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at Fratelli Branca Distillerie srl

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Abstract

In the current transformative change, in which many crises are happening simultaneously, leaders and entrepreneurs need extra tools and force beyond their usual individual leadership and interpersonal skills in order to be successful. The aim of the study was to explore the personnel's perceptions and the experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership at the case company, Fratelli Branca Distillerie srl. The company is a well-established Italian company founded in 1845 and it operates in the spirits sector.

The purpose of the research was exploratory, and it was conducted using one of the major methods of qualitative research into leadership: the case study. For the empirical inquiry was chosen the unstructured interview and additional personal written notes were taken during the research process. The inductive approach was used to investigate themes by selecting the information. In addition, abductive reasoning played a role in the interpretation of data incorporating existing theories and generating a new approach.

Five broad themes emerged in the results. They were used as parameters in the managerial model of the Mindful Leadership *TEMPO,* which is based on a complex process consisting of four interactive phases developed in the system formed by the leader, the employees, the elements of the leadership's theoretical framework and the agents of change.

Recommendations were given for the benefits of the company and the international audience. The model of which core capability relies on being in tune with the Self, the others and the environment can be used by those companies looking for new solutions to improve their capabilities for change in the middle of a constant transformation that challenges daily competitiveness, profitability and ultimately a prospect of survival, let alone success.

Keywords/tags (subjects)
Leadership, Management, Emotional Intelligence, Mindfulness, Meditation, Execution and Mindful Leadership

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1. Introduction

We live in a time of change, in a new era that as pointed out by Moulier-Boutang (2012), is called the third age of capitalism, "the cognitive capitalism" in which the intangible assets of innovation, brand and flexibility are becoming more and more critical for the long-term success or failure of companies and organisations. It is a very different kind of capitalism compared to the previous merchant and industrial forms, in which people had to learn to deal with its immaterial nature and logic.

In this perspective of transformative time, there are several complex institutional, economic and social situations, and for companies and organizations, keeping the balance between the importance of the profit for the company and the respect and prosperity of the people can be a real challenge. There is a need for a new consciousness, a new individual and collective leadership capacity (Sharmer 2008) to deal with the unknown and known challenges of the present time. This would require stable, intentional and proactive decisions, and the resulting solutions should take people and the environment into consideration.

The aim of this study was to explore the dynamics of a specific leadership approach case in a well-known, global Italian family business and to describe a positive collective change design through which other leaders could be more effective in interacting, understanding and relating to the relevant stakeholders. The positive collective change design may help other leaders to motivate and inspire people to face and to face the volatility in the current global market transformation and evolve amid all the change.

The discussion about the theme of leadership and the demands of leadership in its three-dimensional domain including public, private and individual spaces is becoming more and more popular the immense global audience. For some, it becomes a source of entertainment, for others an opportunity to generate a revenue. Many of them do not practice what they preach and some of them have neither the experience nor the competence of a successful leader.

The leadership approach explored and described in this paper is a real example of an alternative to the classic top down leadership. The alternative includes leading from the inside out with intelligence, experience and goodness (Adair 2016). Sometimes for successful personal development, it is necessary to look at oneself from a different perspective, with passion and courage, but always being self-aware and present in the moment with authenticity, empathy towards others so as to facilitate the creation of a "mindful" society, community or organization in which to live with awareness and consciousness.

This academic journey provided some new insights and ideas with an attempt to shape a basic outline of a distinctive leadership approach whose core capability relies on being in tune with the Self, the others and the environment. The proposed leadership approach can be a positive and effective solution as a "survival strategy" for other for-profit organizations suffering from the current crisis. This approach could be of help for those companies which are looking for new solutions to improve their capabilities for change in the middle of a constant transformation that challenges daily competitiveness, profitability and ultimately the prospect of survival, let alone success.

1.1 Background

The leaders of the 21st century need to be adaptive, collaborative and entrepreneurial in order to succeed in their role and mission. In the business environment, as pointed out by Vecchio (2003), an entrepreneur is a leader, acting in a narrow and specific context.

Today's entrepreneurs and leaders face a range of different challenges that center on the ability to make ethical decisions in a stressed and unstable environment. In order to face the current converging change, in which many crises are happening simultaneously, and to be successful it is no longer sufficient that leaders (and entrepreneurs) act by their own virtue of personal force and responsibility

(Schumpeter 1934). They also need some extra tools and force beyond their usual individual leadership skills. A suggested popular tool is the "mindful" approach. According to George (2010), mindfulness is a state of being fully present and aware of oneself and other people and being sensitive to one's reactions to stressful situations.

This work explores two aspects of Mindful Leadership. The first one is related to the way the work and the philosophy of Count Niccolò Branca at Fratelli Branca Distillerie Srl in Italy helps to develop and improve the company's practices through innovation with tradition in mind. This organization is a well-established Italian distillery operating in the spirits sector, its famous product is Fernet Branca and it was founded over 170 years ago in 1845 in Milan, Italy. It is part of the group Branca International Spa which is a wholly family owned business, now in the sixth generation, with 280 employees and many partner organizations present in 160 countries.

The second aspect to be explored is the meditation factor. It is important to understand if this practice used in the Branca Company is an important factor that makes the Mindful Leadership approach unique despite its similarities with some other leadership theories.

1.2 Motivation for the research

As mentioned in the previous section, the aim of this work was to research how Mr. Branca's leadership's style applied the principles of Mindful Leadership and to provide some new insights and actionable knowledge.
As a summary of the traits of the Mindful Leadership process, it can be said that in this kind of leadership, the leader has usually experienced a particular personal development path or event. This has created the conditions for an inner game to manage fears and obstacles, to become mindful, not judgmental and creative, agile and aware of the fact that organizations and companies act in an unstable environment in which many circumstances are independent and out of their control.

Leaders have to guide people also according to a coaching style instead of a leading approach based on command and control. As suggested by Pannitti & Rossi (2012) in a perspective of "Evolution Coaching®" the individual gradually experiences continuous responsible transformation and development towards consciousness, autonomy, self-determination and self-actualization.

The style and the approach of Mindful Leadership make a difference in the performance of the staff or the people involved and it is oriented towards, not only influencing others, but also towards increasing their performance and creating better conditions for the social and working life. Leading the change means helping others to increase their self-awareness, responsibility, and, hence, their self-realization. The "mindful" leaders help their followers to lay the foundations for their future leadership ability (Whitmore 2014).

These mindful conditions shape the new style of the 21st-century leadership, that Chemers (2014) urges to include in a more integrative system, or a holistic model of leadership that acknowledges the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human beings (Rego, Cunha, Oliveira 2008).
 Based on these terms, it is possible to create a position for the "Economy of Awareness" in which all the parts of the organization, the company or society can live and grow with awareness, ethics and responsibility (Branca 2013) like a living organism (Arie de Geus 1997).

This study aimed to show the way Mr. Niccolò Branca, the CEO and President of the group, is achieving results in terms of prosperity for his employees and in terms of the company profit itself. It explored the perceptions and experiences of the people inside the company so as to capture "real evidence" of the effectiveness of the Mindful Leadership in business organizations as already documented in the health, well-being and educational sectors.

As an individual, ex-manager and now a lecturer, I have been impressed by Mr. Niccolò Branca's powerful thought and philosophy, which he applies with a genuine, humble and honest behavior. I was inspired by his thoughts, holistic vision of the world and the company, and the way in which the practice of meditation had changed him and his company.

As a passionate lifelong learner, I wanted to respond to the call of the need for a change in our present time. With this, I wanted to contribute to learning more about the leadership and coaching, as well as teaching and educating the young generation about leadership and personal evolution. It is my pleasure and it gives me satisfaction to promote and share methods and tools that can help future leaders and young business people to further develop their practical as well as interpersonal skills in facing the future.

1.3 Research Questions

As discussed earlier, being at the helm of companies and organizations in today's world challenged by a multifaceted crisis may require a substantial change in the approach to the phenomena of leadership and its process. Starting from the assumption that the opportunity of this period of chaos and crisis can make emerging new styles and approaches in leading process and people, the research question of this paper was:

What are the personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership?

As in a Greek Temple (Figure 1), the answer to this question refers to all the main features of leadership which have to be in a perfect balance combined with proportion and harmony between all the elements that make up the entire architecture. In this way, the leadership temple will keep its stability in the long term despite possible unknown internal or external challenges and forces (Lewin 1950).

As pointed out by Adair (2016), if the "brother" of leadership is motivation then communication is the "sister". In this picture, an effective communication with the

people inside and outside the company,   a strong base of motivation and the columns of mindfulness, relation-*ship* and emotional intelligence perfectly aligned form the scenography in which the final results and the answer to the research question will find the right space and time.
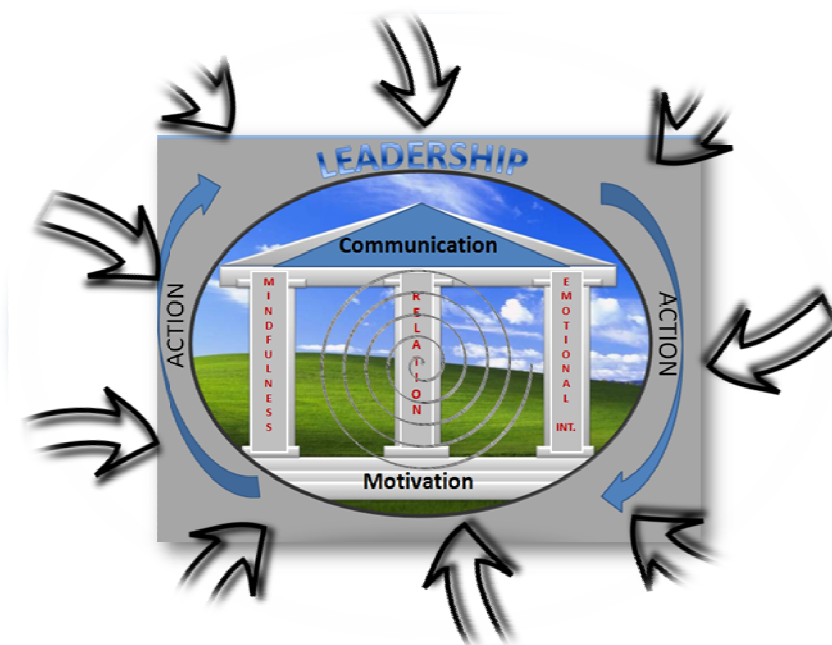
Figure 1. Leadership's temple stability (unknown internal and external forces)

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The introduction in Chapter 1 deals with leadership in its general frame level and shows the explorative orientation of this paper according to the chosen holistic case study approach. Chapter 2 is dedicated to the revision of extensive literature from international scientific journals in the fields of social science, international business, human resources, psychology, psychiatry and education along with scholars' articles, professional reports, studies, surveys and books. It describes and explains the key concepts of leadership, management, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, meditation and execution. Morevover, it defines Mindful Leadership according to the current interpretation of it. Chapter 3 refers to the methodology used in the study. It describes the qualitative tradition followed in this leadership study illustrating the approach and context. It supports the choice of a single case study and the

unstructured interviews as the main method of data collection. A section of this chapter is dedicated to the data analysis and the reliability and validity aspect of the study and the ethical principles on which it is founded. Chapter 4 shows the results and Chapter 5 focuses on the final discussion. At the end of the paper, there are the list of References and the Appendix.

2. Literature Review

This chapter defines the key concepts of the study and presents the literature review. The key concepts in the research are leadership, management, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, meditation, execution and Mindful Leadership. The concepts are defined in the following sections.

2.1 Leadership

The first area of the literature review of this work is focused on the concept of leadership. In this study, it is important to give a definition of leadership so as to design and interpret it in the right frame and understand the research data that were collected and analysed.

The concept of leadership is wide and many definitions have been given about it and there is a large volume of published studies and examinations describing the concept and its meaning. According to Sanders (2014), representative literature about leadership can be found among the many publications of different researchers and authors (Bass 1990; Burns 1978; Daft 2014; Greenleaf 1977; Hollander 1992; Rost 1991; Selznik 1957; Stogdill 1948, 1974; Yukl 2013).

Furthermore, as stated by James MacGregor Burns in 1978 "*Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth*" and before him as pointed out by Stogdill in 1974 "*there are almost as many definitions of Leadership as there are person who have attempted to define the concept*".

Over time, according to the many definitions, also quite an extensive number of theories have been proposed. As suggested by Daft (2014) the evolution of leadership can be divided into four main eras in which many theories have been

formulated and designed: Era 1: *the Great Person Leadership*, Era 2: *Rational Management*, Era 3: *Team or Lateral Leadership* and Era 4: *The learning leadership*. From a theoretical point of view, this work refers to the Eras 3 and 4. Both of these periods of the leadership evolution are characterized by a turbulent and unstable environment (from 1970 until now) and they are respectively characterized by influence-power and the relational theories. The specific theories of these two Eras can be considered the conceptual source from which the Mindful Leadership takes shape (see Figure 2). Their relevance is relative to the influence and relationship between leaders and their followers.

Authentic Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, Resonant Leadership and the Leader-Member Exchange theory are the five theories which were integrated into the theoretical framework of this work.
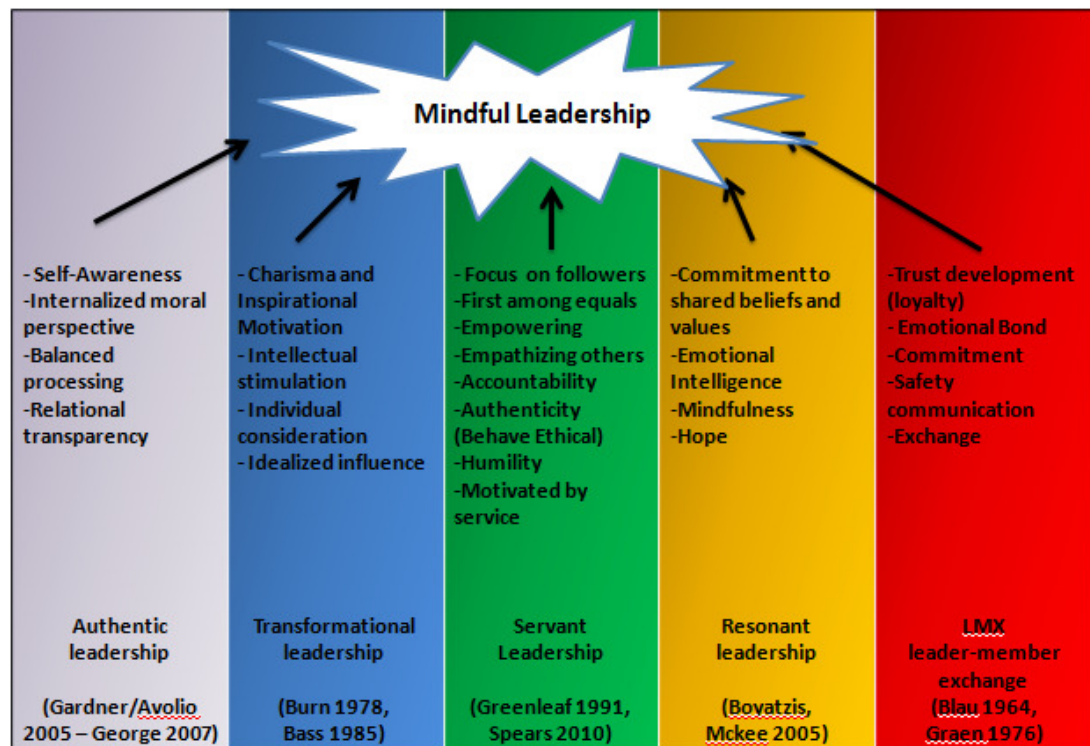
Figure 2. Leadership Theories related to Mindful Leadership

The Authentic Leadership theory has been studied by many scholars in the recent years and its definition is different depending on theorists who designed it. Most of them as for example Avolio, Gardner, Walubwa Luthans & Mayo, (2005) or George (2007) agree that the core of this theory is in the leader's words, actions and values. Its main attributes are self-awareness, a trusting relationship with the followers and a high degree of self-acceptance along with core positive values , such as honesty, altruism, kindness, fairness, accountability and optimism (Yukl 2013). To support this point, as pointed out by Nahavandi (2015) an authentic leader is a *"person with strong articulated values that guide decisions and behaviors"* . Moreover, the theory is founded on four key elements: self-awareness of one's emotions, motives, abilities, and inner conflicts, unbiased or balanced consideration of issues, behaviors reflecting personal values and convictions, as well as relational authenticity that allows for openness and appropriate sharing.

As pointed out by Avolio and Gardner (2005), Authentic Leadership is the basis for some other value-based theories and so for the Transformational and Servant leadership theories, too. In fact, according to Daft (2014), Transformational Leadership is based on the personal values and beliefs, beyond the qualities of the leader. It is characterized by the ability of the leader to bring about significant changes in both the followers and the organization.

The essence of the Transformational Leadership theory is focused on three main aspects: inspiring the followers through charisma and inspiration (Bass 1985) being able to overcome the resistance to change and going beyond one's own self-interests for the good of the group. The theory also includes the ideas of developing the followers through intellectual stimulation (Nahavandi 2013) from lower-level physical needs - safety and security - to higher-level psychological needs - self-esteem and self-actualization - (Daft 2014) and empowering the followers in becoming leaders through the third and last factor: the individual consideration. This last point is important also because it connects this theory to the Leader-Member Exchange theory which is part of the theoretical framework of this work and will be discussed later on.

The leader who follows the transformational approach treats each single follower with a different but equitable individual attention so that the followers feel special. The focus on the follower is also one of the elements of Servant Leadership, but Transformational Leadership focuses on developing the followers through idealised inspiration, individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation (Bass 1985; Burns 1978). On the other hand, the Servant Leadership concept, which was proposed by Greenleaf in 1970 and which became the title of a book in 1977, has its focus on the followers' needs (Parolini, Patterson, Winston 2009). In the Greenleaf's model, there are four basic aspects: service must be put before self-interest, the action of listening before affirming others and trust must be inspired by being trustworthy and last but not least, there is the element of nourishing others by helping them to become a whole (Daft 2014).The result of Servant Leadership in society is that there will be more people committed to serving as moral agents (Yukl 2013).

This commitment to shared beliefs and values is a concept that can be found in Resonant Leadership, too. Resonant Leadership is a relatively new theory among the relation-focused leadership approaches. Designed by Boyatzis and McKee's in 2005, it is different from the other theories of leadership because of its foundation on the emotional intelligence (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2002). Resonant leaders' features are empathy and inspiration, passion and compassion as well as the commitment and ability to read people and groups accurately. They enable people and followers to be the best they can be (Boyatzis 2008) by providing hope and courage in moving toward challenges, change and future. The key concept of the relationship found in Resonant Leadership and the concept of individual consideration in Transformational Leadership are connected to the fifth and last leadership theory that this study refers to, namely, the Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theory.

The LMX theory focuses on an individualized leadership model exploring the way in which the leader-member relationships develop over time and how the quality of exchange relationships can affect the final outcomes (Daft 2014). This relationship-based exchange is unique (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995). At a first impact this theory

focusing on the different relationships of the leader with each follower could seem irrelevant compared to the previous four theories focusing on individuals. However, with its in-group and out-group member categories, the integration of this theory to this study seemed relevant for understanding how Mindful Leadership is perceived and experienced by the members of the two groups. In the LMX theory, the followers belong to the In-Group - inside the company or very close to the leader - and the Out-Group consists of the stakeholders gravitating outside the company. For the members of the in-group some studies have confirmed that the outcome is positive, and this leads to high performance, high self-realization and low stress (Hofmann and Morgeson 1999). Meanwhile, for the followers of the out-group the situation is quite different, and the quality of the relationship is, according to their role, mainly limited to the formal job and poor performance, commitment and loyalty (Nahavandi 2014).

Therefore, in order to frame this work among the several studies and theories conducted on leadership after the 70's there are two elements which can help in defining the concept of leadership: the mutual influence process and the relational emotional connection.

As stated by Yukl (2013) the leadership is the process of facilitating collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives and as pointed out by Mary Uhl-Bien (2006) the role of emotions is a key point in human dynamics and interactions.

After many decades until now, several researchers have defined the leadership according to their personal perspectives analysing the aspects of the phenomena in which they are most interested in and giving to leadership many different names and definitions. As noted, the most part of the theories of the leadership of the past half century focus their attention on the leader's characteristics or on the leader's behavior, meanwhile, the new theories indicate the process it deals with.

Throughout this paper the term leadership will refer to the process, the activity of the leadership in action (Maguire 2010) that gathers in itself two sub processes: the leading of the Self and the leadership Experience. They are suggesting a way of being as opposed to a simple way of doing and that goes beyond the common approach that highlights leaders according to only to what they have or do (Fry & Kriger 2009).

The first one is the relationship of the leader with him or her self and therefore the ability to practice the leading of the Self, the self-leadership (Neck and Manz 2010). The second one is the ability to build a Leadership Experience to relate to others, to bring benefits in society developing the capabilities to listen to people, read people and inspire people and make them secure (Sen 2010). This process is based on six essential elements of leadership: 1. the influence (multi-directional and mutual impact – leaders/followers – non-coercive), 2. the intention, 3. the personal responsibility and integrity, 4. the change, 5. the shared purpose (and value) and 6. the followers (Daft 2014). In this study, the leadership process was assisted by the emotional intelligence, the mindfulness, the meditation and the actions meant to transform the insight, the vision into facts (in the sense of execution) and took the name of Mindful Leadership.

In today's complex and uncertain society being a leader can be a daunting responsibility. The contemporary leadership process already contains in itself the seeds of the transformation and the evolution of the leadership itself: a shape-shift from a leadership featured only by competencies - ability to perform and lead - to a leadership which core is the quality of the relationships and the ability to create awareness and trust.

As noted by Kouzes and Posner (2003), to be available and visible is very important for a leader to create the best environment in which to grow his or her community with authentic leadership (George 2014) based on responsibility, trust, ethics and shared values. As indicated in a research conducted in 2010 by Kouzes and Posner, ethic-integrity is the most important among the four broad categories used by people to evaluate leaders. Judgement, competence and vision are the other important elements. According to this perspective, the leaders who lack in these aspects are bound to fail.

The debate on the concept of leadership and on the strong ethical and moral basis on which it needs to grow is a topical aspect. Ethical leadership and social responsibility are based on the assumption of interactions oriented to a result that brings mutual benefit to the parties involved. They should, therefore, create positive situations for all the four dimensions in which the leadership process acts: the leader, the other, the objectives and the system.

2.1.1 Leadership and Management

A complementary topic to the leadership discussion is the relation between Management and Leadership. About this subject there are many different points of view. According to Rost (1991) many authors like for example Graham (1988), Jacobs (1970), Katz & Kahn (1978), Selznick (1957), Zaleznik (1977) have distinguished leadership from the management, but the confusion between the two roles is nowadays still present.

Rost (1991) identified the management as a unidirectional authority meant to coordinate some activities; meanwhile the leadership is a multidirectional relationship. Leadership is about influencing relationships and handling real changes which reflect mutual purposes. Managing a team is very similar to lead people, but the approach and the goal are very different, so that to carry out both roles effectively is very difficult. As pointed out by Drucker (2003), the management essence lies in doing things right, meanwhile the leadership mainly means doing the right things.A different position is that of Zaleznik's debate that was focused on the very different aspects of management and leadership. A manager and a leader differ in their attitude towards goal, in the conception of the work, in the relation with others and in their sense of self. Agreeing and starting from this point, Kotter (2005) develops the concept and add in his reasoning they can be complementary and equally important in a time in which the complexity and the change are the challenges to be faced. According to his opinion leading and/or managing depends on the situation.

When the organizations become larger and complex, managing is more important, meanwhile when the external environment becomes more complex and uncertain, the leadership is more crucial. Management efforts are focused in getting people accomplishing their task and increasing the performance, while leaders are busy in gaining consensus relative to doing the right thing (Yukl 2014).

The leadership is an important asset for the success of most managers, but as pointed out by Sanders (2014) managers are routinely late in recognizing the need

for change. Some managers could have a leaders' attitude within their own team but to become a real leader it is necessary to face a process of transformation in which the individual switches from the dimension of the *how to do* to the *how to be*.

The aim to review the literature about this topic was to understand in which situations the two processes –management and leadership– are merged and which are the situations when only one between the two can play its role. The role of leader can be learned and gradually acquired at any point in the course of his or her life and career (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2013, 101). Being an innovative leader in an organization means to give the chance to each worker and employee to transform his or her self into a leader of for a better and positive private and working life. Anyone can be a key protagonist in building an extraordinary change, starting from the individual (Jung 1997, 159).

A common ground on which both the management and the leadership can find similar features is a situation like the one of the Good Work pointed out by Gardner, Damo and Csikszenthmihallyi (2002), in which each single individual should act. In the role of the manager or in that of the leader, the individuals should always think about the possible implications of the decisions made for the community taking care in achieving the "four E" of the Good work which is characterized by: the engagement, the excellence, the ethics work and the empathy. Although their two different natures (Zaleznick 1977) the role of the managers and leaders can be aligned in some of their specific aspects.

From the perspective of the team effectiveness Hogan (2015) suggests with his article "Six Lessons on Leadership" a way to distinguish leaders from managers traits using the following six generalization: 1. what followers want from their leaders, 2. the personality predicts leadership, 3. the leadership drives engagement; 4. the engagement drives performance, 5. the leaders drive financial performance, 6. there are more bad leaders than good ones and bad managers lead from the dark side. In the context of the effectiveness similarly, Nahavandi (2015) drew the distinctions between management and leadership focusing on the roles and not on the two concepts. She suggests a list of differences described in Figure 3.

Managers	Leaders
• Focus on the present	• Focus on the future
• Maintain the status quo	• Create change
• Implement policy	• Initiate policy
• Maintain existing culture and structure	• Create new culture and structure
• Remain aloof and objective	• Establish emotional bonds with followers
• Use position power	• Use personal power

Figure 3. Management and Leadership -Nahavandi (2015)

According to Gass and Priest (2005) the leader is a manager, but a manager of the change. To implement the change and transform the current difficult global scenario of our era into a change with opportunities , the leaders cannot spend too much time on reflective activities such as planning or coordinating like traditional managers do. Thus, they have to act fast similarly to the "disturbance handlers" managers categorized by Mintzberg (1973) in his work the Management Role. Few managers' roles could fit in the leader role, such as serving as a leader, but usually they take major decisions in an orderly, rational and planned manner. The leaders have to do and act instead of just plan or organize. They have the responsibility to take corrective key actions to face the unexpected events, the unknown, the "black swan" as by Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2007) theory. A leader cannot attempt to predict it, but he or she can contribute in building a robust leadership and environment against the negative ones that can occur and exploit the positive ones. It is so possible to prepare and shape the environment where good decision-making can be maintained even in the midst of a chaos. To review and solve the crises and eliminate the organizational unwanted problems in a balanced situation, and not in a do-gooder or cynic approach, the "mindful" leaders are likely to act more decisive and effective. Here is the moment in which the emotional intelligence and the mindfulness play their game and make the difference.

2.1.2 The Leading of the Self

As mentioned before in this study, the leading of the Self is one of the two sub-processes shaping the leadership process. The leading of the Self or "Personal Mastery" as defined by Senge (2006) is the ability of an individual to work with the force of the change and not to resist or survive to it. It means to be and feel connected to the own deep Self to develop a high level of self-awareness in a way to understand to be part of a creative process which can influence and help (without controlling) the development of people and situations. This ability can be learned and as suggested by Whitmore (2014) can be achieved reaching three main levels: the basic level to free the Self from the conditioning debris and fears, the medium level, the personal development and the highest level the transpersonal develop. To overcome the first level, it is necessary to reach the balance, the stability in the relation between our two selves, Self 1 and Self 2, as described by Gallwey (1974) in his book the Inner Game of Tennis. The Self 1, or the teller, is the voice that gives commands and issues judgment to the Self 2, the doer. It is the producer of fears, doubts, disappointments and anxiety. It is the Self guided from the ego mind which makes the individual lose easily the balance in case of sudden upsetting changes and external unexpected events. Meanwhile the Self 2 embodies the human being with all the innate potential that human being have when they born, including all abilities developed and those that are not yet realized and represent the potential to be free.

The medium level, the one of the personal development, is based on the improvement of characteristic as vision, purpose, values, alignment, perception and awareness. If developed with a mindful approach enhanced by the ability to interact with others through the emotional intelligence, it can reach a level of leadership excellence (Marturano 2014) that means to reach the third and last level of transpersonal evolution and development.

The leading of the Self is a lifetime process in which all individuals and especially leaders are in an in-depth personal permanent commitment to achieve a state of more conscious life, to increase self-confidence, and to better understand the others.

Three fundamental effective skills can express a genuine personal leadership: the presence, the adaptability and the creativity. To develop these abilities it is necessary to consider the human system as an interdependent combination of body, mind and spirit (Belluco 2015).

2.1.3 The Leadership Experience

The Leadership Experience is the second sub-process of the leadership process in which are present both the experience of the leader, who works for collective benefits and the way the followers, the community, expect, perceive and experience the leadership.

The leadership experience, from the leaders' point of view, is based on a high level of social and emotional intelligence, responsibility, ethical behavior and above all the connection with their people. The self-awareness, self-regulation along with social awareness, empathy and social skills are the drivers for the change and the evolution. The relational and cultural sensitivity along with a holistic perspective of the life and the world can be considered a key factor which can make the new leaders the managers of the change. Managing the change should be a key competency for all contemporary leaders who know how to inspire passion, confidence and trust in the people they are leading. To transform each situation and act according to the common interest and not to the personal interest, it is necessary to shift from an Ego to an Eco perspective, from "me to we" (Otto Sharmer & Katrin Kaufer 2013).

This is the cutting-edge approach in experiencing the leadership: moving from the perspective and vision of an ego-centric system to an eco-centric system. An egocentric system is the result of the integration of perceptual information obtained from a perspective in person and on the position-vision and path of the individual. In this scheme, the representation of the world is always changing, while the subject always remains the centre of the system of reference. In an eco-centric system, the representation of the world remains fixed, while the position of the individual changes within it. For the new leaders, it is necessary to step out from the comfort

zone (see Figure 4) to develop the ability to shift from one system to the other system, moving from the centre and make emerging the inner movement and solution for a collective evolution.
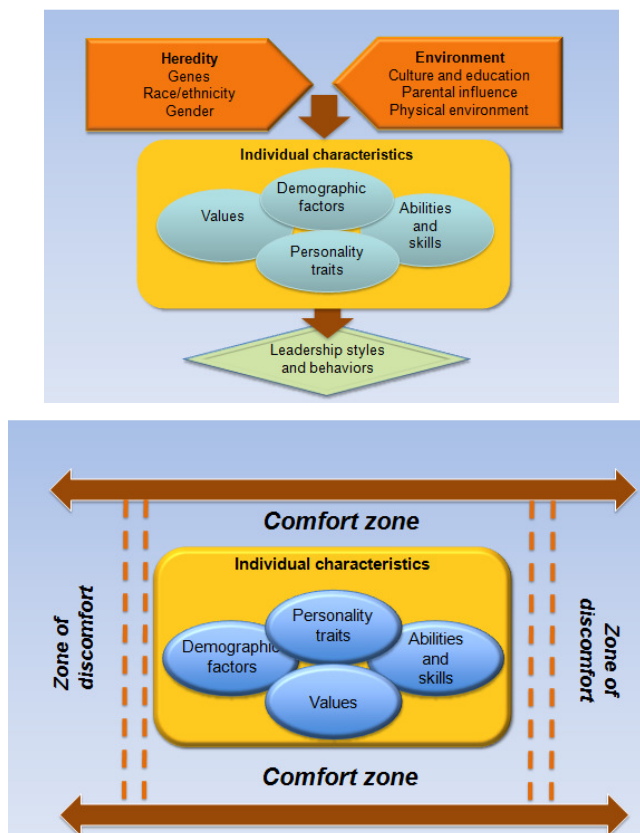
Figure 4. Individual differences framework and the behavioural range – Nahavandi (2015)

The emotional intelligence connected with a state of mindfulness and extended from the inner personal movement connected to the social and the economic level develops the co-evolving process which is needed for the survival and sustainability of successful, for profit yet ethical organizations and community.

Leaders have to learn to be agile and comfortable with this transformation and they have to skilfully guide the sudden change of the environment in a responsive way, being able to hold ambiguity, being collaborative, respectful and creative (Marturano 2014). The elements experienced in the inner work done to reach a balance in leading of the Self, like the self-awareness, decision-making, innovation, compassion, courage and resilience are so essential, not just optional, competencies for the leader him or her self but also for their community, organizations, workforce and stakeholders. In fact, the society, the organizations or the community perceive the

leadership experience of the leaders accepting it and follow it, being part of it. These are the followers, who are the only ones able to evaluate the leader approach and leadership (Hollander 2006) influencing and empowering the quality of the leadership relationship (Howell & Shamir 2005, p. 97) and so the experience. According to Daft (2014), and many other writers and researchers, the leadership cannot exist without followers. Followers and leaders must share the same universal values (see Figure 5); they both must assume the same responsibility and the challenge to affect a positive change. The leadership experience is not a one-way relationship: leaders need the followers to support their actions in facing the change and then they demonstrate their confidence in the followers' ability to achieve tasks independently. According to Kelley (1992) there are also different followers' styles which can affect the relationship.

Leader-Follower Dynamic

Good **leaders**
- Trustworthy
- Honest
- Committed
- Innovative
- Competent
- Courageous
- Takes initiatives

Good **followers**
- Trustworthy
- Honest
- Committed
- Innovative
- Competent
- Courageous
- Takes initiatives

- Great followers produce great leaders…
- Great leaders produce great followers

Figure 5. Leader-Follower Dynamic - Hunma (2014)

2.2 The Emotional Intelligence

As defined by Goleman (1998), the emotional intelligence is "*The capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships*".

In the holistic approach to leadership of this work, the emotional intelligence had a key role. According to McCuistion's analysis, as shown in Figure 6, there are four kinds of leadership intelligence: Physical (PQ), Intellectual (IQ), Emotional (EQ) and Spiritual (SQ).

Figure 6. The leadership intelligences - David McCuistion (2014)

They are interrelated and they all contribute to shape the leadership process, but in this work, the focus was on the Emotional Intelligence and on the studies and the theory of Daniel Goleman. The literature review about the connection between the emotional intelligence and the leadership is wide. Thus, this study aimed to show that the emotional intelligence contributed in building the architecture of the Mindful Leadership along with the mindfulness principle.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence is not new, it was proposed already in 1990 by two psychologists Mayer and Salovey in an article titled *"Emotional Intelligence"* and published in the journal *"Imagination, Cognition, and Personality"*, but it is in 1995 with Goleman's book titled *"Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ"* that the concept had a big impact on different segments of society. The five components of the emotional intelligence as shown in Table 1 are: 1. self-awareness, 2. self-regulation, 3. motivation, 4. empathy and 5. social skills (Goleman 1995:317). The first element is the self-awareness or as defined by Siegel (2011) the mind sight, whose role is to make easier the understanding of one's own needs; the second, the self-regulation is the ability to control or regulate the emotions and to keep them in balance especially the negatives ones. Leaders can face obstacles and setbacks in stressful situations in an effective way.

The third one is the motivation, the passion. The fourth is the empathy and it means having the mindsight towards others or as mentioned by Yukl (2014) empathy can be associated with strong and powerful social, cooperative interpersonal relationships. In the leadership process the component of the empathy is an indispensable

requirement for the leader because it represents the ability to get in tune with the surrounding reality and the people. As pointed out by Goleman (2013) there are 3 types of empathy that a leader should be able to have or to learn to use: 1. the cognitive, 2. the emotional and 3. the empathic concern. Each of them has its importance and influence in the working environment and in the interpersonal relations in all fields.

They act on different dimensions of the human emotional ability bringing different effects benefits in the relations as summarized in the Table 2. Finally the fifth aspect of the emotional intelligence is related to the ability to bind together all the components so to handle and manage the relations with other individuals, solving problems in complex situations, using the time in a better way, adapting behaviors according to the situations and managing crises with a resilient approach.

Table 1. "What makes a leader" - Goleman (1998)

The Five Components of Emotional Intelligence at Work

	Definition	Hallmarks
Self-Awareness	the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others	self-confidence realistic self-assessment self-deprecating sense of humor
Self-Regulation	the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods the propensity to suspend judgment – to think before acting	trustworthiness and integrity comfort with ambiguity openness to change
Motivation	a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence	strong drive to achieve optimism, even in the face of failure organizational commitment
Empathy	the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions	expertise in building and retaining talent cross-cultural sensitivity service to clients and customers
Social Skill	proficiency in managing relationships and building networks an ability to find common ground and build rapport	effectiveness in leading change persuasiveness expertise in building and leading teams

Table 2. Three kinds of Empathy - Table created from Empathy-101 – Goleman (2013)

3 Kinds of Empathy

Kind	Features	Effects
Cognitive Empathy	Understanding how other people see the world and how they think about it, and understanding their perspectives and mental models. This lets us put what we have to say in ways the other person will best understand.	This way of tuning in to another person does more than give us an understanding of their view – it tells us how best to communicate with that person: what matters most to them, their models of the world, and what even what words to use – or avoid – in talking with them.
Emotional Empathy	A body-to-body connection that gives us an instant inner sense of how the other person feels— sensing their emotions from moment to moment. This allows "chemistry" in our connections with people.	Tuning into another person's feelings requires we pick up their facial, vocal, and a stream of other nonverbal signs of how they feel instant-to-instant. This variety of empathy, research shows, depends on our tuning in to our own body's emotional signals, which automatically mirror the other person's feelings.
Compassionate Empathy	Naturally leads to empathic action. Unlike the other two kinds of empathy, this variety is based in the ancient mammalian circuitry for caring and for parenting, and it nurtures those qualities.	This kind of empathy partakes of the brains' circuitry for parental love – it's a heart-to-heart connection. But it's not out of place at work: you see it when a leader lets people know that he/she will support them, that he/she can be trusted, that they are free to take risks rather than maintain a too-safe defensive posture.

The research of Goleman shows that in the working environment the impact of the Emotional Intelligence is very important in all working roles, not only for leaders and it is much higher compared to the academic or technical sectors 66% against 34%, but it is in the leadership roles that the difference is really surprising 85% against 15% (Whitmore 2014).As observed by Goleman (1995) this ability can be learned, but of course, to achieve some significant improvement it is needed an intensive self-motivation and a strong desire to improve social abilities for the personal development and change. For an effective leadership, the emotional intelligence is a relevant aspect which can shape the leadership process in several ways (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee 2002; Mayer & Salovey 1995).

According to Goleman (2000) there are six leadership styles, shown in Table 3, they are originated from the different components of emotional intelligence and that can impact the organizations in their climate and performance; the effective leadership is the result of alternating the leadership styles according to the needs required for the situations in which the leader has to act.

Table 3. The Six Leadership styles – Goleman (2000)

The Six Leadership Styles at a Glance

Daniel Goleman's research found that leaders use six styles. Each springs from different components of emotional intelligence. Below is a summary of the styles, their origin, when they work best and their impact on the organization's climate and its performance.

Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions in ourselves and in our relationships.

-- Daniel Goleman, Working with Emotional Intelligence

	Commanding	Visionary	Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetting	Coaching
The leader's modus operandi	Demands immediate compliance	Mobilizes people toward a vision	Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds	Forges consensus through participation	Sets high standards for performance	Develops people for the future
The style in a phrase	"Do what I tell you."	"Come with me."	"People come first."	"What do you think?"	"Do as I do, now"	"Try this."
Underlying emotional intelligence competencies	Drive to achieve, initiative, self-control	Self-confidence, empathy, change catalyst	Empathy, building relationships, communication	Collaboration, team leadership, communication	Conscientious-ness, drive to achieve, initiative	Developing others, empathy, self-awareness
When the style works best	In a crisis, to kick start a turnaround, or with problem employees	When changes require a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances	To build buy-in or consensus, or to get input from valuable employees	To get quick results form a highly motivated and competent team	To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths
Overall impact on climate	Negative	Most strongly positive	Positive	Positive	Negative	Positive

Goleman, Daniel, "Leadership that Gets Results" Harvard Business Review. March-April 2000 p.82-83.

Many abilities are required and can help a leader who is acting for the change: the ability to listen attentively, to communicate effectively, and to express appreciation and positive approach. The ability to welcome the emotions, understand and influence them can help a leader to become much more effective and to achieve much more insight which can bring him-her to find solutions to particular situations. There are different studies about the effects and the consequences of the emotional intelligence and there are some studies reporting them using a self-report measure (Wong & Law 2002) or a performance-based measure (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios 2003).

Although some critics claim that the emotional intelligence uses well-known traits and skills and adds no important new insights about effective leadership (Landy, 2005; Locke 2005), a research conducted by Joseph & Newman (2010) supports the proposition that emotional intelligence enhances leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, as pointed out by Goleman (2017) the Emotional Intelligence tested in 200 companies shown to be a key factor as primary soft social skill in settling conflict

management, facilitating the managing of both positive and negative emotions to build an effective leadership.

As facilitators of this Emotional Intelligence process, two complementary tools: the mindfulness and the meditation.

2.3 The Mindfulness

The mindfulness is the intentional practice of paying attention in a particular way, without judgment to the moment-to-moment experience (Kabat-Zinn 2003). In this paper the influence of mindfulness in the development of the leader's role and the leadership process and its implications in the company were basic to understand the way Mindful Leadership could be considered as agent of regulation of the impulse action both in the personal action and in the collective action affecting the behavior of employees. In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of studies on mindfulness but as noted by Aviles and Dent (2015) the most part of them are related to the mindfulness and the change from a psychological perspective exploring the influence on the well-being of individuals. The subject of the mindfulness has anyhow been getting a lot of attention in four main areas: cognition science, health, education, and leadership. In a research conducted by Reb et al. (2014) it is shown that the mindfulness within the Western scientific paradigm is almost recent and the researches have been conducted in psychology and medicine meanwhile in the Eastern perspective the mindfulness has existed for at least 2500 years.

According to a study of Langer & Moldoveanu (2000) the first results showing the differences between a mindful and a mindless behavior have been issued around the year 1974. A mindful behavior involved awareness and creativity, paying attention to our self and others without judging, meanwhile as pointed out by Bodner& Langer (2001) the mindlessness is a feature of an individual acting like a robot with thoughts, emotions, and behaviors programmed and applied following past mindset and routines. The literature discussing the correlation between mindfulness and the leading organizational change, and describing how the transformation of a Mindful Leadership can affect the change in companies and organizations, is almost recent.

Two significant studies on the subject of mindfulness related to the leadership are those presented by Dhiman (2009) and Sethi (2009). The first one anticipates the application of the mindfulness in the working field and in the leadership context. The second one extends the concept of the subject from the limitations of its meaning of some esoteric and religious Eastern world practice to the very practical and executive actions oriented perspective of the Western countries. This study aims to show the way the mindfulness contributes substantially to the development of an excellent level of leadership able to face the challenges of the 21st century and can facilitate a leader to face more efficiently the challenges of the change and alter the individual and organizational cognition for the benefits of the leader him or her self and the community he or she leads with trust in a growing positive and organizational mindful environment.

The concept of mindfulness was relevant in this study because this specific mental state affects positively people, developing skills and relations, and as pointed out by Ehrlich (2015), the leaders using mindfulness in their working life can create lasting relationship with their followers, employees and customers and can make grow their organizations and business.

Furthermore, working in "mindful" organizations brings out the best from the people, supporting them in spirit, mind, body and emotion, transforming the workplace in a better place getting better results. A leadership built on the mindfulness principle contribute to develop resilience, transparency, creativity and innovative collaboration in the organizations, which bring to a sustainable world society that works for all parties involved.

2.3.1 From the "Mindful" Meditation to the Execution

Some of the historical definitions of the concept of mindfulness relate its origin to the ancient Buddhist philosophy (Bhikkhu 2011), identifying it as the practice to achieve enduring happiness (Ekman, Davidson, Ricard, & Wallace 2005) and to gain insight into a view of the beauty, the true nature of the existence (Olendzki 2010).

Researches like Emanuel et al. (2010, 815), who have looked at mindfulness, have found that it has recently become a non-secular practice of many western people, but as pointed out by Fries (2009, 5) the mindfulness is often associated with the practice of the meditation because of its long history of Eastern contemplative traditions.

Today we hear many talks about the meditation, and there are very confused ideas about it. For some people it is a technique to control the body, for some others is a method to control the mind and the focus, for some people is basically a method to have transpersonal experiences.

The meditation is not something virtual or metaphysical. It is something real. I agree with the definition of Lazar (2005) who describes the meditation like a form of mental exercise in which the main focus of the Insight meditation is the cultivation of attention and the development of a mental capacity, which is identified with the mindfulness. Her study involved and sustained the "mindful" attention to internal and external sensory stimuli and shows that in adults the cortical plasticity can occur in areas important for cognitive and emotional processing. Through the meditation elements like the attention regulation, the body awareness, the emotion regulation (reappraisal and exposure, extinction, and reconsolidation) and the change in perspective on the self interact closely to build a process of enhanced self-regulation (Carver & Scheier 2011; Vohs & Baumeister 2004).

In reconnecting the self-awareness for the individual becomes much easier to explore the capacities and potentialities of the Self with joy and confidence. True meditation connects individuals to the primordial awareness. Furthermore in a recent study of 8 weeks time of "mindful" meditation programme conducted in 2011 Hölzel, Lazar et al. confirmed the changes occurred in the gray matter concentration in the brain regions involved in learning and memory processes, emotion regulation, self-referential processing, and perspective taking.

The meditation is an act that should be done without effort and in a way that anyone working in today's complex business environment, and certainly a leader should know about (Congleton, Hölzel & Lazar 2015).

The relation between the "mindful" meditation experience and the execution process for a leader is more important than the decision making process in itself. Transforming the vision, the insight in a concrete and mindful action is the real challenge and ability for the new leaders who have to lead the change first and then the people. The execution in leadership means to ensure that things happen and it is the strength to go through actions and choices. The execution is also the moment when a "mindful" leader can transform and develop the vision basing his or her choice on a value based list of options. This means not just doing what he or she intends to do but it is actually having the effective intention, to ensure that everything is done to contribute to teach people the same ability in performing and to reach the common final goal.

2.3.2   The Mindful Leadership

As mentioned in section 2.3, the role of mindfulness in the leading process in organizations has been studied in a systematic review by Aviles and Dent. In their study, dated August 2015, they found that despite the term Mindfulness is well known both in Western and Eastern countries, the literature about its relation with organizational change was very small up to 1997. In fact, only three articles were present, meanwhile in 2015, the number of articles and publications were twentyseven. This is an indicative increase showing the interest about the topic.
In fact, also the term "Mindful Leadership" is almost a recent subject but it is gaining great attention in the Western countries.

The most known exponent advocate of this subject is Mr. William W. George alias Bill George (2010, 2012). He served as CEO of Medtronic and he is a senior fellow at Harvard Business School where is teaching leadership since 2004. In 2010 he joined forces with a Buddhist Rinpoche and for the very first time they explored how Eastern teaching influences Western thinking about leadership, and vice versa. They explored the relationship of self-awareness and self-compassion to leadership development. According to their knowledge the Mindful Leadership teaches to

leaders to use mindfulness to pay attention to the present moment and to meditate their feelings and emotions and keep them under control. In fact the mindfulness enables leaders to be fully present, aware about themselves and their impact on people, and keeps them focused on achieving the goals of their organizations.

A different perspective has been found also in the studies of Dunoon and Langer (2011, 2012). They highlighted three aspects of mindfulness process, which are important factors in the dynamic quality process of mindfulness toward leadership in a deeper level beyond the self-awareness: the alertness to multiple perspectives, the active self-reappraisal and the attentiveness to the use of language.
According to their studies the practice of the mindfulness can increase the ability of leaders to see and identify new or different things in some particular context, whether in the external environment and situation or in their own actions and reactions. In fact, this opening to mindfulness in the world of business, work and leadership offers to leaders the opportunity to see and accept circumstances for what they are, not how they may wish them to be, before taking action (Gelles 2015; Gonzalez 2012; Marturano 2014).

An important contribution to the topic of Mindful Leadership has been given by Janice Marturano, who founded the Institute for Mindful Leadership in 2011. She has a long experience in corporate culture and in the book *"Finding the space to Lead: A practicle guide to Mindful Leadership"*(2014) she describes the Mindful leader, as the person who knows how to take time for what matters, with focus, vision, clarity, creativity and innovation, compassion and self-compassion. In the spaciousness for creativity the leadership presence becomes excellence.

In fact, as pointed out by Wells (2015) in the NCPEA Education Leadership Review of Doctoral Research, the Mindful Leadership concept is related to the practice of being fully present in the moment for all that can come to the door of the leaders (see Table 4).

Table 4. Descriptions of Leadership in Contrast with Mindful Leadership - Wells (2015)

Descriptions of Leadership in Contrast with Mindful Leadership

Previous Descriptions of Leadership	Mindful Leadership
Striving	Letting go- not grasping or 'hanging on' to things that no longer serve you or others; letting go of past judgments
Doing	Being- being fully with what is at hand to understand
Talking	Listening- to hear as opposed to interrupt, or argue one's point of view
Making Things Happen	Accepting reality- for what it is, and then making the decision of what would happen next
Clutter	Spaciousness- of mind as well as material objects
Judging	Compassionate Understanding – of self and others
Telling	Hearing- as the foundation for knowing
Multitasking	Single tasking- giving undivided attention to what is at hand
Distracted thinking about 'to-do' list	Being in the moment- without being preoccupied
Directing	Accepting- for the foundation of responding
Busyness	Stillness- to be able to patiently be quiet to observe, notice, and attend
Distracted Preoccupation	Attentive awareness- using the senses to fully observe

The literature has emphasized that the Mindful Leadership is almost a new "philosophy" of *being* leadership instead of *doing* leadership. Furthermore, the formal and informal discussions about the Mindfulness are aligned in recognizing that its constructs, which are part of the theoretical framework of this work, can be integrated with those of the Emotional Intelligence theory. The result is an asset for the positive outcome of the leadership and the leading process both for individuals, companies and organizations.

As pointed out by Jon Kabat-Zinn (1974) the Mindfulness a "*universal human capacity*" and if practiced can be a mental healthy habit. Furthermore, in these recent years many scientific publications about studies conducted on the brain (see Table 5) confirmed that through the scanning technology it has been shown the way the mindfulness can positively affects some brain's activities.

Table 5. Mindfulness Journal Publications by Year 1980-2016 – Source:goAMRA.org (2017)
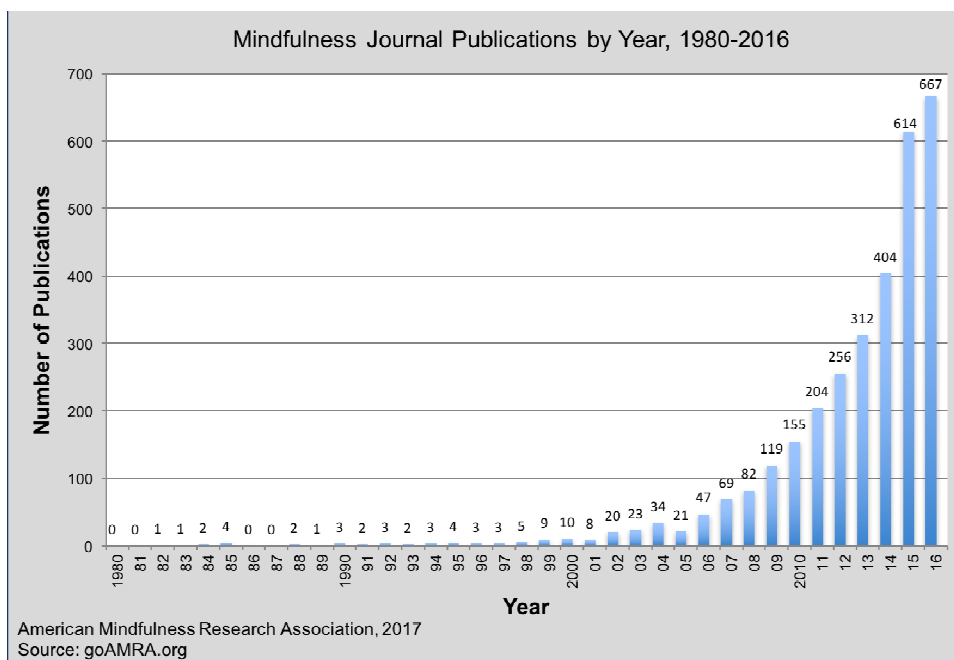
Practicing mindfulness-based meditation on regular basis increase the gray matter in

the brain area of the pre-frontal cortex; this area is associated with "decision

making" which is one of the many complex activity of the brain.

Another important data is the increase of the gray matter in the hippocampus, which

is the brain center of learning and memory and last but not least the practice of

mindfulness can reduce the area of amygdale, which is the center of human being

fears. These three main aspects are enough to identify and understand the effective

potential of this capability. Thus, it seems that the brain is not a fixed or immutable

organ as was thought in the past, but it is always possible to develop it for all the

length of its life (Lazar 2015). Combining and matching the Mindfulness with the

elements of Emotional Intelligence (see Figure 7) brings surprising results. Through

the deep introspection level given by the mindfulness, the self-awareness suggested

by Emotional Intelligence becomes more profound and enhanced. The self-regulation

is improved reaching the insight, a simple motivation becomes a strong will, the

empathy for others is empowered and transforms thoughts into actions developing

social skills and competencies which drive to achieve positive change maker factors (see Table 6). This is the powerful relationship between Emotional Intelligence as human ability and Mindfulness as way of being, that according to Goleman (2017) can help leaders in filling the gap between the perception they have of themselves and the perceptions their followers have of them.
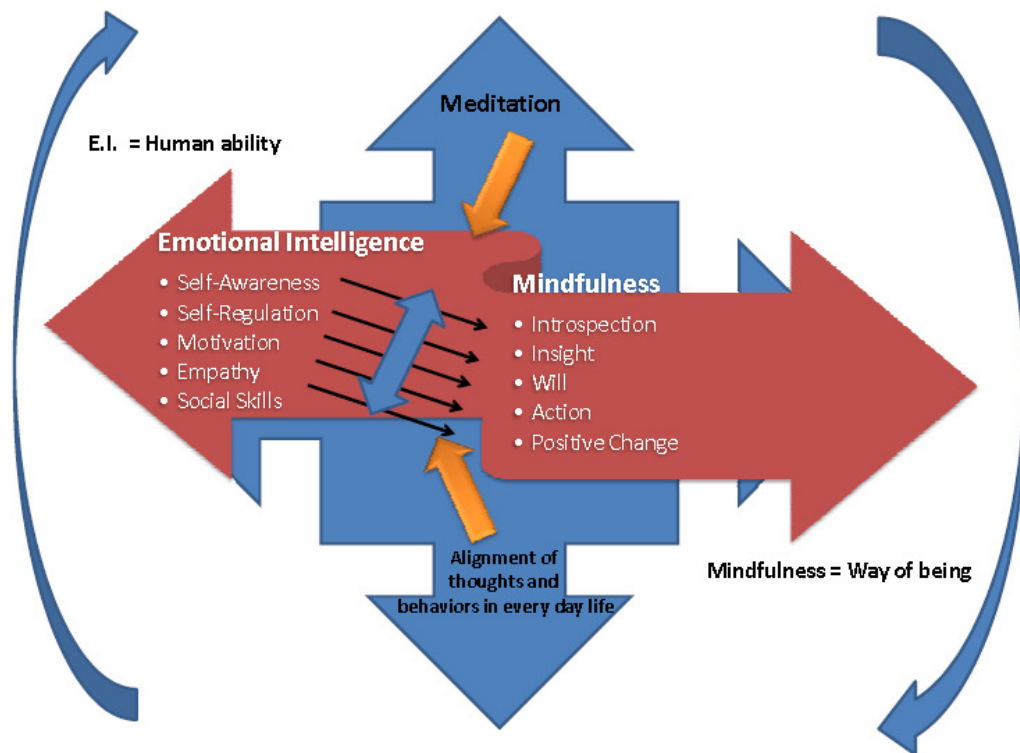
Figure 7. The relationship between Emotional Intelligence and the Mindfulness

Table 6. Competencies of Emotional Intelligence that are aligned with Mindfulness – Wells (2015)

Competencies of Emotional Intelligence that are Aligned with Mindfulness

Competencies of Emotional Intelligence	Qualities of Mindfulness that serve all competencies of Emotional Intelligence
Self-awareness- Awareness of emotions and their effect on others; self-confidence Self-management- Flexibility, emotional self control, optimism, achievement, initiative, transparency, and achievement Social Awareness- Empathy, service, organizational awareness Relationship Management- Inspiring and developing others; resolving disputes, influencing, creating shared vision and energy, team building, and bolstering change	Being in present moment for all that arrives at the door Mindful awareness; listen in stillness Observing and listening Listening without judgment Patience and trust Compassion and self-compassion Acceptance Non-reactivity

Source: Table created from Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002), *Primal leadership: Realizing the power of emotional intelligence*

In the business world this practice and combination has been tested in some American companies like Google, Apple, Procter & Gamble, General Mills, Mayo Clinic, and the U.S. Army (Hunter 2013).

Through the mindfulness coaching, the meditation practice and some other resources they offered to their employees, a better functioning of the workplace improved. The Mindfulness is giving to employees a better well-being; it can reduce the level of frustration, and decrease the percentage of absenteeism reducing the cases of burnout as well. An improved work environment is a better place in which to work with ethical decision-making, increased personal awareness and emotional regulation. When studying the shaping process of Mindful Leadership with respect to Emotional Intelligence elements at work, it is important to note the impact the emotions have on the individual and the way the mindfulness can change individuals and organizations which in business context should bring to an increased creativity, a decreased number of accidents and a better circular information (Langer & Moldoveanu 2000).

In this process, the individual training of the leader and that of each follower or co-worker is focused in achieving a high level of attention, self-knowledge and self-mastery (emotions) creating a collective state of awareness that as pointed out by Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) evolve mental habits able to develop trust and production.

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that the Mindful Leadership can be described, as suggested by Wells (2015), with the following approaches: acceptance, awareness, being fully present, compassion, letting go, listening, patience, responding and trust (see Table 7).

Table 7. Mindful Leadership approaches – Wells (2015)

	MINDFUL LEADERSHIP IS:	
Instead of	**Mindful Leadership Approaches**	**Instead of acting**
Refusing to accept reality	← Acceptance →	Blaming others
Preoccupied or distracted	← Awareness →	Observing with intention
Regretting the past	← Being Fully Present →	Worrying about tomorrow
Not caring or listening to someone in need	← Compassion →	Judging + criticism
Not caring enough to be interested	← Letting Go →	Holding on
Disregarding	← Listening →	Thinking of your reaction + what you will reply
Not observing or being aware of a situation not on the 'radar screen'	← Patience →	Interrupting
Denying; avoiding	← Responding →	Angry outburst; reacting
Disbelief; disregard	← Trust →	Believing in self; Caring for others

2.4 Theoretical Framework

As highlighted and exhibited in the "Mindful Leadership" Chapter 2.3.2, the leadership is a process that combines the perspectives of the leader and that of the followers in a context of evolution and permanent change. To answer to the research question ***"What are the personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership?"*** it was necessary to shape the frame by combining the key aspects of Mindfulness as way of being, described in Chapter 2.3 with the five elements of the Emotional Intelligence theory discussed in Chapter 2.2 and shown in Figure 7. The conceptualization of the Mindful Leadership was completed by integrating in the framework some key aspects of the influence-power and the relational leadership theories selected for this purpose: 1) the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, 2) the Authentic, 3) the Transformational, 4) the Servant and 5) the Resonant Leadership (see Figure 2 and 8).
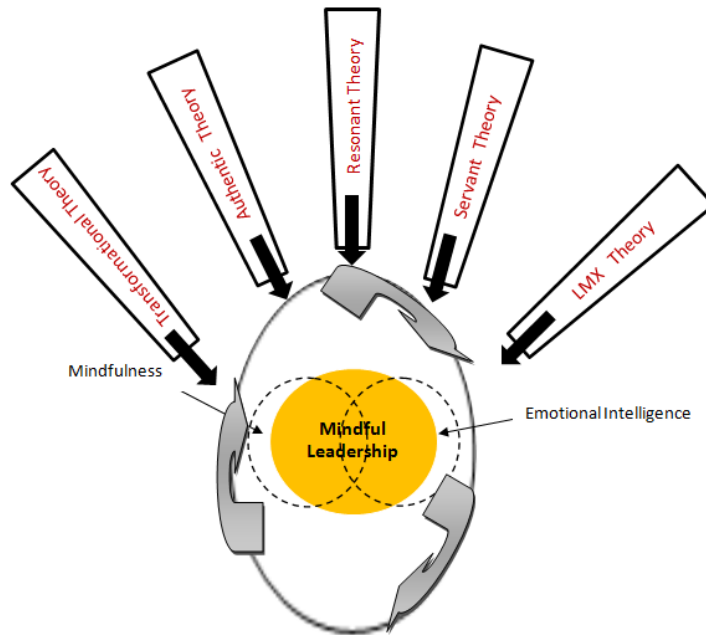
Figure 8. The concepts of the Mindful Leadership

Furthermore, the Mindful Leadership approaches shown in Table 7 in Chapter 2.3.2 were used as main categories along with the factors of the alertness to multiple perspectives, the active self-reappraisal and the attentiveness of to the use of language discussed earlier in the Chapter 2 according to the suggestions in the studies of Dunoon and Langer (2012). These three important factors are part of the listening, the acceptance, the awareness and the responding approaches.

Their interactions are important because they can influence and affect the two sub-processes, the Leading of the Self and the Leadership Experience, that are active parts in the leadership process environement as shown in Figure 9.

In this work, the leadership theories described in Chapter 2.2 were selected and integrated because of their relevance according to the influence and relation between leader and followers. In Table 8 are shown the correspondences between the Mindful Leadership approaches and the five selected theories.

Table 8. Correspondences between the Mindful Leadership approaches and leadership theories

	Leadership Theories				
Mindful Leadership approaches	Leader-member exchange LMX	**Authentic**	**Transformational**	**Servant**	**Resonant**
Acceptance		√		√	√
Awareness		√	√	√	√
Being Fully Present		√		√	√
?Being Mindful?		?		?	?
Compassion		√		√	√
Letting Go		√		√	√
Listening	√	√	√	√	√
Patience	√	√	√	√	√
Responding	√	√	√	√	√
Trust	√	√	√	√	√

As it can be noted the Authentic, Servant and Resonant leadership theories show approaches similar to those of the Mindful Leadership. This means that the three theories have similar features to the Mindful Leadership philosophy despite they have some different key principles and they follow different paths and styles to be performed. As example, they have some common aspects like trust, compassion and patience because they all focus on the leader's concern for the well-being of others and so the need to achieve a high level of attention in listening and being present in the moment as an important asset for the high quality of the human or the working relationship in which they are interested and involved (Stone et al., 2004; Avolio et al., 2004;). At the same time they may have different shades according to the same characteristic. A specific case of this aspect is the approach "*being fully present*" mentioned in Table 7. It is a common component in the three theories, but that can be specified with three different readings and meanings. In fact, "*being fully present*" does not always mean "*being mindful*". It refers to the mindfulness area, but it has to be read and understood in its meaning of construct or practice according to the specific perspective of the theory of reference.

In the Servant Leadership theory for example, as observed by Spears (2004) one of the key principle is the inner serenity the leaders must have in order to be awake to

the reality of present situation. This means that *"being fully present"*, not necessary means *"being mindful"*. A similar situation is shown in the Authentic Leadership in which the leader's perception of the reality is a key factor which can influence followers' trust and emotions during change (Agote, Aramburu & Lines 2016). Therefore, it is important the state of being fully present, but it is not a basic condition. In the Resonant Leadership, the *"being fully present"*means living in a conscious awareness of one's whole self, other people and the context in which the leader and the followers live and work. But according to McKee (2005) this mindful approach is not enough to bring to a *"true renewal"*and change without two further critical components, the hope and the compassion. Therefore, "*being fully present*" means being present, knowing one's abilities and limitations, knowing how we influence others, behaving ethically and acting intentionally according to the specific situation happening in that present moment, but *"being mindful"*means being attentive to what is happening in the present moment without judgment (Baer, 2003; Brown & Ryan 2003), catching the moment and use the given opportunity to make of that moment a "Kaizen moment", in its Japanese meaning of "change for better", a positive growing for change action enabling a mindful choice in the respect of a wide perspective including the people and environment.

It is a more challenging state of being; a specific mode compared to some other alignments of thoughts as for example the self-reflection (a form of critical thinking) or seeking and receiving feedback from external sources which is a different mechanism for enhancing self-awareness (Avolio 2007) which can be used in some other theories.

Figure 9 depicts the complete theoretical framework of this work. The people, the process and the product are the key factors involved in the leadership process environment. The meditation and the execution are the complementary elements for the development and transformation of the Mindful Leadership concepts shown in Figure 8 in which, the leading of the Self and the Leadership Experience sub-process discussed in this chapter find action.
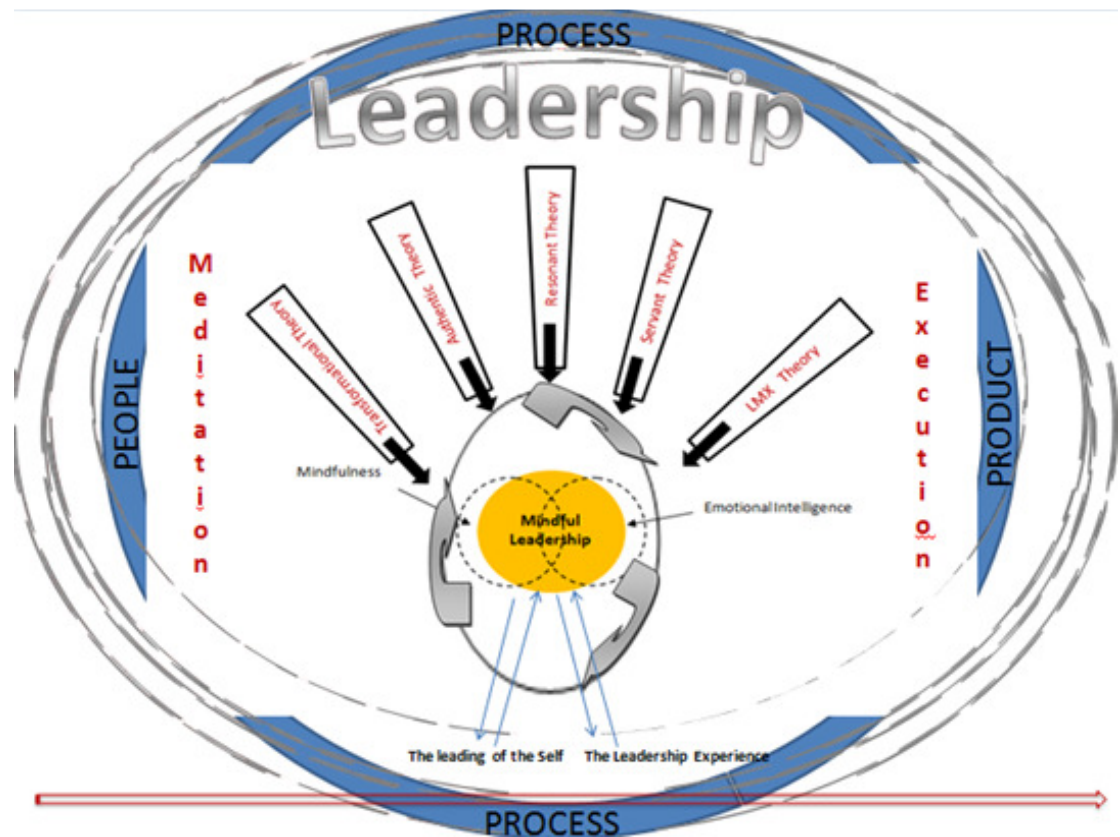
Figure 9. The Mindful Leadership - Theoretical Framework

The **people** represent both the source and resource from which the **process** of training and growth of leadership starts and develops by creating a tangible and intangible **product** made of consistent relationships.

The practice of **meditation** can be a way to turn off or slow down the meaning-making process for the time needed with flexibility and creativity in a way to analyse, solve a problem, making a decision or facing rapid changes. Meditating means investing time in practicing a metacognitive capacity (thinking about the way one thinks) to reach a level of awareness that allows individuals and the leaders to have immediate adjustments and adaptive flexibility. Once learned, it is a long term way of being that as pointed out by Avolio (2007) allows the leader to observe him or her self as a witness or as a third-party observer with a minimum amount of judgment.

As pointed out by Kabat-Zinn and described in Chapter 2.3 practicing mindfulness is not an everyday phenomenon and it requires experience. In this work the mindfulness as practice was not deeply investigated, but generally it begins with

focusing the attention on some specific experience such as sensations of incoming and outgoing breaths. Then the practitioner learns to observe thoughts, objects and emotions with detachment developing metacognitive knowledge, insights and experiences. In this exploration, the important note about the mindfulness, was its meaning of awareness, that kind of detached mindfulness (Wells 2005) associated with "cognitive de-centering" enable to see thoughts as objects in the mind and separate them from reality. This "meta" level state of being in the leadership process is an important factor that could distinguish the Mindful Leadership from the five theories discussed in this study and shown in the Table 6.

The LMX and Transformational theories were important for the understanding of the differences in perceptions and experiences by the leader, the personnel and the stakeholders for the practical application of the insights in the **execution** process that was integrated in the framework, but they had a partial relevance to the mindfulness discussion involved in this study.

Being mindful can be related to the highest level of metacognition which can bring the Mindful Leader to a *meta-awareness* elevating him or her to the ability to switch rapidly from an "attached" to a "detached" dimension of consciousness. According to Jankowski and Holas (2014), the main difference between the different conceptualizations of mindfulness, in this case "*being fully present"* or "*being mindful"*, lies in the number of meta-levels involved in the mindfulness process itself.

They proposed that meditative (or clinical) mindfulness involves highest level of meta-cognition where some other conceptualization involves lower levels of meta-cognition. A lower level of mindfulness can be reached without a conscious intention and the use of the meditative practice (a person can be mindful of internal and external events without having awareness of such mindset). Meanwhile, higher levels of the meditative mindfulness are not possible without a regular training and conscious intention and practice.

As pointed out by Branca (2013), the meditation makes the state of mind clear and attentive: "*it is a natural state in childhood, and it can be recaptured in adulthood through a constant practice, through which all of us can explore, develop and achieve our evolutionary and creative potential".* Thus*,* it increases the memory and the

capacity of learning and enhances the organisational and decision-making abilities and the execution performance.

3. Methodology

According to Saunders (2009), the classification of the research purpose provides three categories: the exploratory, the descriptive and the explanatory. In this thesis, an exploratory approach was applied as it was considered to provide valuable means of answering the research question at a relatively early stage of the study. An exploratory study usually answers to questions starting with "what" and in fact, according to Robson (2002), the exploration research features tend to generate new insights on the phenomena under study and assess them in a new light. Furthermore, as pointed out by Adams and Schvaneveldt (1991), the exploratory research is a focused and flexible approach that offers to the researcher a broad focus at the beginning of the work process, allowing precision in the focus and, thus, narrowing it progressively as the research process proceeds.

Hence, the research's question of this work **"*What are the personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership?*"** fitted with the exploratory purpose.

3.1 Research Approach

The philosophical stance behind this study was interpretivism. The understanding of the fundamental meanings of the leadership phenomena related to the organisational life was in the core of the research, and so a key point of the process was the clarification of the assumptions. This could be processed with a specific paradigm.

According to Burrell and Morgan (1982), there are four paradigms which can be used for the analysis of social theories and phenomena: the functionalist, the interpretive, the radical humanist and the radical structuralism theory. The one that could assist in clarifying the assumptions of this study about Mindful Leadership was the interpretivism with its focus upon the details of the situation, the reality behind

these details and the subjective meanings motivating actions. The interpretive sociology is concerned with understanding the essence of the everyday world, so that its significance for the study of organisations, and therefore for this research, was fundamental.

In this perspective, the research design of this study was based on qualitative data. A research method is a strategy of inquiry which includes the research design and data collection (Myers & Avison 2002). As pointed out by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research involves natural interpretation of phenomena based on the meanings that people bring to it. In fact, a qualitative method is a subjective approach that describes the perceptions and the experiences of people giving them a meaning with the final goal to gain insights and explore the depth and the complexity of the phenomena studied. In this work, a qualitative inquiry was opted for.

The main research approach was the inductive approach, which means work starting from specific observations and moving on to broader generalizations and theories. However, during the process of qualitative data analysis, the abductive approach can be used to identify codes, themes and categories generated insightfully from data that cannot be shaped with deductive or inductive reasoning (Lipscomb 2012).

The process started with the main research question and aims and objectives that needed to be achieved within the scope of this research. In this regard, this research was cross-sectional and it took place in a specific time horizon. It was a case study with unstructured interviews conducted within a few weeks time.

3.2 Research Context

The study of the leadership process in a company or in an organization usually requires a case study investigation. In fact, as defined by Robson (2002) a case study is a way of conducting research involving empirical investigations of a specific contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. Yin (2003) also highlights the importance of the context, adding that, within a case study, the boundaries between the phenomenon being studied and the context within which it is being studied are not clearly evident. According to Morris and Wood (1991), the case study strategy is of particular interest when the researcher wishes to gain a rich understanding of the

context of the research and the processes being enacted. Thus, it was a suitable choice for this study in which a specific ability to generate answers to the questions "what?" and "how?" was needed. Furthermore, as suggested by Yin (2003), there are four case study strategies based upon two discrete dimensions: a single case versus multiple cases and a holistic case versus an embedded case. In fact, this study case refers to Yin's second dimension which is related to the unit of analysis. This study concerned only with one organisation, one Italian company as a whole so that it is a holistic case study.

Fratelli Branca Distillerie S.r.l. is the context of the study. It is a company operating in the spirits sector founded over 170 years ago in Milan, Italy. It has always been wholly controlled and headed by the Branca family, now in the sixth generation. From 2000 to date, the leadership style adopted by Niccolò Branca, who is the President and CEO, has led the company to significant results on the global market. His holistic vision of the world and the vision of the company as a living organism and the introduction of the practice of meditation in the company have changed him and the company as well. In this organizational business context the growth process is not built only on the win-win strategic business approach, the communication and marketing strategies or the establishment of a team exclusively focused on international markets. Instead, it seems to be founded on a shared vision, on shared principles and values according to which the human factor is the purpose and aim at the same time.

3.3 Data Collection

In the setting described in Chapter 3.2 the empirical was collected in the Branca's company with a multi-method qualitative data collection technique. This refers to those combinations where more than one data collection technique is used with associated non-numerical (qualitative) procedures and analysis techniques (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003). The data collection for this research included both primary and secondary data, but only the first was analysed. For the primary data collection, this research employed the unstructured in-depth face to face interviews. As an additional method, the author used observation in the form of the observer as

participant according to the context and in some specific situations experience on site.

According to Kahn and Cannell (1957), an interview is a purposeful discussion between two or more people, and, as pointed out by King (2004), the semi-structured and in-depth (unstructured) interviews are "non-standardised" interviews. The unstructured, open interviews were informal without a predetermined list of questions to work through, but with some clear point to be discussed with the participants involved. Free talks layouts with first line managers and non-directive interviews were employed.

As mentioned above, another option of data collection is that of the observer as a participant with only minimal involvement in the company setting. Participating in certain group activities of the company with the group studied being aware of the observation activities could be really important for the final outcome of the research. As noted by Adler and Adler (1994) this "peripheral membership role" helps the researcher in observing and interacting closely with the members of the workgroup establishing an insider's identity without participating in those activities constituting the core of group membership. However, as Merriam (2009) points out, this may bring access to many different people in this situation from whom to obtain information. Still, the group members control the level of information given, so that sometimes the flow of the information could be filtered with related validity problems. The chance to participate in some moments and situations of the company routine life during the days of the interviews was used with the perspective of reliability and validity of the data according to the situation and the people involved.

In this regard and irrespective of the data collection technique, the sampling selection for the audio-recorded interviews was agreed directly with the CEO Mr. Branca: the access to 13 people, managers and employees (50% men and 50% women, of four generations) and Mr. Niccolò Branca himself; and 2 additional meeting (not audio-recorded) with external consultants. The total number of the individuals met and interviewed is 15.

In the same occasion, the researcher and the CEO discussed some of the ethical principles to be observed, according to the general ethical guidelines that a research

and a researcher has to follow and the company ethic code (the ethical concerns will be explained later on in section 3.6).

The interviews were planned to allow three or four session every day to offer enough time and give the due attention for each person and situation. The setting was close to the Branca Museum area of the company in a quiet place. This detail is important because the qualitative interview is not a simple technique for the collection of information; it is rather a process of interaction between two individuals which requires a peaceful location.

The running of an interview is not a simple task because the flexibility that characterizes it makes the identification of general rules complex for a correct execution. Before starting recording, the researcher introduced the topic of the thesis, described some guidelines points and gave to all the participants a written consent document to sign. Conducting open interviews did not require strictly following the qualitative interview's steps suggested by Corbetta (1999). The author's guidelines about it can facilitate the following flow of the talk: preliminary explanations, primary questions, probe-questions, repetition of the question, repeat the answer, encouragement, expressions of interest, pause, request for investigation, language and the role of the interviewer.

As mentioned before in this section, besides the primary data also some secondary data were collected but not analysed. They were sourced from company's documents in written form, like reports, emails and newspapers, blog, books and non-written form such as audio- and video-recordings, speeches and some personal insights after the meditation (practice in use in the company through sessions of yoga coaching and breathing techniques) and some additional conversation with some people like for example consultant or professor close to Count Branca and to the company. All these data had a direct or indirect impact on the researcher's prior knowledge and interviewee-interviewer interactions.

3.4 Data analysis

According to Kvale (1996), data collection, data analysis and the development and verification of propositions are a set of interrelated and interactive processes. The analysis occurs during, as well as after the collection of data. There are two ways of

analysing qualitative data. One approach is to examine the findings with a predefined framework, which reflects the aims, the objectives and the interests of the research. This is called a "framework analysis" (Pope et al 2000). The second approach takes a more exploratory perspective, encouraging the researcher to consider and code all the data, allowing for new impressions to shape one's interpretation in different and unexpected directions. This approach is known as "thematic network analysis" (Attride-Stirling 2001). Usually, a qualitative analysis draws on a mix of both approaches.

In this study, the data analysis used was an inductive data-driven content analysis, which meant using the thematic network approach. Content analysis is considered by many researchers a valuable way to structure the empirical data for interpretation, creating a meaningful whole, so that the analysis happens during the whole research process. This means that it ensures richness of the interpretation and that it is deep because it is about both the process of analysing and making synthesis and, finally, about classyifing and compressing the empirical data.

Using the inductive approach as a standardized procedure for analysing the qualitative corpus data can produce valid and reliable findings. It is used to investigate themes by selecting information in documents, recordings and other written and verbal material to develop a final theory. In addition, in this qualitative research process, abductive reasoning played a role in incorporating existing theories and generating a new approach.

According to Saunders (2009), the inductive approach may be a difficult strategy and time consuming, but if structured and planned it can help in fulfilling the two important purposes mentioned above: the simplification of the data and the reliability and validity of the findings.

The 13 interviews were audio-recorded, and, subsequently, they needed to be transcribed and presented as a written (word-processed) account. In this study, the language used in the interviews was the Italian language, therefore, all the data were translated into the English language.

As suggested by Kananen (2011, 57) the transcription level chosen is the word-for-word to add accuracy to the research. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the other main steps of the inductive thematic analysis are: the generation of initial codes, defining and naming categories and the search for themes, reviewing themes, and producing the final report.

Once the transcription and the translation of the interviews were completed, the results were tabulated (see Table 9) in order to move from data to more abstract theoretical concepts as an integral part of the qualitative data analysis process. The table includes the audio-recorded interview, page numbers, initials of the interviewed person, content data code, subcategories, categories and theme-concepts.

Table 9. Example of the data analysis process

Audio/recorded Interview	Page	Author	Content Data Code	Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes
6	3	RT	I feel safe and (protected)here. Maybe we are concerned about the geenral economy, but I know here we are safe, in here nothing bad can happen.	No 'patatrac' (collaps)	Job safe	Long-lived Family Business
6	1	RT	His Leadership is indiscussed,I remember just before the Christmas dinner... I told him...you are the leader we follow you! We hope that our efforts also help him to go further ...He sometimes says that we have to throw the heart over the fence ...with courage in keeping the company where it is... it is difficult to maintain what we have, because of the bad economical time, however, despite everything, Branca is always the number ONE	The leader who leads the ship with heart and courage, indiscussed leadership and number one company	Courage	Enlightened Ownership
6	2	RT	he is a normal person	Humble person	Humilty	Enlightened Ownership
7	1	MF	the president and the charismatic figure	Mr. Branca charisma	Charisma	Enlightened Ownership
7	1	MF	you feel part of the company, although your name is not Branca, because you're part of a family, a family a bit more wide , you're part of this family and this is the thing ... the awareness of knowing that you are not alone. And that´s what I' always liked the company.	Belong to the company	Togetherness	Long-lived Family Business
7	1	MF	the awareness of knowing you are not alone	No loneliness	Cohesiveness	EoA

As shown in Table 10, nine themes were found and labelled with different colours and names to facilitate the search and the analysis after the filtering process. A further analysis of the themes was conducted with the aim to review and cluster some of the themes to produce the final five themes described in the results chapter (see Table 11).

Table 10. Example of the data filtering process
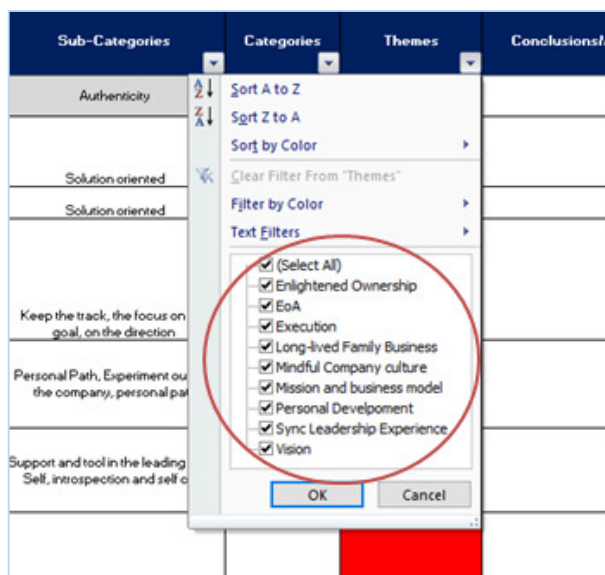
An additional coding of the perceptions and the experiences of the employees was proccecessed following a "lean coding" approach (Creswell 2013). They were sorted according to their core attributes, then set in order, shined, standardised and sustained. The results are shown in the results chapter (see Table 12 and 13).

3.5 Verification of the results

As pointed out by Klenke (2016), often case studies are criticized because of lack of academic rigour, but they can be a valuable choice in conducting research in leadership. In fact, as suggested by Kananen (2011, 66), the validity and the reliability are concepts extremely important in a research, and at the same time very difficult to be verified in a qualitative research, because they were meant for quantitative research. Furthermore, according to Kananen (2011, 53), the number of participants in a qualitative research usually should not be defined in advance, although in some study it is indicated that a number between 12 and 15 is sufficient.

Specific care and attention were given to the representativeness of the convenience sample investigated including different age groups, locations (cultural backgrounds) and the time dimensions. To verify the results, the researcher adopted the four criteria in judging the qualitative research suggested by Trochim (2006): the credibility, the transferability, the dependability and the confirmability. The

credibility of the results can be released only from the participants of the research. The exploration, description and understanding of the phenomena were therefore evaluated from their own perspective. There was no transferability because of the unstructured nature of the interviews, therefore the transfer of the results to different contexts was not applicable at the early stage of the exploratory study. As mentioned before in this section the dependability, or reliability, is a typical criteria of quantitative research and natural sciences. It cannot be easily applied to qualitative research in which the object of the study is referred to individuals with subjective opinions (Kananen 2011).

As far as the confirmability as quality criteria of this single case study in leadership subject, the researcher followed and employed the quality criteria of the interpretivism paradigm as suggested by Klenke (2016, 41): the reliability as interpretative awareness, validity as defensible knowledge claims, trustworthiness and authenticity.

3.6 Ethical considerations

As mentioned in section 3.3, during the entire process the researcher had to deal with some ethical issues. The majority of them were about the privacy, the voluntary nature of the interviews participation, their consent, the risk of deception, the confidentiality, the anonymity, the embarrassment, the stress, the harm, the discomfort, the pain, the objectivity and the quality of the research (Saunders 2009). Considering the nature of this qualitative research, the interaction between the researcher and the participants could have been ethically challenging as they were personally involved in different stages of the study. Therefore, as already mentioned before, the formulation of specific ethical guidelines in this respect was essential to add credibility to the research initiative. In this study, all the actors of the research adhered to the ethical code of the company which was already set in place to protect the company itself and all the actors and parties involved. As a result, an informed consent form was written and given to the people participating in the research. It was accepted and signed by all the interviewees and the researcher.

The data collection of the case study was labor-intensive and resulted in collection of vast amount of information. The study was carried out with responsibility, awareness

and transparency in mind. The necessary consent and approval of those involved was obtained from the participants to minimize the risk of potential harm.

Major effort was made to observe and comply with applicable laws of Italy and internal regulations of Fratelli Branca Distillerie srl in which the research was conducted.

4. Results

In this chapter, the results of the research are presented following the research question that shapes a conceptual map developing the exploration through two interconnected dimensions: perception and experience. In the research question **"*What are the personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership?"*** the word "perception" means becoming aware of something and the word "experience" , from the Latin word "Experientia", identifies the act of trying the experience achieving a skill or a knowledge by doing something. Both words are referred to the personal level of the participants who were involved in the research according to their professional roles in the company. Their individual perception and experience interactions influenced and contributed to the shaping of the structure of the final collective outcome. This point is very important for the understanding of the choice of the observations, their association and the final answer. In this light, the structure of the results, as shown in Appendices 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 is built through the clustering and the aggregation of the nine themes (or code families) found and interpretation according to the two reasoning logics: inductive and abductive. In fact, as shown in Table 11, the first theming data process delivered nine preliminary themes or code families, which were shaped and converged during the second analytic check. The final outcome of this was sectioning the whole corpus data in five broad overarching themes to be read in the following order: the Long-lived family business, Enlightened Ownership, a Mindful Company Culture, the Economy of Awareness and Synchronized Leadership.

Table 11. Themes clustering

Vision	Family Business	Leadership style	Personal Develop.	Mission & Business model	Execution	Company Culture	Economy of Awareness	Leadership Experience
		↓					↓	↓
Long-lived family business		Enlightened Ownership	Mindful Company Culture				Economy of Awareness	Syncronized Leadership

The table 11 represents the sequence of the resultants of the experiences and the perceptions that emerged from the verbal and not-verbal communication of the people met and interviewed in person. These experiences and perceptions were carefully observed, analysed and sifted by the author according to the context of the study. With the purpose to proceed from the micro individual level of the findings to the macro community level overview, as described in section 3.4 and explained in the Discussion Chapter of this study, the perceptions and the experiences of the employees were coded according to the 5S methodology of lean thinking and management process (see Table 12).

The final dominant attributes are shaped and represented in Table 13 including the perceptions and the experiences of the personnel interviewed: humanity, wisdom, transcendence, temperance, justice and courage.

Table 12. Results after using the "Lean coding" in perceptions-experiences management

5S	Vision	Family Business	Leadership style	Personal Develop.	Mission & Business model	Execution	Company Culture	Economy of Awareness	Leadership Experience
Sort and Set in Order			Charisma						
			Responsibility						
			Enlightened						
			Get hands into the business						
			Presence						
			Democratic						
			Open						
			Caring people						
			No prejudice						
			Curiosity						
			Effective						
			Humility						
			People concern						
			Cognitive, Emotional and empathetic concern						
			Coherence						
			Committed						
			Leading in transitional times						
			Persistent						
			Courage						
			Co creative cooperation				Wisdom		Human capital - human resources
			Value				Kindness		Authority and authoritativeness
			Communication				Harmony between owners family members		Temperance
			Leadership example				Fairness		Presence
			Empowerment				Cohesiveness		Entropy
			Need for selected people				Respect for traditions		Happyness
			Responsible		Ethics		Values		Leadership example
			Goal minded		Fairness		Heritage		Teamwork
			Sinchronicity	Spirituality	Obstacles, challenges and risks		Innovativeness		Perserverance
			Leadership example	Mindfulness	Accountability - values		Respect for traditions		Competent
			Global vison, focus and priority	Meditation	Resilience		Wholeness		Teanwork Misalignment
		Job security and people wealth	Time	Empathy	Entropy		Functions	Self-regulation	Kindness
		Togetherness	Engagment	Empathy	Doing		Traditions	Productivity	Leadership process
		Influencial principles	People concern	Introspection and self care	Backbone needed		Ecological consciousness	Quality	Communication
		Humanity	Self entrepreneurship	Meditation	Total engagement and commitment		Misalignment	Cohesiveness	Influence
		Foresight	Attention	Self-regulation and control	Embodiment	Executional Performance	Glocal village	Credibility	Wisdom
		Wholeness	Heritage	Leadership example	True to the mission	Executional Performance	Traditions	Openness	Honesty
		Source of wealth and	Global vison, focus and priority	Spirituality	Accountability - values	Executional Excellence	Accountability - values	Respect	Global vison, focus and priority
		Structural and emotional	Enlightment	Emotional Intelligence	Openmindedness	Focus	Persistence	Social Intelligence	Freedom
	Wholeness	Job safe	Too much communication	Social intellgence	Zest	Building and Powering teams	Empowerment	Integrity	Direct relation
	Love and Humanity	Togetherness	Fast Thinking process	Humanity	Self-regulation and control	Outcome based leadership	Embodiment	Trascendence	Rewards
	Perspective	Job security and people wealth	Wisdom	Motivation	Rewards	Outcome based leadership	Meritocracy	Industriousness and hardworking	Fairness
Shine	Vision	Family Business	Leadership style	Personal Develop.	Mission & Business model	Execution	Company Culture	Economy of Awareness	Leadership Experience
Standardise	Humanity		Wisdom	Trascendence				Temperance	Justice & Courage
Sustain	Long-lived family business		Enlightened Ownership	Mindful Company Culture				Economy of Awareness	Syncronized Leadership

5S - Lean thinking in perceptions-experiences management

Table 13. Final dominant attributes according to the themes

During the data analysis it was important to consider three significant factors: 1. the sixth generations of the ownership of the company (spread over 170 years and with six members of Branca's family actively working in it), 2. the employees' generation references in terms of relatives who had worked in the company and 3. the four different generations that the participants belonged to and that were working together.

The meaning of time in its many perspectives and different shades is the conducting virtual red thread that offered reflection tips and in some cases served as a clue to understanding various dynamics in the light of understanding the theme grouping of the results. These aspects are discussed in Chapter 5.

To support the content of the results, the researcher used citations taken from the audio-recorded interviews and referred to the sample of the participants by indicating the interviews with numbers from 1 to 13. Only the words of Mr. Branca are indicated with his initials – NB – because of the relevance in identifying his statements according to the dichotomous key leader-follower. The two additional

unrecorded unstructured interviews are indicated with the numbers 14 and 15 and are used, if needed, to enhance some statements. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the original language of the interviews was the Italian language. The verbatim transcriptions in this work are expressed in two languages, English and Italian, and for this reason, some of them could look slightly different as a result of adapting certain colloquial or peculiar expressions in the translation process.

4.1 Humanity: Long-lived Family Business

The theme of **the long-lived family business** emerged as a result of converging two preliminary code themes: **the family business** with its specific characteristics and principles and **the vision of the company**. The reason for this lies in the fact that many of the participants expressed in their conversations not only the importance of **family stability** as a key factor for the longevity and the success of the company, but the care the Branca family gave to their people over time, in terms of the protection and well-being of the people working within the company. These people experience and perceive the company as having a **human aspect**, much like a family. These experiences and perceptions form a critical point from several perspectives, as mentioned in some interviews:

This company is my second family and I spend more time here than at home. This means that you feel like the company is your own business. This [company] is about the family, and then the Count – Mr. Branca - he is particularly special [he is very special] (Int. 6)

[Questa azienda è la mia seconda famiglia, ed è più il tempo che passo qua che il tempo che passo a casa…. Il significato di sentire l'azienda propria. Per quanto riguarda invece la famiglia cioè l'istituzione, la famiglia e il Conte (sono) – speciali – lui in particolare è molto speciale (Int.6)]

You feel part of the company even if your surname is not Branca. You feel you belong to this family, a larger family (Int.7)

[Ti senti parte dell'azienda anche se non ti chiami Branca perché fai parte di una famiglia, una famiglia un pò più larga (Int.7)]

On one hand, it is important to understand the origins of the long-term **vision** of the founders' ancestors and the way the current sixth generation continues to grown the company, balancing the **traditions** and **innovation**.

However, the success of this family is related to its history... it was born here... I see it… when I make the tour of the Branca's museum it is important to show people that we have been rooted in a city, Milan (Int.1). It is a rare case where a family still continues to manage such a business (Int.1)

[Il guadagno di questa famiglia però è legato alla storicità… è nata qui… io lo vedo quando faccio anche i giri per il museo è importante far vedere che siamo rimasti radicati in una città, Milano (Int.1)... è un caso raro dove c'é ancora una famiglia che gestisce (Int.1)]

When I guide visitors to the museum, they always ask me... many ask me a question about how many Brancas are still in the company?... There are three males and three females, if I am not wrong, and they ask me whether it is still operating as a family business? I say yes, because, in any case, a business run by a family, like ours, have the intelligence to have a leader… and he makes decisions… [they do not compete or fight among themselves] (Int.1)

[Quando faccio il giro al museo, mi chiedono sempre… molti mi fanno una domanda in quanti sono adesso i Branca… sono tre maschi e tre femmine, se non vado errato e mi dicono ma è ancora una azienda a conduzione familiare? Dico sì perché comunque le aziende a conduzione familiare, come la nostra, hanno l'intelligenza di avere un leader… ed è lui a decidere – non competono o combattono tra loro - (Int.1)]

On the other hand it shows a feeling of wellbeing, affection and loyalty amongst the people who are employed in the company and in some cases for several generations.

My dad worked here, my grandfather and my great-grandfather worked here, and I am at the fourth generation... (Int.1)

[Qui ha lavorato mio papà, mio nonno e il mio bisnonno, io sono alla quarta generazione... (Int.1)]

The following is additional evidence of family members who themselves have worked for many years at Branca, and whose ancestors have also worked at Branca:

I work in this company for 39 years (Int.4)

[Sono 39 anni che lavoro in questa azienda (Int.4)]

Before me, my dad worked here... then I came here to work because a position was open... I was not always working in production, but [through my work] I experienced the production process personally [almost as though for the second time]... my daddy always talked about this company so it was already familiar to me... (Int.12)

[Prima di me lavorava qui anche mio padre... ho cominciato a lavorare qui tra l'altro come operaia inizialmente perché era la posizione aperta in quel momento, quindi... per quello non ho sempre lavorato in produzione, ma ho vissuto proprio di persona la produzione.... a parte quello, tutte le sere sentivo mio padre parlare di questa azienda... (Int.12)]

I have been working here for about 39 years... Let's say I am really grateful to the Branca family, because my close relatives…we have also always worked in this company (Int.6)
[Circa 39 anni che sono qui… Ecco diciamo che verso la famiglia Branca ho tanta riconoscenza perché i miei parenti più stretti... abbiamo sempre lavorato in questa azienda (Int.6)]

I have worked here for 15 years, the truth is... it seems like yesterday that I started working here because in Branca... time just flies (Int.10)
[Lavoro qui da 15 anni, per la verità mi sembra ieri che ho iniziato a lavorare perché in Branca... proprio il tempo vola (Int.10)]

I have been working for the company for 5 years (Int.7)
[Lavoro in azienda da 5 anni (Int.7)]

Moreover, there are four generations of people and organisations who still interact or work with Branca – all with different attributes, ethics and values, leadership styles, views about authority , work assets and liabilities: Traditionalists (born before 1945), Baby Boomers (born 1945-1964), Gen X (born 1965-1980), Millennials (born 1981-2001).

These business relationships develop and form like a big family - a community acting, practicing and expressing the virtue of **humanity** by co-operating to fulfil a common goal. The following expresses some thoughts that support the above-mentioned point:

In our heart, there is an eagle like a tattoo; this means you (as an employee) have it inside you (Int.1)
[Nel nostro cuore c'é un'aquila, perché ce l'hai dentro come un tatuaggio (int.1)]

We hope that [the company] will be always owned by the family. We feel integrated, let's say we're protected too, we're there , under [the wings of the eagle] (Int. 6)
[Speriamo che [l'azienda] rimanga sempre alla famiglia ci sentiamo più integrati, diciamo anche protetti, siamo lí sotto [l'ala] (Int.6)]

While only a minority of the participants did not openly express the feeling that the company is like a family, all agreed about the importance and the deep meaning of the motto **Novare Serbando**, which means :

… we are able to innovate without ignoring our roots, this is the way to connecting the past with the present and creating the future. (Int.NB)

[... riusciamo sempre più a innovare, però senza disconoscere quelle che sono le nostre radici, ecco come si incontra il passato col presente per poi creare un futuro della situazione.(Int.NB)]

Here we are part of the NOVARE SERBANDO family (int.4)

[Qui siamo una famiglia NOVARE SERBANDO (int.4)]

Interviewees also emphasized the importance of **time** in the company, as shown for example, in the statements below:

We have been here for 170 years and we have to try to stay there for a long time... but to be able to look beyond the short or medium term, I would say we need foresight... (Int.11)

[Siamo qui da 170 anni e dobbiamo cercare di rimanerci ancora a lungo...davvero essere capace bravo nel vedere al di là del breve-medio periodo quindi io direi lungimiranza come la parola che identifica questa abilità... (Int.11)]

The numbers and facts speak for themselves. There is not too much to add... the company was born in 1845 and we are still here in 2017 (int.4)

[Parlano numeri e fatti. Non c'é molto da aggiungere... un'azienda sorta nel 1845 siamo nel 2017 e siamo ancora qui (int.4)]

Still talking about the aspect of time an interviewee said that:

Novare Serbando definitely has [the will] to keep things positive... and therefore they choose not to forgo quality, to have a company in Milan that is apparently a [strange] economic choice and to also try to keep... the respect of his ancestors because as he says, "I see them every day" and I would like to... show respect for the past. Maybe sometimes it could be easy to throw everything away and start over. Instead you need the ability to understand what was good or could be improved or, can serve as a good basis, to carry on a number of activities, developing on past insights and then, of course, to innovate while holding on to the positive things and ensuring they evolve. (Int.8)

[Il Novare Serbando è sicuramente [la volontà] di mantenere le cose positive... e quindi la scelta di non abdicare alla qualità, al fatto di avere comunque un'azienda a Milano che apparentemente è una scelta economica strana, quindi cercare di mantenere quello che , anche nel rispetto come dice anche lui è il rispetto dei suoi antenati perché come dice lui, "io li vedo tutti i giorni" e vorrei evitare che mi tirino dei fulmini... quindi il rispetto del passato ci vuole, magari è più facile buttare via tutto e ricominciare da capo, invece, bisogna avere la capacità di capire quello che andava bene o poteva essere migliorato o come base poteva essere buona e portarle avanti quindi una serie di cose, intuizioni date dal passato che sono mantenute e sviluppate e poi ovviamente per l' innovare del Novare Serbando è proprio quella di tenere queste cose positive e farle evolvere. (Int.8)]

Another interview added insight about the importance of keeping the headquarters in Milan, to maintain strong ties with the company's roots:

The quality of products made in the city of Milan, Italy has remained unchanged over time... keeping a company in the centre of Milan is a cost, but it is a strength (Int.11)

[La qualità che è rimasta immutata nel tempo dalla produzione che viene fatta in Italia in città Milano e comunque tenere un'azienda in centro a Milano è un costo, ma è una forza (Int.11)]

Overall, the result indicates that the Branca family has not only been creating a bond with its employees for generations of people working there over time, but that it took care, and it is still taking care of its people, respecting the typical Italian model of a family business.

The following is a short description of the Branca's "village" as was told by the grandfather of the participant from interview 1:

During the War, for example, the fruits of the citrus peels and quinces of which we only use skins, were distributed for free outside the company in Resegone Street on the tables just like at the market… then in Porro Street behind the company there was the farmhouse with cows and transportation horses, the gardens to grow vegetable to feed nine hundred employees… a lot of food products were donated to people in the area. Branca's family opened up a - leisure center after the war which was famous. The Branca dance hall was used to distract people after a dark period and was not only open to the employees but to the people of the area... Celentano and Mina debuted here ... There has always been this intention and action to help the employees in the DNA of the family... and this is continuing today ... for example, we now have meditation, yoga coaching [or some other initiatives]; there are no more "colonia" [leisure activity facility for children] for the children… I went to "colonia" when I was a child… Branca paid the "colonia" holidays to the employees' children a month at the seaside and a month on the mountains ... (Int. 1)

[Nel periodo della Guerra, la Branca ,visto che nei suoi prodotti utilizza materie prime naturali faccio un esempio, le scorze di agrumi e mele cotogne, che ne so... delle quali dobbiamo utilizzare le bucce e quindi il frutto non veniva usato, e mi raccontavano che facevano proprio al tempo fuori in via Resegone dei banchi come al mercato; regalavano la frutta alle persone del territorio che non avevano da mangiare... addirittura alle spalle, in via Porro… c'era la cascina con le mucche e i cavalli da trasporto, gli orti, perché a km 0 rifornivano la mensa con novecento dipendenti... ma tanti prodotti alimentari venivano donati alla gente del territorio. Aprirono un dopolavoro dopo la guerra che era famoso, la sala da ballo Branca per distrarre le persone dopo un periodo buio e non solo era aperto per il dipendente ma per le persone del territorio, venivano qui ballavano, debuttarono qui Celentano e Mina... Nel DNA della famiglia c'è sempre stato questa cosa di aiutare il dipendente questo per arrivare a dirti fino agli anni… ad esempio stupido però ti può far capire che ora c'è lo yoga ok , non ci sono più le colonie per i bambini io andavo in colonia, Branca pagava la colonia ai figli dei dipendenti un mese al mare un mese in montagna… (Int. 1)]

A last, but important point in the theme about the family, is the sense of family is identified as conscious responsibility experienced and perceived both from the

perspective of the leader and that of the employees. This conscious responsibility are represented in these words by Mr. Niccolò Branca himself; it is captured in a sentence by one of the participants, referring to a specific occasion in which the talk was about the Italian plant (about 280 people in total , of which about 100 of them are located in Milan, Italy):

Every night before I fall asleep I think that [here in Milan] I have to feed 100 people tomorrow (NB words cited in Int.1)

[Io ogni sera prima di addormentarmi penso che domani (qui) devo dare da mangiare a 100 persone (NB words cited in Int.1)]

4.2 Wisdom: Enlightened Ownership

The **Enlightened Ownership's** theme is embodied in **the principles** and **the values** of the leadership approach and style employed by Mr. Niccolò Branca. From the data analysis, the most common view among the interviewees is that Mr. Branca is **an enlightened owner** and **leader,** with a high level of charisma and **wisdom**, and with the ability to see deep below the surface and far beyond the appearance. He seems to embody the folklore which is connected with the symbol of the eagle - the logo of the company which was conceived in 1893, designed by the artist Metlicovitz and adopted in 1905. The eagle is known for its visual acuity: with one eye looking toward the horizon and the other eye scannning the ground below.

Mr. Niccolò Branca is perceived and experienced by his people as a mindful, wise and illuminated leader, not only with great "insight", but also with a great maieutic ability, as commented below:

He is a very intelligent person and so you have to be fast to keep pace with his speed of thought... The Count Niccolò is a person who is definitely enlightened and also a person with a strong and distinct personality. For this reason there is also a low turnover in Branca (int.13)
[E' una persona molto intelligente e quindi devi essere veloce stare dietro alla sua velocità di pensiero... Il Conte è una persona sicuramente illuminata e anche una persona con una forte e spiccata personalità per cui c'è anche un discreto turnover in Branca (Int.13)]

I think he can see and understand before others... has great insights... this is a very positive thing and he can read people ... he is talented in understanding others and being understood by others (Int.12)

[Lui secondo me arriva prima di altri, cioè è avanti vede lontano, ok quindi per me è anche questa è una cosa molto positiva e con le persone a leggere così avanti anche le persone... secondo me questo è talento, talento di capire e - di farsi - capire (Int.12)]

Others confirmed Branca's maieutic approach:

He has a maieutic approach and is able to transfer concepts lik a teacher to a student…he is a motivator… he can motiivate people through their emotions (Int.9)
[Secondo me, ha anche delle ottime doti maieutiche e riesce a a trasferire - il concetto - all'allievo è un un motivatore emotivamente (Int.9)]

His voice, his tone changes according to the message he has to communicate (Int.7)
[La sua voce, il suo tono cambia a seconda del messaggio che deve comunicare (Int.7)]

About the nature of his leadership ability, it has been interesting to find that some participants felt that the owner-CEO is a **born talent** in leading the company, because of the DNA, as for example stated in interview one:

A leader has charisma that has always been inside them [Branca ancestors]. *I always remember him when he was young because I have worked here for a long time [my family has worked for four generations in the Branca company]... he has great charisma like his father so the charisma is in his DNA (Int.1)*

[Un leader ce l'ha dentro, è un carisma che lui ha sempre avuto, tutto questo carisma... io me lo ricordo sempre, anche da giovane, perché lavoro da quattro generazioni anche io in azienda Branca e mi ricordo lui fin da giovane. Iniziò la sua esperienza in azienda facendosi, passami il termine, la gavetta, perché iniziò occupandosi del mercato inglese che aveva vent'anni credo... non sono un pò quello che sta facendo il figlio Edoardo... e che ha fatto il figlio Edoardo... quindi il padre lo mise a iniziare da capo. Un grande carisma l'ha avuto anche il padre quindi , queste caratteristiche carismatiche particolarmente nel DNA (Int.1)]

Or as stated in the interview seven:

The figure of the president is that of a charismatic figure ... (Int.7)
[La figura del presidente è quella figura carismatica... (Int.7)]

Others through their experience in working with Branca, consider him a **made leader,** who faced a very long, complex and deep personal internal path to be the person he is now:

He is a person who has made a great inner journey, and this I perceived, while reading his books so I do not believe he is a natural leader. I genuinely believe he is a leader who has been built more over time

and through experience (Int.2)

[Lui è una persona che ha fatto una grande percorso interiore e questo… un pò leggendo i suoi libri... così non credo sia un leader naturale sinceramente credo che sia un leader che si è costruito più col tempo e con l'esperienza (Int.2)]

Surely it has been a path what he made ... he firstly made a proper analysis of himself… he questioned himself, because this is what a Leader does, and revised and re-evaluated a whole range of probabilistic aspects related to habit, in trying to find his own way, for himself and especially for his company. And so it is an evolution that will never end because knowing him… he is continuously evolving (Int.8)

[Sicuramente è stato un percorso quello che lui ha fatto... ha fatto un'analisi giustamente prima di se stesso... si è messo in discussione perché sicuramente è da Leader e quindi ha rivisto e rivalutato tutta una serie di aspetti probabilmente dati dall'abitudine cercando di trovare la sua strada, per sé e soprattutto per la sua azienda. E quindi è un'evoluzione che non avrà mai fine perchè conoscendolo è sempre in continuo fermento (Int.8)]

The Count (Mr. Branca) personally tries and tests the Training and Coaching (Int.15)

[Il Conte Branca prova in prima persona, formazione e coaching personale (Int.15)]

If analyzed together, these results provide important insights into the Mindful Leadership style adopted by Mr. Branca, and provide an example of how the **made leader trait** requires a process of **the leading of the Self on an individual development path** and that this can have an higher impact on the final outcome, which will be discussed in the final chapter of this work.

4.3 Transcendence: Mindful Company Culture

The Mindful Company Culture is the broader and overarching theme of this research and it contains four out of the nine preliminary themes: the **mission** with the **business model** of the company, the **company culture**, the **personal development** of the people working in it and the **execution** process. These four themes are strictly intertwined because they allow for a situation where personnel are encouraged and able to learn and apply these important virtues for the benefit of their community: that is, **transcendence**. Being transcendent in this context means to try to achieve the right conditions to motivate people to go beyond their usual limits, enabling

connections and interactions among people and processes to implement the network and give a meaning to the actions towards the creation of excellence.

From this perspective, this means being aware, mindful and grateful for the beautiful things that happen and to work together to reach excellence with a positive attitude.

The participants, on the whole, have demonstrated their perception and experience of the CEO's Mindful Leadership and the strong input and influence his awareness is providing to the company culture, in terms of "mindful" thoughts and actions.

The themes underlying the company mission and of the way the company executes its processes, recurred throughout the dataset in connection with the personal and professional development of the employees.

Their individual motivation and the level of understanding of the company mission can influence the execution process; awareness of the importance of personal and professional development within the company and the connection between the company, its people and the environment, can produce two different results: a perfect balance and alignment in experiencing and building the company culture as a mindful organization, or conversely creating a detrimental effect. In this second case, confusion about the role of the employees, a gap in the organization's identity and the diminishing potential for organizational growth are the possible challenges to overcome, as stated in the following interview:

There are still some people in Branca who are not a good fit with the management of some teams... if inadequate people amplify the negative messages and reduce the positive messages, and the Count has so many positive messages, it is inevitable that there are consequences, with obvious results... (Int.13)]

[Alla gestione di alcuni team di lavoro ci sono ancora oggi in Branca delle persone non adeguate alla situazione... se le persone "sbagliate" amplificano i messaggi negativi e riducono i messaggi positivi, e il Conte di messaggi positivi ne ha tanti, èinevitabile che poi le ricadute ci siano e sono quelle che sono... (Int.13)]

Some others acknowledged that some misalignment in leader-employees relationships can happen and that the CEO can easily understand who can and who cannot take an active and mindful part in the company:

... often it happens that someone has the best intentions but just... a different point of view and then in my opinion, he sees if there is that "tattoo" (the eagle on the heart) on the person... maybe these are good people, good for some other place and they might be perfect for that place, but not here... and that's another thing he always says, when the exchange is not profitable for both sides ... "thank you goodbye!". But not because I'm bad and you're good or vice versa. That is, the discourse is we are a good fit... here [in the company] we would need a trusted and like-minded circle of people (who are a selected group of people close to the leader) (Int.8)

[… spesso capita che qualcuno abbia le migliori intenzioni ma basta… punto di vista diverso e poi, secondo me, lui lo vede se c'é quel tatuaggio (l'aquila sul cuore), cioè perché magari ci sono anche persone brave che in un altro posto potrebbero essere perfette ma non qui… ed è un'altra cosa che lui dice sempre, per cui nel momento in cui lo scambio non è proficuo per entrambe le parti… grazie e arrivederci! Ma non perché io sono cattivo e tu sei buono o viceversa. Cioè, il discorso è non andiamo bene insieme probabilmente… Ci vorrebbe la famosa cerchia… (Int.8)]

Some different perspectives about the alignment or misalignment of managerial efforts have also been found in the company culture environment, and accordingly, to some aspects of the leadership process.

In the research findings, teamwork and the team performance is the situation in which the above situation manifests and becomes critical. The ability and the capability of the employees to fit in with the values of the company culture and achieving the short, medium or long term objectives as required by the owners, is crucial. Also crucial, are their differences in perception and experiences of being a team, a task force or a crew. All these aspects can change work execution and performance outcomes.

The issues of the work execution and performance outcomes were also raised in some other interviews. However, the statement by the CEO expressed his awareness about these matters very well.The CEO is aware of the difference in being a team focused on the same perspective and feeling like a team, versus some other forms of working co-operation that despite keeping the sense of belonging to the same community, the team does not produce executional excellence:

Working in team is different from being part of a group because, especially in Italy, we all work individually... sometimes we work in a team, sometimes we work in a group... If you work in a team you have to get out of your little gardens first, so you can help others even if it is not part of your directly responsibility, to ensure that the process works effectively. Even if you are not responsible for a particular action or task, sometimes you have to accept someone else's part of the problem and

sacrifice yourself for another, as much as you can, to support another person move the project forward ... if you are doing this, it means that you are working in a team. If you are not doing this, you are not working on a team, you are in a group... I think this is one of the most important things to highlight [i.e. team vs group]... also sometimes we work well as a team in times of emergency, but when the situation becomes stable again, people stop working as a team... this is not something I want... (NB)

[Il fatto di lavorare in squadra, una squadra che è differente da essere un gruppo perché specialmente in Italia vedo veramente veniamo tutti tirati su come individui individualisti... devo ritornarci sempre sopra su questo aspetto, perché a volte noi lavoriamo in squadra a volte lavoriamo in gruppo... se lavorate in squadra dovete prima di tutto uscire dai vostri giardinetti, quindi si può coinvolgere in determinate scelte... quelle sono le vostre responsabilità e anche quelle delle altre persone che magari ne vengano colpite. Anche se non è vostra diretta responsabilità, a volte bisogna caricarsi magari di un problema di un altro, quanto voi siete a disposizione; di sacrificarmi per un altro quanto voi potete portare avanti e sorreggere un'altra persona, quando magari lo aiutate per portare avanti il progetto che sta portando avanti, fatevi, ho detto, un esame della coscienza se state facendo questo vuol dire che state lavorando in squadra se non state facendo questo non state lavorando in squadra credo che questa sia una delle cose più importanti. Perché magari si lavora in squadra in un momento difficile e invece poi si ritorna... (NB)]

In fact, there was a sense of misalignment among some of the employees because some of them felt and experienced the meaning of being a team, like the CEO would expect, while others saw the CEO as the captain and the workers like a crew, as mentioned in the following sentences:

The Count embodies the expression of the captain of the company... we are so lean as a structure that now the challenge is to make all of us the captain's men because when the vision tells you that the size of the company must be this because of economic factors, we must all run in the same direction (Int.9)

[Il Conte incarna quell'espressione per il capitano d'azienda... siamo così snelli come struttura che adesso la sfida è fare tutti gli uomini del capitano perché... perché, quando la visione ti dice che la dimensione dell'azienda deve essere questa perché è un equilibrio giusto rispetto ai fattori anche economici dobbiamo correre tutti e correre tutti nella stessa direzione (Int.9)]

And some more:

Come ahead the leader! We follow you!... (Int.5)

[...Venga avanti il condottiero che noi la seguiamo!...(Int.5)]

A variety of perspectives were expressed in the interviews, but all the employees agreed that to be successful in the company there is a need to share, co-operate and work in sync on a long-term holistic vision, for the benefit of the company and all the

people working in and around it. Their awareness can be expressed with a simple but powerful saying of the CEO, which is a core concept of the company culture:

Take action, take mindful action (Int.2)

[Praticare la pratica (Int.2)]

The execution process is representative of the mindful company culture because it is the result of an awareness of the whole company system. For example, the awareness in knowing that to solve a problem, the solution must come from a different mindset that is not at the level the problem is formed:

The solution to the problem is never at the same level of the problem (Int.14)

[La soluzione del problema non è mai allo stesso livello del problema (Int.14)]

The first thing that I always liked, knowing him for several years, it has always been a recurring phrase "tell me about the problem when the problem is resolved" (Int. 1)

[La prima cosa che mi è sempre piaciuta, io lo conoscono da diversi anni, è una frase ricorrente sempre stata quella... "Mi racconti il problema quando è stato risolto" (Int.1)]

The professional awareness of managers and employees about differences in the perception and the experience of the problem and the solution, is a measure of their level of empathy with the company as living organism, with the CEO as leader and driver in creating the opportunity to be an active and proactive part of the executive creative process, creating the basis for synchronized co-operation:

It is important to have attunement and synchronization among people, because it is useless to put the fastest before all others. Sometimes it is necessary to slow down to bring everyone to the same speed and probably raise the level of everyone to bring them together. I think this is an important challenge (Int.9).

[Diventa importante una certa sintonia - sincronia perché è inutile che io metta il più veloce davanti agli altri... deve essere il più lento probabilmente, e poi alzare il livello di tutti insieme secondo me è una sfida importante (Int.9)]

I feel part of the company and I am convinced that if I had made another career path, I would not have the satisfaction that I got here. I could give my idea, I developed it and had the opportunity to put it into practice (Int.6)

[Mi sento partecipe dell'azienda e sono convinto che se avessi fatto un altro percorso lavorativo, non avrei avuto le soddisfazioni che ho avuto qua, ho potuto dare del mio, sviluppato un'idea, avuto l'opportunità. (Int.6)]

All the participants reported that the presence of the CEO as leader and guide is not only recognized, but also fundamental for the work undertaken by the people. The CEO's particular way of being present is a distinct element of Niccolò Branca's leadership, compared to his predecessors.

During working hours maybe he will call us all and informs us about certain new things… the last thing the social corporate responsibility… he put it on paper… when there is something new it is his own habit to call all the workers and explain... (Int.6)

[Durante le ore di lavoro magari può chiamarci tutti... ci mette al corrente di determinate cose, ad esempio un nuovo spot o per dire l'ultima cosa, è stato il bilancio sociale...una novità... ma analizzando dopo, quello che ci aveva detto fino a poco tempo prima ce l'ha messo sulla carta... quando c'è qualcosa di proprio nuovo è sua propria usanza chiamare tutte le maestranze e spiega… (Int.6)]

It seems that there are some significant differences in the perception and the experiences of the many elements of the company culture by the employees and that the key element is the ability to fix issues and solutions. At the moment, it seems that the "mindful" presence and work of Mr. Branca remains a significant element of the company culture, as mentioned below:

The presence of the person (Mr. Niccolò Branca) in particular, in the company, as someone who lives through the same issues as his employees and treats his employees as people rather than numbers, unifies everybody... (Int.12)

[La presenza della persona (di Niccolò Branca) in azienda che vive tutti i giorni le problematiche... che va a livello... di andare a livello di dipendenti delle persone proprio nella persona se stessa come individuo e ha unificato tutto... (Int.12)]

His commitment in the "mindful" company culture is still a work in progress as Mr. Branca himself confirmed:

… an experiment that I am continuing to do is a work in progress because something that is important is that I try to experiment inside the company... some things go well and some other things go less well … there are all aspects of human capital management because... no longer do we see people as human resources but we see people as capital that changes a lot... and this management of human capital is the most difficult management because one has to deal with people who have not made the same journey, with people who have been conditioned in certain ways, have expectations, that they have desires, that have suffered, that have pain and have a series of afflictions that affect their actions and so it's not all easy here. All this has led me to strive to pursue not just the success for the company, but

to make it a valuable company. Success is something that comes as consequence… this is my thought (Int.NB)

[... un esperimento che sto continuando a fare, è un work in progress, perché è qualche cosa che sento, che cerco di sperimentare dentro l'azienda... delle cose mi vanno bene, delle cose meno bene, sicuramente ci sono tutti gli aspetti della gestione del capitale umano. Questo l'ho detto ultimamente, in questa visione qui non si vede più le persone come delle risorse umane, ma si vede le persone come un capitale... che cambia moltissimo in questa maniera qua e questa gestione del capitale umano è la gestione più difficile perché uno ha a che fare con persone che non hanno fatto questo percorso, con persone che hanno condizionamenti, che hanno aspettative che hanno desideri che hanno sofferenze, che hanno dolore e che hanno una serie di afflizioni mentali che li fanno agire e quindi non è facile tutta questa parte qui. È tutto questo aspetto mi ha portato piano piano appunto a cercare di perseguire non più tanto il successo per un'azienda, ma far diventare un'azienda di valore.Il successo poi secondo me viene di conseguenza. (Int.NB)]

4.4. Temperance: Economy of Awareness

The theme of **the Economy of Awareness** represents the philosophy of the company. It is a solid aspect of Mr Branca's leadership and its essence is delivered directly through his words:

… the meaning of the Economy of Awareness is to pursue profit, but with respect for people and the environment, and so I tried to build the company and to organize it in this way (Int.NB)

[il senso dell'Economia della Consapevolezza è quello sí di perseguire un utile ma nel rispetto delle persone e dell'ambiente e così ho cercato di costruire l'azienda, di organizzarla in questa maniera (Int.NB)]

In the unstructured interviews sessions it has been a prominant topic for discussion and talk. Table 14 shows the visualization of the key words about the Economy of Awareness as expressed by the respondents.

Table 14. The Economy of Awareness key words
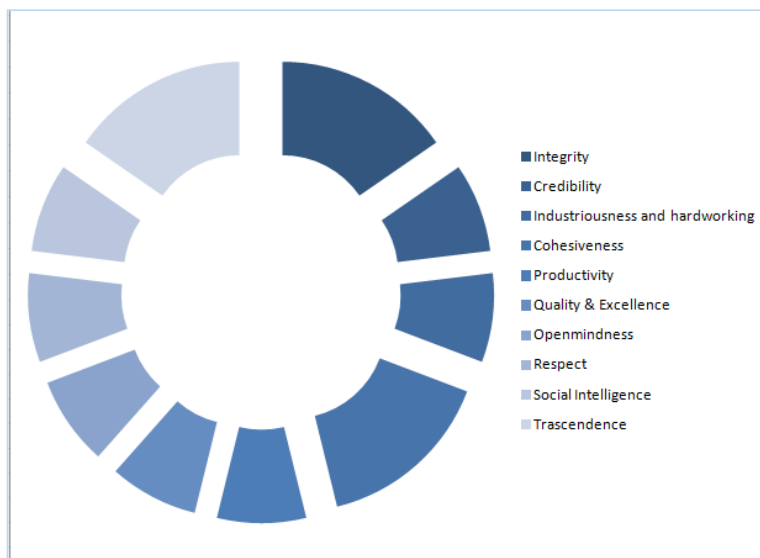
As depicted, the Economy of Awareness has been described by different attributes, three of them are the most perceived and experienced by the employees of the company: Integrity in its meaning of honesty, cohesiveness and transcendence.

The Economy of Awareness is very important to me. [It means] What he [NB] says is true is actually 'authentic authenticity' (Int.1)

[Per me è molto importante, perché comunque sapere di far parte di un gruppo che un...cioè non ce ne sono altri secondo me altri... io ho sentito altri leader parlare raccontare e poi so che fanno l'opposto quindi molte volte bello all'esterno far vedere che sei così in un certo modo poi non lo sei. Lui [NB] quello che dice è vero in realtà è autentica autenticità (Int.1)]

We feel part of the company in the sense that it is no longer about seeing the company as a place of work where one has to go because at the end of the month there is salary... there is pleasure to be able to contribute both to the company's interest and then to our's as well... (Int.4)

[Noi ci sentiamo partecipi nel senso in che senso cioè non c'è più il vedere l'azienda il posto di lavoro con un posto dove uno deve andare perché poi a fine mese arriva lo stipendio c'è anche spesso c'è anche il piacere di poter contribuire sia quello che può essere l'interesse dell'azienda che poi è anche il nostro (Int.4)]

... the awareness of knowing that you are not alone. And this is what I liked in the company (Int.7)

[...la consapevolezza di sapere che non sei da solo. Ed è questo che mi è sempre piaciuto dell'azienda. (Int.7)]

The employees, and the people involved with the company, experience the harmony, the feeling of being centered and secure. It creates the right environment, the middle ground, which is a characteristic of **the temperance**, to feel and be protected for personal balance and evolution of the Self:

…you must have awareness of what you do because if you get up in the morning, you have to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and be happy with what you see, you can then go quietly to bed. In this case, I sleep and I do not have anything to reproach myself about. Maybe I can always do more, but, given the limits of my capabilities, of my resources and of time, I think I'm satisfied with myself (Int.8)

[Si è anche questo, avere la coscienza di quello che fai perchè la mattina quando ti alzi e ti guardi allo specchio non ti sputa in faccia, primo, per come la vedo io. Perché io vado a letto tranquilla, dormo di notte e non ho qualcosa da rimproverarmi. Tipo avrei potuto fare di più..no no non ho potuto fare di più , potremmo fare di più quantità se avessimo più tempo potremmo fare mille altre cose però nei limiti delle mie possibilità delle mie risorse sempre più di quello che potrei fare e quindi io penso di essere soddisfatta di me(Int.8)]

Another example of applying a balanced approach to what is possible and what can be done is:

Then the Economy of Awareness... be aware of these possibilities and the limit... as well... (Int.5)

 [Quindi l'Economa della Consapevolezza… essere consapevoli di queste possibilità e limiti… si beh… (Int.5)]

To me the Economy of Awareness is not just about results, but to me it means making super results which include respecting the environment, being aware of and respecting people and their needs... if the company does produce super results, this is for the benefit of stakeholders , customers, and suppliers, who for example, will always be paid on time... unfortunately, everything we have done in the last 30 years including the treatment of the environment, does not reflect this [Economy of Awareness] view... (Int.13)

[Quindi per me l'economia della consapevolezza non è fare il risultato per me è fare dei super risultati ovviamente nel rispetto dell'ambiente nel rispetto dei consumatori fruitori di servizio insomma il destinatario finale, ma se l'azienda fa super risultati, vanno bene gli azionisti, vanno bene i consumatori o i fornitori dell'azienda che verranno sempre pagati per tempo questa è per me l'economia della consapevolezza per andare oltre stare molto alti l'economia della consapevolezza è tutto quello che non abbiamo fatto negli ultimi 30 anni e cioè il rispetto dell'ambiente, cioè purtroppo l'economia del consumo (Int.13)]

The Economy of Awareness is the result of a permanent collective commitment to keeping the living organism healthy in all its parts and it will be extensively discussed in Chapter 5.

This is the product of a complex process and implementation because of several key factors. Firstly, we consider the human dimension, as all the employees are human beings with different characteristics and talents, and different speeds and timing in executing their tasks, as described in the next section.

4.5 Justice and Courage: Synchronized Leadership

The theme of the **Synchronized Leadership** is based on leadership experience, the perceptions, emotions, feelings, sensations, thoughts and actions of the participants

of the research. **Justice** was defined as fairness to achieve the common synchronized action not only in the practice in terms of simply operating together, but rather combining, orchestrating, and aligning the thinking process and the **courage** to go through the emotional process with empathy, as discussed in Chapter 2.

This kind of extensive meaning of synchrony is essential for the common understanding of awareness about what is happening or what people do in terms of their actions or decisions related to the managerial or organizational aims, when they are called to act for a purpose.

A couple of people expressed this point as follows:

Each attitude and every action that I do is an action centered on my understanding about what the reason is, why I am taking action, the goal and therefore the results of my action (Int.5)

[Ogni atteggiamento e ogni azione che io faccio è un'azione centrata su una mia conoscenza di cosa, da dove viene la ragione per cui mi sto muovendo e agendo e l'obiettivo e quindi, quindi il risultato della mia azione (Int.5)]

Also, one interviewee stated:

It is not always easy to guess and follow the vision of a person (NB) because we can have the same vision, but often we do not know how to interpret the insights, so even at a leadership level can be complicated when the vision of the leader and the vision of the employee different (Int.2)

[Seguire la visione di una persona (NB) che non è sempre facile da intuire no… perché la stessa visione spesso anche noi non sappiamo leggere insights, quindi proprio anche a livello di leadership può essere difficile… quando hai una diversa visione dalla tua, però è un pochino più complicato (Int.2)]

The most surprising aspect of the data is the way synchrony is perceived by the interviewees. It can be a result of experiencing the direct presence of the leader in all the company phenomena (that sometimes lead to a sudden reconfiguration of the processes) or in the actions of the subjects themselves.

Strong evidence of this was found in some of the interviews. However, in some other interviews, to come to this result, it was necessary to analyze some expressions more deeply. For example:

… If I have a fixed mindest and I proceed with this kind of mindset because I got some success in the past, and I obtain these results, I will continue using this mindset. But a fixed mindset does not work

[at Branca]...the leader is such a visionary that to be able to work effectively and take Branca forward, I must be willing and able to have flexible mindset... (Int.5)

[Execution, nella letteratura manageriale…devo far accadere la cosa. Il fatto che io abbia uno schema mentale e che lo porti avanti, perché l'hai fatto in passato con successo e quindi sei arrivato al risultato, in altre realtà o in questa realtà, ma poi viene sovvertito perché viene impostato in maniera diversa, questo crea sicuramente una tensione questo è uno degli aspetti che uno deve mettere in conto quando una persona così carismatica, così fuori dagli schemi come proprio riferimento aziendale, questo sicuramente è un aspetto; l'altro aspetto, per cui uno deve mettersi a pensarci prima…non pensa che possa far parte del pacchetto, invece poi se lo ritrova... gli schemi non gli piacciono e li sovverte a seconda della propria sensibilità e questa e una cosa sulla leadership da sottolineare… (Int.5)]

This is an evolution... it is also about finding the right people and putting them in the right place so they can share and practice and to take action, take mindful action (Int. 8)

[E' un percorso è un'evoluzione quindi nell'evoluzione ci sta anche quella di trovare le persone giuste al posto giusto che condividono e che mettano in pratica e [sappiano come] praticare la pratica (Int.8)]

The result of the synchronized leadership can be expressed as a simple algorithm (see Table 15) which may vary according to the variables of the leadership experience and the leading of the Self, discussed in Chapter 2.

Table 15. The synchronized leadership algorithm
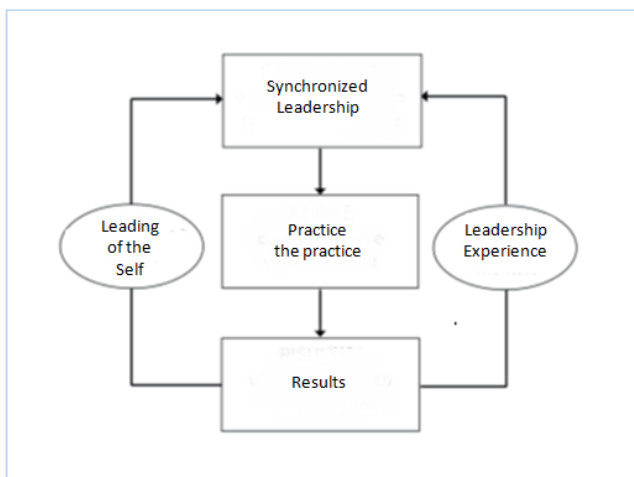
In case of voluntary slowdowns by some employees or misalignment with the company's principles and values, the system could be slowed or some process could be modified with unknown results, as mentioned in one interview:

... I do not know the reasons as to why there are some first lines acting like a cork or if the process is a bit slower and then they will align there too. I worked beside him and I could speak directly with him....then you know it is right that a leader is a leader if he creates a community but a leader is not leader without delegating... I was lucky enough I always work with him and so, so it's okay. (Int.13)

[...le ragioni non le conosco non so se perché ci siano alcune prime linee ....che fanno da tappo o se comunque il processo è un pò più lento e quindi arriverà anche lí. Io invece ho lavorato al suo fianco e ho potuto prendere la linea diretta senza intermediazioni di persone che non erano in grado di fare le intermediazioni... poi sai è giusto che un leader, un leader è leader se crea collettività ma non è leader senza delegare bene... Io invece ho avuto la fortuna di lavorare sempre con lui e per cui, per cui è andata bene.(Int.13)]

The Leadership perception in some cases is still linked to the personal experience. Group orientation in certain cases is perceived in individualistic terms and can create real gaps in the process. There is still a strong perception of authority, roles and rules which are typical of Latin countries such as Italy. These perceptions are not only related to leader behavior, but sometimes more revelant in people specifically from certain generations (like traditionalist or baby boomers). These people sometimes undermine the active involvement and active participation that could bring balance and alignment between the individual and the community.

Therefore, synchronization is a crucial asset, and is as important as the empathy element in this study. It is important because as stated by George Labovitz and Victor Rosansky (1997), this kind of alignment, as it is meant in this paper, can be thought of in two ways: it can be a *state of being* (related to *be mindful about something*) and it can represent a *set of actions (*related to *practice the practice)* which without, leadership cannot happen or cannot be sustained in a company. This is the essence of the Synchronized Leadership in this study.

5. Discussion

The aim of this case study was to explore the employees' experiences and the perceptions related to Mr. Branca's leadership and to determine whether it was aligned to the style of Mindful Leadership. Moreover, the aim was to determine whether Mr. Branca's leadership style offered innovative perspectives, outcomes and interpretations and whether his leadership dynamics contributed to the prosperity of

his employees and to the profit of the company itself. The investigations of the perceptions and the experiences of the people inside the company were fundamental in designing the real evidence of the effectiveness of Mindful Leadership in a business organization as it already is in the field of health, well-being and education. The motivation of the study arises from the current international global need and interest in shaping new concepts of effective leadership able to face the challenges and the black swans of the current uncertainty destabilizing society and the environment.

On the professional and personal level, the passion for the topic has driven the author to deepen her understanding of leadership, mindfulness, emotional intelligence and meditation and to contribute to the implementation of a model for the promotion of an alternative leadership concept, which can help other companies and people in developing their practical working process and personal path. There was only one research question because of the many implications behind its two core words:

"*What are the personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership?*".

The research was conducted with responsibility and awareness using one of the major traditions of qualitative research into leadership: the case study. The unstructured interview was used for the empirical inquiry of a sample of 15 participants (13 audio-recorded and 2 recorded with personal written notes). The corpus data was translated and transcribed in the Italian and English languages. All the data were analyzed by creating content data codes, sub-categories, categories, preliminary themes (or family codes) clustered in five final themes.

5.1 Answers to the research questions

The answer to the research question **"*What are the personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Niccolò Branca's Mindful Leadership?*"** could not be simplified with a list of attributes or patterns, because some of them were so personal and intimate that could not produce examples for generalization. In this perspective it was necessary to unify them, and therefore, the result, was a complex process of interactions and networks between the leader, the employees, the agents of change

and the elements of leadership in all its processes in a context of evolution and permanent change.

To give a foundation and a structure to the answers and bridge the gap between the individual and the collective level of each participant in perceiving and experiencing the "mindful" leadership of Mr. Branca, it was necessary to shift from the micro to the macro level (Goffman 1983). Therefore, their perceptions and experiences were not defined as a single situation but as representing the process itself, as is shown in Figure 10 and described in the next section of this chapter.

The nucleus of the theoretical framework designed in Chapter 2 generates four phases of the process, the final result, its final application field and the managerial implications.
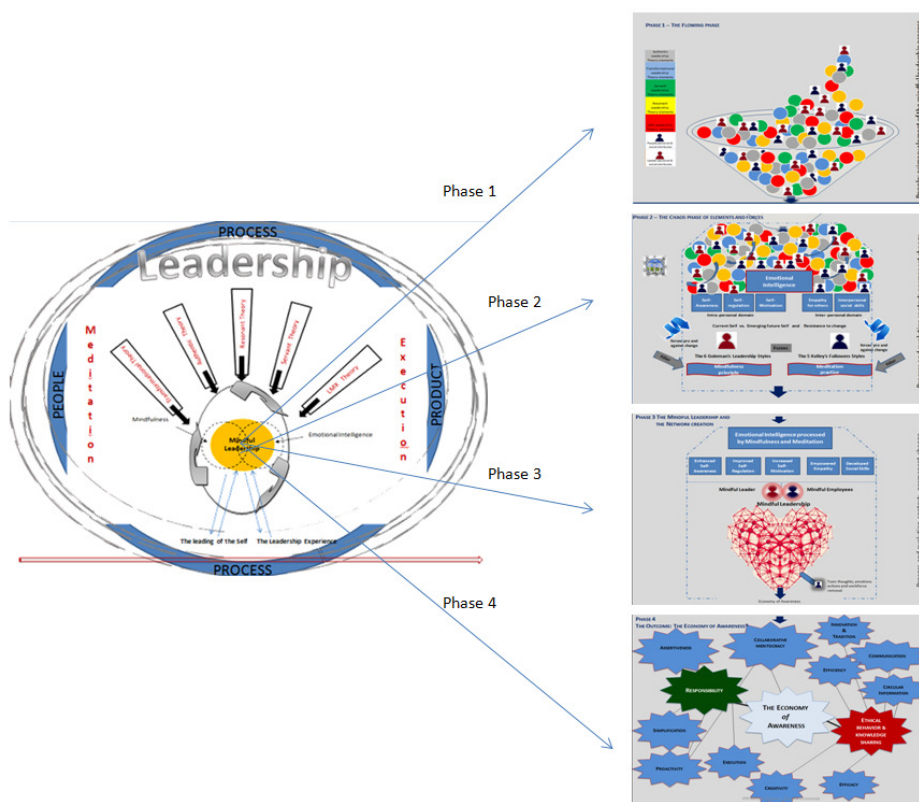

Figure 10. Process of interactions and interconnections leader /employees in a context of evolution and permanent change

As already mentioned in this study, the participants were the employees (who can be also called followers) of the Fratelli Branca Distillerie srl, the headquarters and

mother plant of the Branca International Group, situated in Milan, Italy. Mr. Branca himself can be considered an aware follower and leader at the same time.

All of them are individuals with specific personal and social skills, principles, values and virtues who are acting for the positive growth of the company in the International market scenario in which the only certainty is uncertainty (Bauman 2000). Without a leader able to consciously create a context that favors the rising of a positive and evolving behavior, the concept of community could end up in crisis in which individuals do not feel a sense of group or team being composed of empathic companions. Instead, they could feel disconnected and, in the worst case, even antagonists of each other. This leadership approach of Mr. Branca is challenging the environment in which this *"subjectivism"* has undermined the foundations of modernity, made it fragile, and where, without any firm point of reference, everything could be dissolved like in the *'liquid society'* of Bauman (2000). He is leading the company as a community where people are happy to work and where they are interactively and with awareness learning to make choices that lead to the excellence of the system.

5.2 Assessment of the results in the light of literature

To consolidate the concept of a company as a living organism, the motivation moves both the leader and the employees of the company into the first phase of the leadership process. They bring in it their own qualities, the soft and hard skills, the competences, the virtues, the values and the principles which are the elements needed to the system to start processing the leadership as changing process as mentioned in the literature review chapter. Furthermore, according to the blending of some of the elements of the five leadership theories described in Chapter 2, and that have some relevant impact and benefit on the Mindful Leadership approach. From the Authentic leadership theory, for example, the component of the relational authenticity and the transparency is a key element in the interaction process, in terms of sharing authentic information about the Self and to achieve truthfulness relationships (Avolio and Gardner 2005). The Transformational Leadership's factors, the charisma and the inspiration, are fundamental for the creation of an intense and

emotional bond between the leader and the employees to overcome the resistance to change (Bass and Avolio 1993). A further support, in this sensitive process phase, is the focus of the leader on followers that is a characteristic key of the Servant Leadership. Furthermore, the hope and the compassion of the Resonant Leadership can be facilitating elements for the success in welcoming the change process, and could determine, as in a natural selection, the employees engaged in the in-group or the out-group relationship with the leader according to the tradition of the LMX theory (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995).

The first phase of this process is called **the flowing phase**, in which, all the elements, as shown in Figure 11, start flowing inside a ideal funnel following a directional model similar to that of the visionary (or exemplary) leadership designed by Kouzes and Posner (2012). In this environment, the leader has to shape his leadership style according to the creation of a common vision and culture necessary for the growth of the company in the respect of the point of view, needs or expectations of the employees (followers). In Branca's case, these people, as mentioned before, belong to four different generations, and this aspect creates a much more challenging and interesting connections ground on which to work. The people are the resource on which the whole structure of the leadership process is based and from where everything has to convey in the end, so that, to allow to the company's system not only to survive but to be built, grown and retained.
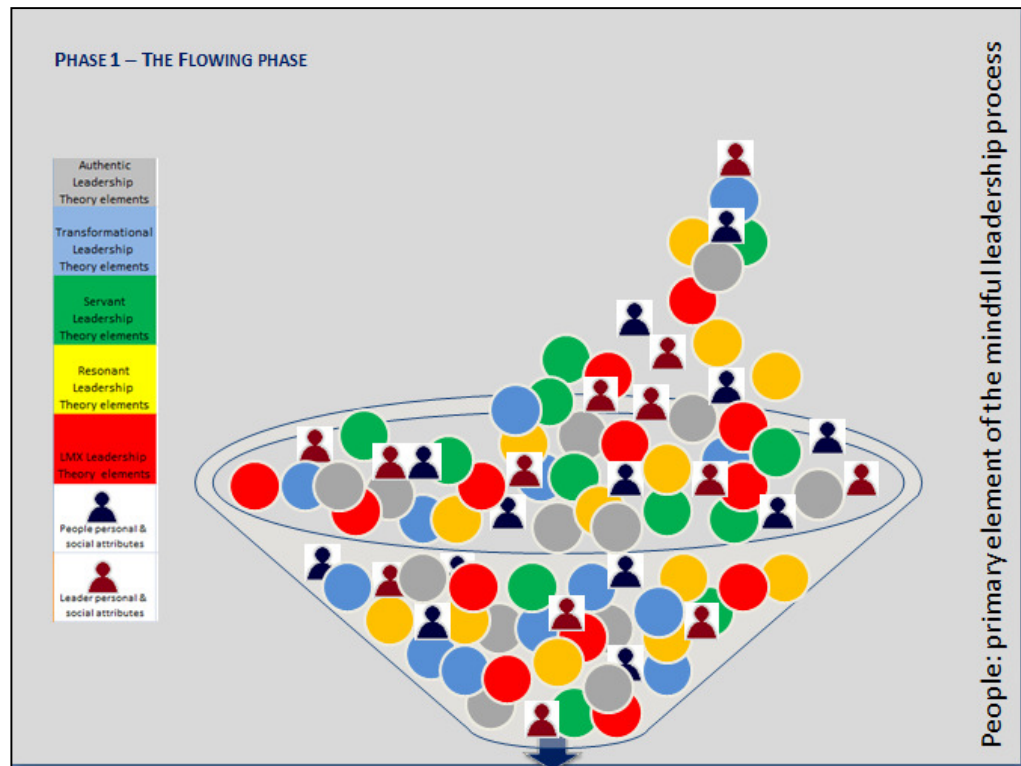
Figure 11. Phase 1: The Flowing Phase

In the second phase of the process, called **the chaos phase**, several challenges and dynamics happen on different levels, both on the leading of the Self front and the leadership experience meant as relationship, and many of the elements of the leadership theories of the theoretical framework create a sub-strata of complex attributes which impact on the final process.

As presented in Figure 12, on one side the leader, while developing his personal development path, he is challenged by many forces and in this specific case the CEO has to shape his leadership approach, selecting and blending many of the elements of the leadership theories framed in Chapter 2 for the benefits of the company. At the same time, he has to guarantee the well-being and the prosperity of the people working in. In a company like the F.lli Branca Distillerie Srl, the process, the evolution context is a permanent change, it is a complex system of internal and external forces, which is the result of 170 years of history, people, processes and products which are now challenging the uncertainty and instability of the 21st century. In this perspective, the leader, Mr. Branca, as he is also used to say, he is always aware of

the importance of the past, aware of the need to be present in this present moment (here and now) and having always a wide sight on the future's horizon (it is not a case if the logo of the company, created in early 1900 is represented by an eagle, which is a powerful bird with an excellent eyesight).

On the other side, the employees, as mentioned above, are people with individual attributes and needs, who are working following the same vision, for the same mission, in a common company culture. As human being, they have different timing and empathy approach in achieving the level of executional excellence required by the company; this means that they have different experience or perception of the vision, mission of the company and the leadership process.

Figure 12. Phase 2: The Chaos phase of elements and forces
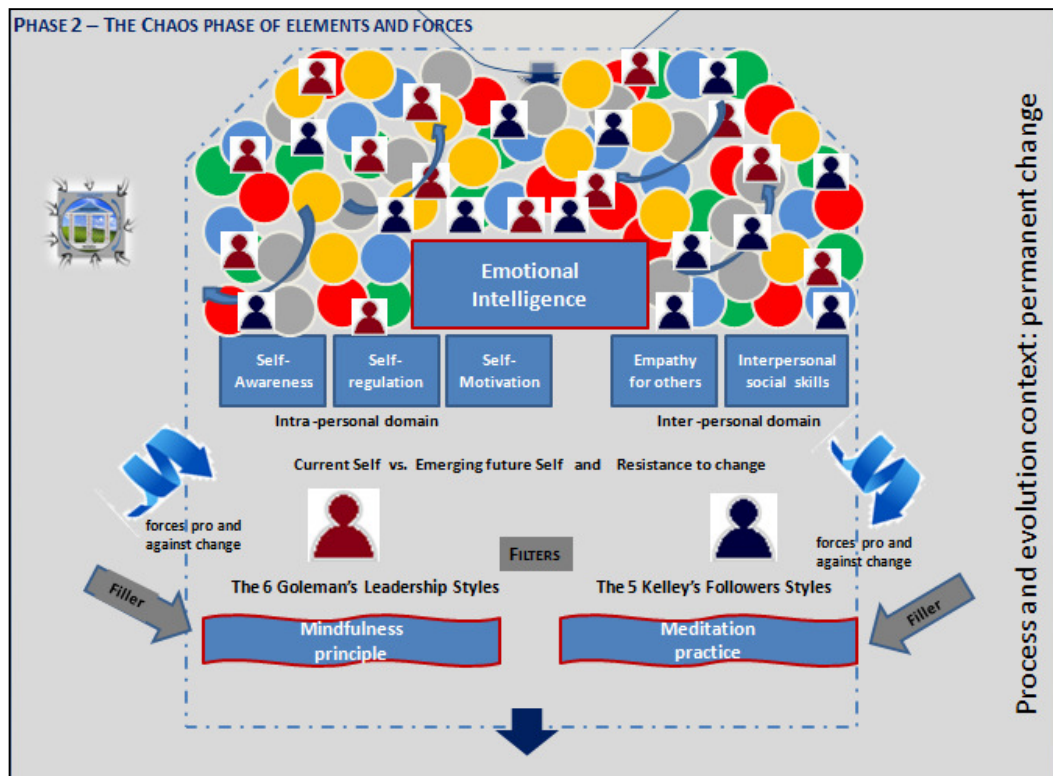
In the Chaos phase of the process, the emotional intelligence as described in Chapter 2 plays a key role in the personal development of the leader and the employees as well. It operates on two different levels: the intra-personal domain (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation) and in the inter-personal domain (empathy for others and interpersonal social skills).

The common challenge the leader and employees have to face is the interactive complex dynamic of the whole leadership system (Mary Uhl-Bien 2006). In a complex system like a company, the balance and the awareness are fundamental to shape the leadership process and define the leadership (and the followership) style. The current Self and the emerging Self, that are the protagonists involved in it, have to find a balance among all the known and unknown elements challenging the system itself. In this company case, this aspect is much more complicated, because of the international position of the company on the market. In fact, Branca Company is a family business, with a corporate structure, with Italian roots and it is exposed to different cultures and business approaches (see Figure 13) and their implications in the network relations.

Figure 13. Exposure of the Branca's Italian family business on the global market

(Created on the original model of Trompenaars' four cultures – with the permission of Mr. Niccolò Branca for the use of the company's logo)
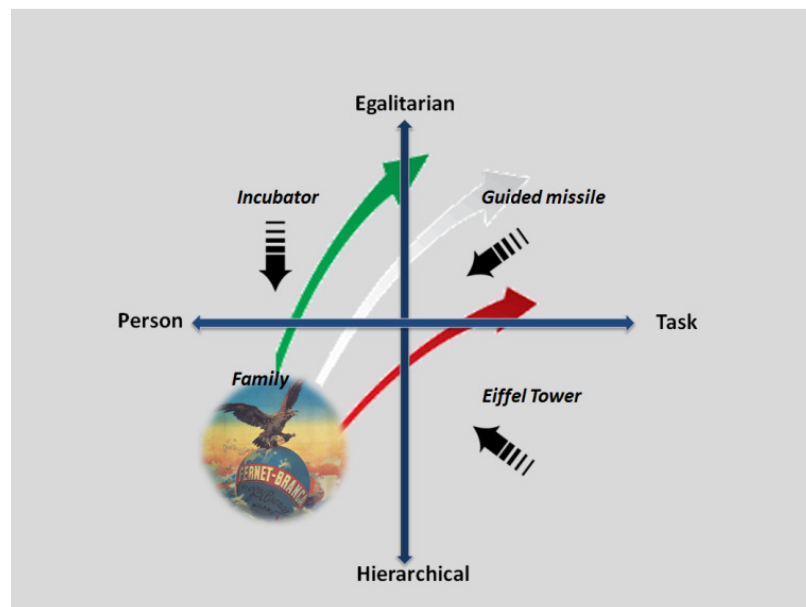
The external and the internal forces, as stated by Lewin in 1950, are the forces for the change and or against the change. His model is still current for the understanding of the dynamics of the resistance to the change. In fact, as pointed out by Lewin (1951), the leader has to deal with three stages of the change as shown in Figure 14: the unfreezing, in which he has to convey the need for a change and prepare the

organization in accepting it; a second step, the change, which is the time of the implement change and the last, but not least, the refreezing step in which the leader has to provide support and give time.
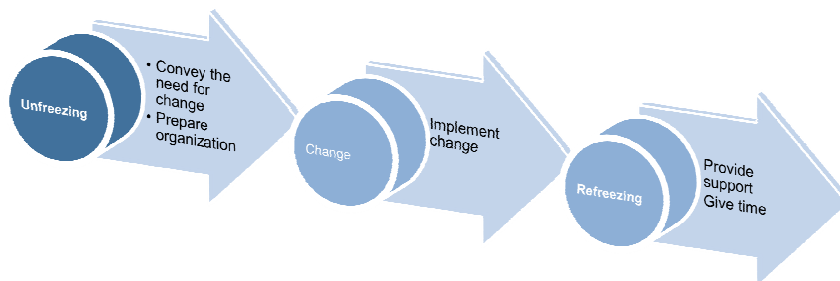
Figure 14 . Lewin's stages of change - Nahavandi (2015)

This is a very sensitive step on the leadership path. It is the moment in which the sensitivity and the actions must be balanced. For the leader, the success of this balancing can be assisted by the right choice in the use of the six leadership styles of Daniel Goleman described in Chapter 2. For the employees-followers can be of help having the motivation and the will to gain awareness about themselves and understanding the style of their followership and their position in the process. For this purpose, the five followers' styles suggested by Kelley (1992), and shown in Table 16, could serve as a filter, as an indication. They are: the alienated follower, the conformist, the pragmatic survivor, the passive follower and the effective follower.

Table 16. The five followers styles of Kelley (1992) - Sourced in Daft (2014)

Follower Type	Thinking Style	Level of Engagement
Alienated Follower	Independent, critical thinker	Passive in the organization
Conformist	Dependent, uncritical thinker	Active in the organization
Pragmatic Survivor	Both as needed	Both as needed
Passive Follower	Dependent, uncritical thinker	Passive in the organization
Effective Follower	Independent, critical thinker	Active in the organization

Thus, if in the case of the leadership approach and as pointed out by Goleman (2000) the most effective leadership style is the combination of the six leadership's styles he suggested, in the case of the employees-followers, the most effective follower is the independent and critical thinker, active in the organization and mindful of the effects of his or her own and others behavior in achieving the company vision (Daft 2014).

This work did not study in details the company's employee's followership styles associated with their generation, the working years in the company and ability to deal with the perceptions about Mr. Branca's leadership. This could be the starting point for ultimately searching and defining the detailed specifications with a double purpose: to provide to the employees some material for their further personal development about their followers' attitude and to offer to the leader some more data about the human capital he is leading.

The importance to add the mindfulness, as a principle, and the meditation as a practice in the process is mainly due to the need of awareness and balance as above discussed. The meditation, the breathing technique, the yoga coaching as it is practiced in the company assists the mindfulness construct (being in the present moment) for four main reasons: helps to stay in the flow, helps in keeping an open mind, amplifies the creativity and empowers the internal strength.

This is the moment in which the leader and the followers should align. It is a very challenging moment because not all the employees reach this development at the same moment and their individual interaction can influence the structure. And it is also important to underline that this study is about an Italian wholly family owned business present on the global market; the leader is President and CEO, he has to deal not only with different people, genres, generations, cultures, countries working together or involved in it, but he is working to shape a new leadership approach shifting from classic top down leadership (typical of the Italian family business) to a different leadership perspective, the one of the complex system leadership (Hazy, Goldstein and Lichtenstein 2007) that corresponds to the creation of a network respecting the environment and where people are considered as ends and not as means (Branca 2013).

Respecting the roots and traditions of the past, being present challenging the evolution's steps and projecting the company in the innovative future: this is the challenge of his Mindful Leadership.

Thus, the factors of mindfulness and meditation are necessary in filling the gap of the leadership process in its complexity and in achieving the ideal processed modality of the emotional intelligence which is needed to create a *'social brain'* (Goleman 2017).

In fact, the upgrade level of its five elements and above all the empathy, as shown in the Figure 7 of Chapter 2, becomes a common denominator from where to start in shaping the new concept of the company as living organism and driving the leadership process into its third phase, **the mindful leadership and the network creation phase** as shown in the Figure 15 here below.
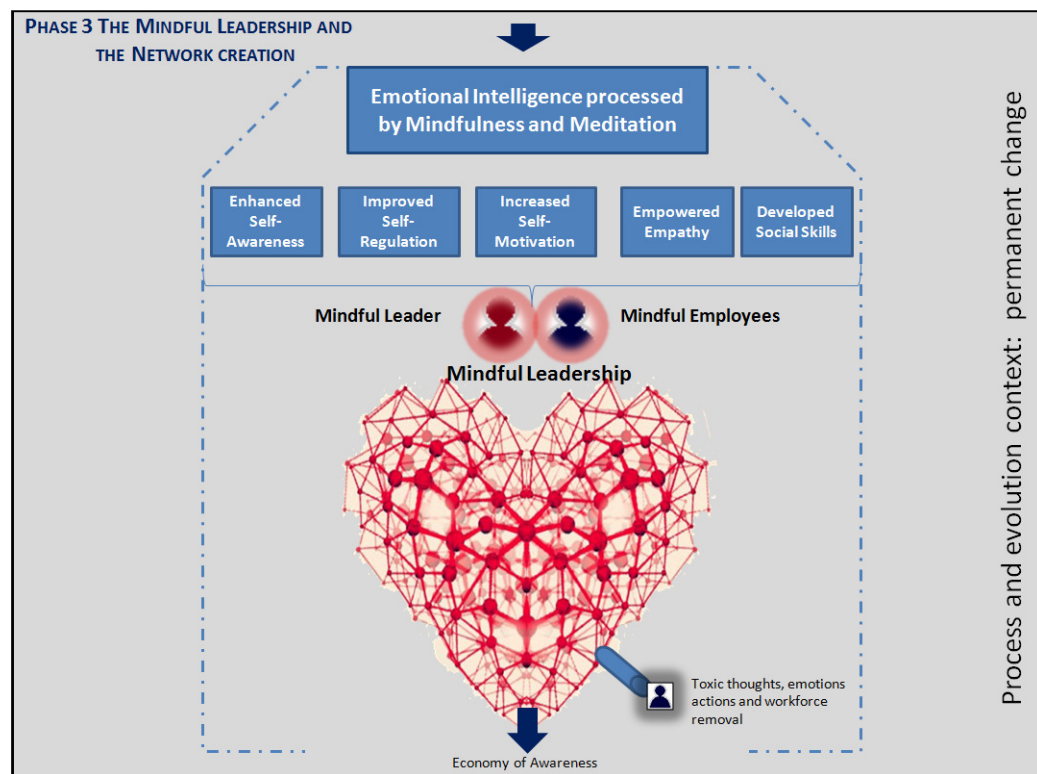

Figure 15. Phase 3: The Mindful Leadership and the Network Creation
"Heart/Mind" network image sourced from *Economia della Consapevolezza* - Branca (2015)

In this third phase the leader, the CEO, is aware and mindful. He is not only the architect of the new shape of the company, but he becomes facilitator and adaptor.

Influencing others, being among others and producing a new frame of values and meaning and indirectly affecting the system, he is agent of positive change by inspiring, leading employees and helping them in dealing with the resistance to change (Schlesinger and Kotter 1979).

This is a crucial step in the process of the Mindful Leadership, in which the leader is working for the final goal to create a "mindful" company culture which is projected to reach a long-term network able to work for the evolution of the company and the people involved. It is a moment of high time commitment and energy for him and it is required a high level of communications skills and high level of awareness that the risk that an appropriate change can happen exists. Above all, if the employees-followers have not reached the same alignment point needed in the company. Surprisingly, this can happen despite the mindful will and the condition.

Therefore, it can be assumed, that is one of the reason some of the employees and Mr. Branca himself, as they stated, sometimes feel a sense of misalignment, not only about the different way the Mindful Leadership of Mr. Branca is perceived inside the company and outside the company, but above all the way some thoughts, actions or practices are not fully shared, understood and executed. Although this could seem a point of weakness of the leadership process, in a deeper analysis is a point of strength. This gap creates the right attitude for a further step in the development of the awareness, which is the fuel for the change. For example, it is preparatory in making decisions and taking actions, sometimes painful, but usuful for the good of the community. For example, identifying and removing unnecessary or harmful thoughts or actions to eliminate toxins from the system as it happens in each living organism. This could also mean reaching the extreme point to have to remove some "toxic workforce". It is possible to hypothesize, that in presence of a Mindful Leadership style and a Mindful Company Culture, the condition of hiring or keeping toxic workforce is likely difficult to occur or at least it can facilitate the transformation of them to average workers as suggested by Housman and Minor (2015). In fact, according to their studies, this could be a benefit for the system enhancing the performance to a much greater extent rather than replacing an average worker with a superstar worker. In this study, the elements of toxicity harming the system were not studied and so they cannot be ruled out.

In the light of what discussed above, it could be assumed that only those people who reached the same level of personal development and leadership experience can proceed contributing to the practical application of the outcome in the fourth and last phase of the process. This is an optimum projection, but in the reality the practical application of the whole process is still a working progress towards the achievement of the excellence.

5.3 Practical application and managerial implication

The personnel's perceptions and experiences of Mr. Branca's Mindful Leadership contribute to shape the product of the leadership process itself that they create, nourish and develop with the CEO. Their awareness and their actions find practical application in **the Economy of Awareness**, as shown in Figure 16, and design the managerial implication as depicted in **the model of the Mindful Leadership at Branca** (see Figure 17). It represents the five themes emerged from the study and that are anchored by an element indicated with a word of Italian origin: **Tempo.**

5.3.1 *The Economy of Awareness*

The **Economy of Awareness** is **the fourth phase**, the outcome, the "product" of the leadership process. It is the philosophy of the company, made by people for people, started by the CEO with the aim to extend its practical application to all the stakeholders and the environment. In fact, as the study suggested, in his holistic vision of the company as a living organism, his thought has become a real organizational concept. The company is a network in which the inter- and intra - connections are awareness-based. There is awareness about the people, the production process, the respect of the environment, the use of the resources and the profit is considered as tool to generate a collective prosperity (see Figure 16).
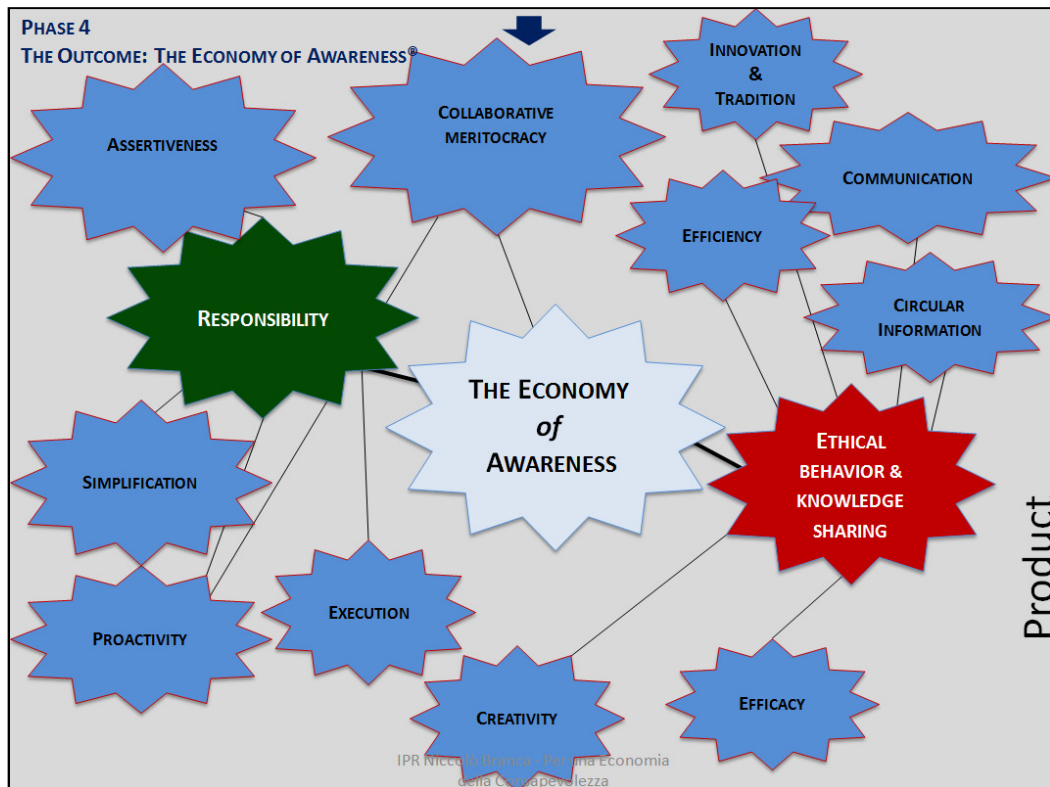
Figure 16. Phase 4: The Outcome: The Economy of Awareness
Adapted from *Economia della Consapevolezza* - Branca (2015)

At this level of awareness, Mr. Branca defines the Economy in its ancient Greek etymological meaning of Oikos (House) and Nomia (Law) that means dwelling in the law and in the truth delivering clear purposes, principles and values performing with the **simplification** of the process. The shift from the perspective of power to the perspective of **responsibility** creates a **proactive** behavior of all the employees, according to their specific roles in the company. In this way, it is possible to lead people to the **execution performance and executional excellence** making things happen. Furthemore, with a team building concept based on the **collaborative meritocracy**, the CEO facilitates a co-participative working mode to accomplish the shared mission and vision. This means involving people in being an active part of the project, rewarding them according to their personal level of responsibility and engagement in achieving the common project's goal.

In the realm of execution, to reach the excellence, the employees are supported by the principles of the mindfulness and the meditation, the yoga coaching practice along with some other tools and initiatives offered by the company for their personal

and professional development and knowledge. Through the Yoga coaching experience they are supported in managing related work stress by the simplicity and flexibility of the application and the speed with which they experience the first benefits (Tanzi 2016).The employees have the chance to make of meditation a routine, as it is for the CEO. As pointed out by Schneider, Zollo and Manocha (2010, 27), its integration with a healthy mental and physical activity helps the practitioners in becoming detached witnesses of their own thoughts, feelings and actions as already described in Chapter 2, so that they can achieve a different perspective of their "way of being" creating lasting effective changes in their behavioral practices.

In this perspective, it is possible for the employees to achieve an **assertive** approach and to be able to learn, to see, to listen without any blames for the challenges occurred in life and leadership, and to act. **The Economy of Awareness** is the condition in which the **ethical behavior** and **the sharing of the knowledge** produced: the Ethical Code - shared with all stakeholders (created in 2000), the Environment Balance, the Work Safety Code, the Food and Environment Security Code and the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Ethics and reputation are fundamental assets for a company, especially in the current economic context (Almiento 2011), as well as the profit of the company, that becomes a tool and it is partially reinvested in the company. It takes care of the prosperity of the people guarantying on time the salary to the employees and whatever special needs they should have. It returns to the community the due fully paid taxes in the respect of the country's rules. It is used for the timely payment of the suppliers so that to help in sustaining the high quality of the products produced respecting the delivery time to customers. Furthermore, it is necessary for the implementation of healthy and safety production process for the protection the people and environment.

It is important to mention, that the role of the **communication** as presented in the previous chapters of this study, is fundamental to nourish the leadership process and the practicality of the Economy of Awareness. To facilitate it, the flowing of a **circular information** system has been put in force to guarantee efficiency and **efficacy** to the **innovative creativity** of the people for the development of future perspectives in the **respect of the tradition** and in the name of the motto ***Novare Serbando.***

5.3.2 *The Mindful Leadership TEMPO model*

The five main themes emerged in the results can be considered as useful parameters for the understanding of the whole leadership process in family business or organizations characterized by the active presence of the ownership. They can be used as guidelines for some other business leadership process.

The result, as shown in Figure 17, is a particular model of Mindful Leadership in which the choices are made acting on the dimension of Time that can be thought both as Chronos- fixed and universal, and Kairos- dynamic and changeable**.**
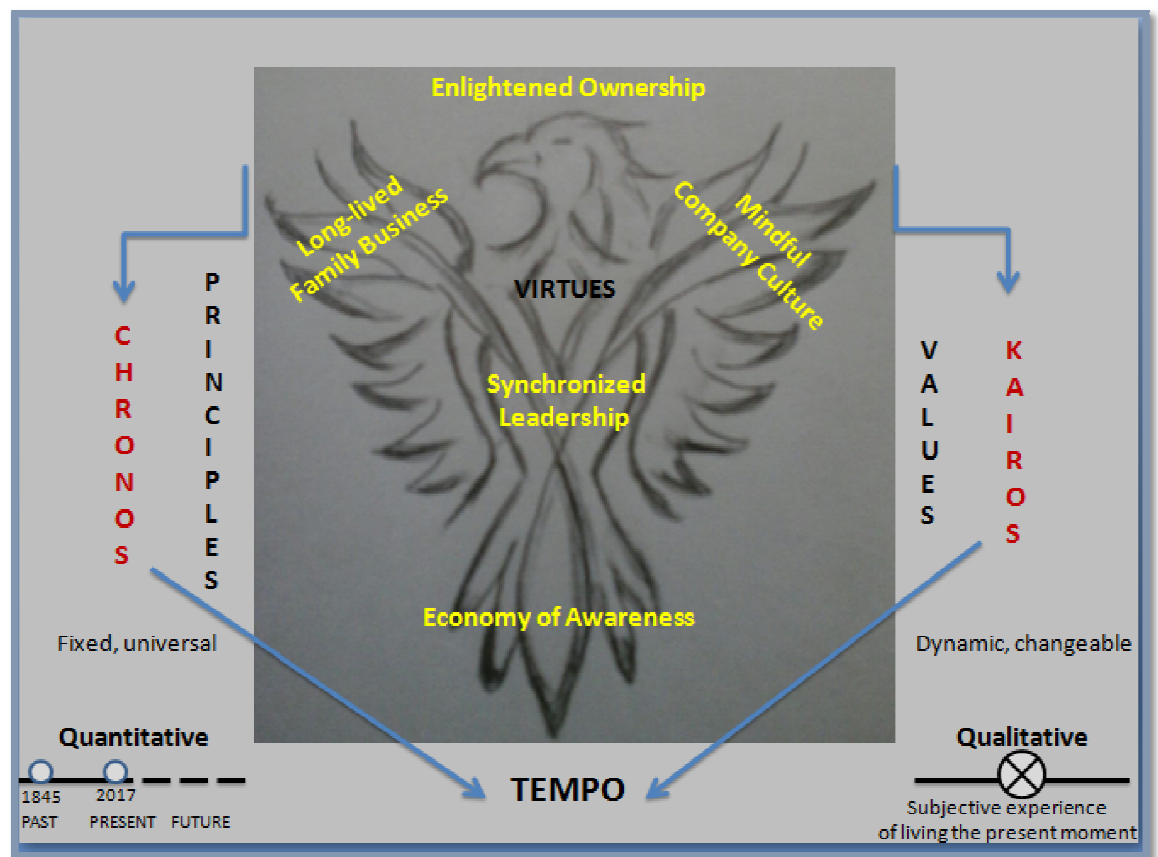

Figure 17. The Mindful Leadership *TEMPO* model
Background pensil drawing: '*Mindful Eagle*' by Joséphine Cuirasse (2017)

From the leader and the followers' perspective, the managerial implication of it in the leadership process can be conceptualized with two words: the *"frequency"* of the CEO/Leader and the *"sequence"* of the personnel/followers (see Figure 18).

The CEO/Leader moves on the horizontal timeline of Chronos on which the six generations of Branca members started the company's journey and fixed its principles working always to ensure longevity to the company meant as a community. These principles are still secure and represented by the eagle's wing of the Long-lived family business. On that timeline, the current CEO, Mr. Niccolò Branca is adding his personal *"frequency"* contributing with his direct involvement in the creation of the Mindful Leadership Tempo. He is giving continuity to the organization keeping Chronos as pace-setting according to the traditions and the principles of the past, and using Kairos as injection of subjective insight and experiences. Making choices for the company and the people, creating actions based on values and rewards, he creates the Mindful Company Culture which is the second eagle's wing. With the support of the **meditation** as tool, used to capture the moments of full awareness and total attention, he can expand his focusing ability taking advantage on what is happening "*right here and right now"*, in the flow of the mindfulness and the presence. Furthermore, he protects all the community, keeping attention to its future, the "*then and there"* of the generations to come. In fact, as he used to say in Latin language: "*Non mihi sed filiis"* it means "*not for me but for my children"*.

The personnel's use of Chronos in the company is complementary to that of the CEO: they have to make choices, creating actions by moving in synchrony with him as leader of the system in a flexible time-space *sequence*.

As already discussed in the study, not all the employees have the same personal or professional development, they don't have the same openness to some sudden change of situation or roles, so that, the implication of a sense of misalignment or sometimes the inability to perform can affect the final result of the process. These possible crises give the opportunity to put in practice the awareness of the importance of the Tempo. It would be a utopian expectation to think that the company, as a network can pulse always at the same frequency, but it is realistic to consider that the Self- and the collective awareness about the different speed of each employee, first line manager, or complete team can be the tool for the balance of the whole move, the action and the execution. For example, achieving a goal in few moves could mean *gaining a tempo*, that could be used when conversely in some other situations the system faces a *gap of tempo*; or in the case when

unforeseen situation's change occurs and a person is forced to make moves and choices that were not planned in the initial plan. If he or she is aware and trained to read and catch the *Kaizen moment*, this could mean, gaining a tempo, instead of perceiving it as a *waste of tempo*. The awareness, the mindfulness and the empathy discussed in this work have also this function in the company; they assist the human resources in acting all "with *TEMPO*".
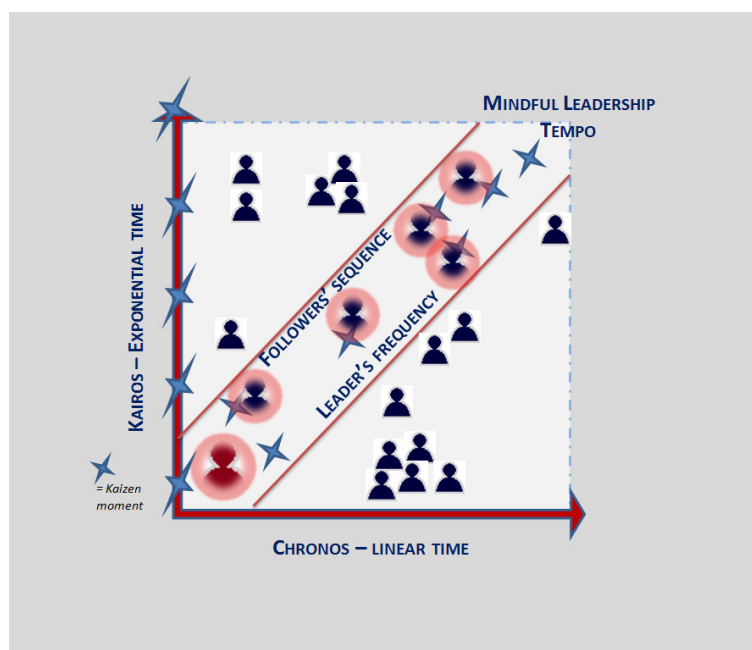
Figure 18. The Leader's frequency and the Followers 'sequence

This is the **TEMPO of the Mindful Leadership** in which the **Enlightened Ownership** functions as a social brain, a control unit; it is the **Mind** in charge to keep in balance the **Body** formed by the principles of the founding fathers of **the Long-lived Family Business** on one side and the values of the **Mindful Company Culture** on the other side. The **Economy of Awareness**, like a rudder, stabilizes all the structure. These four elements along with a conscious use of the mind, the heart and the courage (Branca 2012) can transform the power, meant as action, towards the excellence and contribute through **the Synchronized Leadership**-the **Heart**, in centering and keeping in balance all the system. Therefore, the perceptions and experiences of the people in the company can be represented by their own strength and their potential. Furthermore, they can be defined by the six virtues pointed out by Seligman &

Csikszentmihalyi (2000): the humanity, the wisdom, the temperance, the transcendence, the justice and the courage. They create *the collective soul* of the company.

It is not a case if in the Greek language virtue is *arête,* which means excellence. The kind of excellence described by Aristotle in which the *"Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance, determines your destiny"* and that becomes an agent of protection for the endurance and the development of the living organism with *Tempo* and over time.

5.4 Limitations of the research

The first two limitations of the research are inherent to the exploratory nature of this qualitative research and prevent this study from any claim about reliability and validity in contrast to large sample based deductive quantitative research and some more advanced qualitative and mixed-methods studies. Furthermore, as pointed out by Yin (2003), the methodology of the case study, despite the several benefits explained in Chapter 3, is characterised by the small number of the sample population that doesn't allow generalising from the results. In fact, in the study, the sample size of 15 participants did not allow exploring the experiences and the perceptions related to the phenomena in a wider perspective, although the results were shaped on a sample of people with different ages, genre, generations, working years and roles in the company and all of Italians origin.

An additional limitation of the study is the amount of time spent in the company by the researcher. A longer stay in the company, as participant observer would have enriched this work with the exploration of the use of the three kinds of empathy and its impact on the relations and interactions both of the CEO and the employees gathering some more data to show the implications in the different kinds of empathy in experiencing and perceiving this model of Mindful Leadership.

A further limitation of this work is the absence of research and analysis about the employee's followership styles.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

A first set of recommendations for future research are related to the company. The first recommendation suggested is to structure the sample participants according to the generations' workforce present in the company with the purpose to reach awareness and understanding about how each generation perceive and experience the Mindful Leadership of Mr. Branca specifically. In exploring, for example, the personal and professional challenges they encounter working together and with the CEO. Such exploration's findings could contribute to a better team building awareness in a perspective of executional excellence according to the emotional intelligence parameters which form the 'Tempo' needed to achieve the situation of synchronized leadership.

A second suggestion is to extend the research, as already conducted in Italy, also to the employees of the plant in Argentina. As mentioned above in the study, Fratelli Branca Distillerie srl is the Italian mother plant of the holding Branca International Spa, and there is a second plant located in Argentina in Buenos Aires in the company Fratelli Branca Destilerias S.A. Although the two countries have very similar cultural and leadership profiles, delivering a cross-cultural perspective about the experience and perception of Mr. Branca's leadership in different geography could be of benefits for the employees of both the companies and also for the third parties working with them. Mr. Branca himself, as CEO and President of the group, could have a wider feedback about his leadership so to allocate and adjust some specific insights into actions accordingly.

Further studies could also be conducted to determine the differences in the effectiveness of the Mindful Leadership of Mr. Branca compared to the leadership style of his ancestors over time organizing information according to the variables of Chronos and Kairos suggested by the Tempo model. This kind of study could be of historical and practical value for the company and could be a 170 years experience legacy to contribute to the history of the leadership in the family business in Italy.

A second set of recommendations for further research is dedicated to the international audience. In comparing the Mindful Leadership Tempo model to some other leadership style or approach in the family business context of different countries could be beneficial for mutual growth and implementation of the model. As Finland is the host country for the author, a comparative cross-cultural study between Mr. Branca's leadership's style and a leadership approach of a Finnish CEO and owner of a similar family business company could be considered.

The use of the emotional intelligence, the principle of mindfulness and the meditation as tool could lead many other companies to the same very positive conclusion as in the Branca's case, as stated by an employee in one of the interviews:

At the heart of Mr. Branca's (leadership) style is the notion of feeling good. Being part of Branca's organizational culture therefore means feeling good. Working in Branca, it means not only feeling good as an individual but also taking care of others so that they can feel good as well. This way we can all feel good. (Int.10)

[Lo stile di (Niccolò) Branca significa stare bene, stare alla Branca vuol dire stare bene, lavorare vuol dire star bene e far star bene e dunque stiamo bene tutti. (Int.10)].

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Data Analysis Theme *Family Business*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Historical tradition of the past generation caring for the people working for the	Job security and people wealth (wellbeing) Wealth	
Sense of belonging to the company, feeling the company	Togetherness	
The support from NB and the company is so visible and	Influencial	
Attention to people	Humanity	
Vision of a leader of a family business	Foresight	Family Businenss
The company as extended family for the employees	Wholeness	
The company like a family and the job is safe and protected	Source of wealth and employement	
A world apart ...	Structural and emotional Dimension	
No patatrac (collaps)	Job safe	
Belong to the company	Togetherness	
Well being	Job security and people wealth (wellbeing)	

Appendix 2. Data Analysis Theme *Vision*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Holistic vision of life and economy	Wholeness	
New phase for the company , from a logistic of machines to a logistic of the heart	Love	Vision
Long term	Perspective	

Appendix 3. Data Analysis Theme *Mission & Business model*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Dedication to the company and responsibility towards the society	Total engagement and commitment	Mission & Business Model
Ethical codes	Ethics	
a clean and healthy company	Fairness	
Work in progress mission	Obstacles, challenges and risks	
The profit is needed to keep the company alive and to pay all the employees, stakeholders and taxes	Accountability, values	
Continuity of the company overtime	Resilience	
Entropy is a measure of randomness. Much like the concept of infinity, entropy is used to help model and represent the degree of uncertainty of a random variable. It is used by financial analysts and market technicians to determine the chances of a specific type of behavior by a security or market.	Entropy	
"SOP Standard Operational Procedures" critical point	Doing	
Turn over of the first line and challenging scheme of procedures to be balanced	Backbone needed	
To keep a straight course to consolidate our goal	Doing	
Embodiement of the company	Embodiment	
Doing without cheating the goal	True to the mission	
Sensitivity , responsibility of the people inside the company having different roles	Accountability, values	
Agile and thin company structure	Openmindedness	
People in the company can also take other roles in case of need for the common good and giving continuity to the work and plan of action	Zest	
Self regulatory Codes	Self-regulation and control	
Career Rewards	Rewards	

Appendix 4. Data Analysis Theme *Execution*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Solution oriented	Executional Performance	Execution
Solution oriented	Executional Performance	
Keep the track, the focus on the goal, on the direction	Executional Excellence	
Doing	Executional Excellence	
Present presence, the moment decides the action	Focus	
Building a team and working in a TEAM is very different than working in a Group, right peopole doing right thing in the right way	Building and Powering teams	
to subvert the schemes, change the perspective to make things happen	Outcome based leadership	
Makes things happen	Outcome based leadership	

Appendix 5. Data Analysis Theme *Personal Development*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Self-awareness, internal path, evolution meditation	Motivation	
Self-awareness, internal path, evolution meditation	Spirituality	
Attention to the body's needs in that moment	Mindfulness	
Sensations ,feelings and emotions in that moment	Mindfulness	
Perceptions of the moment	Mindfulness	
Energy of Mindfulness through meditation	Meditation	
Outcome of the self-development path as entrepreneur and leader of ourselves		
Cooperation and self fulfilment	Empathy	
Participation in the company as evolution and personal development	Empathy	
Yoga coaching and education	Introspection and self care	Personal Development
Yoga and meditation	Meditation	
Self-awareness, internal path, evolution meditation		
As leader, first he worked on him as individual, self	Leadership example	
Personal Evolution is a permanent process		
Self-management	Emotional Intelligence	
The ability of the CEO in emphatizing with his people on 3 different level of empathy, Cognitive, Emotional and empathetic concern	Social intelligence	
He is a person among person	Humanity	
Change of company because the goal was reached and the personal and the company ambitions and goals where not more aligned	Motivation	

Appendix 6. Data Analysis Theme *Company Culture*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Golden era of the past	Wisdom	
Elegance of Nobelty in asking makes a 'Yes' as answer	Kindness	
Senior leadership and governance positions in the company/family	Harmony between owbrnung family members	
Importance of roots and origin	Respect for traditions	
Company like a living organism working as a whole for the benefits of all	Cohesiveness	
Same principles and values, same DNA employees and him	Cohesiveness	
Heritage	Respect for traditions	
Branca's values	Values	
Historical path at the Museum	Heritage	
Innovation without betraying roots and origin of the company	Innovativeness	
Family, roots and innovation	Respect for traditions	
The company as a global cosmo	Wholeness	
The company like a village	Wholeness	
Company of functions	Functions	
Novare Serbando real truth	Traditions	
Respect and Care for the environment	Ecological consciousness	
Respect of environment	Ecological consciousness	Company Culture
The living organism grows with him, permanent challenge	Glocal village	
Respect for the past generations and origins	Traditions	
Responsibility, protecting the company and the CEO	Accountability, values	
Innovation and Tradition	Persistence	
Empowering employees thru his presence creating balance between tradition and innovation	Empowerment	
Sense of belonging to the community with different initiatives to shape the company as a family and finnaly this living organism	Glocal village	
High level of responsibility and commitment in the company	Accountability, values	
The CEO and the Company are 2 different entities	Embodiment	
The company is not yet fully meritocratic, it is a long process still going on	Meritocracy	
Some key persons in the organizations are not managing the people and the work process in a good way	Need of Sync	
The company and the CEO are two different entities but with one heart	Need of Sync	
Some people have not the courage to make changes inside the working practices because they are sscared to lose the job because of some people in key roles...nott he CEO	Need of Sync	
Fair process lays a foundation for continued family participation over generations.	Fairness	

Appendix 7. Data Analysis Theme *Leadership Style*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
A person , a born leader	Charisma	
Charisma from father to son	Charisma	
Concern and responsibility towards the employees	Responsibility	
The vision, the insight for the future	Enlightened	
A leader as a doer not a teller	Persistency	
Being present also in small and petty matters of the company	Presence	
No authoritarsm, feeling comfortable	Democratic	
Respect for the employees for their own identity and specifity	Love and Humanity	
A leader being part of the system without prejudice for the role covered	Impartiality	
Curiosity	Wisdom	
Winner	Effectiveness	
The charisma is a characteristic inside DNA	Charisma	
Humble leader	Temperance	
Care for people wellbeing and happyness	Humanity	
Empathy in all the 3 levels	Social intelligence	
Leader present and attentive, help	Presence	
Total coherence and ethics	Coherence	
Branca's leadership self-awareness	Trascendent	
The entrepreneur , the ability to lead in difficulties in leading	Courage	
Challenging leadership style	Persistent	
The leader who leads the ship with heart and courage, indiscussed lesdership and number one company	Courage	
Engagement and cooperation and contact	Co creative cooperation	
Humble person	Humanity	
Mr. Branca's charisma	Charisma	Leadership Style
Responsibility of the president	Value	
Visible leadership	Presence	
Communication style and the voice tone	Communication	
Sense of leadership	Justice	

Sub-Categories	Categories	
Hard and soft leadership skills	Charisma	
Process of leadership is something that happens naturally	Justice	
Leadership style or process cannot be fixed overtime..expecially in a changing world	Optimism flexibilty	
To empower his workers without imposing anything. Offers chances to grow	Empowerment	
A leadership style that lead people to appreciate situation and developping the sensibility for the awareness	Creativity	
The famous circle of the men of the capitain	Belong	
Responsibility and not power	Responsible	
Visionary style	Wisdom	
Syntony and sync	Sincronicity	
Key point of the leader, giving the example	Leadership example	
Mind Heart and Courage in the company in each action	Kiros	
Passionate about its committtment in the company and in the people well being	Engagment	
Leadership style and awareness : people wellbeing oriented = company profit	Humanity	
Entreprenuer of himself	Self entrepreneurship	
Lessons from the Count	Heritage	
His ability in seeing beyond limits. He can see what others cannot and he has this gift, this talent	Foresight	
Enlightened leader who offered possibility	Enlightment	
Farsighted person	Enlightened	
Empowerment implications	Empowerment	

Appendix 8. Data Analysis Theme *Leadership Experience*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Leader as manager of human capital	Human capital before that human resources	
Authority and authoritativeness	Temperance	
Empathy and Inside out, and also Mirroring	Balanced	
Presence for the evolution of the company	Presence	
Too much presence (of the leader) is surely a catalyst of attention but not always good for the business because of direct presence in processes created by others can create a sort of clash	Entropy	
Branca company: great working place and life experience	Happyness	
New leadership in a company of 170 years	Innovation	
The leadership perceived from outside the company is different compared to that perceived inside the company	Need of Sync	
Attention and openness to the execution process of his managers/workers	Executional Excellence	
He cannot stand stupid things without foundation	Wisdom & Knoweledge	Leadership Experience
Again: ouside, the public perception of his leadership is different	Need of Sync	
It is a path is an evolution in the evolution, it is also about finding the right people in the right place that they share and practice and practicing	Need of Sync	
Leader who leads the ship	Leadership process	
Communication, maieutic skills and emotional level	Communication	
Influencer	Influence	
Experience as Guide	Wisdom	
Anticipation of the needs	Global vison, focus and priority	
Leadership style as anticipation	Global vison, focus and priority	
Freedom in the personal choice	Freedom	
Working directing with him is very different inside the company	Direct relation	
Appreciation from the leader, rewards in terms of personal self-fullfilment	Rewards and Appreciation for the excellence	

Appendix 9. Data Analysis Theme *Economy of Awareness*

Sub-Categories	Categories	Themes/Concepts
Authenticity	Integrity	
Consistency	Credibility	
Long process	Industriousness and hardworking	
Sense of belonging	Cohesiveness	
Procedures and situations	Productivity	
Unique company	Quality & Excellence	
No loneliness	Cohesiveness	
Honesty and fairness	Integrity	
Accepting the challenge of the role	Openness	Economy of Awareness
People as goal and not as tool	Respect	
Social report	Social Intelligence	
Transparency	Integrity	
Profit of the company and prosperity of people have to walk and grow together	Transcendence	
Super results with the respect for people and environment	Transcendence	
Back to the traditions	Respect of the tradition	