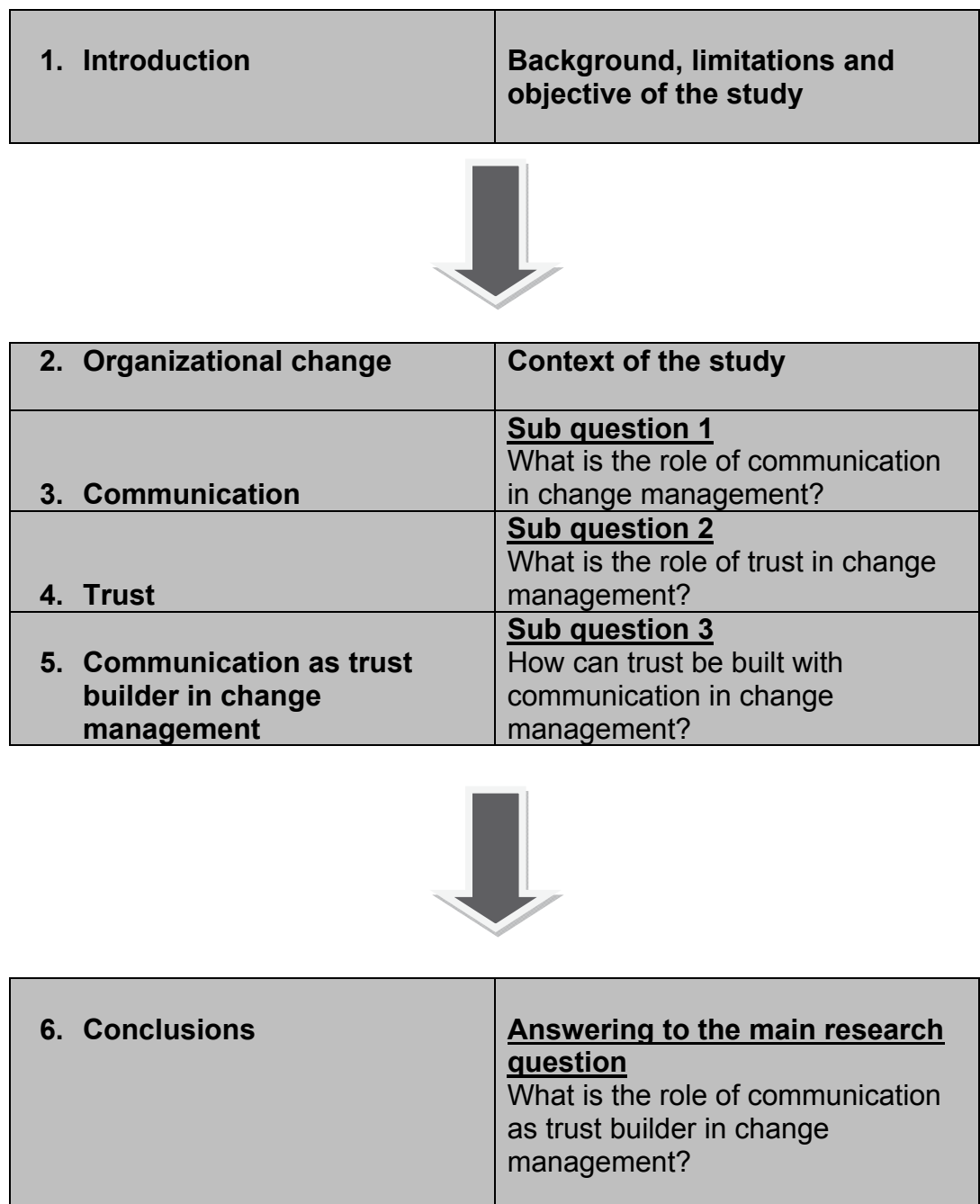


Figure 1. Structure of the study

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

In this chapter, it is presented the context in which the relations of communication and trust are examined. Change process is described by using the Lewinian change model. The levels of analysis are both organizational and individual, like in chapters of communication and trust. This is due to the fact that change should always be seen on both levels in order to ensure the successful implementation and integration.

Macroeconomic forces are pushing organizations more and more for changes: cost reductions, improvements in the quality of products and services, positions of new opportunities for growth, and increase productivity in many ways. (Kotter 1996, 3.) Dervitsiotis (2006, 809) sees, that in a highly interconnected world, in which the pace of change is accelerating, organizations are challenged to achieve high performance levels in the short run and a capacity to adapt to change in order to survive and succeed in the longer run.

In order to drive a successful organizational change through, management needs to understand first how individuals change. Change leaders and management of organization should recognize the two parallel sets of tasks: lead the organization through change and lead the individuals through change. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 1999, 141.)

2.1 Organizational change

There are various types of change as well as different forces driving change in organizations. Different types of change can be categorized in terms of variables like depth of change, speed of change or how change is implemented. (Pendlebury et al. 1998, 12.) Scale of change refers to whether the changes are small (for example reorganization of job structures at workplace level) or large (for example changing the organizational structure of the whole organization). As there is always objective and target to an organizational change, it has also a time frame. Speed of change refers to either slow changes taking place little by little

giving people time to adapt, or fast changes that happen suddenly, sometimes over night. Very often slow changes are representing change processes, which starting and ending points cannot clearly be defined. (Åberg 2006, 129.)

Organizational change and its impact on people's attitude toward change have a very complex and multidimensional character, which suggests that one should not neglect any of the dimensions if trying to maximize the attitudes towards an organizational change. (Devos et al. 2007, 623.)

Despite of all those variables affecting to change, there are some characteristics and main success factors which are, according to the previous research, generally recognizable in most of the organizational changes.

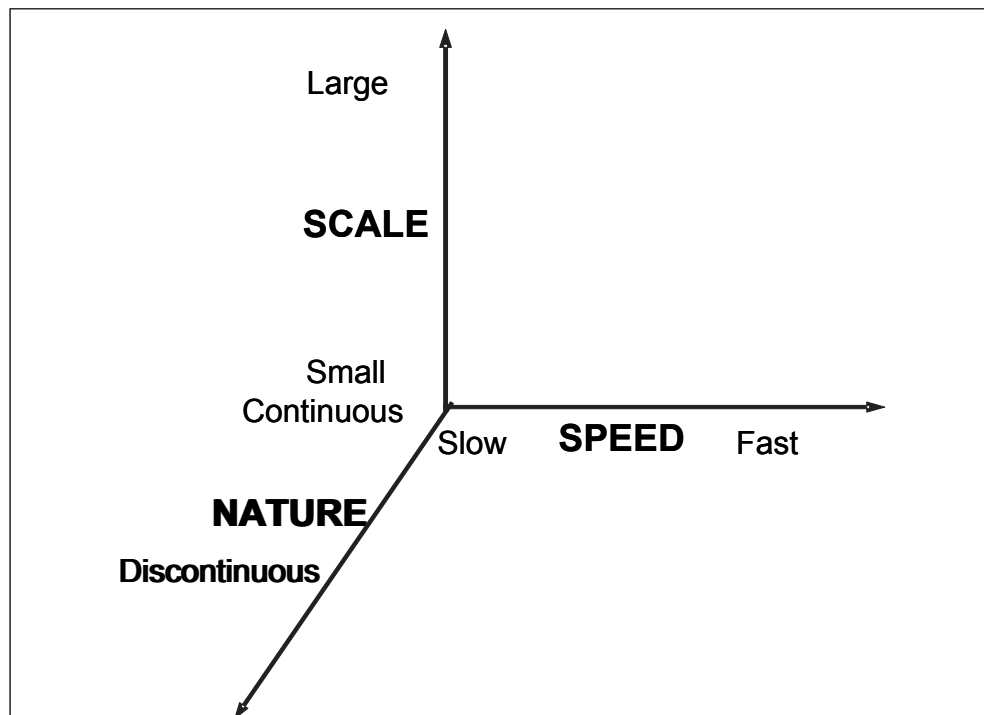


Figure 2. Three dimensions of organizational change (adapted from Salminen, 2007, 17)

2.1.1 High failure rates

Despite of the growing attention and research, still more than half of the efforts of organizational change fail in reaching a deadlock or do not reach the results, which they originally were aiming at. (Benneboek Gravenhorst et al. 1999; Elving 2005.) Beer & Nohria (2000, 133) are estimating that even more than two third of the change initiatives fail. The high failure rate for organizational changes is often a summary of many reasons but it can due to for example organizational culture, timing to implement the change, or communication. (Elving 2005, 129.) Klein (1996) has found further, that the greater the discrepancy between proposed change and current state is, the more difficult the change is to execute. Many change efforts seem to fail because of communication, which is critical to an effective change implementation. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 75.)

The costs of change failures are rising as organizations make costly and repeated mistakes to implement complex and organization-wide initiatives such as reengineering, diversity awareness, globalization, quality and productivity programs, as well as complex alliances, mergers, and acquisitions. This note leads to the fact that change management is put to the top of list of executive concerns in the organizations. (McLagan 2003, 50.)

2.1.2 Organizational culture

The impact of organizational culture is obvious in change management. Organizational culture and processes can be seen as primary leverages for change (French et al. 1989) and readiness to change differs a lot in organizations. According to organizational development theory (OD), organization is generally seen to be healthy when there is open communication, conflicts are handled in open way, there is strong feeling of integrity and decisions are made near to the source of information (Beer, 1980).

Organizations can be culturally assorted into four categories when estimating the renewal capacity: In reactive organizations changes are seen as punishments, in adaptive culture as a way to adapt and in advancing culture as a warning of planning capability. Only in competitive organizations it is seen as a possibility. In change management, organization culture is meaning either strength or resistance. Culture can be a central possibility to change, but on the other hand a barrier or a target of development. Culture is learned and therefore under change. It is slow and complicated to affect to a culture, but necessary because even the large changes cannot be successful if culture is acting against them. Change not only involves learning, but unlearning something that is already present and well integrated into the personality and social relationships of the individuals. Consequently, that is the reason an organizational culture can often act as a resisting force to change. (Mattila, 2008, 21–22.)

2.2 Individual change

Organizations are a collection of people, the way people perceive the changes and feel about them is critical (Salminen 2000, 15). Many researchers agree that organizations can change only if the individuals within an organization change. People are the most important asset and their commitment in effective organizational change and development is a prerequisite (e.g. Balogun & Hope Hailey 1999, 140 and Paton & McCalman (2000, 121, 267). To summarize, Schneider et al. (1996, 7) wrote: "If people do not change, there is no organizational change".

There are differences how individuals undergo changes. It is natural to attach safety to stability and simultaneously attached unsafety and threat to a change. In working environments the changes in organization of work and changes in working environment are often experienced as exceptions and there may be a strong resistance. In order to make controlled and successful changes, it is essential to change managers to recognize the factors of resistance and acceptance in changes. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007.)

Many researchers (e.g. Armenakis et al. 1993; Eby et al. 2000; Mattila 2008) share the view that change effort is heavily depending of organization's ability to change the individual behavior, openness, commitment and motivation of its employees. All of them are critical factors, which should always be affected. As the organizational change is about how to change the individual behavior, the role of communication is further emphasized. (Elving 2005, 130.)

There are four key schools and approaches considering individual change. Behaviorist approach is about changing the behaviors of others through reward and punishment which leads to behavioral analysis and reward strategies. The cognitive approach is about achieving results through positive reframing (goal setting and coaching). The humanistic psychology approach is based on believing in development and growth, and

maximizing potential. The emphasis is on healthy development and authentic relationships as well as healthy organizations. The psychodynamic approach is about understanding and relating to the inner world of change. (Cameron & Green 2004, 33, 52–53.)

Schein (1980) asserted that changes in structures, hierarchy, reward systems, and technology are mediated through individual change. Many change efforts fail, because people implementing the changes underestimate the importance of meaning of individual change. The ability and drive of an organization to change depends heavily on the openness, commitment and motivation to change of its employees. (Armenakis et al. 1993.) Therefore, to achieve change, there is need to understand how individuals change and build this into “unfreeze-change-refreeze” model of change.

2.2.1 Individual reactions and emotions in change

There is a lot of variety in ways people can react on to an organizational change. That approach is often underestimated by the leaders when implementing changes in organizations. The majority of people tends to stay within certain safe zones and is hesitant of change. People tend to become uncomfortable when any change occurs, even if it is a minor one.

Some aspects should be taken into account when assessing individual's reactions to change and planning the change implementation and communication actions.

Firstly, there are different types of changes in organization and they can provoke different attitudes and behaviors in individual. Secondly, the consequences of change are significant. There are always someone who benefits of the change and those who loose in that. Also the organizational history and culture matter when assessing the impacts of change. The personality type of the individual is a major determent factor in how she or he responds to the change. In addition, the history of individual (previous

exposure and responses to change, levels of knowledge, skills and experience, areas of stability in his or her life and stage in his or her career) can also give some clues to how he or she might respond to the change. (Cameron & Green 2004, 46–47.)

Thirdly, ability to handle changes differs quite much individually. Uncertainty during a change process is typically about the aim, process and expected outcomes of the change and implications for the individual employee. Knowledge is not the only pre-requisite to the ability to influencing the outcomes, but knowledge about the motives for change will also help reducing uncertainty and creating readiness for change. In that sense effective communication can be viewed as a mean to proper manage uncertainty. (DiFronzo & Borida 1998.)

Change readiness is similar to Lewin's concept of "unfreezing", is reflected in individual's beliefs, attitudes and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to successfully make the changes. (Armenakis et al., 1993, 681.) Attitudes of employee toward a change can impact morale, productivity and turnover intentions. (McDonald & Siegal 1993.)

2.2.2 Transition curves

One reason why attempted organizational changes fail is that changes often lead to increased feelings of anxiety, negative emotions, uncertainty, and ambiguity among employees. (Kiefer, 2005.) Individuals pass through the transition curves in different way. They do not necessarily know that they are going through different phases or critical points of the change process, but what they may experience, is a wide range of different emotions or lack of them. (Cameron & Green 2004, 33.)

As with the behavioral and cognitive approaches to change, research into the psychodynamic approach began in the area of terminally ill patients, instead of organizations. Kubler-Ross (1969) has described her work with

terminally ill patients and the different related psychological stages they went through during the process.

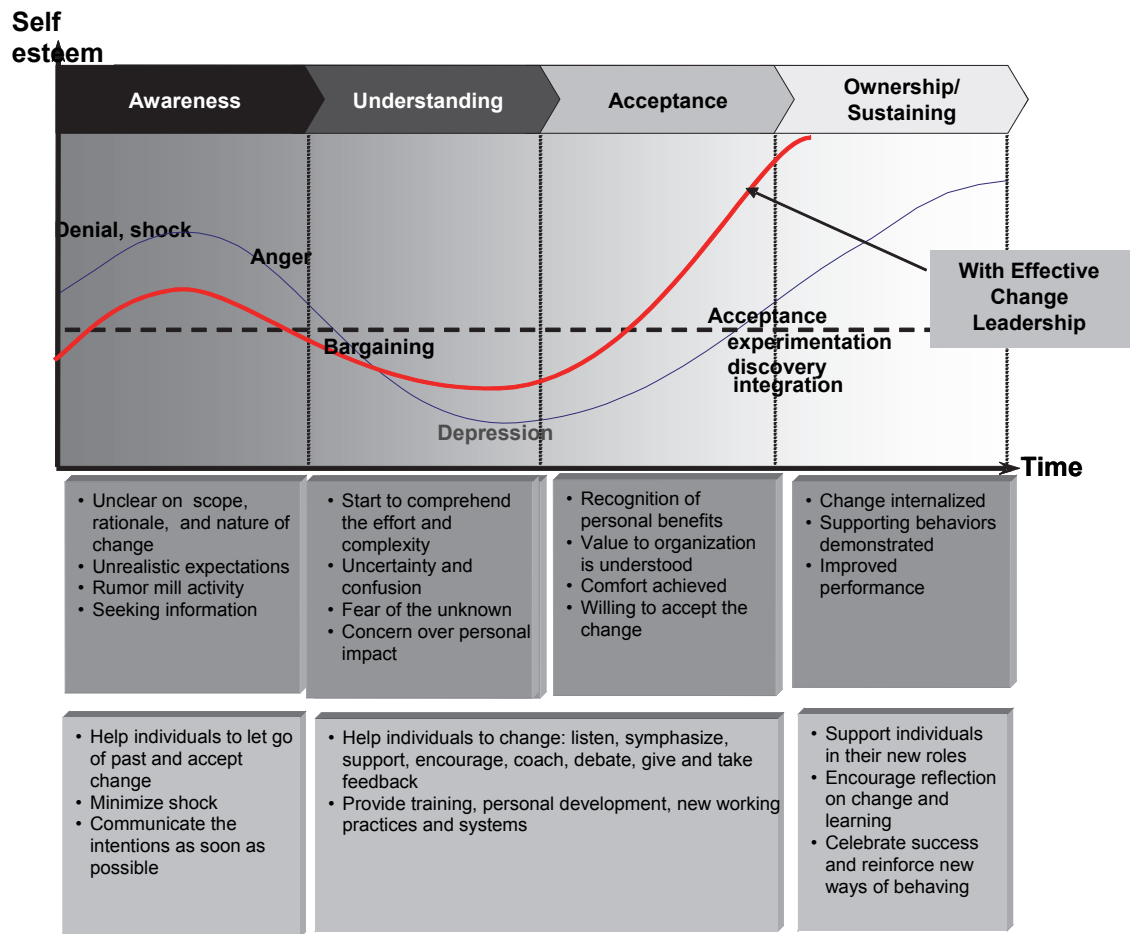


Figure 3. Change curve (based on Kubler, Ross 1000 and Balogun & Halley 2004, 145)

The transition curve suggests that an individual undergoing change pass through different stages: In stage 1 (denial, shock, disbelief), individual initially experience shock when they encounter the need for change and deny it. People faced with change are often not able to accept the communication. (Kubler-Ross 1969 in Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 145). When people allow themselves to acknowledge what is happening, they enter the stage of anger. In that stage, emotions are varying from anger and frustration to the efforts to get the original situation back. The next stage (bargaining) can be seen as deflection of the true gravity of the situation. Person is discussing by him/herself and trying to find anything to remedy the situation, perhaps verging on panic. When it becomes clear

that no among of bargaining is providing escape from the situation, person is moving to the depression stage and is ready to give up everything. For some, this stage can take a form of apathy or some mixture of intense emotions and disassociated states. When the need to “let go of the past” is accepted and move out of their depression, individual is able to move forward to stage of acceptance. Acceptance can be very “quiet”, as it is not necessarily a happy stage, but a stage where one can in some ways come to terms with real situation and the inevitability of what is happening (Kubler-Ross 1969). The last stage is also identifying and testing out new behaviors, maybe as a result of training and an integration of new behaviors are starting to be a routine. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 1999, 142.)

Elving (2005, 133) sees that as the uncertainty of employees during change process will reflect on the implications for the individual employee, in this sense the feelings of uncertainty are about the process of the change, the personal and social consequences of the change. Schein (2003) defined two forces at play within every individual undergoing change, of which the first is learning anxiety. This is the anxiety associated with learning something new (what if the change is not good?). The second, competing force is survival anxiety, which concerns the pressure to change (what happens if the change is not implemented?). The associated fears can be relating for example to temporary incompetence (lack of competence to deal with the new situation), punishment for incompetence, loss of personal identity or loss of group membership.

When people have a lack of respect and/or negative attitude toward the person responsible for making the change, there is strong tendency to resent and event resist it. Their feelings don't allow them to look the change objectively. The degree whether the change is welcome change or resisted, may depend on many factors (Kirkpatrick 2002, 23), for example on the organization's ability to change the individual behavior, openness, commitment and motivation of its employees. (Armenakis et al. 1993; Eby et al. 2000.)

The potential impacts for individual can be positive (for example wealth and development, new opportunities) or negative (like injustice, fear, decreased commitment and motivation). Therefore, it is important to understand the relationship between ongoing change and negative emotions rising from it. (Kiefer 2005, 1–2.)

Figure 4 below is describing the differences of managing organizational change on organizational and individual level.

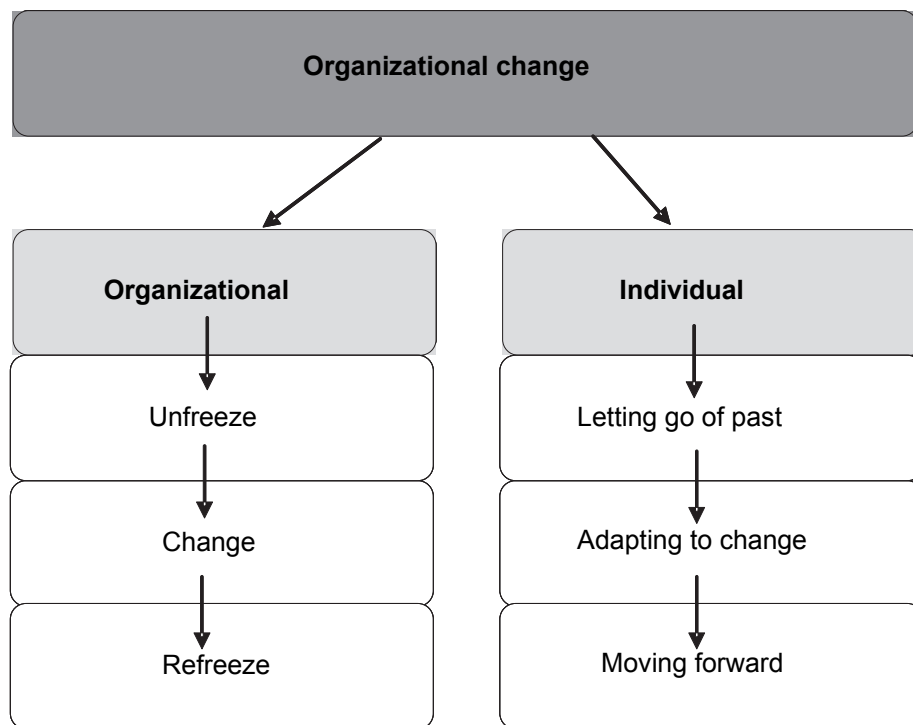


Figure 4. Managing organizational change on organizational and individual level

2.3 Key success factors in change management

There are many variables which makes organizational change successful. Here is summarized some of the most common ones presented in the change literature. Two of the most important success factors, trust and communication, are studied separately in chapters 3 (Communication) and 4 (Trust) in this study.

Several studies have indicated that *participation* is central to increasing employees' acceptance of change. (e.g. Kotter 1995.) In order to implement the change effectively, people must be able to trust that they are heard, respected, and considered. Salminen (2000, 97) suggests that people on all levels and in all parts of the organization should have an opportunity to actually affect the solutions implemented. Pendlebury et al. (1998, 45) is emphasizing that the delivery of change requires the participation of the entire workforce as it enables the business to exploit the rich diversity of employees' skills and experience, helps to overcome the resistance by involving employees directly, and ensures that change is lasting.

Armenakis et al. (1993) found that employees' perceptions of the *readiness for change* has been identified as one of the most important factors in understanding sources of resistance to large-scale changes. Openness for change is mainly facilitated by four variables, which are independent of each other: no threatening organizational change (content-related), trust in upper and lower management (context-related), a positive track record of past changes in the organization (context-related), and opportunities to participate (process-related). Devos et al (2007, 622.)

There are many reasons why a change is resisted and it is sometimes difficult to determine a real a reason for that. The most common reasons for resisting are feeling of personal loss. Tangibles like money, good working conditions or authority can be loosed or intangibles like pride and satisfaction, feeling of importance and security, important contacts, freedom, responsibility, or status can be lost in change. Another reason why people may react negatively to change is that they may feel that there is no need for change and they may feel that the change will bring more harm than good. Consequently, in order to affect positively to change readiness, people should be provided sufficient and honest information of the reasons for change and highlight the positive consequences of change (Kirkpatrick 2002, 20–21, 30.) Juholin (2008, 135) reminds, that there is no

need to try to silent change resistance as it can also be used as a positive and constructive, and give new ideas and useful perspective to the change. Openness for all kind of feelings is one of the basic requisitions in trust building and mature and healthy organization respects these views letting them guide the change positively.

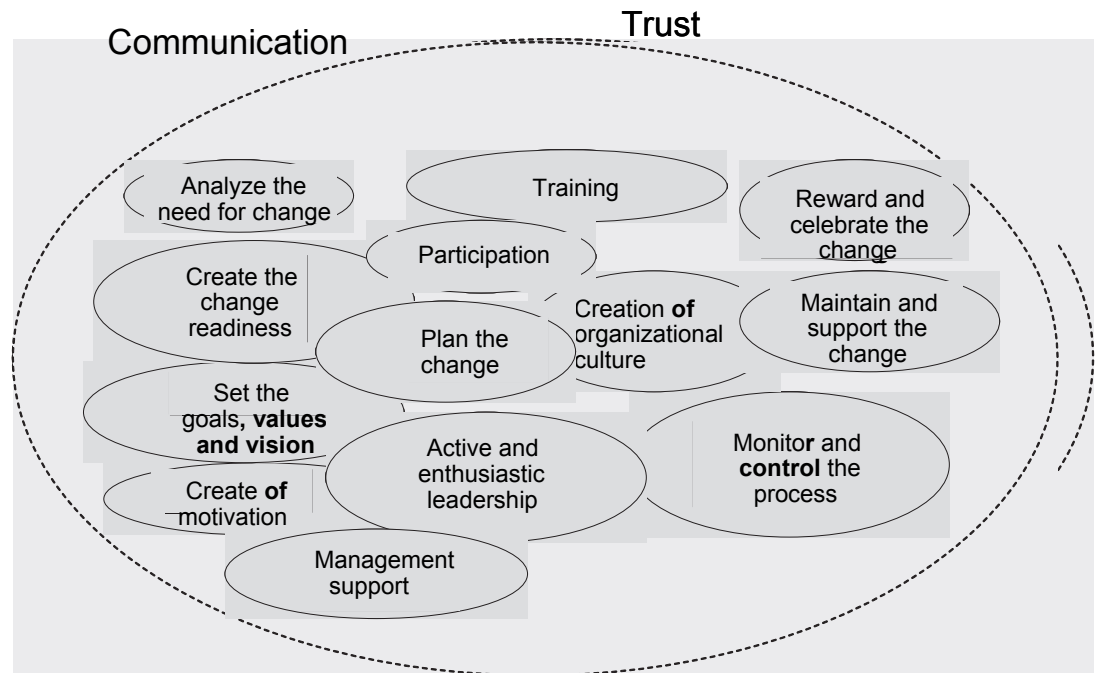


Figure 5. Key success factors in organizational change

2.4 Kurt Lewin's model of change management

Kurt Lewin developed a model of change management from the perspective of the organism metaphor. Lewin is responsible for introducing force field analysis, which examines the driving and restraining forces in any change situation. The model is still extremely relevant, applicable and widely used when implementing different changes in organizations. In fact, many other more modern change management models are actually based on the Kurt Lewin's model of change management.

Managing change through reducing the forces that prevent change, rather than through increasing the forces which are pushing for change, is central to Lewin's approach and his technique of force-field analysis (1947). He maintained that within any social system with driving and restraining forces

which serve to maintain the status quo. In order to promote the right conditions for change, individuals have to identify driving and restraining forces. When change is found to be justified, there has to be an unfreezing to status quo, which means creating an imbalance between the driving and restraining forces. Schein (1995) proposes that the anxiety with not learning must be greater than the anxiety associated with the risk of looking or feeling incompetent for individuals to engage in learning behavior.

A key part of Lewin's model is the notion that change, even at the psychological level, is a journey rather than a simple step. Lewin suggested a way of looking at the overall purposes of making changes. He proposed that organizational changes have three steps. The first stage involves unfreezing the current state of affairs (defining the current state, surfacing the resisting and driving forces and picturing a desired end-state. The second stage is about moving to a new state through participation and involvement. The third stage focuses on refreezing and stabilizing the new state of affairs by setting policy, rewarding success and establishing new standards. (Lewin 1951.)

Lewin's change management model has been criticized by various researchers for being too simplistic. But as with all models, also Lewin's model simplifies what can be quite a complex process. Actually the strength of Lewinian model lies in its simple representation which makes it easy to use and understand.

The key in Lewin's change management model is to see that human change, whether at the individual or group level, is a profound psychological dynamic process that involve painful unlearning without loss of ego identity and difficult relearning as one cognitively attempt to restructure one's thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes. (Schein 1995.)

Typically the process of organizational change is thought of as unfolding in three phases. (Armenakis et al. 1999; Lewin 1947.) As Armenakis et al. (2002, 169) also noticed, the whole change process is continuous and the phases of change are overlapping. It has to be noted, that there are a lot implementing strategies for change which can be used with Lewinian model.

2.4.1 Unfreeze – Creating the change readiness

Unfreezing is about making people (all levels in the organization) ready for change (change readiness). That happens by making them aware of the need for change and dissatisfied with the present ways of working. (Schein 2003). Armenakis et al. are describing change readiness in terms of organizational members' *beliefs, attitudes and intentions*. Schein (2003) states that all forms of learning and change are starting with some form of dissatisfaction or frustration generated by data that disconfirm the expectations or hopes (motivation for change).

Creating the change readiness begins with defining and challenging the current state. At the same time, the driving and restraining forces are decreased and pictured a desired end-state. There are variety of techniques, which have been developed to questioning and challenging of the current state. (Lewin 1951; Balogun & Hope Hailey 1999, 139.) It is obvious, that in this stage trust is one of the major factors to make this stage happen.

An organization must be prepared for any change which is about to occur and get ready to move away from our current comfort zone (readiness for change). The readiness can be created by change education (aiming to dissatisfaction of the current state, convincing the change is viable way to solve current problems and believing the proposed change are achievable). (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 148.)

Dirks & Ferrin (2001, 464) are suggesting that managers may be more successful in implementing change efforts on a proactive rather than

reactive basis, doing so in “good times” with high level of trust rather than on “bad times” with low level of trust.

Stage of unfreeze is about mobilizing an organization towards a move. It is a difficult stage in the process, because it is about making individuals ready for change. The use of logical and rational argument is not necessarily sufficient to convince the individuals who may stand to lose a lot by change. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 148.)

Creation of the feeling of psychological safety is important in the stage of unfreezing. Edmondson (2004, 241) describes psychological safety as “individual’s perceptions about the consequences of interpersonal risks in their working environment”. The risk consists for example of the beliefs how others will respond when one put oneself online by asking feedback or questions, proposing new ideas, or reporting a mistake. Psychological safety and trust are both interpersonal experiences, which can affect various behavioral and organizational outcomes.

2.4.2 Change – Movement

According to Salminen (2000, 12), it seems that it is often the implementation of change that fails, not the planning and deciding on new strategies and tactics. Prerequisite for this stage is that the change readiness has been created and people would be ready move towards a change. Support to adapt to the change is needed and for example training, coaching could be included in this stage. Resisting forces are reduced and driving forces increased simultaneously. In this stage, it is important to encourage people to step into the new state and see the benefits of it.

Moving to change needs actions in communication, education and development interventions may be necessary to help individuals through the transition process. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 158.) The levels of change can be divided into four. On technical level changes are

concerning all formal and informal structures and systems. On political level, all the formal and informal networks and power systems are changed. On cultural level, the routines, symbols and stories are changed and on interpersonal level, the changes are in communication, training, management of development and education.

2.4.3 Refreeze – Making routine

For a change to become routine and accepted into the routines in an organization, the organization must go through the final stage of refreezing the organizational system. As the name suggests, this stage is about establishing stability once the changes have been made. People should be reconnected back into their safe, familiar environment. Refreezing takes people from a period of low productivity in the transitional state to a stable and productive state. In fact, anchoring the changes into the culture can take a lot of time, depending on how big the change is, nature of the change and so on. The ways to sustain the change provide support and training should be provided in this stage. It is important to celebrate the success of change and reward of it.

2.5 Summary

The context of this study was described in this chapter and multidimensional nature of organizational changes was presented. Organizational change process was studied at both organizational and individual level. But as stated before, individuals are forming organizations and that is why the change should definitely start from individuals. There are many different types of changes in organizations, but some main characteristics are definable in most of them. The most critical key success factors are to involve people to the change process (participation of change related persons), define a clear change vision, and find the means how to facilitate the change readiness. If these elements are recognized, analyzed and well managed, it is easier to build trust by the

means of communication which is increasing the possibilities for effective implementation of change.

In the “unfreeze”-stage, readiness for change is created. Readiness is cognitive precursor to the behaviors of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort. (Armenakis et al 1993, 681). It seems that in this stage it is important to create affective trust rather than the cognitive. In this stage, also the unlearning of the old stage should be supported and motivation for change is created.

Change on the individual level is prerequisite for organizational change, and consequently organization's ability to change depends very much of its ability to change individual's behavior. In change communication, recognition of the reactions and emotions of individuals is essential during the change process as they may have a major impact to the progress of change.

Kurt Lewin's change model was introduced in this chapter and the stages of change process accordingly. The refreezing stage is preparing the organization for change and creating the readiness and motivation for the change. The implementation of change is the objective in the change stage and re-stabilizing in refreeze stage.

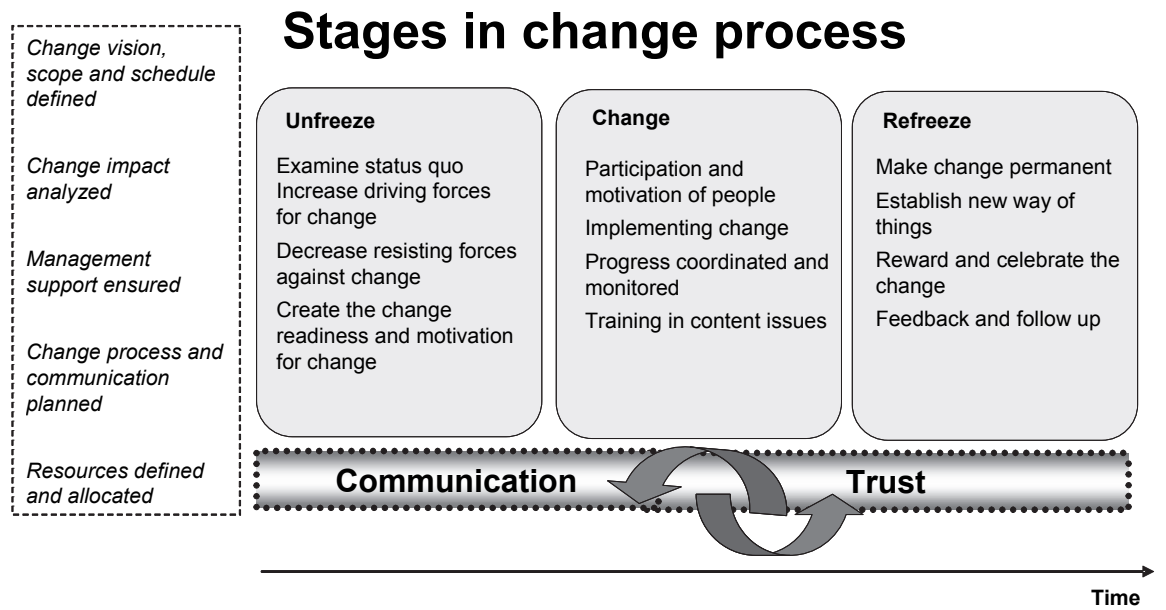


Figure 6. Stages in change process (based on Lewin's three-step model, 1951)

3. COMMUNICATION

This chapter is aiming to define the overall objective of communication in organization, the role of communication in change management and to summarize the most important factors enhancing and preventing communication in high level.

In the previous chapter (Organizational change), some of the critical factors for organizational change were defined. As individual behavior, openness, commitment and motivation of employees have been proven to be important antecedents for successful organizational change, in this third chapter (Communication) is studied what the role of communication is in change management (first sub question) and how these factors could be supported by the means of communication.

In general, communication is seen challenging, fragile and very central organizational function in the previous research. Pendlebury et al. (1995) state that the overall objective of communication is to create information flow. After that, the aim is to increase that flow and channel it in the required direction until the objectives of the vision have been achieved. Pendlebury et al. emphasize that it must be borne in mind that communication implies the creation of interpersonal relationships, so that a dialogue (both parties listen as well as speak) can take place in. Communication is not just about providing information, but also interaction between individuals. (Pendlebury et al 1995, 267.)

Having a wide impact in the organization, communication is a central prerequisite for organizational learning and knowledge creation (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 76) and it aims for the creation of mutual understanding and trusting relationships. (Elving 2005.) Everybody in the organization is responsible of the communication and knowledge transfer. Management is still in the key role as they have responsibility to inform others about the things others do not know.

3.1 Role of communication in change management

Change communication is demanding more attention than other communication. Emotions and possible reactions following it should be taken into account when communicating about the change. (Åberg 2006, 97.) Scholars (e.g. Elving 2005, Kotter 1995, van Vuuren 2008, Jones et al. 2004) seem to be in relative agreement that communication constitutes a vital component in any successful change implementation. It is argued, that communication is a key process skill required of change agents to get others to understand and accept change.

Several studies have identified change resistance as one of the most remarkable reasons in failing in organizational changes. Intention to resist change and cynicism towards it are both considered as negative attitudes and resulting from communication processes. (Qian & Daniels 2007, 322.) Paton & McCalman (2000) shared that finding with a note that change resistance and conflict is often seem to be the result of poor communication, the spreading of rumors and misinformation, and an inability to allay the natural fears and anxieties of employees awaiting the unknown and things they don't understand. This fore mentioned is main reason why trust is so strongly related to communication. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 88.)

It is agreed that communication is crucial in managing changes. Above all, change is naturally what and how we act, but also words and speech – so communication. (Åberg 2006, 130.) Pendlebury et al. (1998, 47) are defining communication as one of the prime factors in making the change process consistent, homogenous and dynamic. Kotter (1996, 10) claims that ineffective communication is even a major reason why change initiatives fail. Åberg (2006, 135) points out that the more difficult the change is, the stronger communication is needed and the longer it takes to achieve the target of communication. According to Allen's study (2007), the employees who perceived they received high quality change communication were reported to be more open toward a change.

Despite the general acceptance of that communication is one of the key elements in successful change management, strategies implemented by management often fail to fulfill their purpose of providing quality communication for employees. (Armenakis & Harris 2002.) Communication should be understandable, repeating and give listener a possibility to do own insights. If the change manager is working like that, she/he tells a lot about her/himself, the understanding of people, her/his ability to lead the change in practice and organizational capability. The personnel dissatisfaction is often affected to communication. The changes should be open and alternate and they should be made together. At the same time, communication should be a dialogue, production of new understanding and finding and supporting to take part in the change. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 75.)

The formal system of communication in an organization is always supported by the informal communication. Though it can be useful by carrying important information and support to the formal one, the negative impact of it should be taken into account. Several studies have associated rampant rumors with unsuccessful change communication efforts. (e.g. Juholin 2008; Åberg 2006, Kirkpatrick 2002.) The message can be malicious, full of inaccurate information, rumors or speculation. According to van Vuuren & Elving (2008, 355), informal communication should be limited as much as possible, because informal communications threats, destroys or disturbs all kinds of formal communication. DiFronzo & Bordia (1998) see that informal communication and rumor mill have negative consequences, including the erosion of trust, negative emotions and attitudes, lower employee morale and decreased dedication to the organization. Negative informal communication can be effectively reduced by active, trustworthy formal communication. (DiFronzo & Bordia 1998, 296.)

Communication with the employees should be an integrative and important part of the change efforts and strategies (Elving 2005, 130) as

well as a continuous and two-way process both by telling and selling the plan and listening to the reactions and suggestions of changes throughout the whole change process. (Noteboom 2002, 37.) In providing clear communication on change through appropriate mediums at a tone and pitch suitable to the audience and in practicing what management of change can be put into place. (Kotter 1996; Carnall 2003.) Van Vuuren (2008, 351) is suggesting that one of the major contributions of communication is to create the conditions for organizational success.

It has been found that high quality of information could reduce employee uncertainty of change and therefore make the change more acceptable emotionally and leads to openness and readiness to change. (Qian & Daniels 2007, 322.) Their study results that information helpfulness is a predictor of anxiety about change.

Among other goals, communication is aiming for the creation of mutual understanding and trusting relationships. Information is often seen as a part of communication. The benefits of participation and commitment are just some of the many ways that are stressing the importance of communication in change management. (Van Vuuren & Elving 2008, 350.)

Conventional texts on managing change recognize communication as one of the most important aspects in an organization undergoing change (Jackson & Callan 2001). Hayes (2002) argued that features of communication networks and effects of interpersonal relations can have a major influence on the process and outcomes of organizational change. Particular attention is given to the notion of “effective communication” that informs employees, enables feedback and promotes wide scale consultation. Many writers in this area assume that such action will overcome resistance to change (which is often stem from natural anxiety, ignorance and misunderstanding) by stimulating interest and commitment and thereby reducing opposition (e.g. Paton & McCalman, 2000).

Based on the prior research, table 6 below is summarizing the role of communication in change management.

Author	The role of communication in change management
van Vuuren & Elving (2008)	Communication creates the conditions for organizational success.
Cartwright & Holmes (2006)	Communication keeps employees engaged and is an antidote to cynicism.
Allen et al. (2007)	Communication creates openness toward change. Also change-related uncertainty mediates to this relationship.
Jackson and Callan (2001)	Communication is one of the most important aspects in an organization undergoing change.
Hayes (2002)	The features of communication networks and the effects of interpersonal relations can have major influence on the process and outcomes of organizational change.
Qian & Daniels (2007)	Quality of information predicts change-specific cynicism, which, in turn, leads to intention to resist change.
Covin & Kilmann (1990)	Communication and widespread employee participation are crucial to successful change efforts.
Hersey & Blanchard (1988)	Communication is a key process skill required of change agents to get others to understand and accept change.
Mattila (2008)	Communication is the most important antecedent for trust and trust needed in implementation of changes in organization.
Carnall (2003)	Communication of clear objectives is needed to be consistent especially under conditions of change, and to ensure that others understand and are aware of the reasons and intentions of change.
Foy (1994); Katz & Kahn (1978); Meyer & Allen (1997); Postmes et al. (2001)	Communication creates the conditions for commitment, and hence should be seen as one of its important antecedents.
DeRidder (2003); Postmes et al. (2001); Meyer & Allen (1997)	Communication is an important antecedent of the self-categorisation process, which helps to define the identity of a group and to create a community spirit fitting into organizational requirements like change efforts.

Table 1. Role of communication in change management

3.2 Factors enhancing and disturbing communication

When the final decision for change has been made and a timetable has been established, a thorough, planned communication approach is necessary. (Noteboom 2002, 37.) Change communication attempts to reduce and structure uncertainty appearing in organizational change. (DiFronzo & Bordia 1998.)

Kotter (1996, 10) sees that communication comes in both words and deeds, of which the latter is generally the most powerful form. Consequently, nothing undermines change more than behavior by important individuals that is consistent with the verbal communication.

In previous research, communication is recognized to be problematic and one of the key things to remember in communication is that it does not necessarily lead to the transfer of meaning. Even if the sender of message thinks that the message has been clearly communicated, it is the listener who creates the meaning for oneself. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 169.)

3.2.1 Barriers of communication

It is important to look at the barriers that can exist between the sender and receiver of the message. An understanding of barriers can give some insight into approaches that will overcome the barriers. Barriers can be divided into those that relate to the sender and those that relate to the receivers. Managers need to look at themselves as senders and recognize which of these barriers exist in change situation. Their communication approach should then be placed to overcome or eliminate the barriers. (Kirkpatrick 2002, 48.)

Effective communication is always a two-way process and it can be described as a cycle. Signals or “messages” are sent by the communicator and “received” by the other party, who “sends” back some form of confirmation that the “message” has been received and understood. In practice, this process should be examined in order to understand the

hidden complexity of it. Empathy is necessary in order to realize which of these barriers exist when changes are made. Communication approaches must be planned to overcome or eliminate the barriers. Rapport between sender and receiver is an important prerequisite to effective communication. They must have good working relationship of mutual respect and trust. (Kirkpatrick 2002, 48–49.)

Table 2 on the next page is summarizing the most common barriers of sender and receiver in communication.

Sender barriers	Receiver barriers
Sender doesn't know enough about the receiver.	Receiver is preoccupied with something "more important".
Sender has a negative attitude toward the message – and doesn't want to communicate it.	Receiver does not like/respect the sender.
Sender has a negative attitude toward the receiver.	Receiver is not interested in the message.
Sender has a negative attitude toward communicating – and doesn't care whether receiver understands or not.	Receiver "knows" what the message is going to be (or thinks he does).
Sender fails to get the attention and interest of the receiver.	Receiver does not want to understand the message as it may be unpleasant.
Sender has poor communication skills (oral expression and/or writing)	Receiver has emotional barriers such as fear, anxiety, anger, and frustration.
Sender picks the wrong time.	Receiver is physically tired.
Sender uses the wrong method.	Receiver is thinking about what to say when the sender finishes.
Sender chooses the wrong place.	Receiver is distracted.
Sender uses vocabulary that isn't clear to the receiver (ambiguous or technical).	Receiver does not understand "English".
Sender doesn't communicate the right amount of information (too little or too much).	Receiver pretends to listen when not listening.
Sender uses negative tone.	Receiver pretends to understand what doesn't understand.
Sender is in a hurry.	
Sender fails to verify whether receiver understands.	

Table 2. Barriers in communication (Kirkpatrick, D., 2001, 47–48)

3.2.2 Factors enhancing communication

According to Kirkpatrick (2002, 49–51), it is good policy to provide ample advance notice of change – whether the change is favorable or unfavorable. Managers must build a reputation for being honest, for letting their people know what is going to happen. From the time change is announced, until the time it is implemented, continuous two-way communication should take place. Subordinates should be allowed to vent their feelings, ask questions, and offer reactions and suggestions. Managers should listen with empathy and provide answers and information as requested.

3.2.3 Feedback and dialogue

Communication should be two-way; taking into consideration employee's view will benefit both the organization and the employees in the long term. Feedback is necessary part of communication and it means that people will “feed back” to management their understanding of what they have read and heard of the change. It also means that people will “feedback” their reactions, feelings, comments, and suggestions regarding any change that has been planned or implemented. Feedback will provide some ideas for making decisions regarding the proposed change or implementing it. If people feel that their reactions and suggestions are being listened and considered, they will be more committed to accept and even welcome the change. (Kirkpatrick 2002, 58.)

3.2.4 Frequency and timing of communication

An overall proviso is to know that the planned communication will never be enough. *When* to communicate *what* should be very carefully defined. According to Balogun & Hope Hailey (2004, 173–174), there is no ideal time. Changes often want as much information as soon as possible, but the people responsible for change may not be willing to communicate until they are completely clear about the details or the openness may not be possible as there are issues of confidentiality.

Juholin (2008, 132) and Stenvall & Virtanen (2007, 74) have the view that during the change, communication should be continuous. There should not be too much communication, but it is essential that communication of the progress is regular. This is preventing good planning and modeling of the change process in the view of communication. The description of a change process should be as exact as possible and include different communication actions. Rumors have a tendency to spread, which speaks for the continuous communication. That could be a reason to communicate also in those cases in which there would be nothing specific to inform. When changes are coming or they are on, the most common question is "what happens and when". It helps to create own orientation if people can schedule happenings and matters. Scheduling is one of the most central subjects in change communication and it is good to think communication in a shorter and longer view that gives the frames and helps to create the view to the whole change. That is followed by concrete information about the expectations which will face each team and unit. It is essential that change is concretized to the level of units as soon as possible. It is also important that it is specified which matters or actions are not under change and which are. (Åberg 2006, 129.)

Van Vuuren & Elving (2008) are reminding, that by communication it is not meant only informing people about the progress of change, but also generating an explosion of ideas which enhance and accelerate the process. Also information and communication have to be balanced as one of the reasons for failure rates in organizational changes can be partly attributed to the misbalance between communication and information. Communication about the change must follow strict procedures and at the same time support the need for information and self-expression. (Pendlebury & al. 1995, 47.)

Juholin (2008, 131) is stating that change processes are slow. In change process there are phases in which it seems that nothing happens, though there are many actions going on and working groups in action. Usually changes are not coming true like expected, which is also supporting the

change communication. Changes are always unsure. Continuous change communication means that change process have to be described and followed up-to-date.

3.3 Communication channels

There is great variety of communication channels available during change. As the technical channels are not included in this study, the purpose of this chapter is more to concentrate to the source of communication. Communication is not only the responsibility of change managers or communication professionals, but all managers and supervisors throughout the organization to help the change. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 174.) Allen et al. (2007, 207) argued that *the source of information* (who is communicating) may be an additional important predictor of employee's attitudes towards a change, rather than the quality or channel of information.

Juholin (2008, 109–111) discovers that communication of work community is consisting of used communication channels, arrangements and rules in communications. There is a wide selection of channels available in internal communications, for example communication between manager and employee, communication between colleagues, different kind of meetings, networks and forums (also virtual), info sessions, newsletters, intranets, just to mention some of them.

Individual is reaching communication from several directions in change situation. Communication can be both organizational (impersonal, for example communication between person and corporate or strategy communication) or individual communication (interpersonal communication, in other words communication between persons, for example individual communicating with manager, colleagues and peers).

3.3.1 Interpersonal communication

There are many terms for person leading the change (change manager, project manager, facilitator, problem owner, change agent) but the focal point of a change is not be an individual. A work group or change team can easily be designated for a special task force for managing the change. (Paton & McCalman 2000, 49). Change managers and managers are facing many specific expectations and they have to be able to build a big picture of the reasons for change and expectations to it, simultaneously the reasons and goals should be handled in the level of unit (Juholin 2008, 133.) In the situations of dramatic or serious impact change, the senior management should be communicating of the change. If the senior management is not personally delivering such news, this can be interpreted as a lack of concern for the welfare of employees. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 182.)

Manager can try to communicatively affect to the values, attitudes, information, opinions, motivation, commitment and behavior of the receivers. He/she can affect to the norms, spirit of behavior of group (Åberg 2006, 135.) and is the most important internal communicator (Juholin 2008, 133.) The features of communication networks and the effects of interpersonal relations can have a major influence on the process and outcomes of organizational change. Particular attention can be given to “effective communication” that informs employees, enables feedback and promotes wide scale consultation. (Tourish & Hargie 2004, 61.)

Many studies (e.g. Kotter 1996; van Vuuren & Elving 2008) underline the crucial role of management during the change process and implementing communication. Major and wide changes should be communicated on organizational level, but on operative level, the managerial communication is even more important. Lower lever managers and direct supervisors are perceived as the primary sources of information for employees because they act on the level where strategies are turned into actions. (van Vuuren & Elving 2008, 351.)

According to the study of Allen et al. (2007, 187), the specific change-related uncertainty may be best addressed by different sources of communication so that the supervisors are the preferred sources of implementation-related and job-relevant information during change, while senior management typically provide more strategic information. Line communication and middle management are in the key role when decisions and other organizational policies made at the top of the organization have to be presented to the lower levels of organization. (Van Vuuren & Elving, 2008, 355.) Salminen (2000, 97) sees that top executive should believe in the importance of changes and communicate this belief through their behavior, champion the change project and ensure that all the necessary resources are allocated and actions taken. Management role is extremely important also because they are leading by their own example.

3.3.2 Impersonal communication

Throughout the whole change process the entire business must engage in frequent and broad communication (Juholin 2008; Åberg 2006; Kotter 1996; Stenvall & Virtanen 2007), which is one of the prime factors in making the process consistent, homogeneous and dynamic. The appropriate medium should be used to ensure penetrations, so that the messaging reaches those it is intended to reach in the time required.

The most important task of internal communication is to share the information including meaning and in the same form, to the large group at

as simultaneously as possible. It is a effort to every manager to adapt the information to his/her unit. Communication is part of work for good manager. It is often not direct and gives the knowledge basement to the co-operation, affects to the satisfaction in work though an atmosphere and motivation in it. These factors are affecting strongly to the productivity.

When changes are communicated in the organization, managers are facing the change in lower level and they have to balance between the targets and the people who are facing the changes in the organization. (Juholin 2006, 131.)

Figure 7 below is illustrating the difference between individual (communication between individuals) and organizational (impersonal) communication.

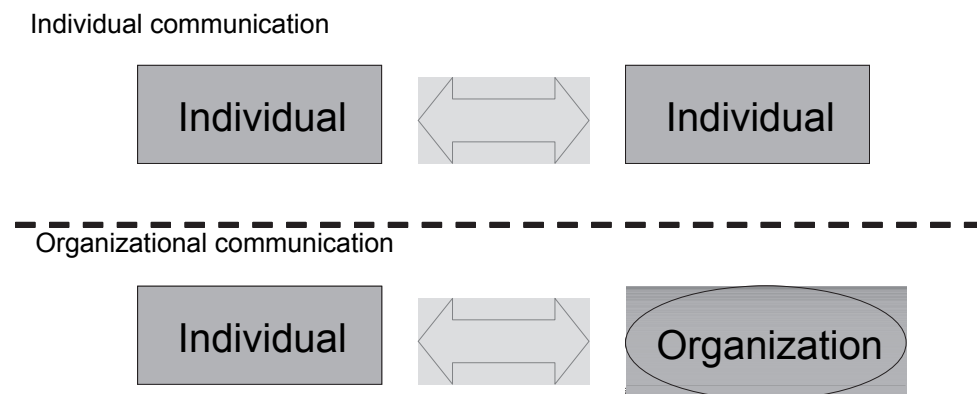


Figure 7. Individual and organizational communication, communicating parties

3.4 Communication during a change process

In this chapter, it is studied how communication should be integrated to the change phases to support change. It is worth noting, that from a change management perspective, there are only few well-defined guidelines of change communication that could be considered and followed. (Paton & McCalman 2000, 45).

Communication is related to many other ways of action, like for example to anticipation and production of estimation information. It is worth to connect the communication actions to the central actions and phases, as exact of those connections can be found the most remarkable needs for communications. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 73.) Emphasize the role of communication with clear, informative repeating and honest. Communication should be increased in organizational change. There are a lot of pressures in communications and information sharing in organizational change. Those requirements should be met in organizational change. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 72–73.)

Change is often requiring more than traditional communication, as the bigger is change, the more information needs and need for conversations occurs. The change which is taking into consideration personnel is conscious of that the feelings of people, atmosphere of working environment and knowledge of supposition of how change will presumably be taken. (Juholin 2008, 126.)

During the whole change process should be communication of the reasons and goals of change. In addition, superiors should be able to clearly inform of what the change is meaning in their unit, team or project. That should be done even to the individual level. So, the key question is what the change means to us, what it requires commonly of organization or unit and separately of each individual. (Juholin 2008, 133.)

Change communication can be informative or need participation from employees, depending on the nature of the change. (Van Vuuren & Elving 2008, 351.) The benefit of participation is one of the many ways in creating commitment to change. Communication should closely follow the phases of change process supporting the trust building during it. Communication strategy should coincide with the general stages of planned change. (Klein 1996.) Lewinian change model is used as a frame for planning change communication accordingly. Two-way communication should be used in change process instead of one-way as it is always more effective way to communicate and it is very important to practice what is preached, which is also creating the basic trust to make change possible. (Kotter 1996, 89–90.)

3.4.1 Communication in “unfreezing”

Change and communication actions in this stage are aiming to get the need for change understood, accepted and welcome to the organization. The communication should be continuous in this stage, to keep a clear picture of the desired change and the benefits of change. The key in this stage of change should be understood. Kotter (1996, 85.) Klein (1996) is stating that this phase in change process is to create the understanding of the rationalities *why* the change is needed. The message of communication should be customized (what is our message, how much is already known of our message) and the audience should be well defined (who is the audience and how will they probably react). Appropriate tone of should also be set in order to avoid in appropriation and contradiction in the message. The interpretation and reactions of communication depends upon the content of message and tone of it. (Paton & McCalman, 2000, 45). Without rich and effective communication efforts in this stage of change process, the fear of unknown tends to reinforce old assumptions and fears, focus on individual’s own concerns over the concerns of organization, and must rely on the rumors if there is no communication available.

Kotter (1996, 85) argues that change leaders is a critical stage in leading change. The vision should be communicated in many different forums over and over again in order to develop an efficient implementation strategy. Van Vuuren & Elving (2008, 354) suggest that framing the motives for change helps reducing uncertainty, which is seen to create distrust toward a change. As communication is known to reduce uncertainty (e.g. Kotter 1996, Klein 1996, Kirkpatrick 2001, Cameron & Green 2004), an effective change communication can be viewed as a means properly to manage uncertainty (DiFronzo & Boardia, 1998). The shared sense of a desirable future can help motivate and coordinate the kinds of actions that create transactions. Gaining understanding and commitment to a new direction is never an easy task, especially in large enterprises. (Kotter 1996, 85.)

In this phase, the driving forces for changing behavior from the current state should be strengthened and at the same time, the restraining forces should be decreased. Communication actions should support in motivating participants by preparing them for change, building trust and supporting people to recognize the need for change. The benefits of change should naturally be emphasized, but also the possible negative impacts and risks in change should be honestly and straight communicated. The possibility to participate should be offered and get people involved in the process.

Management of the organization should be strongly involved when the first communication is launched of the change. This stage should be two-way in gathering feedback and studying the concerns of employees. These objectives can best be met with rich and right timing communication. During this first phase in change process, organizational members become prepared for the change and ideally also its supports.

3.4.2 Communication in “change”

In this phase, the challenge is to get the adoption of change implemented and people to adopt new ways of operating. However, this phase is still an experimental and trial period and employees can still ultimately reject the change. (Armenakis et al. 2002, 169.)

When change process is in “change” phase, communication should start to focus more on giving individuals the information and support they need to undertake the changes, and also on reducing the uncertainty and ambiguity individuals will be experiencing as they attempt to understand the personal meaning of change. Update information on the progress of change and next steps in the change process are required throughout the change process, but more so as the momentum of change picks up. (Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004, 174.)

3.4.3 Communication in “refreeze”

The third phase of change process, institutionalization, flows from efforts to maintain the adoption period and reinforce the changes until they become internalized. (Armenakis et al. 2002, 169.) Communication should be an integral part of this stage, also. It should still provide rich and multichannel communication and gather feedback. The main purpose of this stage is to stabilize the new situation and “hand over” the change management to the daily operations.

3.5 Summary

In the chapter 3, the role of communication in change management was studied on individual and organizational levels. As communication has a wide impact through the whole organization, it can be said to be crucial also for change implementation in many ways. Communication is difficult to manage and it is always more or less failing due to many different

reasons, which have been closer studied in this chapter. The reasons of failures can be for example wrong communication channels, feedback and dialogue missing, and that the communication is not open enough.

By high quality communication, the uncertainty of change can be decreased and mutual understanding and trusting relationships are created. Communication should be two-way, which is creating more involvement of the employees to the change process. Participation is always creating higher level of commitment.

Both interpersonal and impersonal communication is experienced and having an impact to an individual, of which more interactive and that way efficient is interpersonal communication. Communication action should closely follow the stages of change and the principles of communication have been detailed described.

4. TRUST

In order to increase the understanding of the crucial role of trust in the context of this study (i.e. change management in organizational change), the concept of trust is clarified in this chapter. This chapter offers an overview to the nature of trust, dimensions and levels of trust, how trust is built in general (trust building by the means of communication is separated in chapter 5) and what role trust plays in organizational change. Trust is analyzed both on individual and organizational level and organizational trust is further divided into interpersonal and impersonal trust. The view to trust is cognitive and affective in order to understand that the antecedents are different in cognitive and affective trust.

4.1 Nature of trust

Concept of trust has been given a great deal of attention in the previous research for its role in promoting cooperation among individuals and groups and its positive influence on the performance in organizations. A multidimensional phenomenon of trust is seen as one of the basic variables in any human interaction and a critical antecedent for efficient and effective collaboration, communication and knowledge creation (Noteboom 2002; Blomqvist 1997), and important in a range of organizational activities and processes such as team work, leadership, goal setting, performance appraisal and in general, in all co-operation. (Mayer et al. 2005; McAllister 1995, 24.) According to Dervitsiotis (2006, 797), the importance of trust derives from the interdependence that exists among all the elements of human network, be that a business firm or a non-profit organization.

4.1.1 Forms of trust

As stated in the beginning of this study, trust is a multidimensional concept by nature and difficult to define. In this study, trust is seen to be based on rationale and emotions. Also the levels of trust (interpersonal and impersonal) are introduced.

4.1.2 Levels of trust

In this study, organizational trust is analyzed both on organizational and individual levels. The levels of trust reflect the development of trust and the relationship simultaneously. According to Atkinson & Butcher (2003), the roots of trust are laying in the relationships between individuals and can be either interpersonal or impersonal (institutional) trust. This means that in addition to interpersonal trust, there can also be general trust and that is why it can not only be studied only between people. Organizational trust can be further divided to *interpersonal trust* (trust between individuals) and *impersonal trust* (individual trusting for example organization, vision, process or strategy). Trust can be seen as horizontal (trusting for example co-worker, peer or manager) and vertical (trusting superior or management).

Rousseau et al. (1998) noted that trust has been studied at various levels of analysis, often mixing micro- (interpersonal trust) and macro-levels (i.e. impersonal trust) in the same study. They see that the different levels of trust are strongly linked together and micro-level psychological processes interact with macro-level institutional arrangements, but there is also disagreement of how interpersonal and impersonal trust is linked together. Galford & Drapeau (2003) state that every time an individual manager violates the personal trust, the impersonal trust to organization will be shaken, but e.g. Mattila (2008, 16) disagree of that view. He sees that if the trust towards employer as an institution (impersonal trust) is strong, distrust towards management or single persons (interpersonal trust) is not seriously threatening the trust to an organization.

4.1.3 Dimensions of trust

Noteboom (2002) has recognized two depths of trust: “goodwill trust”, which means the intentions of partner to perform according to the agreements and “competence trust“ meaning the ability of a partner to perform according to the agreements made.

Trust can be seen to be based on three components: *capability* (for example economical or technological capability), *goodwill* (equality and respect between the participants) and *self-reference*. (e.g. Blomqvist 1997.) The capability, goodwill and self-reference components of trust are valid both organizational and individual level in the relationship. (Blomqvist 1997, 270.)

Goodwill (for benevolence) is the perception of being cared for in all the things that have value to each party in the relationship. In personal relationship these may include honesty, fairness, loyalty or friendship. (Dervitsiotis 2006, 799.) Blomqvist (1997, 269) states, that the component of goodwill implies the moral responsibility and positive interactions of the actor. Stenvall & Virtanen (2007, 88) are defining goodwill to be the perception of being cared for in all the things we have value to each party in the relationship. In a business relationship behaviors and outcomes that help one another achieve desirable strategic goals and minimize threats are valued.

Capability has to do with the perception and expectation that the other party in a relationship is capable of delivering on a promise and on upholding commitments already made (Dervitsiotis 2006, 799) and that the trustee is finishing the tasks to the end without any mistakes (Mayer et al. 1995) or management is doing the right decisions. (Mishra 1996.) According to Blomqvist (1997, 269), it emphasizes the actor’s ability to deliver state-of-the-art knowledge and skills also in the future. When applied to organizational trust, competence is a generalized perception that assumes the effectiveness not only the leadership, but also of the

organization's ability to survive in the marketplace, i.e. that the organization is able to compete and survive. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 88).

Schockley-Zalabak (2000, 38–39) sees trust as “one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the later party is (a) competent, (b) open, (c) concerned and (d) reliable”. All these are operating collectively to create the perception of trust. Schockley-Zalabak is defining five dimensions to organizational trust: **competence, openness, concern, reliability and identification**. Like in the previous definitions, competence dimension of organizational trust is referring to the extent that employees have confidence in the competence of the organization's leadership (management level, superiors and co-workers). (Schockley-Zalabak 2000, 39.) **Openness and honesty** are linked to trust on organizational level and further, they are an empirical measure for trust. **Sincerity and caring** coupled with openness contribute to the perception of concern and this dimension occurs when organizational members perceive concern for them from leadership. **Reliability** deals with the expectation for consistent and dependable behavior. Consistency and congruence between words and actions build trust. The fifth dimension of organizational trust that they propose is identification. It concerns the paradox of separation and association of an organizational member. If members for example identify with an organization, they will be more likely to report higher levels of organizational trust and effectiveness. That dimension highlights that trust inherently the result of communication behaviors and interpretative processes. Van Vuuren & Elfving (1999) add that through identification, leaders and members of an organization will be more likely to communicate with increased trust than without that.

Individual trust refers to expectations about individual relationships and behaviors. Organizational trust is complex, communication-based, dynamic and multi-faced. It refers to expectations individuals have about networks of organizational relationships and behaviors. (Schockley-Zalabak et al. 2000, 37–38).

Kramer (2004, 17) emphasized that trust takes forms across many different settings and accordingly trust building and maintenance vary across them as well. Trust is always involved in the relationships and hence, the levels of trust can be defined interpersonal trust and impersonal (institutional) trust. Blomqvist (1997) sees, that strong dimension of time is belonging to trust as trust in the past is leading to trusting in the future.

Originally trust has been seen as an interpersonal phenomenon (trust between persons), but in later research, also impersonal (institutional) trust has gained a lot of attention. Trust can be either vertical (trustees are co-workers or colleagues) or horizontal (trustees are superiors or leadership). (Schockley-Zalabak et al. 2000.)

McAllister (1995) is focusing specifically on interpersonal trust within organizations and suggests that there are two types of trust: **cognitive (rational) based** and **affect based (emotional) trust**. Most of the trust researchers have concentrated on cognitive interpersonal trust, which is grounded in beliefs about another's characteristics and benevolent intentions (McAllister, 1995.) Rotter (1971, 444) defines trust as "an expectancy held by an individual or group that the word, promise, verbal, or written statement of another individual or group can be relied on" as one of the first researchers of interpersonal trust. The perceived trustworthiness is often attributed to a trustee's ability (includes task skills and competencies), benevolence (refers to trustee's good intentions), and integrity (relating to trustee's honesty). (Mayer et al. 1995; McKnight, Cummings & Chervany 1998; Mishra 1996.)

Cognition based trust is a rational view of trust focusing on competence and reliability and therefore associated for example with competence, ability, responsibility, credibility, dependability, integrity and reliability. Cognition based trust is grounded in cognitive judgments of the trustor's competence or reliability, and is an antecedent of affect based trust. As

compared to affective trust, cognitive based trust may require more information about the benefits and risks when one is making decisions about trusting. (McAllister 1995.)

Affective trust (often referred also to emotional or relational trust) has more emotional connotations and focuses on interpersonal bonds among individuals and institutions, including perceptions of colleagues' motivation, citizenship, intentions and ethics. (McAllister 1995.) Affective trust is related for example to issues like care, concern, benevolence, altruism, commitment and mutual respect. Affective (emotional) trust to another party is deep, emotion-based feeling and a deep form of trust (Williams 2001). Williams (2001) and McAllister (1995) have noted that the affective based trust is very stable and deeper form of trust than cognitive trust. Even if there would be some distrust between trusting parties, the affective basic trust does not get broken very easy. It is also typical, that the trustor and trustee care and feel responsibility of each other. Typically affective trust emerges from repeated interactions among individuals and experiences of reciprocated interpersonal care and concern. (Huotari & Iivonen 2004, 8, 82.)

The distinction between the two dimensions can also be seen relating to the origin of trust. As one may trust to another because of objective reasons (personal characteristic), the other can affectively trust due to the relationship with trustee. According to Jones & George (1998), affective responses may have bigger role to the experience of trust than thought. Dunn & Schweitzer (2005) have argued that emotions and moods provide people with information on how they are experiencing trust. They also found that emotional states have an effect to trust, even unrelated to the trustor or trustee.

Impersonal trust towards organizations has become more elusive through the recent downsizing and fast changes and in organizations and is for that reason also very important object to research.

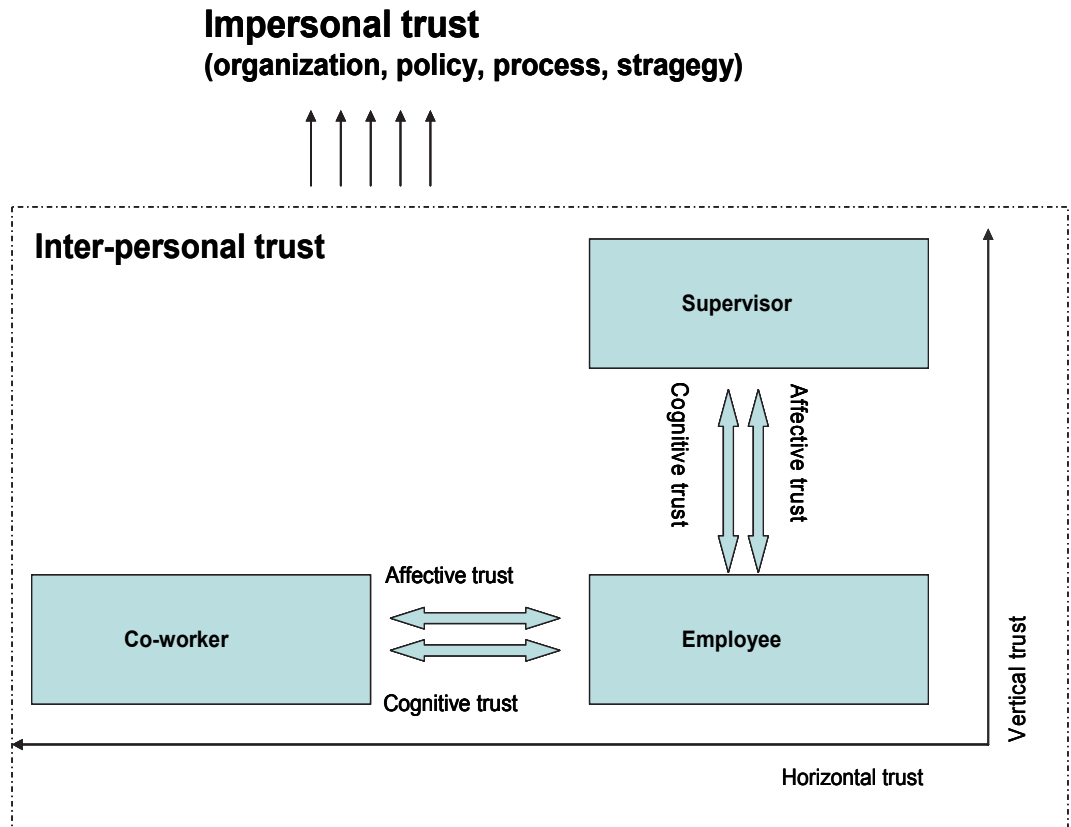


Figure 8. Interpersonal and impersonal trust

4.2 Antecedents of trust

In this chapter, the antecedents of trust are presented. It has to be noted that – like stated in the previous chapters of this study – there is general disagreement of the definition of trust between the researchers and thus, the conceptualization of trust is still quite weak. Consequently, there is also diversity in the antecedents of trust in the prior research.

Mattila (2008, 15) and Kramer (2004) have identified that **positive experiences of employer's previous behavior and trustworthiness** are positively affecting to individual's general attitude towards people. Mattila (2008, 15) emphasizes that **cumulative interaction** between trustor and trustee is a remarkable factor in building trust. **Tolerance of stress in work community** is also forming a strong basis for trust. **Good personal network** and **good working atmosphere** as well as **the experience of possibility to participate** are confirming, among other variables, evolution of trust. Also **experience of justice in work community** is an essential antecedent of trust. Trust is also built by the **feeling of control in work** (i.e. content of work, feeling of limitations and restrictions, self-knowledge, life balance).

In general, the concept of trust is very abstract and many factors are affecting to the evolution of trust and building it. The building blocks can be for example **experiences and given examples, professionalism, capability, consistency, reliability** (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 88), **previous positive experiences, capability to handle stress and uncertainty** (Mattila 2008, 14), **different backgrounds** (for example socio-economic), **cultures** (Costa 2003; Atkinson & Butcher 2003), and **different conception of time and place** (Atkinson & Butcher, 2003.)

An important antecedent of impersonal trust is also **the feeling of continuity of employment relationship** and **the appreciation** which employer is showing to employee. **Care taking** is important especially in the old organizations. **Good working atmosphere** and **solidarity in**

crisis are important basis to trust which employer is feeling to one's peers. **The opinions of others** can also directly influence individual attitude through social norms (Qian & Daniels 2007, 321.) Further, Jones & George (1998, 532) are proposing that the **interaction of people's values, attitudes, and moods and emotions** are antecedents for trust. Schoorman et al. (2007, 349) suggest that **emotions** influence the perception of the antecedent of trust and, therefore, the trust in relationships. It has been also noted that on individual level, also **self-knowledge and trust, which one is feeling to oneself** are confirming the change readiness, tolerance for insecurity and willingness to take risks. (Mattila 2008, 15.) Kramer (2004) has been noted that **expectations towards trustee and the roles of trustee and trustor** and both tacit and explicit. **Organizational rules and norms** are also playing important roles as antecedents of trust. Galford and Drapeau (2003) state, that the building blocks of trust are old-fashioned managerial virtues like **consistency, clear communication and a willingness to tackle awkward questions**. Also the **integrity of senior management** directly influences trust in senior management and attitudes toward change.

Employee's **perceived fairness** (social rules and norms, which are, for example, defining how the rewards and benefits are shared in the organization in the organization) is one of the most essential factors in building trust in organization. Mattila (2008, 15) is also emphasizing **sufficient and open interaction**. **Perceived trustworthiness** is often attributed to a trustee's ability (tasks, skills, competencies), benevolence (trustee's good intentions), and integrity (trustee's honesty) (Mayer et al. 1995; McKnight et al., 1998; Mishra 1996.) Dervitsiotis (2006, 798) sees that trust in relationships is an organic process, taking place over time from a series of repeated interactions and according to him, there are three distinct requirements for building trusting relationships: A perception of goodwill, a perception of competence and reinforcing actions over time, which is leading to behavioral reliability.

In prior research, there are recognized many communication related antecedents of trust. For example, Kotter (1996, 10) sees that ***communication, which comes in both words and deeds***, is efficiently creating trust.

IMPERSONAL TRUST		
Author	Trustee	Antecedents of trust
Mattila (2008)	Organization	Positive experiences of employer's previous behavior and trustworthiness, tolerance of stress in work community, sufficient and open interaction, good personal network
Mattila (2008)	Organization, team	Perceived justice and fairness in work community, possibilities to participate, feeling of continuity in employment, appreciation which employer is showing to employee, organization is taking care of its employees, good working atmosphere, control in own work
Allen et al. (2007)	Management	Existing practices and ways of working in management
Kramer (2004)	Organization	Rules and norms in organization
Several authors, for example Dervitsiotis (2006), Blomqvist (2007)	Organization, teams, processes, strategy	Effective communication and cooperation
Schockley-Zalapak et al. (2000)	Organization	Taking care of employee
INTERPERSONAL TRUST		
Mattila (2008)	Co-workers, management	Solidarity between employees in crisis. Competence, professionalism, cumulative interaction between trustor and trustee
Allen et al. (2007)	Co-workers	Existing practices and ways of working of colleagues
Qian & Daniels (2007)	Co-workers	Opinions of others
Jones & George (1998), Schoorman et al. (2007)	Co-workers	Interaction of people's values, attitudes, and moods and emotions
Kramer (2004)	Co-workers, management	Expectations towards the trustee and roles of trustee and trustor
Several authors, for example Dervitsiotis (2006), Blomqvist (2007)	Co-workers, management, organization	Effective communication and cooperation, cumulative interaction
Mattila (2008)	Oneself	Self-knowledge and trust, which one is feeling to oneself
Schockley-Zalapak et al. (2000)	Co-workers, management, organization	Openness

Table 3. Antecedents of trust

4.3 Consequences of trust

Numerous researchers from various disciplines seem to agree that in general, trust has a number of important benefits for organizations, although they have not necessarily come to agreement on how these benefits occur. (Dirks & Ferrin 2001, 450). Trust has been found to be one of the most important factors to build **effective and productive communication, commitment and cooperation**. (e.g. Blomqvist 1997; Dervitsiotis 2006.)

According to Allen et al. (2007, 191), the employees who trust management or their organization may be **more willing to be vulnerable to the actions of management**, believing the rationale for decisions presented by management. Trust between management and employees are a factor which can have influence to the **feelings of belonging to a community** within the organization. (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Trust results in distinctive effects like **positive attitude, higher levels of cooperation, and superior levels of performance**. (Mayer et al. 1995.) It also **guides the actions of individuals in ambiguous situations** like shaping the perceiving of the partner and in this way will guide the individual response to that action. (Dirks & Ferrin 2001, 461.)

The presence of a high degree of trust **helps an organization reaffirm its identity, enhance its cohesiveness and improve its flexibility and capacity to learn and adapt**.

Dervitsiotis (2006, 809) is arguing that high quality relationships should be developed by building trust, which enables the interacting elements to **share information, co-operate and coordinate** to generate value for all stakeholders. The result of Allen et al. (2007, 187) study indicated that trust is influencing **which sources employees seek information from and how they evaluate the information they receive**.

Trust also **enables relations** in economies and organizations, and **reduces transaction costs** by reducing relational risks. (e.g. Blomqvist 1997; Noteboom 2002.)

Author	Consequences of trust
Mattila (2008) Blomqvist (1997)	Commitment and cooperation, development in organization
Mattila (2008)	Capability to solve conflicts and issues, increased job satisfaction
Blomqvist (1997) Dervitsiotis (2006) Mayer et al. (1995)	Effective and productive communication
Allen et al. (2007)	Willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of management, trust is influencing which sources employees seek information from and evaluation of information
Dirks & Ferrin (2001)	Feelings of belonging to community
Mayer et al. (1995)	Positive attitude, higher level of performance, guidance of the actions of individuals in ambiguous situations
Dervitsiotis (2006)	Reaffirmation of identity and enhancement of cohesiveness in organization, improved flexibility and capacity to learn and adapt, information sharing
Noteboom (2002) Blomqvist (1997)	Enabling relations in economies and organizations, reduction in transaction costs

Table 4. Consequences of trust

Figure 9 below is describing the difference between interpersonal and impersonal trust and clarifying the roles of trustors and trustees.

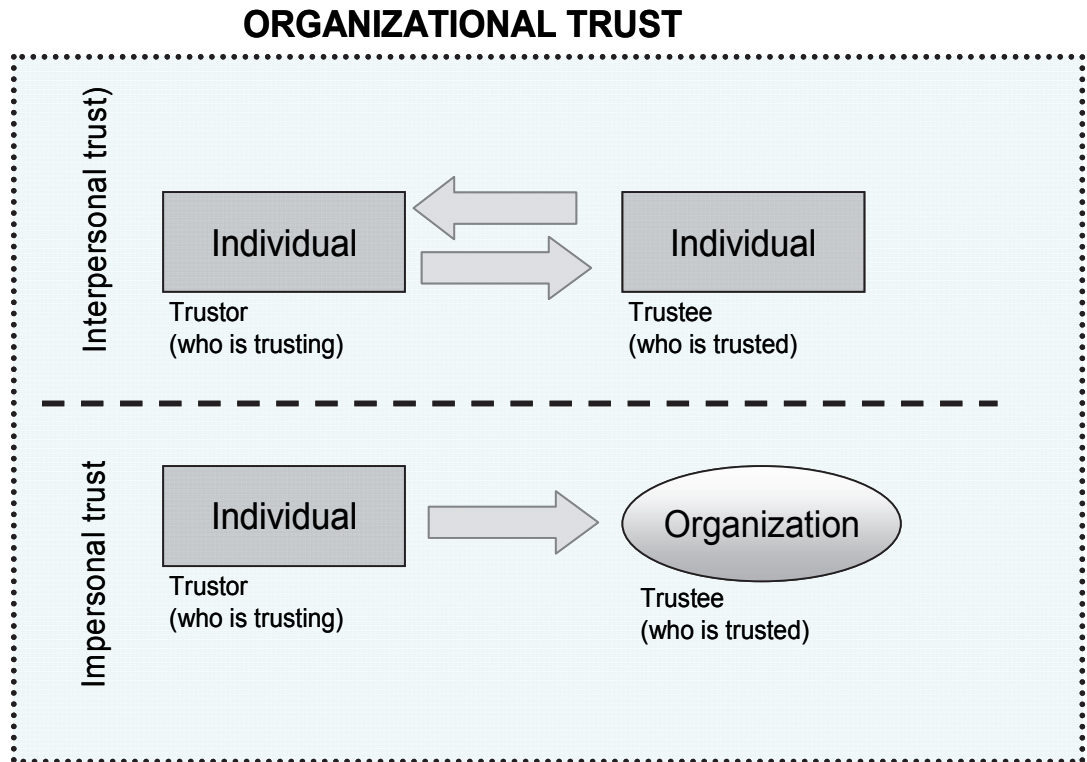


Figure 9. Organizational trust, the roles of trustors and trustees

To clarify who trusts who in interpersonal and impersonal trust it should be noted that both individuals and organizations can be trustees (objects of trust), but only individuals or groups of people can be trustors. (Blomqvist, 1997.)

4.4 Evolution of trust and trust building

This chapter is shortly briefing trust building in general and chapter 5 is concentrating to trust building by the means of communication. The antecedents of trust are in chapter 4.2.

Blomqvist (1997, 283) states that trust is usually seen gradually developing outcome of a process, which is developing slowly and needs gradual investments. Trust is seen as self-enforcing process, which means that trust creates trust and distrust creates distrust. According to Dervitsiotis (2006) and Mattila (2008, 17), developing trust in a relationship

is an organic process and taking place over time from a series of repeated interactions.

4.5 Role of trust in change management

Devos et al. (2007, 622) noted that change was facilitated by trust in upper and lower management. Lack of faith in the organization's leadership is strongly related to the increased anger, frustration, and anxiety of employee with respect to change. It also leads to increased employee actions against the change and negative evaluations from employees of the need and value of the change. (Devos et al. 2007, 611.) Mattila (2008, 17) writes that trust in organizations is most visible when it has been damaged or there is lack of trust. The change history is always affecting to the attitudes towards new changes.

In general, trust as a separate phenomenon in change management has not gained very much attention. Change managers are not paying enough attention to trust in change situation. Attitude can be underestimating and there can be a suggestion that trust will be built automatically through concrete actions (doing). This is not happening very often. Change manager should generally think what different actions mean to trust. Trust building needs an understanding of the actions in unit, behavior and competences. (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 89.)

Trust in organizations is visible when it is missing or damaged. Diminishing of trust is often arising as an increase of the change in personnel, conflicts and decreased satisfaction at work. The crumble of trust is often visible in the change of personnel change, conflicts or reduced satisfactory at work. Consequently, the distrust is preventing planned deployment in organizations and is therefore also remarkable source for change resistance. (Mattila 2008, 17.)

Devos et al. (2007, 622) are predicting that among some other factors (participation in change effort, threatening character of organizational

change and positive track of changes in the organization), there are trust related factors which have a positive effect to the openness of change: trust in upper (executive) management and trust in lower (supervisor) management. For this reason, in case of any development effort in organization, leadership must place the greatest possible emphasis on the quality of human relationships and on building sustainable trust. (Dervitstiotis 2006, 797.)

4.6 Summary

The second sub-question supporting the main research questions was “What is the role of trust in change management?” To answer to that question, the nature and forms of trust and the antecedents and consequences of trust were presented in this chapter, as well as the role of trust in change management. Trust can be divided into individual and organizational trust and further, organizational trust can be seen to be cognitive based or affective based. If the basis of trust, antecedents and consequences of trust are understood, it is possible to find out which the trust building elements are and how trust could be build with communication. According to the previous research, a lot of information of benefits and risks of change are needed to build trust. Affective trust is build

In the prior research, it clearly occurs that trust is one of the basic elements to facilitate change, and even more: make change possible. Thus, as trust is one of the main elements in implementing organizational change, the creation of trust should be enhanced in all means. Open and rich communication has been found to be one of the most efficient antecedents of trust.

These fore mentioned antecedents of trust should be considered when building trust in change communication.

5. COMMUNICATION AND TRUST IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the theoretical part and build a bridge between trust and communication in organizational change.

In the stage of “unfreeze”, trust is playing a major role as in that stage the change process is started. If creation of trust is succeeding at the beginning, that creates change readiness in the organization and process of change can continue. If possibilities to participate are offered, the level of commitment to change is increased. Trust can be enhanced by rich, honest and informative interpersonal communication. In this stage, managerial communication and support is extremely important. Trust enables people to take risks and risk taking is strongly related to adapting a change.

According to the theory, the most significant factors increasing trust in the organization are open communication and participation of employees. With communication, a critical information, feelings and expectations can be shared and in that way, the uncertainty, anxiety, frustrations and other negative feelings related to the change can be diminished. Communication has a positive relationship in trust in many ways. Sufficient, open communication, good relationships, and experience of affection are supporting the positive experience in addition to many individual factors.

Many researchers have defined trust as a critical antecedent for efficient communication. Individual trust is leading to trusting behavior, which is increasing open communication. When communication is open, it is remarkably supporting the change implementation.

Most of the change drivers are pushed to the organization from organizational level. As organizations are based on individuals, micro-level changes should first paid attention to. Behavior and attitudes of individuals should be changed to make the organizational change possible. Communication is playing a key role in changing the behavior or attitudes

of individuals. According to the previous researchers, both trust and communications are vital elements for the successful change implementation.

Making a successful adaptation to change always depends on generating in our human resources a deep and genuine commitment. This calls for genuine trust made possible through effective communications that enables each human relationship in the organization to function well and for the entire network of relationships to generate value for organization.

As a summary of the chapters 2 (Organizational change), 3 (Communication) and 4 (Trust), it can be found that there is a positive relationship between trust and communication. Organizations with high level of trust are more successful and adaptive to a change than organizations with low level of trust. Also communication was found to be one of the critical factors in change management. Further, in general it can be noted that interpersonal communication is creating more trust than impersonal, which is seen to serve for the purpose to provide information. As the element of participation, interaction and immediate feedback is missing in that, it is not building trust efficiently.

Figure 10 below summarizes the main theoretical findings of the dynamics and roles of communication and trust in organizational change process.

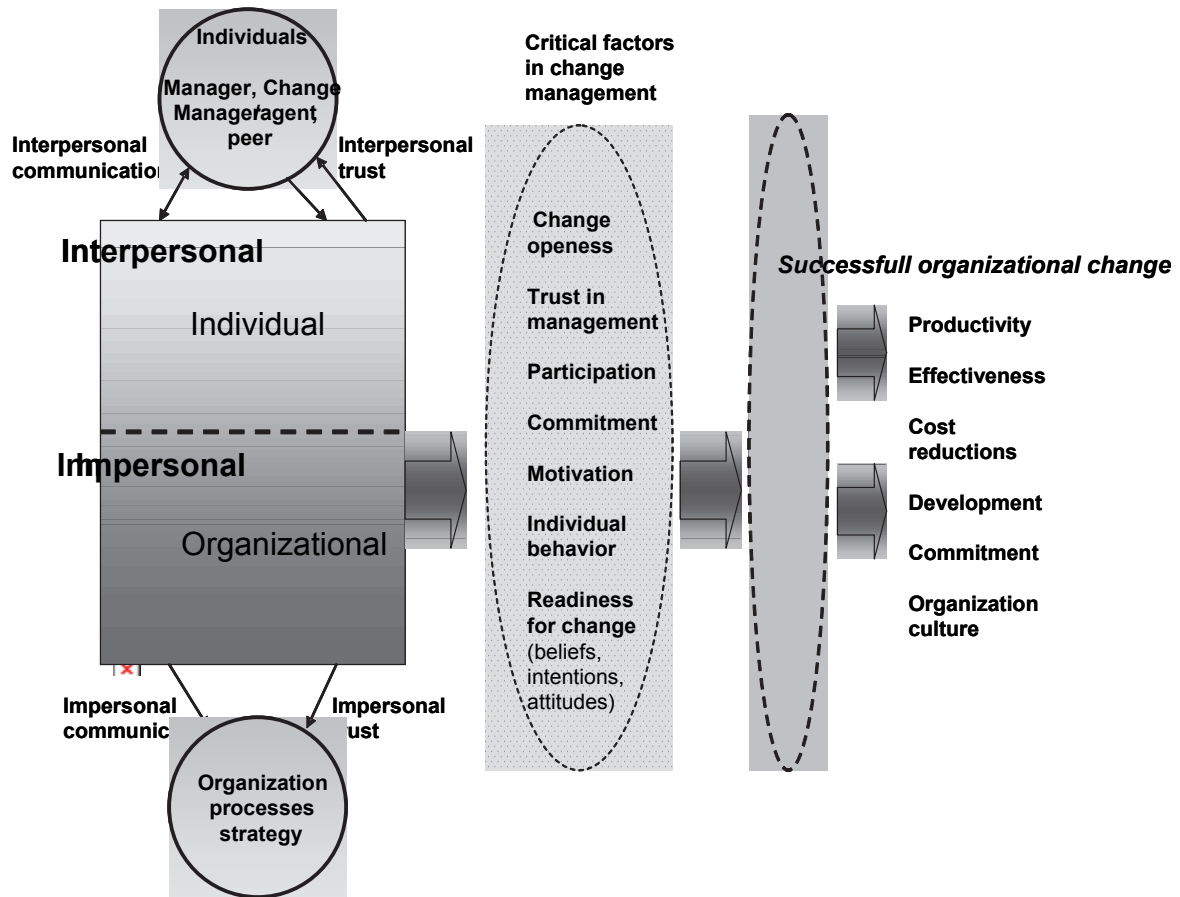


Figure 10. Theoretical findings of the study

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Answering to the research questions

The overall objective of this study was to answer to the main research question of *“How can trust be build with communication in change management?”*.

To be able to answer to that question, the three sub-questions were posed. First sub-question was *“What is the role of communication in change management?”* The role and especially, the importance of it, was not fully realized. It was understood, that the change has to be communicated, but the lack of it was not. The second sub-question was *“What is the role of trust in change management?”* Trust was fully respected, but the means of building it were not known. Especially the matters trust is based on in the first phase were not known and taken into account. The role of trust was somehow also underrated, though the importance was realized in general. The third question *“How can trust be built with communication in change management?”* The role of communication as a trust builder should be clearer in changes. Especially in these cases, trust is building a basement to further actions, development and success of the unit.

The role of communication and trust were clearly found, but the relations of them were not fully seen. Generally, it can be concluded that the role of communication and trust and relation of them should be clear to managers. Though there is knowledge in the different areas, the combining them should be controlled as well. Knowledge of communication and affects of it should be in the knowledge of managers. Communication should be done as two-way communication so that the involvement of employees is ensured. The implementation of participative change strategies is likely facilitating the future change project in the organization. It is remarkable, that there is not sufficiently research or literature on that field yet.

This study provided a theoretical framework of the roles and dynamics of trust and communication in organizational change. It has presented examples of successful change management projects. This chapter will conclude by presenting the limitations, the contributions, both theoretical and managerial, and final conclusions.

For an individual or a group of people (different groups of stakeholders) an organizational change or a relating impact of it may represent an opportunity or a threat. Sometimes there are different, even contradicting, preferences and expectations of different stakeholders towards a change. That is why it is very important to pay attention to the communication to different stakeholders accordingly.

As a conclusion, the role of communication is extremely important in change situations and if it is well managed, it can reduce other relating problems.

6.2 Limitations and suggestions for further research

The aim of this thesis was to enhance the understanding of the roles between trust and communication in change management context. There are at least some limitations that have to be acknowledged. **The most important limitation was to find an empirical partner for this thesis – there was no success in it. That is the reason for missing that part in this thesis.** The following limitations were clearly found:

- 1) There were insurmountable difficulties to find any partner to the empirical part in this thesis. That part was left out and replaced with deepening of the theory.
- 2) Trust was not measured as there is not yet any measurement to it.

Even if the partner for empirical part was found, the reverse would probably have been some. Characterized by the changes is that if the changes are several and the pace of change is fast, normally there are

common cynical attitude towards changes and it is negatively affecting to the success of changes. It would also have been seen as a limit that there are usually many factors affecting to change and when it is surveyed narrow phenomenon like trust building by the means of communication, it is challenging to distinguish the causes and consequences and which are the prerequisites of some other things. Though Lewin's change management model is adjustable and usable in many different changes, it is still quite inflexible to continuously changing organizations. Organization is nowadays seen rather as an ongoing process than a fixed thing. (Van Vuuren & Elving, 2008, 352.)

Although the management has been noted to have a crucial role in implementing organizational change, there may be field for further research. Like Allen et al. (2007, 207) are stating, there still remains a large gap in the change management literature regarding the role of different sources of communication play in influencing the attitudes toward a change.

Several directions to future research could be proposed. For a broader perception of the dynamics and relations of trust and communication in change process, it would be interesting to make an empirical study on that field by using different methodologies. It could draw more perspective to have more variety and organizations to the study. An interesting area for future research would also be the role of cross-cultural dimensions of trust and how they influence to the experience of trust. This topic would deserve more research attention considering the potential for widespread organizational changes due to a turbulent economic environment.

6.3 Theoretical contribution

This pro graduation provides a framework for studying the roles of organizational trust and communication. This study binds together these two concepts in context of change management. A successful

implementation of change is vital for organizations and in case of the failure the consequences can be far-reaching and very costly.

This study has provided literature review to the previous research on this field. In the empirical part issues and ideas that rose from the literature have been tested in practice. For a future research, the cases and interviewees should be carefully selected in order to find out the best practices in change communication and trust building.

6.4 Conclusions

This has been very challenging and developing pro graduation-work as the subject and key definitions are so extensive.

In this thesis, it has been tried to brighten the role of communication and trust in organizational change process, as well as the interplay between these two complexes and multidimensional phenomenon. The context itself, change management, was also challenging and complex environment to study.

Although communication and trust have been identified as major factors for successful organizational change, there still remain a lack of understanding of their interplay and critical role in change management.

The objective of this study was to find out how the role and dynamics of trust building and communication are related in change management. This study has showed that there is a positive connection between these two factors in change management projects. The rate of changes in business world is not going to slow down in the future. The ability to create trust and communicate effectively in dynamic environment with fast changes definitely are among of the most important skills to lead organizations to achieve their goals and beat competitors. These “hidden resources” can be managed only if the importance of these is recognized as the real competitive value in organization.

According to the theory results of this thesis, it is suggested that the change leaders and management should engage in frequent, broad and rich communication throughout the whole process of change. As change management is about people management, the basics of managing change lie very much in openness, communication and involvement. The effective management of change demands management action of all these fronts and that should be taken account from the very beginning of change planning.

Although they are not the only variables affecting to the success of a change management project, both of them are needed in order to make success in change management – it is not too much to say that they are the necessities to make change possible. By managing well change projects and especially paying attention to communication and the role of trust in organizational change, organization can gain sustainable competitive advantage instead of falling into a non-win situation caused by poor planning and management of change projects.

As a conclusion, it can be said that communication and trust are essential topics in change management, regardless which kind of organizational change is in question. Due to this pro graduation, a desire for further research of this field has occurred for me.

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