EFFECTS OF CUSTOMER-CENTRIC ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE ON LEVELS OF CROSS-SELLING AND INTERNAL CHANNEL CONFLICT

Case Company Oy

Master’s Thesis

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ABSTRACT

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Effects of customer-centric organizational change on levels of cross-selling and internal channel conflict: Case Company Oy

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Keywords: Cross-selling, channel conflict management, customer relationship management, multichannel sales, change management, customer-centric organization

Cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict management are highly intertwined concepts that are affected by the internal culture and structure of a company. Organizational structure can impact the natural levels of both and therefore these theories relate to the organizational change process. The internal structures that most support cross-selling activities and optimize the level of conflict support the move towards a customer-centric organizational structure where salespeople represent the entire product portfolio.

The research is divided into a theoretical section and an empirical section. The theoretical section examines the concepts of cross-selling, internal multichannel conflicts, and change management. The research combines the theoretical elements into a framework for evaluating employee change adaption. In the empirical section of the study, the framework is used to analyze the change environment of case Company Oy. The effects of organizational restructuring on the salespeople of the company are evaluated to provide insights on change management practices that support the change adoption on different organizational dimensions. The change process within the company aims for customer-centricity and sales efficiency. An internal survey for salespeople is used to collect data on the structural change process inside the company.

The results indicate that organizational structure impacts the levels of cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict within the case organization. Level of employee adaptation to structural change for case Company Oy is high although the aspect of transparency can be viewed as an improvement area. Effective internal communication throughout change implementation is highlighted in the results. Findings also suggest that a competitive advantage is gained for organizations that promote a change-oriented culture where change is the norm.

TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tuotantotalous

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Asiakaskeskeisen organisaatiomuutoksen vaikutus ristiinmyynnin ja sisäisten kanavakonfliktien tasoon: Case Company Oy

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Avainsanat: ristiinmyynti, sisäiset kanavakonfliktit, organisaatiomuutos, myyntikanavien hallinta, asiakassuhteen hallinta, muutosjohtaminen

Ristiinmyynti ja sisäisten kanavakonfliktien hallinta ovat toisiinsa vahvasti liittyviä käsitteitä, joihin yrityksen sisäinen rakenne ja kulttuuri vaikuttavat. Organisaatiorakenteen muutokset voivat vaikuttaa näiden tekijöiden luonnolliseen tasoon, minkä vuoksi teorioita tulisi tutkia myös muutosprosessien yhteydessä. Sisäiset rakenteet, jotka parhaiten tukevat ristiinmyyntiä ja optimoivat sisäisten kanavakonfliktien tasoa, tukevat siirtymistä asiakaskeskeiseen organisaatiorakenteeseen.

Tutkimus jakautuu teoreettiseen ja empiiriseen osaan. Teoreettinen osa käsittelee ristiinmyynnin, sisäisten monikanavakonfliktien ja muutosjohtamisen käsitteitä. Tutkimus yhdistää teoreettiset elementit viitekehykseen, jolla arvioidaan työntekijöiden sopeutumista muutokseen. Tutkimuksen empiirisessä osassa viitekehyksen avulla analysoidaan case-yritys Company Oy:n muutosympäristöä. Myynnin henkilöstön asenteita muutosprosessia kohtaan ja kykyä sopeutua muutokseen arvioidaan muutosjohtamisen näkökulmasta. Organisaatiomuutos pyrkii asiakaskeskeisyyden korostamiseen ja myyntiorganisaation tehostamiseen. Empiirisessä osassa organisaatiorakenteen muutosten vaikutusta myynnin henkilöstöön arvioidaan sisäisen henkilöstökyselyn avulla.

Tulokset osoittavat, että organisaatiorakenne vaikuttaa ristiinmyynnin tasoihin ja sisäisten monikanavakonfliktien tasoon organisaatiossa. Myynnin henkilöstön muutossopeutumisen taso Company Oy:n sisällä on korkea, vaikka muutosprosessin läpinäkyvyys nähdään kehityskohteena. Tuloksissa korostuu tehokkaan sisäisen viestinnän merkitys muutoksen toteuttamisen aikana. Löydöksissä korostuu myös muutosorientoituneen organisaatiokulttuurin merkitys muutosprosessin onnistumisen edellytyksenä.

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A special thank you to Sanna and the employees and management of the case organization for providing me an opportunity to research a subject that can lead to actual impact within the company and for providing me with honest and relevant input on the subject of the thesis. Thank you to my instructor Mirva at LUT ideas and feedback during the process.

I am extremely grateful for the support of my family. Not only did my parents encourage me to start my IEM studies at LUT but they have also supported me with finishing this writing process by providing insights and feedback on my thesis. With this project coming to an end, I am excited to have some free time once again to read non-academic literature and spend more time with my friends.

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Roosa Hynninen

ABBREVIATIONS

B2B	Business to Business
BU	Business Unit
CC	Customer Channel
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
MOA	Motivation-Opportunity-Ability
OCM	Organizational Change Management

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Appendices

1 Introduction

The introduction will provide an overlook of the entire thesis and the research process, and the research design it is based on. The theoretical background of the thesis is discussed, as well as the goals, scope, and limitations of the research. The research questions are presented in this chapter. Methodology, theoretical framework, and data for the research are introduced briefly. The chapter concludes with an overview on the structure of the thesis, and the key contents of each chapter.

1.1 Background for research

Increasing complexity of change has made it almost impossible for organizations to just maintain the status quo. Global economy and competition, increasing customer demands and price sensitivity, and increased regulations require continuous change. (Abudi, 2017, p. 2-4.) Additionally, customer-driven change has increased the need for salesperson competencies and assistance, as customers seek help for problem-solving instead of just placing orders. Customers are seeking information faster and asking for more personalized offers. (Giovannetti et al. 2022)

Business-to-business (B2B) sales companies believe that new customer interaction and outreach channels are just as successful as or even more so than older channels. Companies with more channels are believed to expand more quickly than those with fewer. Depending on customer choices, multichannel selling, hybrid interactions, and remote or hybrid contact will be here to stay. (Giovannetti et al. 2022) The most successful organizations have the ability to adapt and change which makes it possible to survive economic downturns in the operational environment. A change mindset requires moving away from resource-heavy reactive change efforts and focusing on future-oriented actions. (Abudi, 2017, p. 2-4.)

Large multinational manufacturers often face dilemmas related to the management of a large product portfolio which should at the same time serve the ever-changing customer needs but still be manageable by the sales personnel of the company. Organizing the sales teams around product categories is common as the salespeople can focus on a set range of products and have expertise regarding them. The issue is that often the customers' own product categorizations and needs do not follow the same structures. This is where a customer-centric view comes in for organizations that realize sales can't be organized based on internal product-based categorization, and instead needs to be structured around the customers and their needs. For modern organizations to obtain a competitive edge or simply to remain on the market, a shift from product-centric approach to customer-centric approach is vital (Latusek 2010).

Cross-selling and internal channel conflict are highly intertwined concepts as both examine the relationships between different sales functions and the level of cooperation and collaboration inside the company, but the relationship between these two theories has not been examined in previous literature. In this study, literature on cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict management are utilized to explore the internal structures that most support cross-selling activities and optimize the level of conflict. Organizational structure can impact the natural levels of both and therefore these theories relate to the organizational change process. Cross-selling and channel conflicts have both been studied in the context of organizational structures, although there is a gap in the research for combining these theories in the context of structural change management. The high-level theoretical background is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. High-level theoretical background for the research.

The research provides an overlook on the concept of cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict, and ties them to the context of organizational change process. These theories are explored through a literature review. The goal of the study is to combine these theories into a framework for evaluating salespeople adoption to structural change from the perspective of customer-centricity. The framework is tested with the help of a case study for Company Oy and its B2B sales organization that is undergoing a structural change process. Material for case study is collected form the company primarily through an internal survey for salespeople.

1.2 Goals, limitations, and scope of research

The research aims to create a framework that combines the concepts of cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict management to the context of structural change management. The framework is built to identify the key drivers for cross-selling as well as recognizing the ways to manage the levels of internal conflict inside an organisation.

The goal of the research is to evaluate salespeople adoption to change during organizational restructuring with the help of the theoretical framework. The framework is utilized to provide managerial insights on the organizational change process of case Company Oy on the practices that support cross-selling and channel conflict reducing behaviours. Optimal organizational structure for optimal levels of channel conflict and cross-selling culture are discussed throughout the research.

Throughout the change process, it is important to recognize the needs of the sales personnel, as well as the intended strategic goals for the change. It is equally important to look at the issue from the perspective of the partners and customers of the company. Findings on the cross-selling process and the management of internal multichannel conflict are transferred to the needs of Company Oy and the implementation phase of the change process. Empirical research focuses on creating concrete suggestions on how customer-centric organizational change can be implemented within Company Oy in a way that leads to a better undertanding of customer needs, increased sales performance, and employee adaption of a change-oriented mindset.

There are three research questions defined for the thesis. The first two questions focus on the objectives of literature review and background for creating the theoretical framework of the research. The first and second research question:

1. *What internal structures and actions best support cross-selling and help manage channel conflict?*
2. *In which ways can customer-centric reorganizing of sales impact the level of cross-selling and channel conflict within an organization?*

The third research question focuses on the real-life context of organizational change and therefore focuses on the empirical research and the structural change process of Company Oy. The third research question:

3. *Which actions are needed to support the implementation phase of organizational change for optimal levels of cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict?*

Based on empirical data collected from the salespeople of Company Oy, key issues are analysed in order to recognize the needed resources in the sales organization. Concrete suggestions are created to ensure the change process is successful. The case Company Oy, its operations, and results related to the questionnaire internal to the company are presented in a way that protects the anonymity of the company. Therefore, some of the detailed analysis regarding specific units or supportive systems are not included in the scope of this report.

The thesis will focus on the sales teams and processes internal to a Finnish country organisation of a large multinational company and the supporting functions local to the organisation. Although the research aims to give insights on the implementation of an ongoing change process, and therefore focuses on the future, the actual time horizon of the research is restricted to an overview of the state of the employees' views on the change process at the time of the data collection via an internal survey.

1.3 Framework, methodology and data

Theoretical research is conducted as a literature review on the theories on cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict, and change management. Literature review will draw on scientific articles, and other relevant literature. Other sources such as business-related blogs can also be cited. Keywords were researched with the help of LUT Primo and Google

Scholar databases, as well as other related sources, such as business-related blogs or articles. Search was limited to sources in English and Finnish.

The theoretical framework of the research is adapted from a framework that evaluates behavioural change through motivation, opportunity, and ability (MOA) characteristics from the employee perspective. In addition to these elements, the adapted framework includes three organizational dimensions: personal, social, and structural, as well as integration behaviours for conflict management and the aspect of change transparency. The framework combines these elements to the context of cross-selling behaviour, as well as behaviour for reducing internal multichannel conflict. It is used to analyse the salespeople's adoption to change which again ties it to the larger context of change management. The framework is introduced in detail in the second chapter.

The empirical research is a single case study for Company Oy. The case study is an explorative study that combines both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. Both methods are utilized to fill possible contextual gaps and to tie the results in the real-life case environment. The empirical data is collected with the help of an internal survey from the salespeople of Company Oy. Survey is chosen as the data collection method to analyse large amounts of data collected from the salespeople in a way that simultaneously provides anonymity to the respondents. The results are presented and compared to the findings in previous literature with the help of the theoretical framework.

1.4 Structure of research

The thesis is structured around five chapters where the first one is the introduction to the research. The second chapter presents the theoretical concepts of cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict management, as well as change management. The second chapter also introduces the adapted theoretical framework of the study which relies on the introduced theoretical concepts and ties them together. The third chapter includes the methodology of the empirical study and introduces the research strategy as well as the details regarding the sampling and data collection.

The results of the questionnaire are presented with the help of analysis tools to understand the collected data in the fourth chapter. The chapter discusses the results and evaluates them against the theoretical framework introduced in the second chapter. The chapter combines the results of the literature review and empirical questionnaire data to tie them to the context of the case study.

The fifth and final chapter summarizes and concludes the findings and reliability of the research. The chapter can help understand what the managerial implications of the research are for Company Oy and whether the results of the research can be applied to similar organizational environments. Table 1 summarizes the structure of the thesis.

Table 1. Thesis structure by chapter input and output.

Input	Chapter	Output
Overview of the thesis and the research strategy.	**Introduction**	Presenting the background, goals, limitations, methodology and structure of the study.
Literature on the theories of cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict management and change management. Definitions and related frameworks.	**Change management for cross-selling and multichannel conflict**	Literary review on theoretical concepts of cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict and change management. Creation and introduction of the adapted theoretical framework.
Background of the study, literature on research methods.	**Research methodology and survey introduction**	Introduction to the case study research strategy and design. Descriptions of sampling, data collection and internal survey design.
Results of the literature review, theoretical framework entities, data from case company and the internal survey.	**Organizational restructuring for case Company Oy**	Results and analysis of the internal survey and findings comparison to the adapted theoretical framework. Suggestions for case company.
Findings from literature and empirical data analysis.	**Conclusions**	Summarized findings and providing answers to research questions. Reliability of research and suggestions for further research are presented.

2 Change management for cross-selling and multichannel conflict

This chapter consists of a literature review that aims to combine multiple concepts to create a basis for the theoretical framework for analysing the levels of cross-selling and channel conflict regarding the organizational change process. To understand how these theories can be evaluated and utilized in the context of organizational structure change, we need to define them. The chapter begins with the definition for cross-selling which is then tied to the research area of customer relationship management. The chapter continues to the benefits of cross-selling and key elements for successful cross-selling. Further on the chapter continues to introduce theory on multichannel systems, and how internal conflict can be managed to reach on optimal level within the system. The concept of change management is reviewed in the context of a structural change process that aims for customer-centricity. Finally, these three theories are combined to create an adapted theoretical framework for employee change adaption.

2.1 Cross-selling as a part of customer relationship management

The definition of cross-selling varies across contexts. Schmitz (2013) defines it as a customer management process involving the sale of additional products or services, focusing on items related or unrelated to prior customer purchases. Another perspective by Bauer et al. (2022, p. 713) defines cross-selling through a value creation perspective: "Cross-selling is the act of selling different product offerings to existing customers, thereby providing additional perceived benefits to consumers as well as increased revenues to the firm". This definition is related to consumer sales, but it can be utilized in the B2B business as well as all sales efforts should provide value to customers. Additionally, Van der Borg et al. (2022) describe cross-selling as the practice of selling goods or services to customers after the initial transaction.

In previous literature, cross-selling is often discussed alongside upselling although literature recognizes that separating the two concepts is essential (Bolton et al. 2008). Upselling can include attracting the customer to buy more of the same product, related updates, enhancements, premium products, or additional parts (Ansell et al. 2007). Kamakura (2008) describes upselling as increasing order volume through the sale of additional units of the same purchased item or upgrading to a more expensive version of the purchased item. Netessine et al. (2006) agrees with the definition where upselling is selling bigger quantities of similar products but defines selling items replacing previously sold items as upgrading.

Some authors describe cross-selling as a tool or a technique for customer relationship management (CRM), especially in a B2B context (Bolton et al. 2008; Kamakura 2008; Reinartz et al. 2004). Schmitz (2013) points out that this is a rather simplified view of the concept, since it doesn’t take into consideration the necessary organizational changes required for successful cross-selling. Rygielski et al. (2002) propose three ways to increase customer value through CRM: upselling existing customers, focusing on higher-margin products, or expanding the customer portfolio through cross-selling. Extending the length of the customer relationship is identified as another approach to increase customer value. (Rygielski et al. 2002)

According to Kumar & Reinartz (2018), CRM refers to managing and nurturing customer relationships to ensure customer satisfaction. Effective CRM can resolve the issue customers have with multiple sales points and create a more unified customer experience. (Kumar and Reinartz 2018, p. 4-5). CRM process can be divided into recognizing, procuring, retaining, and developing customer relationships to maximize customer value (Ngai et al. 2009). CRM can increase competitive advantage by enhancing and optimizing customer relationships and it is directly related to the company strategy (Boulding et al. 2005; Kim et al. 2006).

These factors significantly impact the success of cross-selling, although it is good to keep in mind that successful cross-selling cannot be done without salespeople. (Kane 2005; Giovannetti et al. 2022). Salespeople may resist using CRM systems, often perceiving them as not adding value to the sales process and taking too much time away from sales activities (Giovannetti et al. 2022).

CRM can include activities related to marketing and organizational structure development (Boulding et al. 2005). Organizational structure refers to how different roles, responsibilities, and communication channels are arranged within an organization and what type of relationships these entities have. The structure often contains the hierarchy and reporting lines, as well as describes how different tasks are assigned and how the workload is divided and coordinated within the organization. (Grenny 2012)

CRM can also be related to capturing customer data, utilizing existing tools and technologies, and personalized communication strategies which can be utilized together to create a comprehensive sales approach. (Kumar and Reinartz 2018, p. 4-5). Effective CRM usage involves storing all relevant information and customer data in a unified system which is accessible to all necessary personnel. Improper utilization of CRM systems can lead to results favouring large-scale customers based on sales quantity, while dismissing smaller, profitable, and high-potential customers. (Boulding et al. 2005; Payne & Frow 2005)

To recognize customer needs, intentional data collection is crucial to identify potential customer segments. Modern cross-selling utilizes analytical tools to analyze customer behavior, identifying potential cross-selling opportunities across various touchpoints. (Kamakura et al. 2008). The problem with customer information is not that it is not available, but rather that there is already too much information. Therefore just collecting customer data is not enough, but it also needs to be utilized intentionally to recognize the most profitable customer segments. Identifying profitable customers can lead to better resource allocation and lowers the risk of using incorrect incentives for sales personnel. (Boulding et al. 2005; Payne & Frow 2005)

2.1.1 Benefits of cross-selling

Growth is essential for any business and cross-selling provides the opportunity to enhance growth by utilizing existing customer relationships with untapped potential. Cross-selling is an opportunity for companies to learn more about their customers' preferences and buying behaviour (Ansell et al 2007) which is a way to grow both the company's and the customer's perceived value. (Kamakura et al. 2008, Schmitz 2013) Cross-selling is a means of fostering relationships and a big chance to raise and extend a customer's lifetime value (Van der Borg et al. 2022). Literature review on the benefits of cross-selling show that most benefits are related to the expansion of the customer relationship as well as the multiple benefits providing monetary value to the company by improving customer profitability. The benefits found in previous research are combined in Table 2.

Table 2. Cross-selling benefits based on literature.

Cross-selling benefits	**Reference**
Cost efficiency	
Serving current customers is less expensive than acquiring new ones • lower investments and risks	Kamakura et al. 2003, Duclos et al. 2007
Increase a customer's buying volume	Kamakura 2008, Kumar et al. 2008
Raising the company's share of wallet with the customer	Kamakura et al. 2008, Schmitz 2013, Van der Borg et al. 2022
Customer relationship	
Improved customer retention and reduced churn • raising costs of switching for customers • greater degree of loyalty	Kamakura et al. 2003, Duclos et al. 2007; Ansell et al. 2007, Kamakura et al. 2008, Schmitz 2013, Min et al. 2016
Insights into the requirements and preferences of the customer	Tuli et al. 2007, Reinartz et al. 2008, Schmitz 2013
Optimizing and enhancing value creation	Lau et al. 2004, Reinartz et al. 2008
Increase customer lifetime value	Latusek 2010, Van der Borg et al. 2022

Cross-buying refers to the same concept as cross-selling but from the point of view of the customer. Cross-buying customers increase purchasing volumes, potentially leading to bigger bonuses and rebates. Customers can also reap the benefits of buying additional products and services provided by the same vendor and simultaneously reducing the total cost related to the purchase (Kumar et al. 2008; Schmitz 2013). Figure 2 combines elements that, according to Schmitz (2013), increase overall customer satisfaction which again encourages cross-buying.

Figure 2. Factors effecting cross-buying decisions. Adapted from Schmitz (2013).

Loyalty is a key factor in cross-buying as increased switching costs encourage purchasing from the same company in the future. Loyal customers are more profitable due to lower service costs, less price sensitive and more likely to recommend the company's service to potential customers (Reinartz et al. 2008; Min et al. 2016). The customer's experience with the perceived service quality, attitude towards the company, socio-demographic factors, and marketing measures also contribute to cross-buying decisions (Kumar et al. 2008, Cao & Gruca 2005).

2.1.2 Barriers and key elements for successful cross-selling

Despite the potential cross-selling holds, nearly 75% of initial efforts fail due to salespeople-related issues in the implementation phase (Schmitz 2013). Many business-to-business (B2B) manufacturers have moved away from a product-centric strategy during the last ten years and toward solutions that combine products and services. Many manufacturers who are making the shift, nonetheless, have reported concerning outcomes, such as decreased profits. Among the justifications are the necessity of organizational learning as well as higher development and operating expenses that must be paid for initially. Consequently, it is critical to comprehend the processes and backup plans that are needed to support this type of strategy. (Van der Borg et al. 2022) For customers to actively influence decisions rather than be considered as an afterthought, businesses must strike a balance between their product and customer emphasis. (Brown 2012) Table 3 summarizes the literature findings on the barriers and key elements for successful cross-selling which are further explained through examples from literature.

Table 3. Barriers to and key elements for successful cross-selling based on literature.

	Barriers to cross-selling	**Successful cross-selling practices**	**Reference**
Customer data	Data not collected systematically.	Collected systematically and decisions are based on information about customer needs and profitability	Alonso (2022)
Customer segmentation	Trying to cross-sell to all customers.	Segmentation to find which customers are profitable to cross-sell.	Ansell et al. (2007), Kumar & Reinartz (2018), Shah and Kumar (2012)
Cross-selling timing	Cross-selling very often by pushing new offers in all customer contacts.	Waiting until customer relationships are established, listening to customer needs and helping customers before cross-selling to them.	Kamakura (2008), Shah and Kumar (2012)
Customer benefits	Salespeople not communicating the benefits for customers when introducing new products, services or solutions.	Salespeople tell the customer about the benefits when introducing new products, services or solutions.	Kamakura (2008), Kumar et al. (2008), Kumar & Reinartz (2018), Reinartz et al. (2008)
Training	No training for cross-selling.	Training to cross-selling methods and to products, services or solutions which salespeople are not familiar with.	Borg & Freytag (2012), Kamakura et al. (2003)
Product information	Salespeople do not have relevant information about the	Salespeople can have all the relevant information about portfolio and customers	Grenny (2012), Malms & Schmitz

	products and customers due to silo organization.	through effective information sharing.	(2011), Schmitz (2013)
Sales support	Salespeople are expected to sell a complete portfolio without portfolio management support.	Salespeople have access to support cross-sell and are not expected to know everything about the products.	Kamakura (2003), Malms & Schmitz (2011)
Sales process	Complex and varying sales processes for different solutions.	United sales approach which is trained and communicated to all salespeople.	Brown (2012), Homburg (2020), Van der Borg et al. (2022)
Customer rewards	Customers receive no rewards from cross-buying.	Customers can have rewards from cross-buying such as total cost reduction.	Bauer et al. (2022), Shah & Kumar (2012)
Sales bonuses	Sales bonuses not rewarding cross-selling.	Sales bonuses rewarding cross-selling.	Brown (2012), Shah & Kumar (2012)
Sales organization	Silo organization where sales teams are organized by product categories and objectives for salespeople account for the sales of specific products.	Sales manage the whole portfolio and their rewards are based on cross-selling. The rest of the organization supports the cross-selling approach.	Brown (2012), Furst et al. (2017)
Follow up	No follow-up metrics.	Follow-up metrics for cross-selling and if needed corrective actions based on those.	Reinartz et al. (2004)

Identifying and evaluating cross-selling opportunities within the existing customers is crucial to avoid failure (Li et al. 2005; Netessine et al. 2006). Segmenting groups of customers who want similar benefits and behave in the same way can be beneficial while segments can be based on factors such as purchasing power, regularity of purchases, and product type. (Berger et al. 2002)

Several obstacles can make it difficult to spot and take advantage of these profitable cross-selling opportunities. Especially selling an already complex solution could make it less likely that additional products would be sold. (Van der Borg et al. 2022) Shah and Kumar (2012) suggest that companies should avoid cross-selling to all customers, as about one in five cross-buying customers are unprofitable. Figure 3 describes four types of unprofitable customers for cross-selling recognized by Shah and Kumar (2012).

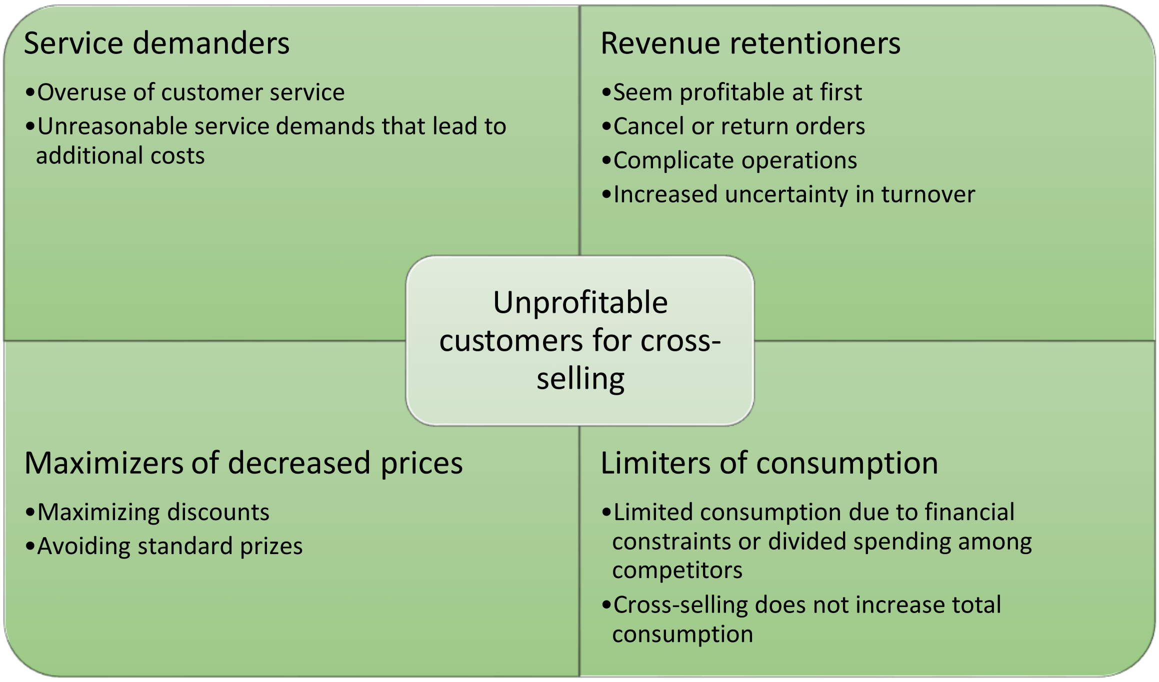

Figure 3. Unprofitable customers for cross-selling. Adapted from Shah and Kumar (2012).

Cross-selling can negatively impact customer relationships if perceived as too frequent or irrelevant. This emphasizes the need for targeted communication. Identifying optimal cross-selling opportunities is it is also important to learn how likely the customer is to purchase again and which product they want to buy, as well as when the purchase is most likely is happening. (Ansell et al. 2007, Kamakura et al. 2008). Successful cross-selling is more likely after the customer relationship has been formed and customer has an attachment to the company offering (Reinartz et al. 2008).

Inbound customer interactions prove more successful for cross-selling, as customers initiating contact are more open to recommendations. This way, customers' mindset is already on the company and its products, and no additional efforts are needed to reach the customer. It can be highly effective especially if the customer initiated the company to solve an issue and were satisfied with the resolution. (Kamakura et al. 2008)

Salespeople may overlook cross-selling due to difficulties managing a large and technically complex product portfolio (Malms & Schmitz 2011; Schmitz 2013). The complexity of selling in B2B markets requires multiple sales representatives and supporting resources to address customer needs. (Ahearne et al. 2010; Schmitz 2013) For a company with several business divisions, striking a balance between managing complex portfolios and recognizing cross-selling opportunities is essential. Important customer accounts should be reviewed to determine which services work well together and which should be distributed separately. (Hughes & Siddal 2023)

Cross-selling performance is the extent to which a salesperson maximizes cross-buying potential. Salespeople's adoption of a company's product offering can be measured by the number of different products and product categories that have been sold or offered by them. (Schmitz 2013; Hughes & Siddal 2023). Figure 4 combines ways to prevent cross-selling losses and maximize cross-selling profits that Shah and Kumar (2012) have recognized in their research.

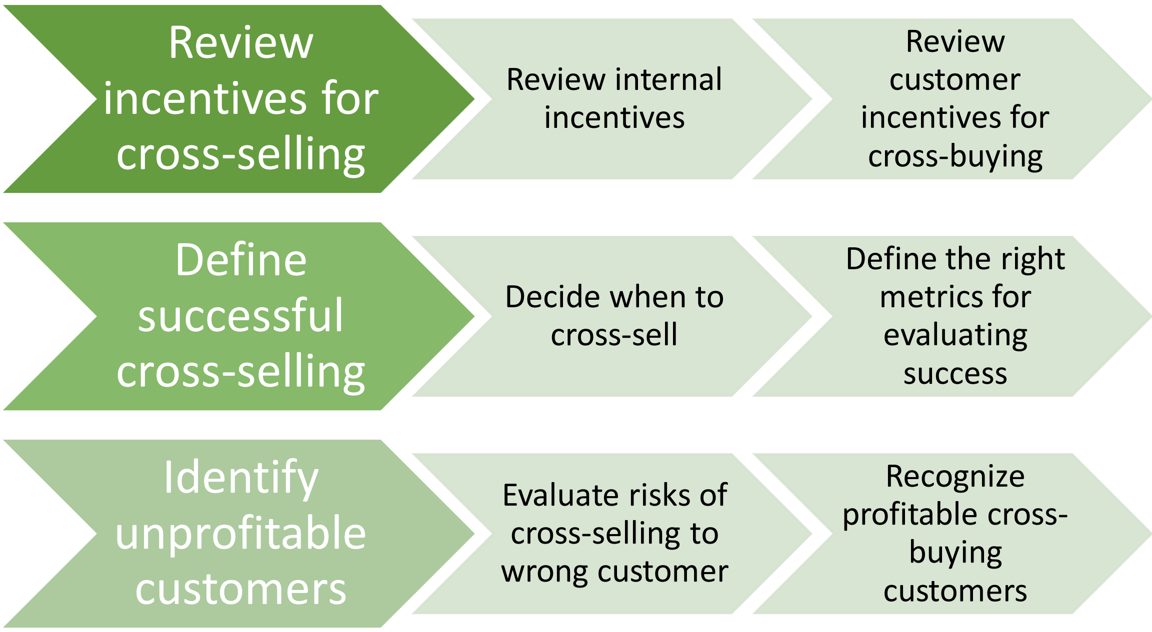

Figure 4. Successful cross-selling. Adapted from Shah and Kumar (2012)

Cross-selling incentives, often in the form of financial rewards, play a crucial role in influencing employee behaviour and goals within the organizational structure. Organizational measures, including training, job rotation, and incentives, contribute to organizational effectiveness. Sales training enhances cross-selling performance by preparing salespeople to go beyond their job-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities (Homburg et al. 2020).

Managers play a crucial role in supporting cross-selling activities in the long run. Training salespeople to contribute to the creation and development of modular solutions or product bundling for specific customer types can enhance cross-selling opportunities. Highlighting best practices, providing cross-selling training, and utilizing incentives are essential steps in promoting cross-selling after implementation (Homburg et al. 2020).

Companies embracing cross-selling often undergo significant organizational changes while introducing new sales incentives and training programs (Schmitz 2013). However, the effective application of cross-selling encounters obstacles, particularly within product-centric organizational structures that foster a silo mentality. Silos prevent collaboration across different business units and even unit management might not know about the relationships their customers have with other units within the same company. (Kamakura et al. 2008; Homburg et al. 2020) Internal alignment and complicated sales processes make executing sales across business units difficult. Companies frequently implement strict procedures, design targeted reward systems, or give sales management more authority to overcome internal barriers. (Hughes & Siddal 2023)

A product-centric organization prioritizes bringing items to market over understanding and meeting the demands of its customers. A product focus gives management in large, complicated businesses a clear understanding of which products are selling successfully, at what profit, and who the product owners are accountable. Although it makes managing a company easier, there is a price to pay. It frequently results in disorganized businesses that compete with one another for customers and lack a cohesive strategy. (Brown 2012) Businesses often adopt a product-centric strategy if they want to cross-sell a certain product and search the customer database to find the best prospects for that product. (Kamakura et al. 2008)

When moving towards a customer-centric sales structure, employees must be trained to sell across product lines and provided with enough incentives to avoid side-tracking. A customer-centric strategy that prioritizes customer requirements and values, is determined to be more successful compared to product-centric structures. The customer-centric approach involves examining the customer's needs and value to the business before determining the appropriate treatment option, with cross-selling being considered when it aligns with developing the customer relationship. (Kamakura et al. 2008).

Organizational structures can reduce resistance to cross-business collaboration by changing salespeople's siloed mindset which improves the ability to cross-sell on an organizational level. Control measures such as training and incentives can encourage employee behaviour that aligns with company goals. Cross-selling promotion involves managers influencing salesperson behaviour by encouraging cross-selling activities through engagement, support, and non-monetary recognition. An organizational culture that supports cross-selling emphasizes collaboration, belonging, customer focus, and long-term customer relationships. (Homburg et al. 2020) The differences between the product and the customer centric views are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Product versus customer centric view. Adapted from Brown (2012).

	Product Centric	Customer centric
Strategy	Have the best product	Provide best solution for customer
People/Culture	Look for new products to introduce to customers	Search for new customer needs to fill
Process	Develop new products	Develop new solutions and manage customer experience
Rewards/Metrics	Rewards sales of new products or number of products	Rewards people with deep insights to the customer
Organizational Structure	Product based divisions	Customer segment based divisions

Team-based selling has emerged as a valuable strategy which addresses issues such as increased consumer expectations, coordinated buying, supplier rationalization, and technical complexity in goods and services. Cross-selling, solution selling, and internal cooperation are all encouraged by team-based selling. (Ahearne et al. 2010; Schmitz 2013). Teams can be structured based on factors like geography, product categories, customer types, or combinations of these elements.

Sales personnel within the same sales team are likely to have some task interdependence and shared goals due to similar organizational positioning and common sales manager. (Schmitz 2013) According to Schmitz (2013), salespeople develop beliefs about their team's reputation, and positive beliefs and norms can reinforce cross-selling behaviours. Team members may be very important in providing each other with additional opinions and sharing learned best practices. They can often also share similar values and activity models due to the surrounding environment. (Mohammed and Dumville 2001). Culture-related activities further support cross-selling, emphasizing cross-business collaboration, customer focus, and long-term relationship focus. Cross-level communication, organizational culture, and the encouragement of shared values and norms uphold the culture within the teams. (Homburg et al. 2020).

Cross-selling can be challenging for an organization with sales teams that specialize in one product area. The sales personnel fear reputational concerns when engaging with the sales of products that are under the expertise of another sales team. While these concerns may be realistic, they may also lead to overestimation of potential risks and resistance. Sales management should aim to reduce the perception of risks associated with cross-selling and clarify the potential benefits through actively sharing successes and best practices. This can help develop positive trust related to reputation and overcome key limitations of cross-selling. By identifying and addressing these concerns, managers can overcome the disadvantages of cross-selling. (Schmitz 2013)

2.1.3 Cross-selling behaviour through the MOA framework

A study by Schmitz (2013) uses the motivation-opportunity-ability (MOA) framework to evaluate the cross-selling performance of salespeople within a team. MOA was first applied in marketing research by MacInnis and Jaworski (1989) to study consumers' information processing in advertising. MOA suggests that individuals engage in wanted behaviour if they are motivated, are provided the opportunity to engage, and possess the ability to do it (Yee et al., 2021). The use of the MOA framework extends to various contexts, including knowledge sharing, work performance, and employee and team participation. (Xu et al. 2023)

Homburg et al. (2020) present similar findings where they suggest that adding organizational structure and control measures to individual salespeople characteristics such as motivation, ability, and general customer orientation, affects the cross-selling performance of the salesperson. (Homburg et al. 2020) And again Hughes & Siddal (2023) recognize similar factors: execution ability, motivation and willingness, and knowledge and awareness which has a more detailed description of "spotting, designing, and delivering cross-business unit opportunities". This supports the view of the original MOA framework, where in addition to motivation and ability, identifying and realizing opportunities for cross-selling is essential. Cross-selling success that can be replicated depends on comprehending and consciously controlling these three factors across sales teams, and the ability to execute is said to reinforce the willingness and motivation aspect of salespeople behaviour. (Hughes & Siddal 2023) Figure 5 includes the MOA elements and their descriptions.

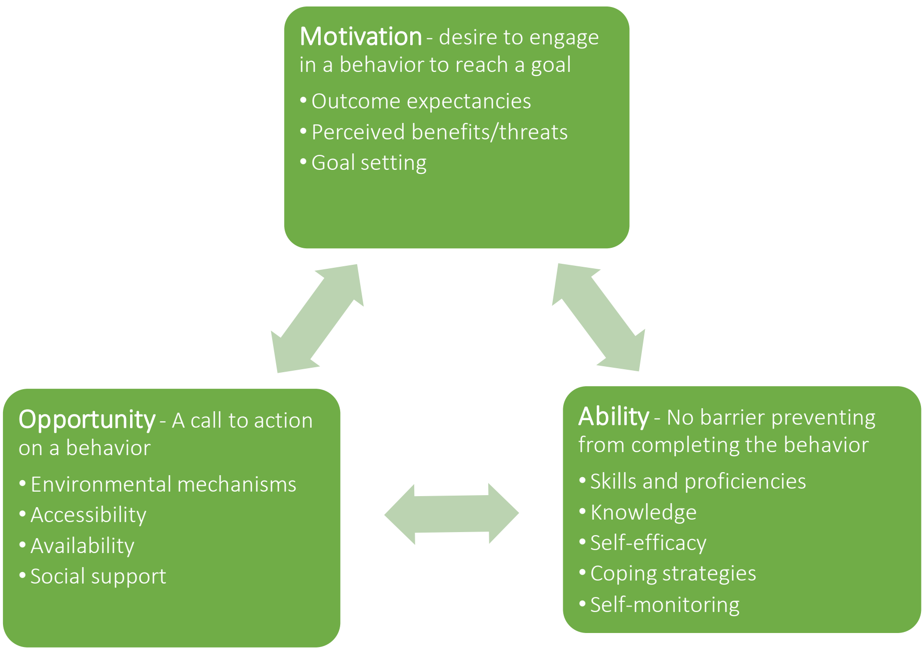

Figure 5. MOA Framework for behaviour change and maintenance. Adapted from Wilmott & Parkinson (2017).

Motivation is the driving force for individuals to achieve desires or targets which also reflects their preparedness and goals. Higher motivation suggests increased likelihood of active engagement in information processing. (Xu et al. 2023) Cross-selling motivation can be described as the desire to engage in cross-selling. Highly motivated salespeople actively seek suitable products for the customers and gather extensive information on the product portfolio. A shared cross-selling standard within a team strengthens individual motivation as well. (Schmitz 2013). Motivating the salespeople requires effective leadership messaging, both financial and non-financial incentives, and clear expectations. The degree to which a company can reduce predictable obstacles for cross-selling and promote cooperation will determine how motivated salespeople are. (Hughes & Siddal 2023)

To enhance motivation, management should communicate the benefits of cross-selling and create incentives that focus on basket expansion rather than sales volume (Duclos et al. 2007). According to Schmitz (2013), implementing a compensation system consistent with cross-selling goals is essential. Proactive steps should be taken to establish an office culture that encourages collaboration between sales teams and other supportive functions closely related to sales. Traditional methods such as group training sessions, establishing mutual information systems, and fostering shared accountability (e.g., setting group goals) should be taken into consideration. (Van der Borg et al. 2022)

An environment for cross-selling opportunities can be created with the right type of action, such as encourgaing salespeople to develop organizational coordination mechanisms for profitable cross-selling opportunities and improved customer satisfaction. Collaborative efforts, such as involving support personnel during customer visits, enhance two-way collaboration. Businesses should not concentrate on a single cross-selling procedure but assess opportunities, develop execution strategies, and understand the variety of opportunities to enhance cross-selling. Encouraging a positive feedback loop, clarifying roles, managing conflict, and providing high-level playbooks and tools for each type of recognized cross-selling opportunities can boost profits and enhance the skills of salespeople. (Hughes & Siddal 2023)

Besides motivation, the salespeople need the ability to cross-sell which demands extensive knowledge of various products and an understanding of customer needs. Sellers must know how to offer the right products outside the customer's current basket to avoid damaging the customer relationship. (Malms and Schmitz 2011) Salespeople's hesitancy may stem from a lack of familiarity with products outside their focus area and might not recognize the value that these components add or how a product might be a good fit for their customer. (Van der Borg et al. 2022). Ability involves resources like knowledge, skills, and money, which are all necessary for behaviour change or goal achievement (Xu et al. 2023).

2.2 Multichannel conflict

Multichannel conflict is highly related to the organizational structure and sales strategy of an organization. Coordination, trust, and shared goals among business units are crucial for overcoming silos and fostering collaboration (Aman 2019). Many of these conflict management methods have been mentioned in cross-selling literature as well, and managing conflict is even mentioned as a tool for successful cross-selling (Hughes & Siddal 2023).

Conflict exists in some form in all organizational systems, whether it is internal or external. Especially, the internal structure and dynamics of an organization are strategically critical when looking at organizations with multichannel strategies. Literature related to one organization's multichannel structure includes the conflicts occurring between different channel groups inside the organization, and how these internal conflicts then affect the external channel systems. (Webb & Lambe 2007) This research focuses on the internal channels, which can be described as a group of employees or teams that manage customer relationships with a specified group of external customers. (Aman 2019)

Webb & Lambe (2007, p.32) define internal multichannel conflict as "*opponent-centred behaviour on the part of one channel that may prevent or impede another channel from achieving its goals*". A more recent and general definition suggests that channel conflict occurs "*when one channel member's actions prevent the channel from achieving its goals*" (Tahirov & Clock 2022, p. 404). The second definition can be used in the context of external channels as well.

2.2.1 Managing multichannel systems

Employing both direct and indirect channels within multichannel systems is a common practice large manufacturers utilize to maximize customer reach. Direct channels sell to the end users directly while indirect channels utilize distributors, wholesalers, retailed and other partners. Different sales channels do come with additional managerial challenges, such as channel conflicts. Conflicts can occur internally with the employees of the direct and indirect sales teams or between the manufacturer and their channel partners who for example might perceive the direct channels as a threat. (Tahirov & Clock 2022)

Internal channel conflicts often arise when sales teams compete for the same customers, due to overlap in the channels. Conflict arises when there is increased competition for sales share, promotional budgets, and support resources (Aman 2019). Frequently mentioned sources of conflict are price discrepancies and high-level silos, where issues between different channels are only resolved on very high levels of the organization. (Webb & Lambe 2007) In an organization, interpersonal interactions are important assets, and they must be used, controlled, or governed carefully. (Borg & Freytag 2012) Still, some degree of conflict can be beneficial for the company as it can enhance the performance of the overall system. (Webb & Lambe 2007)

The ideal structure for a multichannel system depends on the complexity and dynamics of the environment. Channel management and organizational design play a crucial role in reducing channel conflict by determining optimal levels of interdependence and collaboration. Traditional conflict management approaches may focus on reducing channel overlap, but a more comprehensive view is necessary to reduce conflict within the complete system. Customer characteristics should be considered in the design as well. Whether customers have uniform needs and engage in frequent channel switching, or whether customers have specific needs from certain channels, impact the best approach. (Fürst et al. 2017)

Multichannel systems come with internal costs such as marketing resources and operating licenses (Webb & Lambe 2007). High task and product segment differentiation can lead to channels becoming self-contained, with a narrow silo view, and underutilizing these synergies between channels. Product differentiation in the channels can be based on the complexity, support needs or price ranges of the products. (Tahirov & Clock 2022) Combining segment and task differentiation is a holistic approach to multichannel design, allowing for a variety of overall strategies depending on the company's needs. It helps reduce competition between channels, but it also risks hindering collaboration between salespeople and their channel partners. (Fürst et al. 2017).

Organizations can manage channel conflict through well-managed pricing and contracts which can increase overall profits for both the company and its channel partners. Product differentiation in the channels can be based on the complexity, support needs or price ranges of the products. The organization can also impose rules on which customers can be served through direct channels as it might be more beneficial to serve certain customers through an indirect channel. (Tahirov & Clock 2022) According to Aman (2019), minimizing or managing the level of conflict can be done by frequent two-way communication between managers and channel teams.

2.2.2 Internal multichannel framework

Webb & Lambe (2007) have recognized three main causes of conflict in the distribution channels: goal incompatibility, domain dissensus, and differing perceptions of reality. For each of these three conflicts causes there are corresponding integration behaviours. These key behaviours are used by companies who aim to integrate multi-channel distribution systems: the use of superordinate goals internally, effective internal communication, and effective internal coordination among the channels. Based on the integration behaviours, they created a conceptual model of internal multi-channel conflict. This framework can be utilized to manage the level of conflicts, and to analyse the firm's internal market orientation. (Webb & Lambe 2007) The framework is presented in Figure 6. P1-P14 represent the positive, negative, or neutral relationships between the elements.

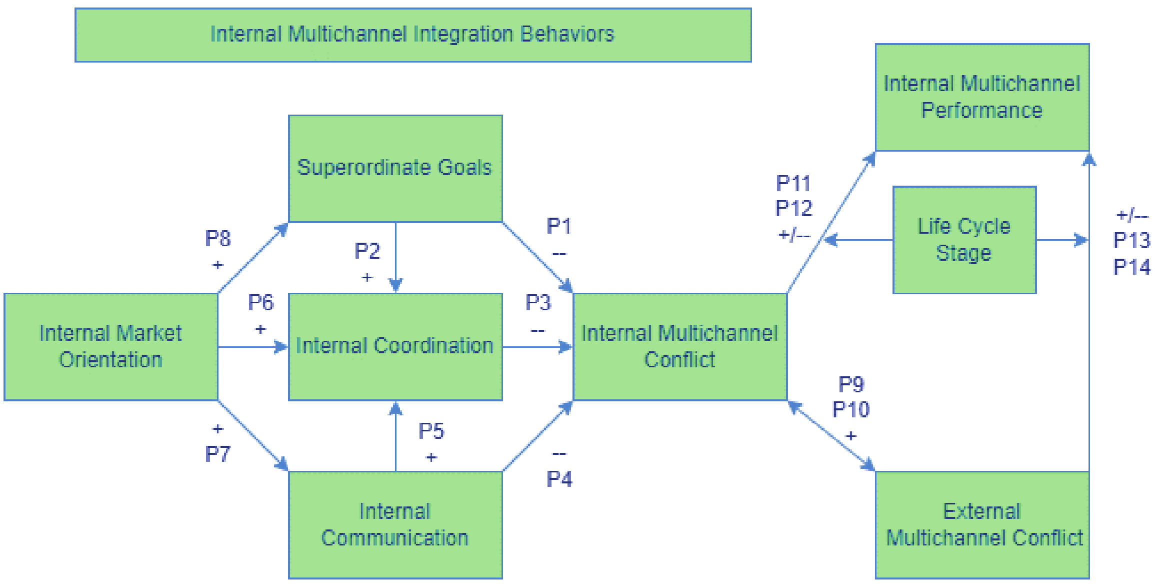

Figure 6. A conceptual model of internal multichannel conflict. Adapted from Webb & Lambe (2007, p.32).

Goal incompatibility is where operational objectives of different channels are conflicted with each other. Conflicting goals can for example relate to growth rates, revenues, profits, and market share. Utilizing superordinate goals that require resources and efforts from multiple groups, is considered the most effective conflict reduction technique. A financial reward system with incentives to align channel group interests with the overall multichannel objectives, reduces the level of conflict. (Webb & Lambe 2007)

Another cause of channel conflict is domain dissensus where the resources allocated to the channels and their objectives are limited. The more overlap there is in the required resources and the more limited the number of resources is, there are greater levels of domain dissensus and therefore channel conflict. Resources can include product support, funding for promotional activities or employee resources. Effective internal coordination between the channels reduces unwanted conflict by presenting the target domains that are intended for and what each of the channels are responsible for. (Webb & Lambe 2007)

Differing perceptions of reality is a result of siloed channel structures, where employees in one channel have a different understanding of the market environment than the other which leads to conflict. For channel groups that exist in completely different mindsets or realities, superordinate goals and proficient resource allocation is not enough for conflict resolution. In addition, efficient internal communication is necessary. Successful communication is frequent, relevant, and occurs throughout the organization. (Webb & Lambe 2007)

2.3 Change management during restructure of sales

Change projects are complex and time-consuming, requiring managers to engage with employees to understand the implications and guide the process. While change can lead to improved agility and profits, it can also create challenges. Change is often necessary, and still it can be faced with significant initial resistance and has a high risk for failure. Understanding change management principles helps managers effectively present change to staff, allowing them to view transformation as helpful and easy to incorporate into their new routine. (Da Ros et al. 2023) Organizational change management (OCM) research has previously focused on resistance to change as a negative factor that inherently leads to failure. However, a shift in perspective recognizes individuals opposing change not merely as a negative force but as stakeholders who, with a better understanding and involvement, can enhance change outcomes (Rosebaum et al. 2018).

Da Ros et al. (2023) suggest that OCM practices recognized in literature should be examined in real-life managerial contexts, where a behavioral perspective could be utilized. Successful OCM increases employee engagement and productivity once the change goes live. Change management goes beyond training and aims to get people committed to the change by minimizing its negative impact on people and the business. The OCM literature suggests that successful leadership and change management have a major impact on the success rates of organizational initiatives and projects. (Hornstein 2015) A comprehensive literature review by Da Ros et al. (2023) recognized nine different thematic groups for change variables in OCM research, which are presented in Figure 7.

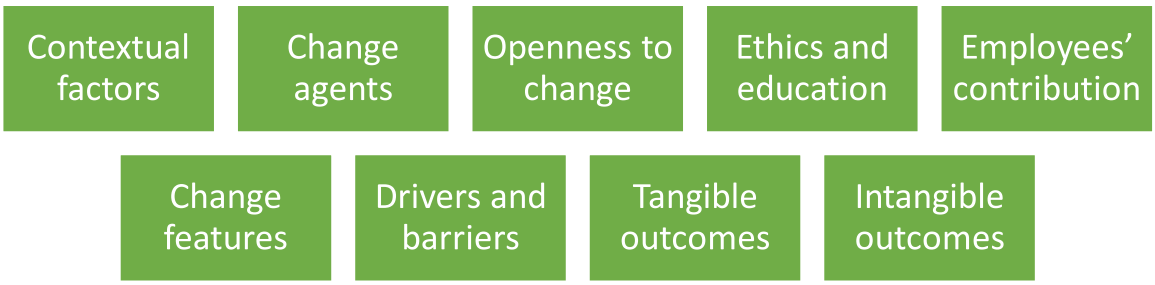

Figure 7. Change variables in OCM research. Adapted from Da Ros et al. (2023).

Contextual factors refer to the internal and external environments influenced by political, administrative, and cultural factors during organizational change. The market sector and ownership also play a role in contextualizing change. Change agents, such as management, leadership, and stakeholders, play a strategic role in implementing change. Organizational development is characterized by openness to change, which includes elements like motivation, engagement, familiarity, and participation. (Da Ros et al. 2023)

Ethics and education factors focus on the pre-formed principles of the organizational structure and its agents, affecting change through individual behavioral, affective, and cognitive traits. Employee contributions, such as dedication, responsiveness, and fortitude, impact corporate transformation through their responses. Features of change, focusing on the frequency, pace, level, kind of rise, and order of change. The drivers and barriers group focuses on resources, perception, vision, and monitoring elements that influence development. Two types of outcomes are tangible and intangible: tangible results, such as costs, productivity, sustainability, and technological advancement, and intangible results, such as satisfaction among internal and external stakeholders. (Da Ros et al. 2023)

2.3.1 Barriers to employee adaption and organizational change

Individual involvement appears to be essential to organizational development and change implementation (Da Ros et al. 2023). Choi (2011), defines readiness, commitment, and openness towards change as factors reflecting the employees' views regarding the change process. Possible cynicism toward organizational change is also an indicator of employee adaption. (Choi 2011) Various identified factors contributing to failures in change incentives include the level and content of change communication, conflicts between organizational objectives and the employees, organizational culture, employee engagement in the planning and implementation, and inadequate planning processes (Rosebaum et al. 2018).

Change adoption can be influenced psychology-based concepts. For example, the endowment effect suggests that the status quo is more likely to be preferred by people than change. Another example is the ease effect, in which accepting the default option is easier than deviating from a pre-selected scenario. (Da Ros et al. 2023) The idea that personal emotions have a mediating effect on the negative effects of resistance to change has contributed to a deeper understanding of resistance to change that focuses on individuals rather than the larger organizational context. (Rosebaum et al. 2018)

Employee resistance can arise when employees get concerned about their job security when there are rumours of change, while others feel less useful as their role changes. Financial restraints, leadership capabilities, and organizational culture all have an impact on how burdening the implemented changes are for an individual. (Hornstein 2015) With new technologies, like artificial intelligence (AI), workers frequently worry that their jobs may be replaced by computers, or they must go above and beyond their regular responsibilities to incorporate technologies into the sales process. Increased resistance to change may result from mental tiredness, control problems, and feelings of inadequacy brought on by this transformation. (Giovannetti et al. 2022, Hornstein 2015)

A change process always indicates that employees must make changes to their way of working. Change efforts become more and more difficult the longer they have worked with the old process. which is why time and support are essential in enabling the employee adaption. (Abudi 2017, p. 9) Table 5 summarizes the obstacles to change on both organizational and personal levels.

Table 5. Obstacles to change on organizational and personal level. Adapted from Abudi (2017, p. 35,41).

Organizational dimension	Personal dimension
• Lack of shared vision around change • No repercussion of doing work "the old way" • Lack of honest and open communications about the change and its impact • Not enough employee engagement in the change process or lack of employee support • Too much going on at the same time within the organization • Lack of undertanding around the change and its purpose • Distrust in leadership • Significant risks related to change that are not addressed • Not enough time and space given to employees to adapt to change	• Fear of impact of the change on the employee's role and responsibilities • Insufficient information about the change and why it needs to occur • Fear that the change will impact the employee financially • Change fatigue • Disruption in the employee's daily routine • A "we have always done it this way" mentality • Viewing change as inconvenient due to other stressors at the workplace or personal life of employees • Fear of job loss • Tools and technology insufficient to change implementation

To encourage adoption from those salespeople who are prepared to change, it is necessary to show how the adjustments made by the salespeople have affected their performance. Getting the change agents to mentor others, offer advice, and provide training will probably have a greater effect on the sales organization. For salespeople that are open to change, hearing from customers about their positive experiences interacting with successful salespeople in various formats can be a motivating factor. (Giovannetti et al. 2022) Change-oriented employees can adapt and thrive in a changing environment which has multiple benefits for the company (Abudi 2017, p. 9). These benefits are described in Table 6.

Table 6. Organizational change as the norm. Adapted from Abudi (2017, p. 253)

Benefits of manking organizational change the norm	
Easier integration and adoption of new technologies	Increased retention of employees through regular learning of new skills
Focus on customer needs and the ability to adapt to them	Promblems become an opportunity rather than a challenge
Ability to manage through a downturn in the economy	Improved product and service offerings to customers
Continuous growth of the organization and its employees	A competitive advantage

If employees are severely strained by change projects, managers shoulder much of the burden while helping their teams through it. For managers to become change advocates and champions and inspire their team members to follow suit, they also need to receive sufficient training and information about the advantages of change. (Hornstein 2015) Sales organizations and executives must realize that they have the power to persuade salespeople to adopt new perspectives and ways of behaving in response to customer-driven change. (Giovannetti et al. 2022)

2.3.2 Change process and transparency

Similar to the actual world, organizational change management is a complicated process, with various variables interacting at different levels of interest to affect the process's outcome. (Da Ros et al. 2023) An effective change management approach involves dividing the project into four stages: preparation, planning, implementation and post-project phase. The first stage involves laying the foundation for an appropriate solution, while the second stage involves designing an action plan for the employees. The third stage involves implementation and continuous assessment of progress. The final stage is the post-project stage, where the organization learns from the success of the change and reinforces it over time. (Hornstein 2015) Figure 8 describes the management responsibilities during a change process.

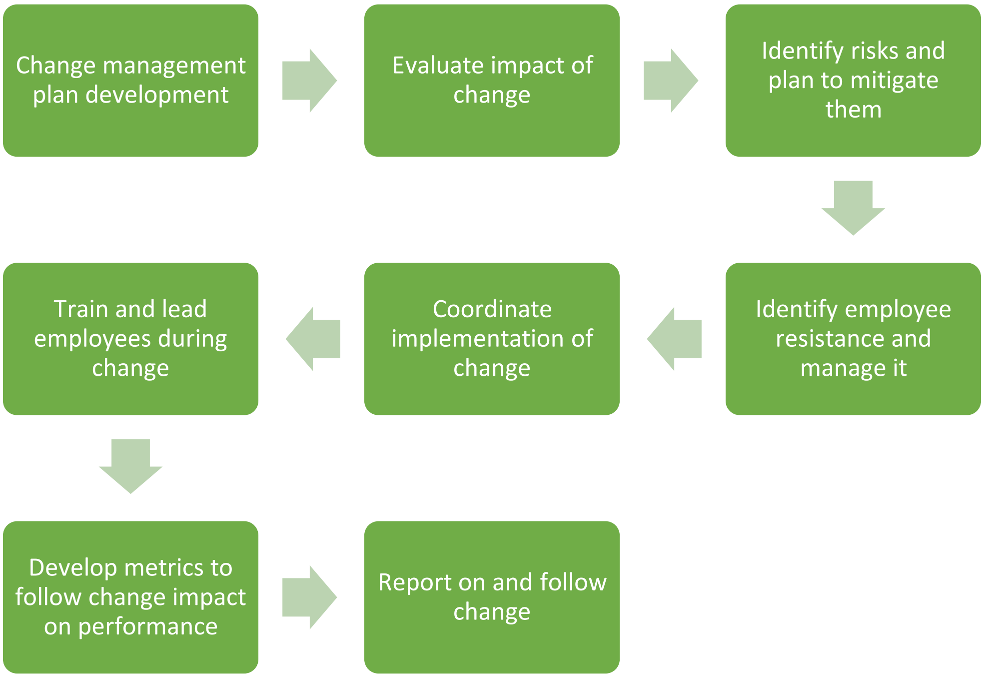

Figure 8. Management responsibilities during change process. Adapted from Da Ros et al. (2023) & Hornstein (2015)

Ideal change management strategy will recognize the complexity of each organizational system which means that each change initiative needs to be carefully planned and implemented in the real-life environment (Da Ros et al. 2023). In all these steps related to management responsibilities, the contextual factors presented in Figure 9 should be evaluated.

Organizational transparency refers to the extent to which an organization openly shares information about its activities, decisions, processes, and performance. Transparency requires deliberate efforts by an organization to provide clear, honest, and accessible information to its stakeholders. Transparency is linked to positive employee outcomes such as fostering trust, employee engagement, and strong organization-employee relationships (Yue et al., 2019; Wang, 2020). Internal transparency in operations supports aligning actions with strategic goals, and fostering a culture of innovation and accountability (Alonso 2022). Figure 9 describes the benefits of organizational transparency.

Figure 9. Benefits of organizational transparency. Adapted from Alonso (2022).

Rumors and informal communication during change can cause uncertainty among employees. To address this challenge, organizations must focus on providing quality information, ensuring employees are aware of the change objectives. Organizations openly communicate their goals, strategies, and decision-making processes to stakeholders through various channels. (Endrejat et al., 2020) Engaging in transparent communication is an ongoing process that involves multiple channels and all organizational levels. The accessibility of the information, clarity of communication channels, and the consistency of communication should be considered from the stakeholder perspective. This can include providing clear documentation, maintaining open-door policies, and leveraging technology to disseminate information. (Men et al., 2022)

Effective internal communication is recognized as a powerful tool during change, helping employees understand the consequences of change and creating a supportive environment. Transparent communication aids transformational leaders in articulating change-specific interests, strengthening relationships with employees, and promoting openness to change (Yue et al., 2019). Communication and leadership alone do not guarantee openness to change, especially in the evolving business landscape where traditional top-down communication models prove inadequate. Lack of transparency hampers employee trust, leading to disengagement and hindering organizational adaptability (Alonso, 2022).

Transparent communication is defined by three dimensions: accountability, participation, and substantiality. Accountability involves sharing both positive and negative information about the organization and taking responsibility for the actions and decisions of the company. Substantiality requires providing truthful and useful information, avoiding contradictions and ensuring that the information provided aligns with the organization's values and objectives. Participation ensures stakeholder involvement in decision-making. (Yue et al., 2019) An inclusive and transparent change management approach is crucial for reducing resistance and enhancing employee commitment. Transparency includes stakeholder participation in the decision-making processes. Organizations activities should focus on seeking employee feedback, incorporating diverse perspectives and fostering employee inclusion. (Men et al., 2022; Yue et al., 2019).

Alonso (2022) identifies three common mistakes made in companies regarding transparency: exposing information without guidelines, overwhelming employees with excessive information, and adopting a one-way transparency approach. These practices, if not carefully managed, can undermine the positive impact of transparency. Acknowledging the discomfort during the transition to transparency is crucial. (Alonso, 2022). Organizations benefit when employees view change as a challenge rather than a threat. Transparent information sharing, employee participation, and overall openness contribute to a positive outlook on change and reduce these future-oriented concerns (Yue & Walden, 2023).

Organizations build trust, foster a positive organizational culture and adapt to the demands of an external environment through organizational transparency. Trust is deemed a critical factor during change, aligning personal interests with organizational success. Trust fosters a positive attitude toward change, with individuals perceiving organizational decisions as beneficial and increases employee engagement, customer loyalty, and overall organizational effectiveness. Organizations that prioritize transparency adhere to ethical standards in their operations, avoiding deceptive practices and ensuring honesty in their dealings. (Zainab et al., 2022)

Organizational change has been evaluated through multiple frameworks focusing on different aspects of change. The Six Sources of Influence is a framework that combines two elements of the MOA framework (motivation and ability) with the three organizational dimensions: personal, social, and structural. The framework was created by Joseph Grenny and his colleagues and presented in the book called: “Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change” published in 2007. The six sources: personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability are designed to identify how behavioural change can be implemented sustainably in both individual and organizational level. (Grenny 2012).

2.4 Adapted theoretical framework

An adapted theoretical framework is created based on theorical findings. The adapted framework includes three dimensions of scope; personal, social, and structural, for each of the MOA factors. The dimensions are drawn from change management literature and the framework of Six Sources of Influence. Opportunity is added as an element based on the cross-selling literature that finds MOA factors to contribute to the salesperson's adoption behaviour and therefore the cross-selling performance. In addition, the adapted framework includes the integration behaviours defined by Webb & Lambe (2007) which affect the level of internal multichannel conflict and a dimension of organizational transparency during the change process is added based on the findings of change management literature. Figure 10 shows the process of adapting the theoretical framework from the literature review findings.

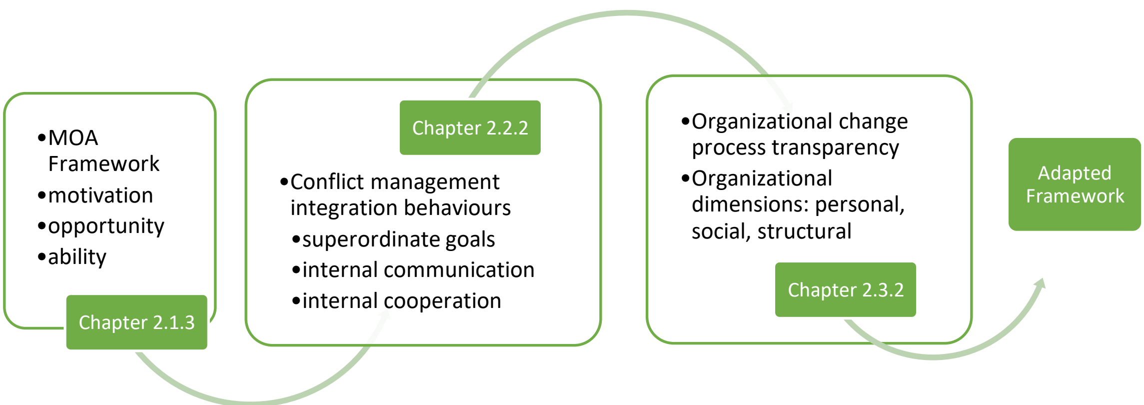

Figure 10. Theoretical framework adaptation process.

The adapted theoretical framework is visualized in Figure 11. The framework includes factors determined in literature that can influence behaviour change and maintain it internally during and after change.

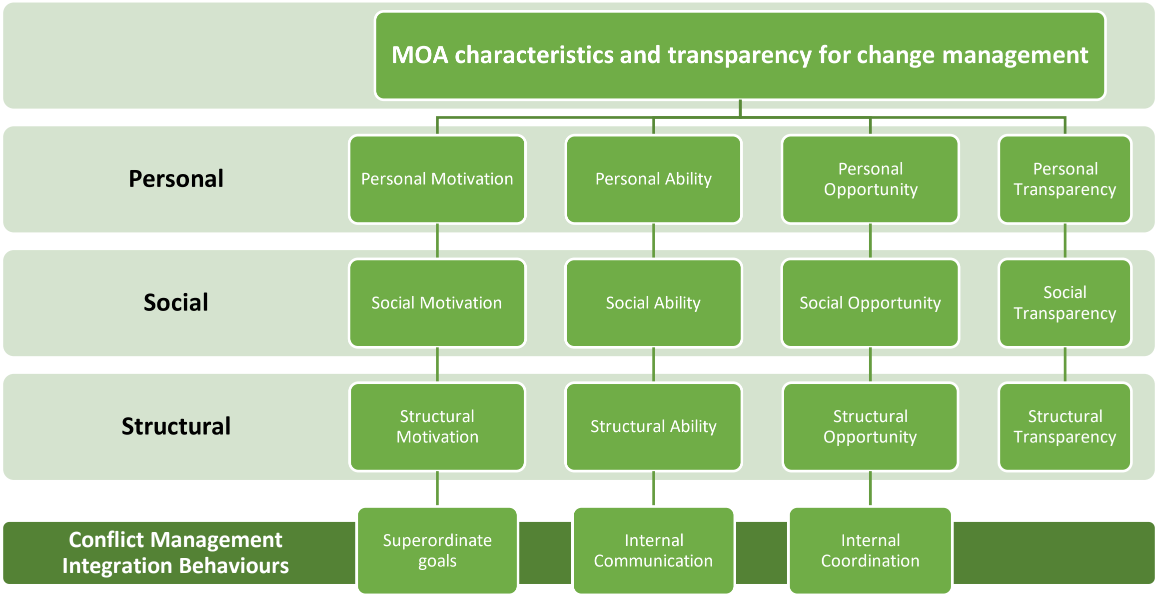

Figure 11. Adapted framework for evaluating employee adaptation during change.

The following descriptions of the different framework elements provide some insights on how they can be used to evaluate behavioral change. These definitions are created for the purpose of this research and utilized later in the empirical section of the study.

Personal motivation includes desire and reasons for doing new things, and whether an employee actually wants to do something. Personal motivation is always connected to personal values. Personal ability on the other hand is believing you can do it and it often comes with deliberate practice. To gain personal ability, it is necessary to find out what is needed for the employee to adopt new behaviour for example regarding resources, knowledge, skills, tools, and permissions. Personal opportunity comes from experiencing a change to implement the behaviour change. It is all about finding opportunities to try new things and sharing those experiences.

Social motivation can be fostered through encouraging and taking notice of right kind of behaviour. Rewarding highly motivated employees pave the way for more employee participation and new initiatives. Social ability includes employees providing help, information, and resources to each other, and seeking the help of those who enable right type of behaviour. Influencing social ability is dependent on how quickly the majority accepts new behaviour to become a norm and when the benefit of behavioural change can be seen.

Social opportunity is related to employees participating and enabling the right behavior in a way where they are actively seeking and sharing opportunities with each other.

Structural motivation comes from rewarding behaviour accordingly and linking it to needed behaviour. Upholding a model for receiving feedback and demanding accountability by communicating what will happen if change is not implemented are essential. Structural ability includes the ability to make changes to the environment and making sure the environment allows free knowledge sharing. Ensuring equipment and resources prompt and enable behaviour change. Structural opportunity is achieved when the environment not only anables but supports right behaviour. Support can be created through redesigning teams and roles with the purpose of implementing right behaviour.

Superordinate goals are highly relevant for the motivational aspects of change. The purpose of superordinate goals is to direct employees to find more synergies between the salespeople and teams by aligning the goal structures with the change objectives. Internal communication is a significant part of the abilities ralated to change adoption. On all structural levels communication and information sharing are one the most essential aspects of successful change implementation. Internal coordination relates to opportunity as it highlights the active engagement of employees in finding opportunities within an environment that encourages and supports this behavior.

Transparency on a personal level refers to how the individual is included in the decision-making process and encouraged to participate. Transparency on a social level foster open communication between individuals and teams. Effects of change can be discussed in an honest way. Structural transparency refers to the organization as a whole and highlights how decisions are communicated by the leadership.

3 Research methodology and survey introduction

This chapter includes the introduction of the research strategy and methodology that form the empirical basis for the study. The research startegy chosen for the study is a case study, which is done for Company Oy. Methodology and design are presented together with the necessary justifications. The chapter will also introduce the reasoning for choosing survey as the most relevant data collection method for this research.

3.1 Case study design

A case study is one of the most utilized strategies, especially for management research, and by definition it aims to investigate a phenomenon in its real-life context (Priya, 2021). A qualitative case study is chosen as the research strategy although both qualitative and quantitative research methods are utilized in the empirical analysis. The research design choice is based on the goals of the research and research questions.

The single case study has an explorative approach which investigates the change environment of case Company Oy. The goals of the thesis relate to best change implementation practices for said company, which means that it is necessary to partly just focus on the results that can be translated to the real-life change process that the company is undergoing. The research is used to predict the challenges and required resource allocation during structural change for Company Oy.

Using mixed methods supports the case study approach as qualitative results fill the gaps of the quantitative analysis and bring them to the right context. Quantitative analysis is still necessary as it makes it possible to view and draw insights from a large amount of data. A larger data set helps to describe the research population more accurately. Evaluating organizational change is relevant for the insights for real-life context and therefore supports the case study approach.

The materials for the empirical research consisted of documents and data regarding the organizational structure, organizational goals, and information on the sales function operations. These materials brought insights as to how the goals of the organization align with the organizational change from the point of view of the employees. Materials related to the current sales organization structure, sales strategy and related supporting functions are explored.

3.2 Internal salespeople survey

A case study is a research strategy and does not in itself define the methodology for data collection (Priya 2021), which is why an internal employee survey for salespoeple is used as the pirmary source of data for this research. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are utilized in the survey analysis. Survey is considered a good method for gathering information from larger groups in a way that doesn't significantly increase the efforts needed to analyze the results. It is easy to compare the results and collect quantitative data. Other benefits include the possibility to create a survey that can be completed anonymously. Surveys can and often do include open-ended questions as well. (Abudi 2017)

Yue & Walden (2023) suggest that companies should assess employee attitudes toward change through surveys or interviews during change processes.The internal employee survey Company Oy focuses on both the attititudes and levels of adaption salespeople experience regarding an upcoming organizational change implementation.

Survey was chosen as the most relevant research strategy as it allows for quantitative collection of data, which is necessary when the target group of the research is large compared to the available resources for analysis. A target group of 65 salespeople excluded the possibility to utilize interviews for example. A survey provides a combination of structured data collection, low barriers for participation, anonymity for the responders, which makes it easier to share honest responses. Data from a survey is analysed quantitively although due to the nature of the research, the survey also includes a few open-ended questions that will be analysed and collected qualitatively. Survey includes these questions to gather insights on what kind of support is needed and how resources can be best allocated during the change process.

Organizational change on this scale is always complex and therefore it is almost impossible to account for all the possible reactions or views by employees. Quantitative data can give an overview on the general attitudes and provide insights on which aspects of change are evaluated to be most important. Qualitative data can fill the gaps of numerical data analysis as it can provide insights on any aspect of change that was not accounted for in the survey or by allowing a more detailed view on why a certain aspect of change is met with resistance.

In this survey, qualitative data aims to help in interpretating the quantitative results and ties them to the right context. The results are compared to the findings of the literature review through the theoretical framework presented in the study. Figure 12 presents the process for creating, designing, and implementing the survey, as well as analysing the results.

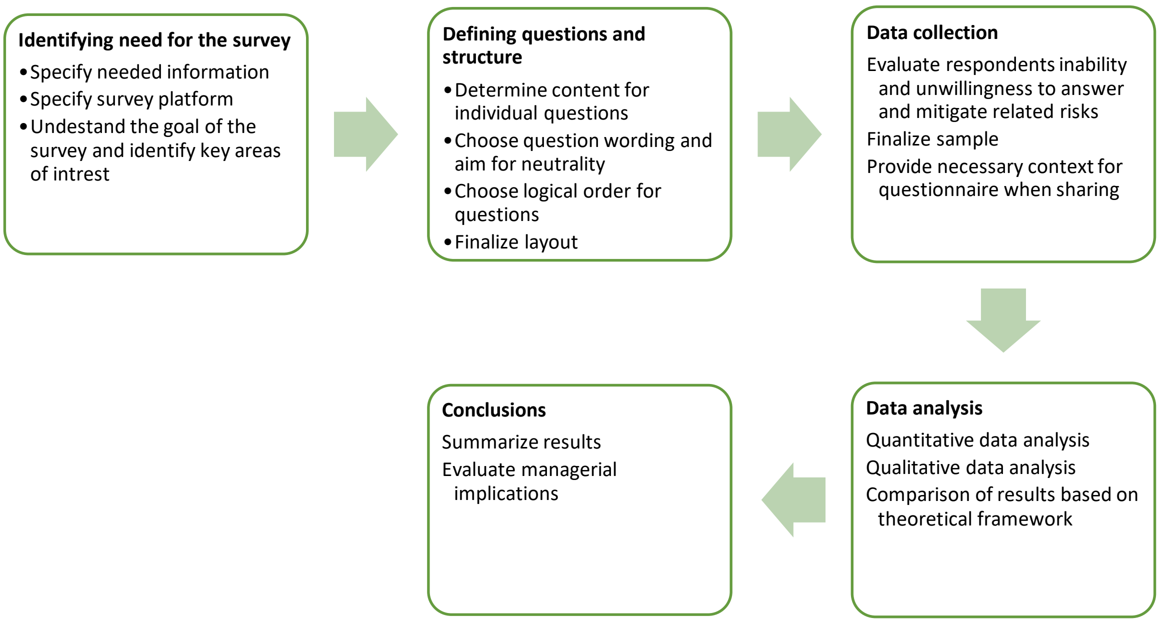

Figure 12. Survey design and analysis process.

3.2.1 Survey structure and design

The survey consisted of 8 questions, including questions for respondent characteristics, collections of multiple scale measures for quantitative data, and were open ended questions for qualitative analysis. The complete survey design and questions formatting can be found from the appendixes (Appendix 1). Table 7 summarizes the purposes behind the survey questions.

Table 7. Summary of survey structure

Question numbers	Purpose of questions
Questions 1-3	Respondent characteristics
Questions 4-5	Employee attitudes and adaption (theoretical framework)
Questions 6-7	Supportive structures, tools, and systems
Question 8	Additional insights for building context

Respondent characteristics were defined in the first three questions (Q1-3) through multiple choice questions, where the respondent was asked to choose the option that best applied to their current situation. These questions defined the business unit (5 options, Q1), current role (3 options, Q2), and length of employment (6 options, Q3) at the company.

The attitudes towards organizational change were evaluated with Q4 which included 16 different sub-questions in the form of statements (S) based on the theoretical framework of the study. Each statement represented an entity within the theoretical framework. The channel conflict management integration behaviors: superordinate goals, internal communication, and internal collaboration all had one corresponding statement for measure. In addition, there were statements about motivation (3 statements), ability (3 statements), opportunity (4 statements), and transparency (3 statements). These elements included one statement on all of the organizational dimensions: personal, social, and structural, except for personal opportunity which was evaluated through two different statements.

As mentioned, the survey consists of both qualitative and quantitative question types, which are designed to support the overall results and provide insights that tie the survey analysis to the case study context. Q5 was prompted with a question on the things the respondent most feel they would need support with during the organizational change.

The importance of supportive functions, tools and systems was evaluated in Q6. Nine available resource types (R) were recognized from the case company materials, although it was clear that these 9 resource types did not include all the possible resources. The available resources were evaluated against the literature review findings on the most important resources regarding cross-selling, conflict management, and change management. Response scales range from 1 = does not affect every day work to 4 = has a significant effect on every day work.

The prompt for Q7 aked the repondents to evaluate which resource types listed in Q6 would need to be developed the most. The prompt also recognized the generality of the resource list and asked whether any significant resources were missing from the question. The last question (Q8) aimed again to provide context and qualitative insights to any of the previous questions. The prompt was designed to evoke any ideas, specifications, concerns, or other opinions related to the organizational change. A motivation behind the last question was to mitigate any risks related to potential flaws in the survey design and to encourage real responses on the feelings regarding the change.

Question formatting aimed for neutrality and simplicity. The open-ended questions had more descriptive prompts to encourage and evoke thoughts. Survey respondents can have moderacy response bias which is a tendency to choose the option in the middle of the scale (Stantcheva 2023). This is why a scale of four was determined for the statements in Q4, and for the resource types in Q6 as it was important to from the analysis standpoint to evaluate if the respondents would choose a slightly more positive or negative response.

3.2.2 Collection of data

The target population for the survey was the employees most effected by organizational restructuring, which was determined to be the employees currently working in the sales function. The population consists of salespeople, sales managers or employees with a divided role between sales and another supportive functions such as product management. The target sample included the employees that have an active sales job code and therefore have access to the training, systems, and materials for salespeople. The email list of the employees with the relevant sales job code was received from the company.

The survey was anonymous and although there were some characteristics for the respondents, the answers weren’t evaluated individually in a way where the identity of the respondent could have been recognized. Evaluated time to take the survey was between 10-15 minutes, and the evaluated time was communicated to the respondents with the link to the survey. The average time to complete the survey was 14 minutes and 6 seconds which fits the evaluated time well.

The organizational change process was first announced in the second half of November 2023. Upcoming changes to the sales teams moving from business units to sales channels was determined as the new high-level structure although the process was communicated to still be in the beginning of a planning phase. The announcement was shared with the sales personnel both team by team and in a general info that was recorded. A link to a survey created on the Microsoft Forms platform was sent by email to the targeted employees, which also included the link to the recording of the announcement. The survey was live during the second and third week of December 2024.

The answers given right at the beginning of the answer period might present stronger opinions one way or another. The time of answering will not be explored further in this study, which can simultaneously leave out other changes in the external environment of the respondents that could have varied within the two-week answer period. Most answers were submitted within the first day of the survey release. A reminder was sent 4 days prior to the end of the answer period where there was another, smaller spike in answers.

The responses of the survey were based on the employees' individual knowledge and understanding of the upcoming sales restructuring. Respondents should all therefore have an understanding on the issue at question but then again, some employees mentioned that they did not how the changes would affect them which made it difficult for them to answer the questionnaire. There were no rewards for answering so even among the respondents we can say that they were motivated enough about some aspect regarding the upcoming change that they decided to answer.

Respondents in managerial positions might have a more comprehensive view and understanding related to the change process. Managers, and salespeople alike who have been within the company for a longer time might have differentiating views on the change due to familiarity with the company. This can either lead to a more positive outlook or a more negative outlook on the change process. Number of responses might have been affected by the time of year due to overlapping vacation days and workload.

3.2.3 Analysis methods

The data original data included data on individual responses that included the time spent on the survey as well as an individual numerical ID for all of the respondents. As the survey was anonymous, the ID had been assigned based on the order of responses and the data did not include any names or emails of the respondents. These results were exported from Microsoft Forms to Microsoft Excel where the rest of the quantitative analysis was done.

Averages were calculated for all of the Q4 Statements and Q6 Resource types, which both were evaluated on 1 to 4 Likert scales. In addition, averages were calculated for all 14 of the respondent characteristics. These included averages for the 5 different business units, 3 job roles, and 6 scales for length of employment at the company. The total average per question was used as the baseline the other averages were compared to. The reliability of the analysis was limited with respondent characteristics that had only 1 to 2 answers. It also limited the possibility to do further comparisons where for example, the combination of two characteristic variables could have been used without possibly endangering the anonymity of the respondents.

There were three open ended questions included in the questionnaire (Q5, Q7, Q8). Q5 and Q7 were mandatory questions with a more specific question prompt and Q8 prompted the respondents to share any ideas, comments, specifications, opinions or worries that they were not able to present earlier during the questionnaire. There were no limits on the length of the open-ended responses. The open ended text results were analysed by grouping the responses by themes and most relevant keywords.

The open text answers were analyzed by creating word clouds, grouping answers with similar themes together, and by calculating the mentions received by a certain tool or a system. The number of mentions was utilized to analyze Q5 and Q8 answers together and a response matrix was created in order to visualize the connection of the results with the framework entities (Appendix 2.)

4 Organizational restructuring for case Company Oy

This chapter introduces the background for Company Oy and the environment of the organizational restructuring process. Information regarding the organizational background and context is gathered from various materials internal to the case company. The results of the survey are presented and analysed in this context and the findings are tied to the theoretical framework. Comparisons between the literature review and the case study are presented.

4.1 Organizational background of case Company Oy

Case Company Oy is a country organization of a large international company with an extremely wide and complicated product portfolio. The product portfolio consists of hundreds of thousands of products, as well as related software and service offers. Salespeople in different business units (BU's) cannot have expertise on all the products of the company. Instead, they are more often focused on the products and solutions essential to their own BU's operations. Over time, this has led to so called silo thinking. Figure 13 shows a simple presentation of the current organizational structure, where each BU is its own entity and each BU's sales teams goals are based on selling the main product offering of the BU.

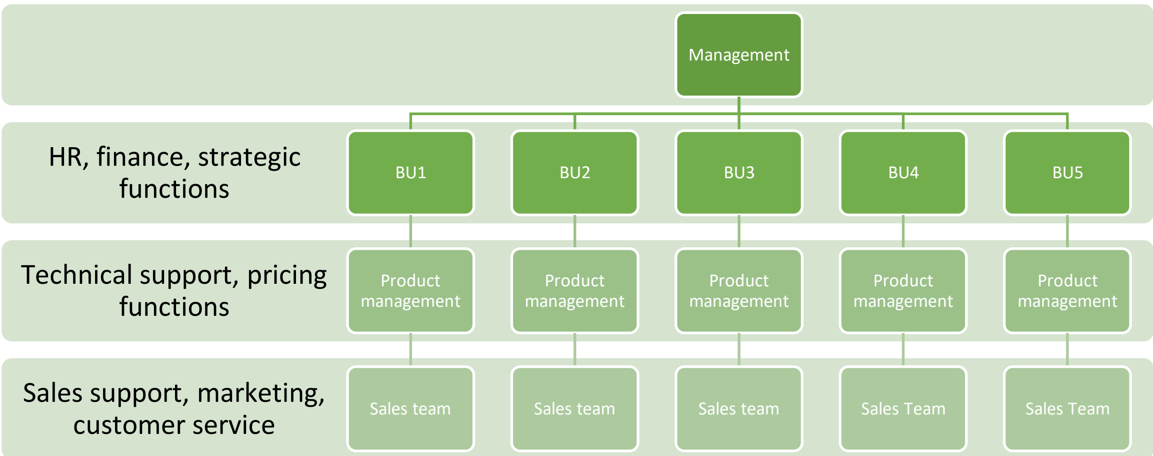

Figure 13. Current organizational structure of Company Oy

The goal of the company is to move towards a more cohesive and collaborative way of working between the BUs to provide the customers increased value by one-stop-shop idea. A single customer need or project might involve multiple BU’s product offering, and in the current structure, multiple salespeople end up making separate offers on their own BU’s product baskets for the same project. This can lead to monetary loss and a continued lack of understanding of customer needs. Additionally, customer satisfaction might be hampered. Showing a more unified offer and sales representation to the customer could lead to winning more projects against competitors who have a narrower portfolio.

The cross-selling potential within the company is high, but at the same time the current process includes many challenges. Different BU’s have different sales approaches, and different goals regarding sales success. Additionally, BU’s have multichannel operations for sales and marketing. Challenges related to internal conflicts are seen in everyday work. Challenges can be related to pricing differences, imbalanced resources, or conflicting goals and strategies within the channels. These impact the way these BU’s can collaborate to optimize cross-selling for the benefit of the entire company. Internal multichannel conflict management is an essential part of the complete picture as increased levels of conflict hinder collaboration between the sales channels and BU’s. Figure 14 shows a simple presentation of the current organizational structure, where each BU is its own entity, and each BU’s sales team's goals are based on selling the main product offering of the BU.

One of the core values of the company is to prioritize customer needs and therefore it is crucial for the company to serve and support existing customers better. Management of Company Oy has decided to restructure the sales organization to be more customer-centric, and the structural change process can potentially create an optimal environment for cross-selling and simultaneously reduce the internal multichannel conflict. The strategy and organizational structure of the company need to align for this to happen. Previous attempts to encourage cross-selling without the needed structural changes have not succeeded on the wanted scale.

In the end of November 2023, the management team announced the upcoming organizational restructuring process that was being planned to be implemented during the year 2024. The goal of the change process is to sell the entire portfolio of products through multiple customer channels to serve customers better and improve their profitability. The company has made evaluations that suggest there is a lot of untapped potential within the largest existing customers. Figure 14 presents the changes to the organizational structure.

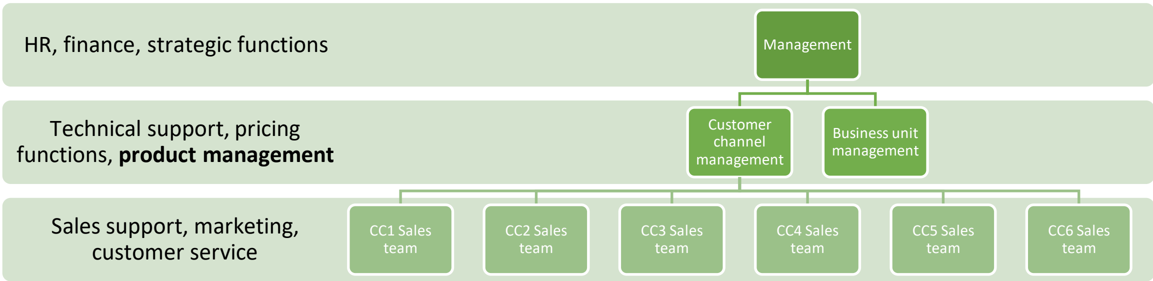

Figure 14. Changes to the organizational structure of Company Oy.

Instead of sales teams existing within the BU's, the sales teams are organized by six customer channels (CC). These six channels have been determined by the management team based on the segmentation of the existing customers. The goal is to assign each customer to one of the channels and have one salesperson representing the customer. One salesperson can have several customers. The product management of the different BU's will work together with all the relevant customer channels for their products. The upcoming structural changes are highly complex and have an effect on each entity within the case organization. The high-level descriptions of the organizational structure and related changes are summarized and visualized based on available materials and information internal to the case organization.

4.2 Survey results and analysis

According to Abudi (2017, p. 97) utilizing employee engagement survey data can help organizations to learn about the employee attitudes and beliefs regarding how the organization could be improved. The survey included eight questions where the first three questions aimed to map out the characteristics of the respondents. The fourth question included 16 sub-question statements and the sixth question included nine resource types. Both questions were rated on a scale from 1-4 and the results are analysed quantitatively.

Questions five, seven, and eight were open text answers with prompts to collect qualitative insights that fill the contextual gaps of the quantitative data.

From 65 recipients overall 37 responses were collected. This equals a response rate of 57%. Internal surveys have an average response rate of 30-40%. Higher response rates are seen in survey environments that the employees are comfortable in, and they feel their anonymity is protected (Cornell 2024). All the respondents were assumed to have an equal amount of information regarding the restructuring process and assumed to be affected by the changes. Therefore, all responses hold an equal amount of value in the analysis.

4.2.1 Characteristics of respondents

The characteristics of the respondents were determined with three questions: business unit (Q1), current role (Q2), and length of employment (Q3). Table 8 presents the characteristics of respondents.

Table 8. Respondent characteristics of the salespeople survey

		n (N=37)	*%*
Business Unit	BU1	15	41%
	BU2	13	35%
	BU3	1	3%
	BU4	2	5%
	BU5	6	16%
Employment role	Sales management	2	5%
	Sales employee	30	81%
	Supporting function	5	14%
Length of employment	Less than a year	2	5%
	1-3 years	7	19%
	4-6 years	9	24%
	7-10 years	2	5%

11-15 years	6	16%
Over 15 years	11	30%

The number of respondents from the business units reflect the sizes of the units, where BU1 and BU2 are the largest BUs in the company and BU3 and BU4 are the smallest. Most respondents identified as sales employees, while a few responses were from sales management representatives, and some from supportive functions. The length of employment has some variation although it is interesting to note that 46% of the respondents have been at the company for 11 years or more. Compared to employees who have not been at the company for long, these employees might have more insights on the issue through their experiences at the company, but they might also resist change more.

4.2.2 Employee attitudes and change adoption

Questions 4 and 5 in the employee survey were formatted to evaluate employee adoption to change. Q4 included 16 statements that all represented one entity of the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3, with the exception that personal opportunity was evaluated through two statements. Both statements measure the personal opportunity category from different perspectives and the average used for the entity later is calculated from both statements together.

Evaluation metrics for Q4 were defined for the 1-4 answer scale, where 1 (completely disagree) and 2 (partly disagree) represented negative values, and 3 (partly agree) and 4 (completely agree) represented positive responses. Based on the responses, it was determined that 2,5 is a limit for defining whether the average value can be considered positive or negative. Averages below 2,5 were considered negative, and averages between 2,5 and 3 were evaluated as satisfactory. Averages between 3 and 3,5 were evaluated as good and averages over 3,5 as excellent.

Table 9 includes the question formatting of the statements. Figure 15 presents the answer distribution for the 16 statements included in Question 4 and the corresponding entities drawn from the theoretical framework.

Table 9. Statement formatting for Q4.

	Question formatting (Q4)
S1	I understand the reasoning behind the need for organizational change
S2	I feel included in the decision-making process
S3	I am motivated to adapt to the new organizational structure
S4	I trust that I am able to adapt to the changes
S5	I have the necessary resources to do my job efficiently in the new structure
S6	I believe that I will get enough training and support with the changes to my role
S7	I am excited about the new opportunities that change brings
S8	I feel well prepared for the challenges that change brings
S9	I believe that the changes are aligned with the goals of the company
S10	I believe the changes will lead to better evaluation of performance and recognition
S11	I believe the changes will improve customer satisfaction
S12	I believe the changes will enhance the collaboration of the sales teams
S13	I believe the changes will positively affect the sales results
S14	I trust that the changes will improve the sales process
S15	I believe that the change will encourage knowledge sharing, learning, and supporting others
S16	The changes within the organization are transparent enough

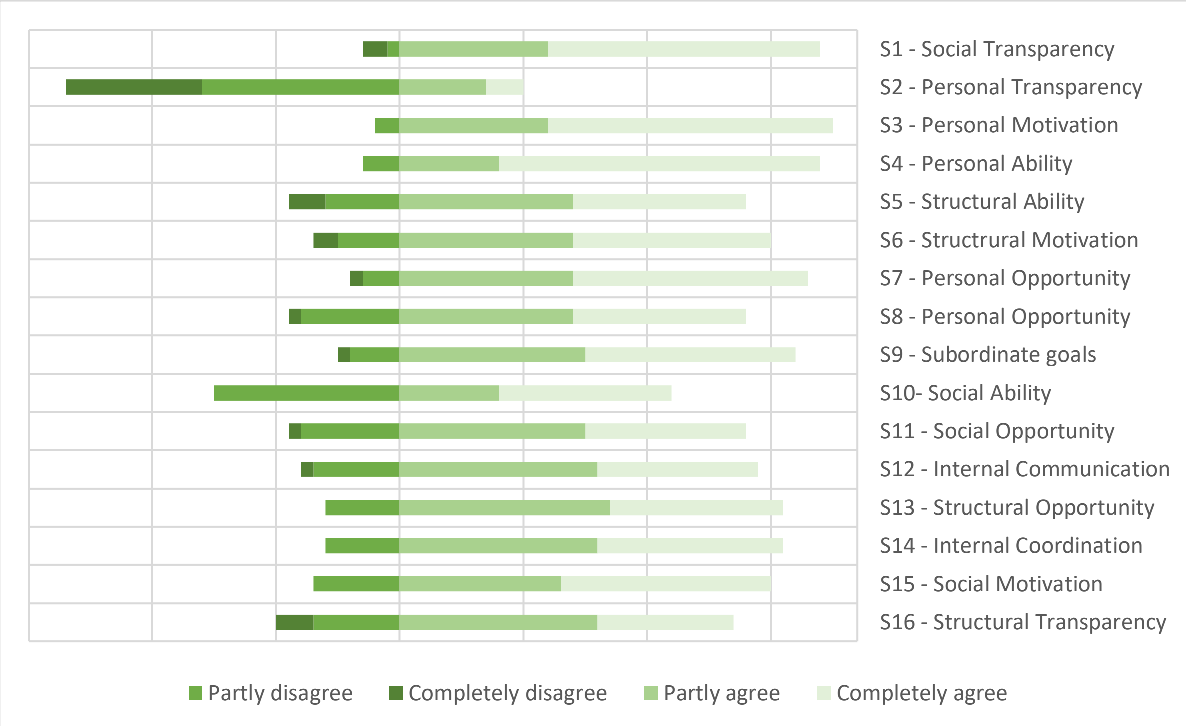

Figure 15. Answer distribution for Q4

The symbol μ (“mu”) is used to present the mean or average value in the results. The highest agreement rate was for S4 (μ = 3.62, Personal Ability) and S3 (μ = 3.57, Personal

Motivation). The agreement rate for these statements is more than 3,5 which means they can be considered excellent. S1 (μ = 3.46, Social Transparency) and S7 (μ = 3.38, Personal Opportunity) follow closely with high averages. Based on these results, the personal aspects of employee change adoption appear to be the strongest. In addition, most salespeople (N=34) partly or completely understand why the change is necessary. Salespeople seem to trust in their own ability and motivation for change and over half of the respondents (N=19) agree completely with the statement that they are excited about the opportunities change brings.

The lowest agreement rate was found for S2 (μ = 2.05, Personal Transparency) which was the only statement where the answer average was below 2,5 and is therefore considered a negative response. This is indicative that majority of the respondents do not feel included in the decision-making process (N=27). A few statements, S10 (μ = 2.97, Social Ability) and S16 (μ = 2.95, Structural Transparency) are considered satisfactory. This means there is some uncertainty around whether change will actually bring recognition and better evaluation of performance for employees (N=15), although none of the respondents disagreed with the statement completely. 10 respondents provided negative responses for not seeing the change process within the company transparent enough. Table 10 summarizes the averages for the statements in Q4 and includes the mean value for the different aspects of the theoretical framework.

Table 10. Question 4 response averages, μ = average

Personal *(μ = 3,123)*	**S3**	3,57	**S4**	3,62	**S7/8**	3,25	**S2**	2,05
Social *(μ = 3,195)*	**S15**	3,27	**S10**	2,97	**S11**	3,08	**S1**	3,46
Structural *(μ = 3,103)*	**S6**	3,19	**S5**	3,05	**S13**	3,22	**S16**	2,95
Internal conflict *(μ = 3,183)*	**S9**	3,30	**S12**	3,11	**S14**	3,14		
	Motivation *(μ = 3,333)*		***Ability*** *(μ = 3,188)*		***Opportunity*** *(μ = 3,173)*		***Transparency*** *(μ = 2,82)*	

Motivation has the highest average while the average value for transparency is significantly lower than the other aspects. From the integration behaviors related to conflict management, superordinate goals are considered the strongest, and while internal communication and coordination both have good averages, no employees completely disagree with the statement that the changes will improve the sales process. The rest of the statement averages were considered good which means that most of the respondents do believe the change process will be implemented well, and it will affect all organizational layers.

Question 5 was designed to be a supportive question for providing qualitative insights and filling the contextual gaps of question 4. The prompt for Q5 asks the respondents which things they would most need support with during the organizational change process. Figure 16 visualizes the words or phrases that received multiple mentions in the open text results.

Figure 16. Word cloud visualization for Q5 results.

Additionally, the answers were grouped based on themes and recurring comments relevant to the change process. Each response was allocated to a single theme based on the main message of the response although some responses included overlapping support needs. Table Table 11 summarizes these results.

Table 11. Summary of qualitative findings for Q5

Theme	Number of mentions	Key takeaways
Uncertainty about personal role	9 (24%)	Uncertainty of the effects of change, clear instructions on new roles, goals and how change affects daily work
Concrete strategic plan and implementation	9 (24%)	Presenting the big picture with concrete strategic points, how is the personnel expected to adapt
Supportive functions	7 (19%)	Responsibilities of supportive function, how to find the right people when the need for support increases
Open communication	6 (16%)	Frequent information sharing regarding change and need for open discussions within the company
General need for support	4 (11%)	Uncertainty on effects, unable to comment on the change without more information

Nine answers were related to uncertainty about how the restructuring is going to affect the respondents' roles. At the time of the data collection, the effects of change on the individual level were widely unknown which is understandably one of the most relevant issues in evaluating the possibility to adapt to change. The employees need to know what they are expected to learn and change within their new role. According to a respondent, updates from managers about the process would help with not jumping to wrong conclusions. Concrete information on what is going to change and how it is going to affect each individual is of course critical in the process, and for some, it might be very difficult to think about other aspects of change when facing this type of uncertainty.

The well-being of employees was also brought up as a factor causing uncertainty. Constant change can add to the mental workload, and a prolonged situation can impact how motivated and content the employees are during the change process. With any new roles or responsibilities, the respondents say it would be good to be supported with prioritizing, as well as understanding how the roles of others in the organization and within the team change as well.

Knowledge sharing and open communication during the change process and within the new structure are mentioned as essential by 6 of the respondents. The employees strive for open discussions on how the restructuring process works and who is responsible for the decisions. Information on how the employees themselves can affect the change process is mentioned as critical. Any developments during the planning phase would be essential to communicate as well as possible as it would help the employees manage the implementation phase better. Salespeople could prepare for any new responsibilities or role changes by starting relevant training regarding necessary internal processes or new products.

Multiple respondents raised a question on how the supporting functions would be restructured to then better support the new sales teams and how different responsibilities would be divided between sales and the supportive functions. Overall, seven of the responses focused on the responsibilities of the supportive functions. According to the employees, it is time-consuming to figure out who is responsible for what internally, and it is going to be an issue after the restructuring as well. The salespeople need materials on the product categories with sales arguments as well as technical information, and those arguments need to be provided by the product managers or other supportive functions. In addition, there is a need for technical support for the customers and sales system support for the salespeople. The significant role of product managers in the new model is mentioned multiple times. Relevant product knowledge across customer channels in the new structure is one of the most essential aspects of successful change implementation.

Nine responses highlight the need for a clear strategic plan for change implementation. Descriptive presentations on the new structure need to be presented to the entire organization, as well as instructions related to how the personnel is expected to operate in the new structure. A big picture is needed to understand who and when to contact when issues arise. Information on the reward and bonus models related to the new system is also regarded as necessary for the change to be successful.

Employees understand that this type of change will not come easy and will take time, and therefore it is even more essential that clear expectations on the length of the implementation phases are communicated and how quickly the salespeople are expected to adapt to the new model. It is still understood that everything cannot be perfect and sometimes changes need to be made during the implementation as well. 4 of the answers specifically mentioned that it is difficult to even know what kind of support they would need since there isn't enough information on the change process yet, or that they would need more information on the entire process.

4.2.3 Supportive tools and systems

Questions 6 and 7 focus on the supportive tools and systems for salespeople. Q6 consisted of 9 predetermined resource types that the respondents were asked to rank based on the relevance of the resource in everyday work. The scale of 1 to 4 was utilized, where 1 stands for ‘is not relevant for daily work’ and 4 stands for ‘is highly relevant for daily work. In this research the resource types are not neseccarily physical resources but include intangible resources such as effective communication, and collaboration, as well as feedback and goal setting. Table 12 includes all resource types and the response average in a decending order. ERP stands for Entreprise Resource Planning.

Table 12. Response averages for Q6 resource types

Resource types	Average (μ)
Internal communication and collaboration within the sales team	3,57
Personal goal setting and bonus models	3,49
Manager feedback and support	3,41
Internal communication within the company communication channels	3,35
CRM system	3,30
Marketing materials and support	3,30
Sales analysis and reporting tools	3,14
ERP and sales support systems	2,89
Internal virtual product and sales trainings	2,46

The results indicate that the interpersonal relationships between the salespeople and their teams, managers, and other relevant personnel have the biggest impact on their daily work. Communication and collaboration within the teams is evaluated to be the most important factor, as it exceeds the 3,5 average limit. Personal goals and bonuses, manager feedback and support, and communication channels within the company are all highly rated based on importance in daily work. From the systems and supporting functions the CRM system and marketing materials and support are evaluated equally as important, with sales analysis and reporting tools following behind. ERP system and other sales support systems and internal virtual product and sales trainings are rated the lowest where the latter has an average just behind 2,5.

Question 7 prompted the respondents to evaluate which of the supportive tools and systems would need to be developed the most. In addition, respondents were encouraged to mention any other resources related to their daily work which was not listed in Q6. Table 13 summarizes the mentioned resources from the open text answers and the number of mentions each received. One response could include multiple mentions. Most of the mentions aligned with the predefined resource types while there were a few additional development areas found. Differences included the additional mentions regarding pricing related support, general material management and materials sharing platforms as well as the development of the customer portal.

Table 13. Number of mentions by development area in Q7.

CRM	Analysis and reporting	Goals and bonuses	ERP systems	Communication within the company
12	7	5	5	5
Pricing	Training	Material management and sharing	Customer portal	Manager support
4	3	3	2	2

Comments related to the CRM platform highlighted the need for general instructions on how salespeople are expected to use the system while ensuring that everyone uses the system the same way. Some respondents describe the system as confusing and time consuming. Others see the potential of the platform and feel the system could be utilized better. Functionalities and links to other platforms such as the bidding tool, email and calendar system, ERP systems, and customer service support could be developed. Changes made in other systems takes too long to be updated which can lead to dissatisfied customers.

According to a respondent, CRM should be utilized together with analysis and reporting to evaluate customer relationship metrics and to create comparisons between different customers and customer types. Other responses related to analysis and reporting highlight the need to get enough data to get an overview of the relevant operations from one system. Multiple salespeople hope for a better system for following their own sales targets and measures, as well as data insight from their customers. Currently the customer specific analysis is done mostly by the salespeople themselves, without a comprehensive view on the customer base.

Some salespeople mention that sales targets and measures for each person should be developed to be more separate from the BU goals, to support the new structure. More frequent checks regarding the individual and team goals and performance regarding them should be available for the salespeople to see. Transparency of the goal setting process is mentioned, as well as the need for managers to understand what it takes to achieve the targets. Manager support is essential in figuring out what is expected and what could be done better.

Most trainings are available on a global platform of the organization and some salespeople mention that the trainings have little to do with the local salespeople and their daily operations. Some mention a need for frequent enough basic training with the systems that are in daily use, even if there would not be any new features. Internal product training and material management related to the products is viewed necessary as the product portfolio is constantly changing and hard to manage. Some respondents communicate a need for instructions on how and on what platforms to share specific information.

Different markets also need personalized materials in the right style and language that fit the unique needs of the customers in that marker. As the case company is a part of a large international organization, some supporting platforms, systems and processes serve all of the different country organizations simultanuously. This can make it difficult or resource heavy to customize the systems to fit individual needs recognized by a country organization. Marketing support is mentioned as important, but it is also mentioned that the marketing budget currently does not enable the type of support that would be needed. One of the respondents highlights the need for sales material form the complete offering that show how different products can be grouped together for complete solutions for the customers. Materials should include price benefit evaluations and the value proposition so that they can be used by salespeople right away.

Development of internal communication channels are suggested to improve collaboration and information sharing. General practices enhancing collaboration inside the company such as recurring meetings with people working with similar issues would encourage knowledge sharing. Multiple respondents agree that there are too many communication channels which makes finding the right information difficult. Clear communication on what type of information is found from which channel is needed.

Respondents mention a need for pricing and bidding support, especially for cross-functional projects. In addition, support need for risk management processes and contract agreements are mentioned. The organization cannot solve all support needs of the salespeople but assigning clear responsibilities for the salespeople on which systems should be used and how is necessary. Optimally salespeople should be supported by the tools and systems in place so that they actually have time to sell.

4.2.4 Focus areas for change management

Question 8 was designed to fill in gaps of the survey design and to encourage respondents to share their views regarding the change process openly. It was clear that the change process evoked both negative and positive feelings with the respondents. Some respondents expressed worry regarding the channel-based structure as it is perceived to only focus on the biggest customers and their needs which could lead to monetary losses. There are a lot of small customers that together bring in a lot of revenue and resources should be allocated to acquiring new customers as well. One respondent expressed that creating 'generalist' salespeople will reduce the sales opportunities of the company.

Multiple respondents mentioned the wellbeing and workload of the salespeople as well as the strain of constant changes on top of it. Some respondents express understanding over the difficulty of the change process and how the implementation of change will take its time. Some hope that the change will be implemented throughout the entire organization and that the change objectives will be visible for each employee in their goals. In case of challenges a respondent hopes that the leadership will actually try to fix them and not go back to the old way of doing things. According to a respondent, the processes and tools should be transformed to support the new structure, and not the other way around. The comapany should enforce, support, and encourage also those who are not excited about the changes as there will always be some resistance to change.

Other respondents have more positive views regarding the change implementation. They believe that measuring objectives will be easier after the change is implemented and that customer satisfaction and financial success will improve. One respondent hopes the changes will lead to more sales and therefore more available resources allocated to the right places. There are multiple mentions that the change will lead the company in the right direction. An analysis for number of mentions in the open text answers of Q5 and Q8 were analysed in a respondent comparison matrix (Appendix 2). Q7 answers were not analysed together with these answers as the responses focused more on the concrete resources of the company.

The matrix compared each of the answers to the theoretical framework. There were two respondents who did not provide answers for either Q5 and Q8. In addition, there were 9 respondents who did not provide answers for Q8. Based on the respondent comparison matrix, it was calculated that the average response mentioned 2.53 factors that could be appointed to one of the framework entities. The average response value accounts for the empty responses, as well as the overlap of respondents who answered both Q5 and Q8 to ensure the results would reflect the responses in a balanced way. The number of mentions per framework entity were calculated and compared to the average response to find how many precent of the answers a framework aspect presents. The summarized results of the matrix are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Number of mentions for framework aspects in the survey questions Q5 and Q8.

Personal *(39,6%)*	**10**	11,3%	**7**	7,9%	**12**	13,6%	**6**	6,8%
Social *(35%)*	**8**	9%	**5**	5,7%	**11**	12,4%	**7**	7,9%
Structural *(50,9%)*	**6**	6,8%	**8**	9%	**15**	17%	**16**	18%
Internal conflict *(39,6%)*	**7**	7,9%	**12**	13,6%	**16**	18%		
	Motivation *(27%)*		***Opportunity*** *(22,6%)*		***Ability*** *(43%)*		***Transparency*** *(32,8%)*	

The results were combined with the findings of Q4 to format an impact value calculation for each aspect of the framework. Equation 1 shows how the impact value was calculated. The average value (μQ4) was for Q4 results for each of the framework entities. To highlight the aspects of change that were rated the lowest in Q4, the average was reduced from the maximum value of 4. N stands for the number of mentions for all the framework entities found in Q5 and Q8. Number of mentions for a specific framework value is symbolized with *n*. Multiplying factor is utilized to emphasize the differences in values.

Equation 1. Impact value for framework aspects.

$$Impact\ value = (4 - \mu Q4) * \frac{n(Q5, Q8)}{N(Q5, Q8)}$$

The impact value was calculated for each framework entity. A higher impact value indicates that the element should be evaluated carefully during the implementation of the change process. A low value can mean that the aspect of the framework is already quite strong or that the employees for other reasons don't view it as critical as the other elements. For example, personal motivation and ability had the highest averages in Q4, and both are mentioned multiple times in the open text answers which definitely means they are essential factors to the success of the change process. Still, these are considered strenghts already possesed by the salespeople in high quantities, and salespeople have trust in these aspects. High values therefore represent areas where the organization should improve or focus their their change resources towards. Table 15 presents the impact values defined for the framework aspects.

Table 15. Impact value for framework aspects.

	Motivation	**Opportunity**	**Ability**	**Transparency**
Personal	4.9	5.9	5.2	13.3
Social	6.6	5.2	12.4	4.3
Structural	5.5	7.0	16.2	18.9
Integration behaviours	5.5	11.7	16.0	

Highest impact value is determined for structural transparency which includes frequent and honest communication throughout the change process and implementation. The entire organization should be aware of the change objectives and what happens if change is not implemented successfully. Strcutural ability and internal communication have equally high impact values which further suggest communication about the process is the most essential aspect to engage employees in the implementation. Structural ability relates to the organizational structures and support systems and whether they enable permanent changes in the right direction.

Responses to the openly prompted Q8 agree with the notion of open communication regarding what, why, and when change will be implemented. Silo thinking is still viewed as an issue and collaboration between the channels should prioritized. Collaboration between sales teams could be improved by sharing successes and failures. Salespeople should be encourgaed to cross-sell and provided with cross-selling training. The roles and responsibilities need to be as clear as possible and training need to be started right away in preperation of the change implementation.

Information on the supportive functions and tools should be made available for the sales personnel and collected and updated in to one location that the salespeople have access to. Backoffice should be highlighted in order to share knowledge internally on who to go to with certain issues. For example, who is responsible for which supportive system and who to ask for technical product support for each product category. System and product offers should be aligned and the sales process should be coordinated in a more united way where the company would be selling complete solutions instead of seperate products and systems. The supportive functions need to be fully working with the new customer channel model from the perspective of tools and organizational structure.

Selling the whole product portfolio should be the goal for individual salespeople as well which is why goal setting, bonus structures and the allocated employee resources should align with this. Some respondents suggest the current bonus structure doesn't encourage cross-selling and individual effort is not reflected well enough. For the change to succeed the reward structure should be transformed in a way that doesn't encourage the salespeople back into silo thinking. Setting collaborative goals across the channel limits should be considered.

The importance of focused and transparent leadership during change and the support from the managers is highlighted by the respondents. Managers in the new structure will need to adapt to the changes as well. One of the respondents comment on lack of information regarding the roles of the various managers and directors, and how these roles will be structured in the implementation phase.

5 Conclusions

This chapter summarizes the findings of the research and how they corresponded with the objectives of the research. Comparisons to previous research and the impact of the findings are discussed. The findings provide valuable insights into the complex relationships between cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict management, and organizational change management. The conclusions provide both managerial and research implications on how an organization can effectively navigate challenges of change initiatives, while fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and customer-centricity. The chapter discusses the managerial implications for Company Oy as well as the implications related to the research objectives, reliability, validity, and generalizability of the research. Additionally, implications for future research are presented.

5.1 Managerial implications for Company Oy

The study provides insights and recommendations for Company Oy's management to overcome the challenges related to customer-centric organizational restructuring, finding cross-selling opportunities, and managing internal multichannel conflict. The managerial suggestions consist of findings from the literature review and the empirical analysis of the internal salespeople survey. Both suggest that managers should prioritize understanding cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict within organizations and recognize their impact on customer satisfaction and profitability. Managers can use this knowledge to inform their strategic planning and decision-making processes.

Company Oy management is focused on achieving increased sales efficiency through customer-centricity and aims to create a better environment for successful cross-selling by reorganizing the structure of the sales function, as well as related supporting functions. The literature review suggests that by adopting a customer-centric approach, implementing structural changes, fostering collaboration, and monitoring progress effectively, the company can position itself for long-term success in a competitive market. Findings also suggests that effective cross-selling strategies involve overcoming salespeople-related challenges, identifying profitable opportunities, and strategically implementing initiatives within targeted customer segments. A customer-centric approach leveraging customer data analysis can be utilized to maximize effectiveness and reduce internal conflicts.

Literature on change management suggests that the hardest part of a company to alter is its culture. When an organization has a culture that is resistant to change, transformation is slow or even impossible. A change-oriented culture is crucial for successful organizational transformation. Management should promote attitudes that encourage adaptation and foster a culture of change. Encouraging knowledge sharing, skill development, and innovation is essential for organizational agility. Aligning individual goals with organizational objectives reinforces employee engagement and commitment to change. A change-oriented organization consists of employees that have a favourable attitude toward change because of a positive organizational culture of change. This type of organization can change and adapt to the demands of the market.

Findings of the empirical research were analysed with an adapted framework for employee adaptation. The framework addresses personal, social, and structural aspects, as well as motivation, ability, opportunity, and change transparency. These aspects can significantly improve employee readiness and engagement according to theoretical findings and no contradictions were found between the literature review results and the empirical results that were analysed through the framework. Further research is required but findings suggest that the framework can be applied to ensure that employees are equipped with the necessary skills and mindset to navigate change successfully. Table 16 summarizes the framework and the determined aspects of change adaption.

Table 16. Summary of framework for employee change adaption.

	Personal	**Social**	**Structural**	**Integration behaviours**
Motivation	Employee feels the desire to do engage or do something different. The benefits overrule the threats in the expected outcome.	Encouragement from other employees to adapt to changes. Change-oriented employees pave the way for change.	Environment that encourages new change related behaviours and links rewards to the adaption of change.	Aligning goals within sales teams and between different customer channels in a way that support the changes.
Ability	Employee trusts that they can do	Employees provide help, information,	The environment allows the	Effective internal communication is

	what the change requires them to do. They have the skill and knowledge as well as coping strategies for adapting.	and resources to each other. Active knowledge sharing is encouraged, and support is asked from those who enable change.	employees to adapt to the right behaviours. Free knowledge sharing is allowed and there are no internal barriers to change.	fostered through clearly defined communication channels, and predefined communication practices the personnel are aware of.
Opportunity	Employee has the opportunity to do things in a new way and is prompted to do it. Employee actively finds new opportunities and shares experiences.	Employees engage and enable the right behaviours by actively seeking and sharing opportunities with each other.	The environment supports employees by structuring teams and roles to reflect the change objectives. Opportunities are available and accessible by employees.	Internal coordination for change is done through carefully aligning change vision with implementation plan and enhancing collaboration between sales teams, business units and customer channels.
Change transparency	Employee feels included in the decision-making process.	Open and honest communication and encouragement to speak about the change process.	Information is shared on the decision-making process and decision-makers.	

Empirical results indicate that the level of employee adaptation to structural change for case Company Oy is high which increases the likelihood of successful change implementation. According to the findings of the internal survey, personal aspects of the change adoption statements had the highest agreement rates which means that the employees believe in their ability and motivation to adapt to the changes, and most were excited for the opportunities change would bring. Motivational aspects were considered the strongest compared to social and structural entities.

The aspect of transparency can be viewed as an improvement area for Company Oy based on the empirical results. Analysis of the impact value indicates that structural transparency should be evaluated carefully. The impact value does not necessarily indicate that the aspect of change would be the most important, but instead highlights the areas where the weaknesses are within the change process of Company Oy. Management should therefore focus on supporting employee adaptation through these factors, without compromising the strengths of the current change environment.

Theoretical and empirical findings both suggest that transparent communication is crucial for enhancing understanding and alignment among employees during change initiatives. According to the findings, it involves articulating a clear vision, ensuring concrete action plans, and emphasizing the rationale behind the change. This helps management gain employee buy-in and commitment to the transformation process. Effective communication, especially during the early stages, is essential for managing conflict and ensuring a smooth transition. Establishing open channels among channel leaders and across organizational dimensions is essential, including highlighting the consequences of unsuccessful change initiatives, clarifying the vision, and ensuring concrete, realistic, and engaging change plans. Fostering a culture of transparent communication and collaboration can mitigate conflict and enhance organizational resilience.

The survey results show that the company has communicated the need for the restructuring process well enough for the employees to understand the need and justifications for the change. The decision-making process itself is not viewed to be transparent enough by some of the employees, and most employees agree with the view that they don't feel included in the decision-making process. Theoretical findings suggest that transparency in leadership communication significantly impacts employee openness to change. Self-efficacy of employees and organizational trust is considered to improve with transparency.

Employee responses suggest that during the change process, the new leaders of the sales channels need to establish frequent communication with each other individually as well as facilitate discussions on strategic and unified approaches to sales with all the channel leaders. Especially in the beginning, sharing responsibilities and collaborating on cross-channel customers need to be coordinated together, while creating new ways of working. Theoretical findings provide further insights that active communication before, during, and after the change process can lengthen the reaction times to upcoming issues. It is always easier to manage conflict when it is detected earlier, and some issues can be handled before reaching a critical point of having negative effects. The empirical results related to employee needs around transparent communication are aligned with the theoretical findings on organizational transparency. Table 17 summarizes the suggestions for transparent communication and actions that are supported by both theoretical and empirical findings. The suggestions are created specifically for the change implementation phase for all three organizational dimensions discussed in the research.

Table 17. Change communication and action for all organizational dimensions.

	Change communication and action for each level
Structural	• Highlight what happens if the organization is not successful with the change initiative • Clarify the vision and purpose behind change • Ensure that the change plan is concrete, realistic, and engaging
Social	• Highlight the benefits of the new structure and changes • Provide a narrative around how change can enchance collaboration and customer relationships • Reward and encourage employees or teams who embody and lead change initiative
Personal	• Describe why the organization needs to change in the long term • Encourage sharing of perceived benefits around the new way of working • Promote learning and developing new skills • Create exitement around new things • Make sure individuals are engaged in the change initiative

Literature findings implicate that cross-selling effectiveness can be improved by leveraging customer data, fostering a knowledge sharing culture, and aligning incentives with customer-centric objectives. This approach is supported by organizational structures and incentives that encourage collaboration and innovation. Sales incentives should align with customer-centric objectives, encouraging sales personnel to focus on fulfilling customer needs. Aligning individual goals with organizational objectives reinforces employee engagement and commitment to change. Seizing cross-selling opportunities requires motivated salespeople, equipped with the necessary knowledge and organizational support, within an environment that encourages collaboration and innovation.

Both theoretical and empirical findings suggest that internal multichannel conflict resolution is highly dependent on whether the responsibilities and goals are well defined for all employees. Effective internal multichannel conflict resolution requires clear roles and responsibilities, coordinated internally, and alignment of sales objectives with organizational goals. This can help mitigate conflict and foster collaboration across channels. Collaboration between sales teams and supportive functions is crucial for maximizing cross-selling opportunities. Managers should ensure employees have access to necessary information and resources to succeed.

Survey results indicate that an individual salesperson should have their own assigned customers who they are responsible over, and one salesperson should officially only be a part of one channel to ensure clarity in roles and responsibilities. Each sales representative should direct the entire portfolio of the company to their named customers and the sales objectives for individuals should be related to the entire company offering to support the cross-selling initiatives. The supporting functions need to help the channels in a balanced and coordinated way that matches the rest of the organization.

Based on the survey results, the central themes around the organizational change are clarity around roles and responsibilities, as well as the role of the supportive functions. Multiple responses highlighted the complicated product portfolio management and the role of supportive functions. Technical support and the product related trainings are also mentioned multiple times. Theoretical findings support this view by indicating that providing employees with necessary training and support is crucial for successful change implementation. Managers should invest in training programs that provide employees with the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to new roles and responsibilities effectively.

Employee concerns as well as change management literature bring attention to management needing to consider both the short- and long-term effects of the resource allocation in the beginning of the change implementation. Resources can include financial resources, as well as employee resources, marketing funds, or brand visibility. Analysis on the support resources finds that the most important resources regarding daily work for salespeople of Company Oy are the resources related to interpersonal aspects. Active manager feedback and support are highlighted, as well as the importance of individual goal setting. The resources that would most need to be developed further for support are the CRM platform and its connection to other internal systems and the analysis and reporting systems to track customer data for better insights. Following closely by a need for a system for following individual goals and sales measures transparently and for clarity regarding the intended content of different communication channels to manage information better.

The empirical results indicate that the company should analyse and try to understand their customers better by utilizing the CRM system in a more comprehensive way. By examining customers who have already cross-purchased and one product, the company can analyse in more detail what the company's turnover consists of. It is possible to make operations more efficient and take advantage of the available potential of customers. Analyzing the unprofitable customers is just as important for successful sales strategies. Determing how the organization is living up to customer expectations and their value propositions is important as they the company has a large customer base who all look at the implications of the changes from their own perspective.

Both according to the empirical results and the theoretical background, the bonus structures need to match the new sales structure in a way that promotes active cross-selling. Bonus structures and sales incentives and the alignment with the company objectives are highlighted also in both change management and channel conflict management literature. Survey results indicate that individual and team goals need to be set in a more customer-centric manner which means aligning goals per customer or customer channel instead of measuring sales success based on product categories. The product aspect cannot be forgotten but the focus of the individual salespeople targets needs to be more customer-focused. Giving equal value to all sold product families and categories encourages the sales personnel to find the most lucrative product offerings for their customers. Sales personnel should be encouraged to view the sales transaction from the point of fulfilling customer needs. This can be aided with tools and training that help salespeople in understanding their customer better.

Conflict management literature highlights that pricing in different customer channels needs to be balanced in a way that is the most beneficial for the company. This can be difficult especially as the market situation can constantly be changing, disrupting the balance. Company wide pricing strategy needs to be created with additional plans on how to adapt to changes in the market. The pricing strategy needs to take into account the unique characteristics of each channel, which also include other aspects than financial characteristics. These can include brand visibility, and customer satisfaction. Other supporting functions such as product management should also be coordinated in a way that supports all the channels in a balanced way.

5.2 Research implications

The literature review in this study explores the interconnectedness of cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict management, and change management. Results suggest that the concepts are intertwined by analysing overlap in the aspects related to each theory. Previous literature has not examined the relationships of these three theories together or provided a framework for evaluating these concepts together. An adapted framework introduced in Chapter 2 is built upon the theoretical concepts and is created for the evaluation of employee adaptation to change. The framework aims to fill the research gap and tie the empirical findings to the literature review findings.

The research answers the research questions as follows:

1. *What internal structures and actions best support cross-selling and help manage channel conflict?*

The research identifies several internal structures and actions that support cross-selling and manage channel conflict effectively. A customer-centric approach is found to support cross-selling initiatives which inherently require collaborating and knowledge sharing. The implementation of a customer-centric organizational structure where restructuring sales teams based on customer channels rather than business units can facilitate cross-selling by aligning sales efforts with customer needs. This type of organizational restructuring that aligns with customer-centric principles can benefit an organization in terms of enhanced cross-selling effectiveness and reduced internal conflict levels.

Silo-thinking and internal conflicts can act as a barrier to cross-functional collaboration. Encouraging collaboration, sharing successes and failures, and aligning goals and incentives are essential for promoting a unified approach cross-selling. Cross-selling strategies need to account for both profitable and unprofitable customers which can be analyzed with the help of customer data and technology utilization. Product-related training as well as cross-selling training for salespeople is essential. The barriers to cross-selling as well as the best practices for successful cross-selling are presented in the literature review (Table 3). Literature on internal multichannel conflict management recognizes three factors that most effect the level of conflict: subordinate goals, internal communication, and internal communication. All these factors were present in the survey responses of the employees as well.

The research finds that cross-selling and internal multichannel conflicts are related concepts and cross-selling culture can be supported with managing channel conflicts. Internal multichannel conflicts are found to occur in environments where the channel objectives do not align with each other, and where the levels of internal cooperation and communication are low. The findings reveal that all structural, social, and personal dimensions of organizational change are crucial for facilitating cross-selling initiatives and mitigating channel conflicts.

2. *In which ways can customer-centric reorganizing of sales impact the level of cross-selling and channel conflict within an organization?*

Both theoretical and empirical findings indicate that organizational structure impacts the levels of cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict within an organization. Literature suggests that customer-centricity promotes effective knowledge sharing which helps salespeople serve their customers both faster and with better insights. Common practices inside the organizations that promote customer-centricity result in salespeople understanding their customers better which again results in improved customer care and identifying opportunities for cross-selling. Customer-centric reorganizing of sales can have several impacts on cross-selling and channel conflict. It can encourage cross-selling by aligning sales teams with customer channels. Also, organizations can better understand customer needs and offer integrated solutions, leading to increased number of cross-selling opportunities.

Literature on conflict management indicates that a customer-centric organization can reduce channel conflict by promoting collaboration and alignment across sales channels and therefore mitigate internal conflicts arising from competing sales objectives or approaches. Enhancing collaboration between sales teams and supporting functions, such as product management is crucial for reducing conflicts and optimizing cross-selling opportunities.

Unified strategies for pricing and customer management approaches are necessary for conflict reduction. The level of cross-selling can be increased by reducing internal conflict levels.

Impact of organizational culture is highlighted in change management literature where also leadership, and market sector are found to play crucial roles in shaping change initiatives. Successful cross-selling initiatives requires an organizational culture and structure that support the right behaviors. Organizational culture that supports change efforts and the management of internal multichannel conflicts are found to be an essential element in creating an environment for successful cross-selling. Change is an ongoing process, and continuous improvement is necessary for long-term success. Organizations should adapt to feedback, monitor progress, and adjust as needed to ensure the sustainability of change initiatives.

The findings emphasize the importance of understanding change management principles to effectively implement organizational restructuring. By recognizing individuals' roles as stakeholders and involving them in the process, resistance to change can be minimized, and outcomes improved. Employee attitudes towards change adoption are influenced by factors such as readiness, commitment, and perceived impact on their roles.

The findings suggest that aligning sales structures with customer channels and clearly defining roles and responsibilities can help facilitate cross-selling and reduce internal conflicts. Empirical findings highlight the importance of coordinating supporting functions to complement sales channels for seamless operations. The findings suggest that careful planning and execution of these changes, along with clear communication and support, is believed to lead to improved sales performance.

3. *Which actions are needed to support the implementation phase of organizational change for optimal levels of cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict?*

Literature on change management emphasizes that effective organizational change requires clear communication, training, leadership support, and continuous improvement. Honest and frequent communication about the change process, objectives, and expectations helps employees adapt to the new structure. Organizational transparency and effective internal communication throughout change implementation are also highlighted in the empirical findings of the research. Uncertainty around change and lack of clear communication can act as barriers to change adoption. Transparent communication fosters trust, engagement, and openness among employees, leading to smoother transitions and greater acceptance of change initiatives. Effective leadership and managerial support guide employees through the change process, addressing concerns and fostering a supportive work environment while adapting their own actions to the changing needs of the organization as well.

Change management practices demand that any change process needs a concrete implementation plan that is based on the unique change objectives. Continuous improvement is essential for monitoring progress, gathering feedback, and adjusting as needed. Theoretical findings suggest that change management is an ongoing process, and decision-makers should continuously monitor progress and adapt strategies. Regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms can identify areas for improvement and ensure the organization remains agile and responsive to change. Findings also suggest that a competitive advantage is gained for organizations that promote a change-oriented culture where change is the norm and employee engagement and readiness to chance are high.

Literature on all three theories agree on the importance of collaboration between sales teams which can be promoted by sharing successes and failures, by encouraging cross-functional teamwork, and by aligning goals and incentives. Collaboration between sales teams as well as individual goal setting and bonus structures are found to be essential in aligning the change objectives within the organization. These factors are also highlighted by the empirical analysis results.

Enough time should be given to the employees to adapt to changes and what is expected from the salespeople adaption needs to be communicated by the management. Employee well-being and workload should be considered during times of organizational change. Providing support, managing workload, and addressing concerns about role uncertainty are critical for maintaining employee morale and productivity. Salespeople require adequate training, managerial support, and defined roles and responsibilities that promote accountability for adapting to change. Providing employees with tools and support systems is crucial for facilitating change adoption. Systems such as CRM platforms and internal communication channels should be optimized to support the new organizational structure.

5.3 Reliability of research

Research questions presented in Chapter 1 align with the objectives of the study which enhances the reliability of the entire thesis. Additionally, the theoretical research focuses on previous literature from credible and relevant peer-reviewed journals and books as the primary sources which contributes to the reliability of the literature review. The researched utilized previous literature and theoretical frameworks related to cross-selling, internal multichannel conflict, and change management. The findings do not contradict the existing theoretical background and previous literature findings which supports the reliability and validity of the research. The reliability of the methodology relies on the validity and appropriateness of the chosen research methods and the methods used in this study are found to support the research objectives.

The reliability of the findings depends on the accuracy and applicability of the adapted theoretical framework presented. Further research is required to determine how applicable the framework is in another organizational context or scale. Empirical findings from a case study conducted within Case Company Oy provide insights into the specific challenges and opportunities faced by the organization during its restructuring process. The results of the single-case study where data is collected at a specific point in time are limited in relation to generalizability of the findings. Reliability of the empirical findings also depend on the validity and credibility of the data collected and while research aimed for minimizing the effects of bias and ensuring data integrity, the subjective interpretation in qualitative analysis inherently contains limitations to reliability.

The reliability of the research findings is also dependent on multiple other factors, including the accuracy of translations. The internal survey for the salespeople was in Finnish and the questions and results presented in the report were translated by the author and therefore influenced by the interpretation of the author. Additionally, the qualitative results have been filtered in a way that protects the anonymity of the case company and its internal operations, which can affect the level of details presented in the findings.

The survey aimed to map out the attitude and feeling towards change within the company. At the time of the survey release, the topic of organizational change was sensitive for some employees as it evoked strong feelings both ways. The survey was released shortly after the initial announcement of upcoming restructuring process, which means that those respondents who answered the survey right away, might have had stronger feelings toward the announcement than the respondents who answered at the end of the two-week answer period. Other external factors could have affected the respondent views during the answer period as well.

The survey sample was determined based on the understanding that salespeople would be the ones most affected by change. This assumption was made before the implementation of the organizational restructuring, which means that the target group of the questionnaire possibly cannot describe the complete effects of the change, and some other relevant group within the organization might have been left outside the scope of the research. The respondents of the survey might have held back with the responses due to a subconscious fear that their answers might be recognized. Respondents might have avoided providing examples of the effects of change or issues they are facing in case they would be recognized based on detailed answers.

5.4 Further research

Further research is needed to understand the impact of organizational restructuring, change management, cross-selling and internal multichannel conflict on employees. A framework for employee adaptation to change could be applied across various organizational contexts to assess its applicability and effectiveness. Application to similar organizational environments that struggle with the multichannel approach, silo thinking, and a large product portfolio could be tested with the framework presented in this study.

Comparative studies across different contexts and geographic regions would enhance the generalizability of findings. Addressing these research gaps can advance understanding of organizational change dynamics and provide evidence on effective management practices. Qualitative investigations can provide deeper insights to employees' perceptions and experiences during organizational change. Future studies should employ rigorous methodological approaches to improve the reliability and validity of research findings.

The time scope of the research poses limitations for the findings as the change process itself and the results of how well change is managed within Company Oy during and after implementation were not included in the scope of this thesis. Longitudinal studies tracking the implementation and outcomes of organizational change initiatives would offer valuable insights into the long-term effects of the proposed change strategies. Further research on the role of technology, such as CRM systems and communication platforms could provide insights for organizations leveraging digital solutions.

This thesis focuses on a country organization located in Finland. The global organization Company Oy is a part of consists of many local country organizations. These country organizations might serve customers who also operate internationally. For example, other Nordic countries have similar markets and customer pools within the countries overlap. This can lead to internal conflicts on a global level. Therefore, cross-selling optimization and internal multichannel conflicts could be investigated on a larger scale, either between multiple countries or within a customer or supply chain context. Cross-cultural variations in proposed change management practices could also be investigated.

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Appendix 1. The survey structure and design.

Q=Question, S = Statement, R=Resource

Number		Question	Question category/ related theory
Q1		What business unit do you currently work with?	Respondent Characteristics
Q2		Which of the following best represents your current role?	Respondent Characteristics
Q3		How long have you been employed at Company Oy?	Respondent Characteristics
Q4	Q4 – S1	I understand the reasoning behind the need for organizational change	Social Transparency
	Q4 – S2	I feel included in the decision-making process	Personal Transparency
	Q4 – S3	I am motivated to adapt to the new organizational structure	Personal Motivation
	Q4 – S4	I trust that I am able to adapt to the changes	Personal Ability
	Q4 – S5	I have the necessary resources to do my job efficiently in the new structure	Structural Ability
	Q4 – S6	I believe that I will get enough training and support with the changes to my role	Structural Motivation
	Q4 – S7	I am excited about the new opportunities that change brings	Personal Opportunity
	Q4 – S8	I feel well prepared for the challenges that change brings	Personal Opportunity
	Q4 – S9	I believe that the changes are aligned with the goals of the company	Superordinate Goals
	Q4 – S10	I believe the changes will lead to better evaluation of performance and recognition	Social Ability
	Q4 – S11	I believe the changes will improve customer satisfaction	Social Opportunity
	Q4 – S12	I believe the changes will enhance the collaboration of the sales teams	Internal Communication
	Q4 – S13	I believe the changes will positively affect the sales results	Structural Opportunity

	Q4 – S14	I trust that the changes will improve the sales process	Internal Coordination
	Q4 – S15	I believe that the change will encourage knowledge sharing, learning, and supporting others	Social Motivation
	Q4 – S16	The changes within the organization are transparent enough	Structural Transparency
Q5		What are the things you would most need support for or get information on?	Qualitative insights on Q4 statements
Q6		Evaluate the effects of supporting sales resources and systems on your everyday work.	Supporting tools and systems
	Q6 – R1	CRM System	Ability
	Q6 – R2	Internal trainings	Ability
	Q6 – R3	Marketing materials and support	Ability
	Q6 – R4	PM and ERP systems	Ability
	Q6 – R5	Reporting and analytics tools and support	Ability
	Q6 – R6	Individual goals and bonus model	Motivation
	Q6 – R7	Manager feedback and support	Motivation
	Q6 – R8	Internal communication within the company and available communication channels/platforms	Opportunity
	Q6 – R9	Internal communication and collaboration within sales teams	Opportunity
Q7		Which of these supportive tools or systems would need to be developed the most? Are there any other systems or resources that should be developed?	Qualitative insights on Q6 supportive tools and systems, and filling the gaps of Q6
Q8		Is there anything else you would want to emphasize in the change process? You can give development ideas, specifications, share concerns, or other opinions regarding the change.	Overall view on change, qualitative insights.

Appendix 2. Open text response comparison matrix.

	Personal				Social				Structural				Int. behaviours			Empty
	M	O	A	T	M	O	A	T	M	O	A	T	M	O	A	
R1																3
R2				1		2								2		
R3															1	2
R4											3	2	3			
R5	2							1			2	2				
R6	2				2					1	1		2	2		
R7	2								1				2	1		
R8			1										2	2	3	
R9			1	2						2				2	2	
R10																3
R11							1									2
R12							2			2	3	1				
R13					1										1	2
R14					1										1	2
R15											1	1			1	2
R16	1			1							2	2	1			
R17	2	2					1				3		2			
R18			2	1			2	1				1				
R19			1			2	2				1				2	
R20								1							1	2
R21	2	1					1	3							2	
R22			2				1								1	
R23	1		3				2						1	2	2	
R24		1		1												2
R25		2								2	1	1		1		
R26												1			1	2
R27			2					1		2	2	1			1	
R28		1			2		2					1		2	1	
R29	3		3							2						
R30			1						1			1				2
R31					2	2	1		1		1			2	2	

R32	2		2			2					1	1		1		
R33			2						1		2	1		1		
R34			1	1	2	2		1	2	2		1				
R35		1					2		1		2	2				
R36	2				2						1			3		
R37		1			2			2		1		2			2	

R = Respondent, M = Motivation, O = Opportunity, A = Ability, T = Transparency, 1 = mentioned in Q5, 2 = mentioned in Q8, 3 = mentioned in both Q5 & Q8.