






Leading autonomous teams
Case: Company X

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<p>The objective of the study is to suggest specific leadership actions in order to maximise Team A's performance. One intention is to study different leadership needs that the team has and investigate what are the key elements that support developing an autonomous team. Another intention is to evaluate the current state of leadership and the areas where leadership should be revised.</p> <p>The theoretical framework is based on relatively new literature, especially on journals. One relevant theoretical framework, focusing on psychological and social sciences, is Ryan & Deci's self-determination theory (2017). Another valuable source, focusing more on management research, are the team leadership dynamics by Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks (2001).</p> <p>The study was carried out using deductive qualitative research. The study's approach is single case study with a cross-sectional time horizon. Data were collected through survey. The research philosophy chosen is pragmatic, emphasising practical outcomes. The analytical approach is qualitative.</p> <p>The findings indicated that multiple leadership functions could be developed. The results suggested that the current leadership style is not providing enough guidance to Team A. Additionally, the lack of career development and regular feedback were highlighted as main blockers for efficient team performance.</p> <p>In conclusion, guidelines for leadership are produced. The leadership style should be adopted to a more supportive and coaching one. In order to maximise Team A's performance, the team leader should implement the guidelines produced.</p>	
Key words Teamwork, Team leadership, Autonomous teams, Team performance	

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1 Introduction

Quick changes in technology, regulations and tough competition are constraining organisations to adapt faster and faster. Hierarchical organisational structures tend to slow down business operations. What if these traditional structures are keeping companies from developing? What if slow processes are forcing companies to lose their competitiveness?

In the last years big changes in organisational structures can be seen. Traditional management and hierarchical structures are losing popularity and the actual operating level and teams are given more power. Managerial tasks are moved from managers to the team level reducing the number of managers. The manager's or leader's role is still important, but the nature of leadership has changed from managing, towards a more supporting and coaching style.

Companies understand that the biggest assets of an organisation are its people. In this complex business environment, organisations must have flexible structures that enable them to change direction if needed. Changing an organisation towards a more agile one, demands change throughout the company. Company X has just started a big organisational change that most of all concerns their organisational culture and leadership model towards a more agile one. Team A is one of the company's teams that is supporting software development operations.

The aim of this study is to examine what are the leadership needs that Team A has and how leadership should be applied in order to maximise the team's effectiveness. At the moment, under this change towards a more agile organisational structure, Team A continues the work normally, but misses support and leadership. In order to ensure Team A's performance, learning, development and leadership must be revised. Main theories and literature available will be discussed. The terminology used in the field of study concerning teams, leadership and effectiveness will be presented. The empirical part of this study involves Team's A evaluation and analysis on an individual, team and organisational leadership level. Based on the findings of the research, guidelines for leadership are produced.

2 Research problem and questions

Company X is one of the biggest financial organisations in Finland. The company headquarters have a research and development (R&D) department that is responsible to ensure the group's development, both of products and services. Team A is a team in the R&D department that supports different functions in software development projects and is involved in process development tasks. Team A is a team that consists of eleven team members that support different development entities, including software development. Their roles differ from specialist to business analysts and communication specialists, but one of the good things of the team is that it has a close network so that most of the times someone always know something in case of question. Most of the team members are doing their job independently without so much interfering with others. Team A has direct communication channels to multiple stakeholders and it supports internal development processes by providing expertise from the operative level to the management level.

The main research questions of my study are:

- What are the leadership factors that affect Team A performance?
- How could leadership be developed in order to maximize Team A effectiveness?

As sub-questions, helping to answer my main research problem, are:

- What are the different leadership styles?
- What are the most important factors that Team A is seeking from leaders?
- How to measure Team A's performance?
- Why leadership should be adopted to serve Team A better?

The main research questions help to understand which are the leadership factors that affect Team A' performance. What factors are valued by Team A as the most relevant?

Based on the results, this study tries to answer also the question of how leadership should be developed in order to maximise Team A's performance. After knowing which the leadership functions are most valued by the team, leadership can be developed accordingly to answer these needs.

The research sub-questions are helping in answering the main research questions. Different leadership styles must be examined. Team A's needs towards the team leader is also important so that the development areas can be identified. One important question is how to measure Team A's performance, since it consists of knowledge workers. Finally, the last sub-question is trying to seek answers to why leadership should be adopted. The target is to identify few leadership functions and concentrate on developing those which are the moment are blockers to effective team performance.

3 Teamwork

In this chapter basic terminology used regarding teams is presented. This chapter also discusses the roles of different teams in today's complex business environment, including international teams. Also, the basic agile concepts highlighted in the software industry, that can be seen as one of the most challenging one, are discussed. In all industries teams have a crucial role in organisational success and new trends and factors are challenging leadership in today's organisations.

3.1 Teams

The definition of a team according to Levi (2014) is a special type of group in which people work interdependently to accomplish a goal. Interdependency, meaning that team members have a connection or a relation between each other, is what differentiates them from a just group of people. From a teamwork perspective interdependence may possibly be the most important characteristic of a group. As group size may vary from two people to thousands, but a team involves only from 3 to 12 persons that interact with each other directly. Teams can be compared to sport teams where each member has its own purpose and task. For example, in football one team member can work in defence as other plays further. Every team member has specialised knowledge, skills and abilities for performing their tasks. This way each member is contributing by bringing their expertise to the team. (Levi 2014, 3-5.)

A team is a group of people that work together towards a common goal. Organisations can categorize people into work groups, teams and self-managing teams. For a work group to become a team it needs to have a certain level of authority to act at its own. Teams are more likely to work cooperatively helping each other in completing tasks. The level of power and authority given dictates the nature of the team. Teams can be organised by different levels of power, leadership, decision-making and tasks. (Levi 2014, 6-9.)

But why do organisations use teams? The traditional approach to organise people at work is called scientific management and it state that managers dictate how to perform a

task and workers do as they are told to (Taylor 1911). This approach suits very well certain processes that are more mechanic and simpler. The nature of work has developed from Taylor's time in the beginning of the 20th century. Back then the focus was on developing productivity by controlling routine activities. In some case this approach is still valid, for example when the process is not too complex, and workers do not need to concentrate on other factors such as quality and customer service. In today's working environment employees may need to handle a variety of factors at work and be involved in development tasks. These complex tasks require multiple perspectives and expertise. Teams are needed when companies are willing to improve processes that produce products or services. Teams are also important when the work is complex, it requires rapid change, and when customer service and quality is highlighted. (Levi 2014, 9-10.)

Research on teamwork is divided mainly into two branches – the research on psychology and social sciences, and the management research that investigates how to use teamwork in organisations. It is important to understand the research behind teams in order to apply them in practice and develop teamwork further. (Levi 2014, 1.)

3.2 Autonomous teams

By examining self-managing teams through the factors mentioned above, we shall see the difference between self-managing teams to more traditional ones. Significantly more power and authority are given to self-managing teams than to traditional work groups. Independent teams are not micromanaged, or management controlled, but have the power to perform as they see is the best way. (Levi 2014, 8-9.)

In this study, self-managing teams are also called autonomous, independent or self-directing teams. These are teams that work at their own in order to reach a goal as they see it is best. In other words, autonomous teams have the needed resources, knowledge, authority and autonomy to perform their work.

Companies are recognising human capital and agility as key factors to organisational success. Consequently, they have continuously transferred power from the management to the team-based structures as self-managing teams. This flattened structure gives organisations more flexibility and adaptability. (Magpili & Pazos 2018.)

One good example of giving more power to employees is discussed by Semler (1989) that raises three main principles for everything that the organisation is doing: democracy, profit sharing, and information. All these values must be working in order to succeed and result as wanted. It is evident that employees that control their own work are going to be happier than those who do not. Employees controlling their own work does not mean that numbers are not important. Productivity or profitability is just as important as in more traditional models. But it is the question of seeing the connection between productivity and profit that gives employees the bigger picture. And if employees are seeing this and succeeding, as Semler (1989) puts it: “They can do whatever the hell they want”. (Semler, 1989.)

Self-managing teams are independent but still linked to the organisation hierarchy. Leadership is needed even the managerial side comes from the team itself. Self-managing teams need leaders to remove obstacles and facilitate the team’s work, not controlling the team’s operations as in traditional work groups. Independent teams have the right to make their own decisions. Finally, tasks are performed independently in both work groups and self-managing teams, but the difference is that self-managing teams have strong interdependency and all members work together to coordinate tasks and activities. (Levi 2014, 8-9.)

Whether or not to utilize self-managing teams in an organisation depends on the situation. It is not always the best possible option. Organizations choosing to use self-managing teams can move towards the use of self-managing teams slowly by giving more and more power to the team. This makes the transfer a bit easier for organisations trying to shift more responsibility to the team itself. Management may experience that giving away power to the team threatens their existence. Actually, this shift allows managers to focus on tasks outside the team. (Levi 2014, 192.)

Self-managing teams demand a new approach to leadership. Even though the team itself control its internal operations, the team needs someone that motivates, support and coaches them. Often, if the team is performing quite routine task, no external persons are needed except in the case on impediments or problems that the team cannot fix themselves. Actually, the presence of an external leader can be identified as negative, if it experienced to take away autonomy from the team. Active involvement by leadership requires that the leader has prepared the team in advance to possible change or coaching, or that the situation has reached the point that the team needs external help. (Levi 2014, 192-193.)

Individuals rarely grow alone. People need human interaction in order to learn and develop themselves. Some psychologists have even made an interesting case that people only grow in connection to others. According to recent research by Dutton & Heaphy (2016), people can have more control over their learning by making high-quality connections. These connections are described to be positive interactions, based on mutuality and vitality. They push us to grow because our thinking is broadened, we absorb more information and are more engaged. These connections also help us in growing more resilient in the face of setbacks. (Dutton & Heaphy 2016.)

High-quality connections offer eight different ways of learning by utilising these relations; (1) Building a group of people around the organisation to have lunch or some activity together in order to challenge each other to learn, (2) Propose a self-managed instructional course for your team and share responsibility to implement it, (3) Invite one or two person to be your coaching partner and set learning goals for a certain time period, (4) Create a group in your organisation that will tackle some organisational problem through high-quality connections, (5) Share your challenges with your connections in order to have a fresh pair of eyes looking from a different point of view, (6) Encourage team members to seek and provided help to each other and create new connections, (7) Remember to share stories with people working remotely and make them feel involved, (8) Find connections also outside the organisation or community in order to improve learning and supporting. (Dutton & Heaphy 2016.)

3.3 International teams

In today's globalized world it is common to have team dispersed in different countries. Virtual teamwork and technological advances have made it possible to the increased usage of teams with members from different countries. Diversity and varying perspectives can enrich the team's functioning but cultural differences starting from the meaning of teams must be asserted. (Levi 2014, 272).

Different cultures could be asserted by analysing them through the Hofstede framework (Wild, Wild & Han 2010, 71). The framework highlights five cultural dimensions for studying cultural differences showed in Figure 1.

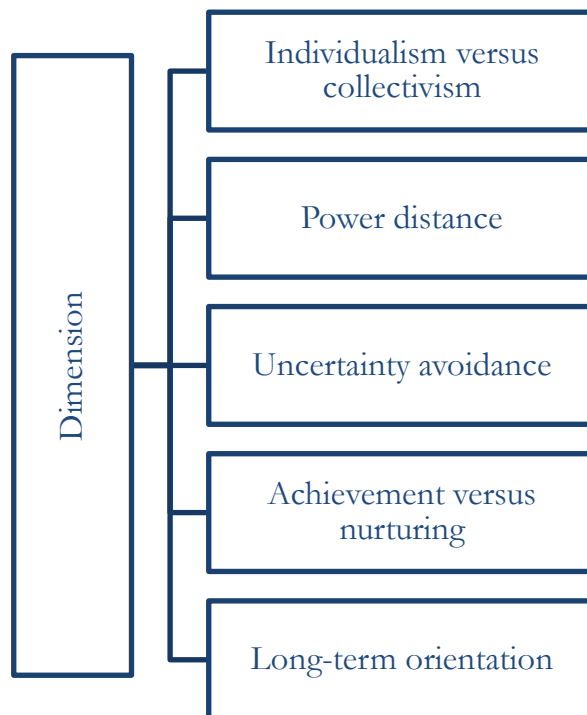


Figure 1. Hofstede Framework (Wild et al. 2010)

These five dynamics influence how the organisation's own culture is built but also at an individual level, how do team members act in the team. In an individualist culture, people tend to concentrate on themselves and on their own interest, which in a team environment could emerge problematic. The same concerns also dealing with power distance. Especially in self-managing teams if the team members accept the team leader's point of view, it diminishes creativity immediately. But then when people have

low power distance it may create more conflicts in the team by higher participation. Uncertainty and risk taking define how well people are handling change and how they react to it. Some cultures emphasise personal achievement more than relationships and caring for other people. Finally, the time perspective of cultures defines how people think of overcoming obstacles. (Wild et al. 2010, 71-72; Levi 2014, 268-273).

3.4 Complex environment

The current rate of change is forcing our businesses and society to adjust their way to operate. It is difficult to maintain old fashioned organisational structures when the environment is changing fast. New technology has offered companies integration over their operations in a new way. Organisations know they need to optimize their costs, quality, product development, customer service and adaptability to continuously increasing competition.

Simplified organisational structures are seen as one factor that create flexibility in companies. By reducing managerial levels, more power is given to employees. This is where teams step in by offering a perfect alternative to traditional management models. Teams coordinate and integrate different functions of a company. Teams also learn quickly and can develop these functions so that tasks are performed better. By doing so, teams are handling the work that management functions were doing previously. (Levi 2014, 11.)

Organisational agility is increasing across industries and countries. The more industries are quickly changing, the more companies are trying to change themselves into more agile. Constantly changing business environment is driving companies to lean their processes but transformation towards agility doesn't happen easily. Many companies are on the way to become more agile but claim that there is still plenty of changes be implemented. Companies tend to start their agile transformation from functions that are closer to the customer. Eventually higher customer satisfaction may lead to higher productivity that is cited often as one objective of agile transformations. (McKinsey 2017.)

Our quickly changing business environment is requiring businesses to keep up with its pace and modify their structures in a way that enables quicker changes in strategy, leading and at the operational level. The typical 20th century organisation has not operated well under this rapid change. Organisational structure, processes, system and culture have been more of a drag on change than a facilitator. Agility and autonomy concerning both individual's work and teamwork has been researched more and more. A sign of its contemporality can also be seen in increased articles in, for example, the Harvard Business Review and literature. (Martela & Jarenko 2017; Kotter 2012.)

There are three main reasons that drive us towards agility; globalisation, the nature of work and technology. The organizational environment is more complex today and in order to survive, businesses must be more agile, because the traditional organizational structure is slowing them. In addition to globalization, the operational environment has changes also thanks to quickly moving information and automatization. The second reason concerns the nature of work that can be seen changed towards more creative and independent decision-making specialist work. The third reason concerns modern technology that enables structures that wouldn't be possible without developed information systems. (Martela & Jarenko 2017.)

During the past decade research has found few trends that will grow further in future organisations. As discussed previously, change management is critical, but in addition there must be a certain sense of urgency to change. The rate of urgency means that companies are always looking for threats and opportunities and not enjoying periods of calm with casual hectic periods. (Kotter 2012, 169-171.)

Another factor in achieving successful change is teamwork that is enormously helpful all the time. When the pace of making decisions is much quicker, management is not able to keep up. The people involved in the operative tasks must have the needed authority to react in the situation right away and not waiting for possible processes that take ages. (Kotter 2012, 171-173.)

Leadership is also changing radically since organisations need leaders that can create and communicate visions and strategies. The focus is shifting from budgets, organising,

staff, control and problem solving towards empowerment, vision and communication that are or will be the heart of any transformation. Surely there is still need for people that will look after these mandatory processes, but the system must be built to serve the organisation. Organisations that restrict people to grow themselves and blossom, often destroy leadership. Linked to leadership issues, empowering employees arises as one trend. Organisations needs the hearts and minds of all its members in order to succeed. This usually happens easier when senior managers give power to lower levels by delegating most of their managerial tasks. (Kotter 2012, 173-181.)

Every industry faces challenges with an increasingly changing operating environment, but maybe one of the most challenging is the software industry. In 2001, the manifesto for agile software development was created in order to uncover better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it (Agile Manifesto 2001). This framework that was created around software development puts the emphasis on multiple issues that form a good basis to any agile team.

- **Individuals and interactions** over processes and tools
- **Working software** over comprehensive documentation
- **Customer collaboration** over contract negotiation
- **Responding to change** over following a plan

These focuses give power to the people or team members, give more importance to a working or finished entity, encourage collaboration with customers and value more being able to react to change rather than on plans. (Agile Manifesto 2001.)

4 Leadership

Since the times of Frederick Taylor (Taylor 1911), control has been important to corporate organisations. Controlling feels something that a manager should be doing, and it feels essential if you are a boss. Scientific or traditional management, where the manager is in control of everything, has been replaced or partly replaced since decades by other management practices. (Carney & Getz 2018.)

Traditional management is diminishing in businesses and leadership is taking over. Managers are still needed but their role is more a leading role than a dictating one. The role of middle management is slowing organisations down and it is probable that future organisations are built more on autonomous teams without extra management levels. (Martela & Jarenko 2017, 9.)

Leadership and management are two different and complimentary systems of action. Both are needed since they both have its own purpose. Leadership tends to be nowadays more popular because it helps in coping with a more volatile environment. The practical difficulties rise when organisations are combining these two systems towards an optimal level. Leadership with poor management is no good but also management with poor leadership. (Kotter 2001.)

Carney & Getz (2018) call this change towards a more liberated culture ‘corporate liberation’. The idea with the concept is simple; a liberated company gives employees the freedom and responsibility to take actions they see are best for the company’s vision. The role of the manager changes from a controlling towards a facilitating one. As an example, a manager could ask every morning her/his team is doing and is there anything that is preventing them from performing their work. If there are some problems, the manager shouldn’t offer a solution but get the team in finding a solution that they think is best. Multiple cases show that even big corporations as Michelin, Decathlon and Carrefour are achieving great results by transforming their organisational structure towards a more liberal one. (Carney & Getz 2018.)

Kotter (2001) separates management from leadership depending on the nature of the functions being in question. Management is seen as a system that helps in coping with complexity by bringing order and control. Leadership is supporting management by learning to cope with change. These distinctions are presented through three examples:

- Management involves planning activities and budgeting, leadership shows direction.
- Management provides organising and recruitment, leadership aligns people.
- Management solves problems and requires control, leadership provides motivation.

By making sure that the managerial level is working well and by adding good leadership, organisations can thrive. Both systems of action are needed because they are looking at the task from a different perspective and supporting each other. (Kotter 2001.) This is partly why Hamel's (2011) statement "First, Let's Fire All the Managers" can be misleading since management functions are still needed.

Traditionally leadership has been thought to have a lot in common with management, but nowadays they are seen as different entities. A manager is someone chosen by the organisation to take responsibility for his/her team's performance. Managers also have the authority to interfere with the team work performance and make decisions. In comparison to the manager's characteristics, a leader may be chosen by the organisation or it may be chosen by the team itself. Leaders provide guidance for teams and help remove obstacles. Leaders are the ones that facilitate decision-making in the team, but let the team make their own decisions. (Levi 2014, 183-185.)

Leadership has been conceptualized by multiple sciences but can be summarized into a process where an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. It is a process that is not linear and not only dependent on the qualities of the leader as shown in Figure 2. Leadership always involves influence since it is a transactional event between the leader and the team. (Northouse 2013, 5.)



Figure 2. The Components of Leadership (Northouse 2013, 5)

Defining leadership as a process indicates it to be more than a personal characteristic. It is an interactive event between the leader and the team member. As also seen in Figure 2, leadership is in the core of the functions and concerns everyone that are part of the team, not only the leader. Influence determines how the leader is affecting team members. Without influence, there is no leadership. This influence takes place in teams that share common goals, meaning that the leader and the team members have a mutual purpose. (Northouse 2013, 5-6.)

What characteristics make leadership effective in an international context? The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program (GLOBE) studied the attributes of effective leadership in 62 countries and found universally common leader behaviours and attributes. GLOBE has identified six global leader

behaviours:

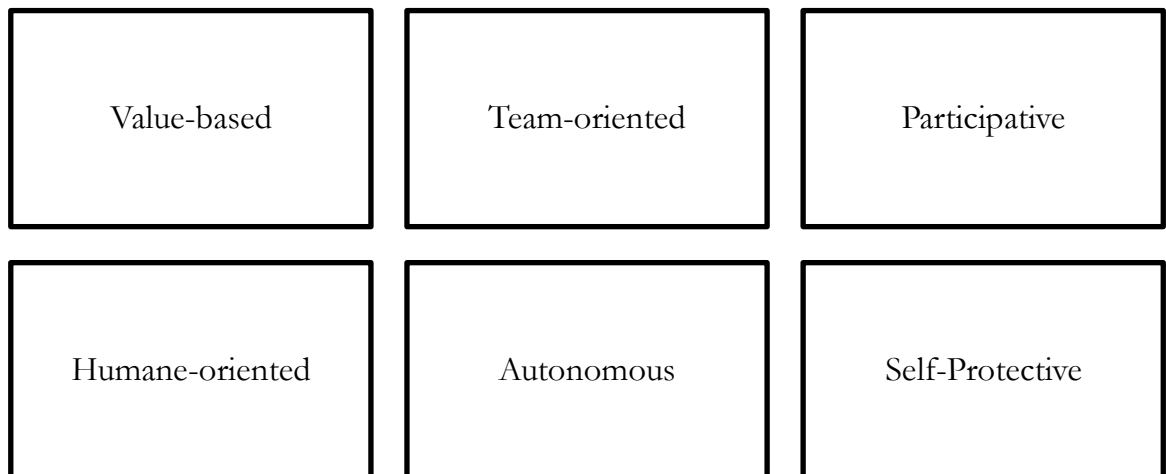


Figure 3. Six Global Leader Behaviours (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta 2004, 14)

The value-based or charismatic leadership is based on the ability to motivate and aspire in order to achieve good performance results. Team-oriented leadership is a dimension that emphasises the meaning of effective team building, clear common goals and purpose. Participative leadership reflects the level to which managers or/and leaders involve others in decision-making. Humane-oriented behaviour is supportive and includes also compassion and generosity. Autonomous leadership refers to independent and unique leadership attributes. Finally, self-protective leadership presents a behaviour that protects the safety of the individual, for example through status enhancement and face saving. (House et al. 2004, 3, 14.)

4.1 Team leadership

Although the vast amount of leadership research and studies on team leadership, we know quite little about the most effective leadership styles for teams. Team leadership requires many skills and responsibilities that differ from traditional leadership styles. As discussed previously, organisations are moving some of the traditional leadership functions to the team level. Team leaders should not manage the team but provide help

in order to the team to become more effective. (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks 2001; Levi 2014, 183-195.)

Three main fundamental characteristics can be identified in effective team performance. First, team members need to have specific and clear roles and they need to contribute to the team collective success. Team failure so is not caused only by member's inability but by the inability of the group to coordinate and synchronize their individual participation. Secondly, teams need to adaptively cope with complex and volatile environment. The fast pace of change, several stakeholders with their own agendas, possible physical distance and high information load are all factors that require teams to operate more adaptively when coordinating their work. Thirdly, team leadership contributes significantly team effectiveness by providing team directions and organizing the team so that it maximizes its processes. Team leadership is needed both in traditional teams and in self-managing teams. (Zaccaro et al. 2001.)

Functional leadership behaviour cannot be described by certain characteristics because it is always depending on the nature of the team, the task in question, the context and the problems the team is facing. From the perspective of functional leadership, the goal of the team leader is to help the team operate more effective. This means the leader's main job is to ensure all team functions critical to task accomplishment and group maintenance are taken care of. (Zaccaro et al. 2001; Levi 2014, 194.)

Levi (2014) describes three core leadership functions: setting the direction for the team, manage the team's operations, and develop the team's leadership abilities. Zaccaro et al. (2001) describe leaders to be responsible for three functions: diagnosing problems that impede the team goal attainment, generate and plan solutions, and implementing solutions. In both views the focus of the team leader depends on the situation, the maturity of the team and particular problem domains. (Zaccaro et al. 2001; Levi 2014, 194.)

There is not one right leadership style. Empirical studies show that effective leadership is adopted based on the group members' needs and environmental factors, so depending on the situation. One of the most important leadership theories is called

situational leadership theory. The theory defines four main leadership styles: directing, coaching, supporting and delegating. The right leadership style should be adopted depending on the matureness of the team. This theory is based on a combination of task and relationship orientation. (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 2008, 94-111; Levi 2014, 191-199.)

Table 1. Leadership Styles (Hersey et al. 2008, 104-105, 133; Levi 2014, 191)

<i>Leadership style</i>	Task behaviour	Relationship behaviour
<i>Directing</i>	High	Low
<i>Coaching</i>	High	High
<i>Supporting</i>	Low	High
<i>Delegating</i>	Low	Low

These four leadership styles, showed above in Table 1, are very different. Task behaviour determines the level of leader’s interference in telling the tasks and responsibilities of a team member or the team. High task behavior can be seen as a dictating or directing leadership style. The relationship behaviour determines the level of two-way or multiway communication, including listening, explaining and facilitating. Leadership styles with high relationship orientation include coaching and other supportive behaviours towards others. (Hersey et al. 2008, 133.)

As mentioned above, the matureness or readiness of the team is a determinant factor when choosing the appropriate leadership style. Two main components of performance readiness are ability and willingness of an individual or a group. Ability is the demonstrated skill, experience and knowledge that concerns the task given. Willingness is the extent to which commitment, motivation and confidence is demonstrated to accomplish the given task. (Hersey et al. 2008, 134-136.)

The readiness of an individual or a group is divided in four levels depending on the willingness and ability to perform a task. The levels are showed in Table 2.

Table 2. Performance Readiness Levels (Hersey et al. 2008, 137)

<i>Level</i>	Ability	Willingness
R1	Low	Low
R2	Low	High
R3	High	Low
R4	High	High

The first level (R1) is a situation where the individual or group is unable to perform the given task and lacks confidence and/or commitment and motivation. The next level (R2) describes an individual or group that has not the ability to perform the task, but if some guidance from the leader is provided, is ready to commit and is motivated. The contrary to this stage is the third level (R3) that describes a situation where the individual or group is able to accomplish the given task but is not willing to use that ability or is not feeling secure about what to do. The highest level (R4) of performance readiness is when both ability and willingness exist. At this level the individual or group is able to perform the given task confidently and is committed to it. (Hersey et al. 2008, 137-141.)

Situational leadership matches the leadership style to the performance readiness of an individual or group. In addition to match the appropriate leadership style, leaders should think leadership as a developmental process. At level R1 a task-oriented approach is needed. As the tasks are accomplished, and some experience is gained, at level R2, leaders should implement a more coaching style in order to support the development of abilities to perform the tasks. At level R3 it is important to utilise the acquired ability and get the individual or team more committed, for example by letting them participate in the decision-making process. Finally, at level R4 the leader can concentrate on other

issues and let the team or individual manage itself, since there is no longer need to guidance. An individual or team that is at R4 level can handle all the internal leadership functions themselves and can take the full responsibility to perform the given task. If the performance readiness level is thought as a developing stage model from R1 to R4, more and more power is given to the individual or team. Drawbacks in performance development are part of leadership and leaders need to act when it happens, also called regressive intervention. (Hersey et al. 2008, 149-150, 197; Levi 2014, 191-192.)

4.2 Coaching

Coaching is such a broad concept that it can be seen in many different contexts. Coaching can mean for example, coaching an individual forward or coaching a team to operate better. Organisations also provide coaching under big change processes.

Leadership actions to foster team effectiveness include for example building a team, providing the needed resources, removing impediments, helping the individual to contribute to the team success and the team as a whole to use their resources in order to pursue their purpose. Only the last two factors mentioned are seen as coaching behaviours. (Hackman & Wageman 2005.)

Hackman & Wageman (2005) introduced their theory of coaching that has three main features. First, the focus is on the functions that coaching is serving to the team, not on a certain leadership style or a leader's personal characteristics. Then there is the importance of timing. Coaching must be timed so that its effects are the most likely to result as planned. Thirdly, the most suitable conditions for coaching must be exploited in order to improve performance.

Even though Hackman & Wageman (2005) are not focusing on specific leadership styles, the situational leadership theory is supporting the factors of their theory of coaching. In the situational leadership theory coaching is possible when both task and relationship orientation are high. This requires to that teams are more experienced and have already been developing their operations and it requires leaders to know the appropriate circumstances and timing for team coaching. When teams have acquired a

certain level of experience, a softer leadership style as coaching is welcome. (Levi 2014, 191; Hackman & Wageman 2005.)

Team coaching is an intervention from the leader that aims to improve the performance and coordination of the team. This intervention means providing support and guidance to the team. Three types of coaching exist with different purposes. (Levi 2014, 196-197.)

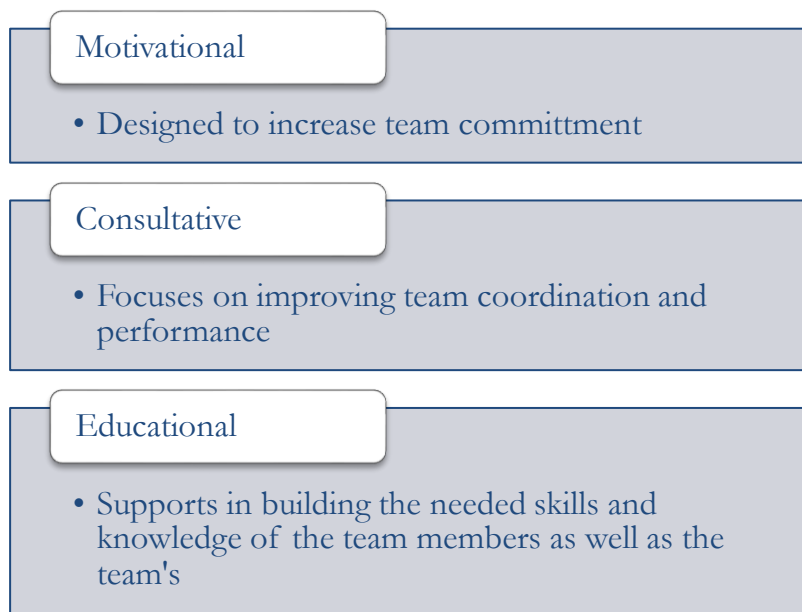


Figure 4. The Different Types of Coaching (Levi 2014, 196-197)

The different purposes and the focus of coaching are significant factors, but in order to ensure the efficacy of the coaching intervention, they must be performed in the right time. Timing plays a big role in determining whether coaching is supporting team efficiency. The best team leaders react on the right time both when the team is open to interventions and needs the leader's help, and under unpredictable times when immediate action is needed. (Hackman & Wageman 2005; Wageman, Fisher & Hackman 2009.)

Coaching is often mixed with management, but one must pay attention to the difference. The focus of coaching must be on developing the capabilities of the team,

not trying to manage the team's activities. Often managers tend to direct how the team should operate rather than building the team to become better. (Levi 2014, 196-197.)

4.3 Individual needs and motivation

Organisations should always remember that its most important asset are its people. Even leadership may sound as something mystical and fancy, in practice it is a system that provides continuity by coping with change. In this chapter I will look deeper into leadership from an individual point of view.

Since the times of Maslow's (1943) basic needs theory it has been known that individuals need certain factors before others in order to achieve pure self-actualisation. Physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation are all needs that individuals seek to satisfy. According to Maslow (1943), the lower levels must be satisfied before moving towards self-actualisation. Individual needs differ, and some factors may be satisfactory to others at different phases or criteria. In practice, different needs tend to emerge simultaneously, so it is good to look also from other perspectives.

The self-determination theory by Ryan & Deci (2017) state that there are three basic psychological needs; autonomy, competence and relatedness. These are said to be objective phenomena that, just like physical needs, have functional effects when increasing or decreasing their value. These three needs are affecting our learning and achievement. In addition to individual development, it has been shown that these three needs also affect a person's motivation and productivity at work. Just like Maslow's (1943) basic needs discussed previously. Multiple researches indicated that lower levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness, reflected in lower well-being. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 10-18, 533.)

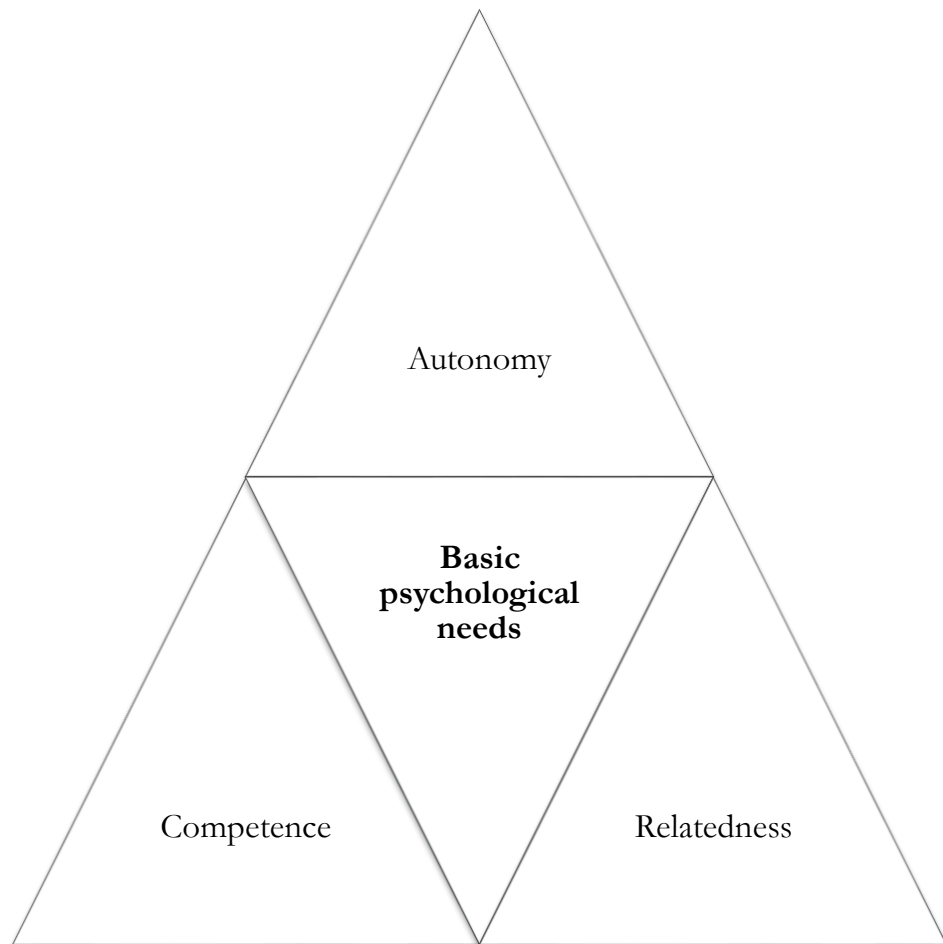


Figure 5. Three Basic Psychological Needs (Ryan & Deci 2017, 10-18, 533)

Human beings have also other psychological needs that reflect their needs in work environment. People need to be treated equally, have personal growth and exercise self-direction. By creating an environment that supports these needs, organisations will achieve multiple benefits. (Carney & Getz 2018.)

The nature of work itself has changed in the past decades. This era of digitalisation requires employees that are committed, flexible and proactive. Organisations have to reshape themselves in order to support these autonomous employees and teams. Even though it is still not mainstream, modern successful organisations have been shaping themselves in supporting autonomously motivated workers. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 533.)

What drives people as human beings? This is the question that started the development of the four-drive theory by Lawrence & Nohria (2002). The theory states that four basic

emotional needs or drives exist; the drive to acquire (1), bond (2), comprehend (3), and defend (4). These drives are the forces that interact with all our functions. (Lawrence & Nohria 2002.)

These four drives affect also employee motivation. The drive to acquire (1) pushes people to gain scarce goods including also intangible asset as a certain status. Bonding (2) drives people to feel part of something by creating connections. People are curious and the need to understand (3) drives us towards satisfying our curiosity and comprehend the world better. Finally, the drive to defend (4) and protect from external threats but also promoting justice. (Nohria, Groysberg & Lee 2008.)

Motivation varies not just in quantity but also in types. Some employees are motivated by their intrinsic pleasure of doing their work, while others are motivated by extrinsic factors, as money or title. The more employees are intrinsically motivated, the more they tend to be creative and engaged and stay motivated longer. (Friedman 2014, 142.)

Traditionally companies have been motivating their employees by external motivators as 'carrots and sticks'. This view is being replaced with an opposite one that supports workers by giving them more autonomy, in other words by empowering them. Empowering employees has shown to have best motivational results. This concerns all companies from small and medium enterprise to big multinational corporations. Organisations around the world are facing that by supporting autonomy they do not only achieve better employee experiences but also benefit financially. This makes sense because when people feel empowered about their work, they also tend to be more motivated to excel. This is based on our basic psychological need: autonomy. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 534; Friedman 2014, 143.)

Many companies see the benefits of empowering employees. In practise companies encourage employees for example in setting their own goals and judge their own performance. Organisations are empowering employees in taking ownership of their action and sometimes even ownership of the company by becoming shareholders. (Oakland 2014, 339.)

Empowerment is beneficial for the organisation under change situations, but it can also work as a motivator for team members and teams. The self-determination theory shows that more autonomous terms of motivation are related to higher quality engagement and wellness, and that employees face less exhaustion, burnout and ill-being. Especially in today's work environment where creativity and proactivity are required, employees need to invest energy and care into it, and autonomy helps in coping with it. Autonomy can also be associated with higher performance. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 538.)

A truly motivated employee is thriving to succeed in his/her job and trying to do his/her best. Work should be more than just a place that produces monetary revenue. Work should be something that an employee feels being part of and wants to contribute in it. Finally, the employees' wellbeing at work will contribute to the organisation's health and performance. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 558.)

Autonomy and empowerment are highlighted under change situations. Change is something that represents the unknown and so many of us tend to resist change. In organisational change it is highlighted because easily employees experience that they don't have much a role in it, they just have to adapt. Ryan & Deci (2017) present that self-determination supports positively change management. Having leadership that supports employee autonomy is making them more accepting of the organisation change. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 539.)

Ryan & Deci (2017) share the same view as Kotter (2012) concerning the positive effects of autonomy or empowerment on change management. When the environment is changing quickly, organisations need to change quickly too. This change is more likely to succeed if many people are involved and feel that they have the power they need. This is why empowerment makes such a big difference. When managers provide a clear rationale for change, offer some choice in how change is implemented and acknowledge employees' feelings, this raises the employees' satisfaction in the three main criteria highlighted by Ryan & Deci (2017); autonomy, competence and relatedness. (Kotter 2012; Ryan & Deci 2017, 539.)

It appears that even major changes can be introduced easier in an autonomy-supportive environment. Having managers that relate to an employee's needs and efforts drive workers to perform better in their work. Having autonomously motivated employees are likely to carry out their job better but also experiencing greater wellbeing at work, that can affect positively on all interactions with both co-workers and clients. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 539-540.)

4.4 Knowledge workers

As discussed previously, the nature of work has changed dramatically in the past decades. Employees are categorised increasingly as knowledge workers, not manual workers. We are living in a knowledge economy where knowledge workers are the key to success. Organisations are depending on the contributions of the employees; therefore, the role of managers and leaders is highlighted in order to achieve both tangible and intangible value creation. Manager and leaders should increase employee engagement by providing employees with meaningful work in which they are able to thrive. (Jakubik 2016.)

Organisations realise that knowledge work is the heart of innovation. Still, it is challenging to measure the performance of knowledge workers. (Davenport, Thomas & Cantrell 2002.) Drucker (1999) identifies six major factors that determine knowledge worker productivity:

1. Defining the task
2. Autonomy
3. Continuous development and innovation
4. Learning and teaching
5. Quantity as important as quality
6. Knowledge worker seen as asset, not cost

These factors share a lot of common with the basic psychological needs discussed earlier. Knowledge workers need to define their task themselves in the best way they see

and to do that they need enough autonomy to think and act. Knowledge worker need to continuously think of how we are doing things and come up with better solutions. At the same time, they have to require more knowledge, develop and share it. The quality of knowledge work is difficult to show or determine. Can knowledge work be measured or is it just intangible? It cannot be determined just by the quantity it produced, but also quality must be considered. Finally, knowledge worker must be seen as an asset, not a cost, that bring corporate advantage. (Drucker 1999.)

Knowledge workers form the heart of the organisation, so it is important to acknowledge it in different tasks. Leadership must be shaped for sustaining knowledge worker's development and engagement. Focusing on the knowledge worker productivity is a way of getting a bigger picture of the situation in a company. The knowledge-worker performance usually unites for example strategic planning, organizational design and IT investment. (Davenport et al. 2002.)

All researchers share the same view that knowledge workers must be managed or lead in a way that supports their learning, development and make them thrive at work. The nature of work is setting emphasise more on factors that elevate employee engagement and consequently performance. Leadership must be adopted to serve the needs of knowledge workers.

4.5 Employee engagement

There are multiple definitions of employee engagement. The term itself has become really popular during the last decades. Shuck & Wollard (2010) define employee engagement as “an individual employee’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioural state directed toward desired organizational outcomes”. Employee engagement implicates that the place of work could be a place for satisfying our psychological and basic needs, such as motivation, commitment, success, and even self-actualization. (Shuck & Wollard 2010, 103-107.)

Employee engagement has emerged as an important activity for organisations in order to perform in a dynamic and competitive environment. This activity also links the employee to the organisation’s goals and objectives. Research has shown that employee engagement does effect employee performance through several factors as commitment, involvement, psychological presence and positive attitude. Better employee performance reflects in better organisational performance. (Gupta & Sharma 2016.)

According to Gartner (2018), 20% of organizations will include employee engagement improvement as a shared performance objective for HR and IT groups by 2020. There is plenty to develop, since employee engagement has been low globally for at least the last two decades. (Gartner 2018.)

How to get employees engaged in their work? This is a question both research and organisations have been trying to answer. It interests because engaged employees are more motivated, flexible and productive. Gupta & Sharma (2016) have summarised Aon Hewitt’s report of employee engagement drivers in Figure 6.

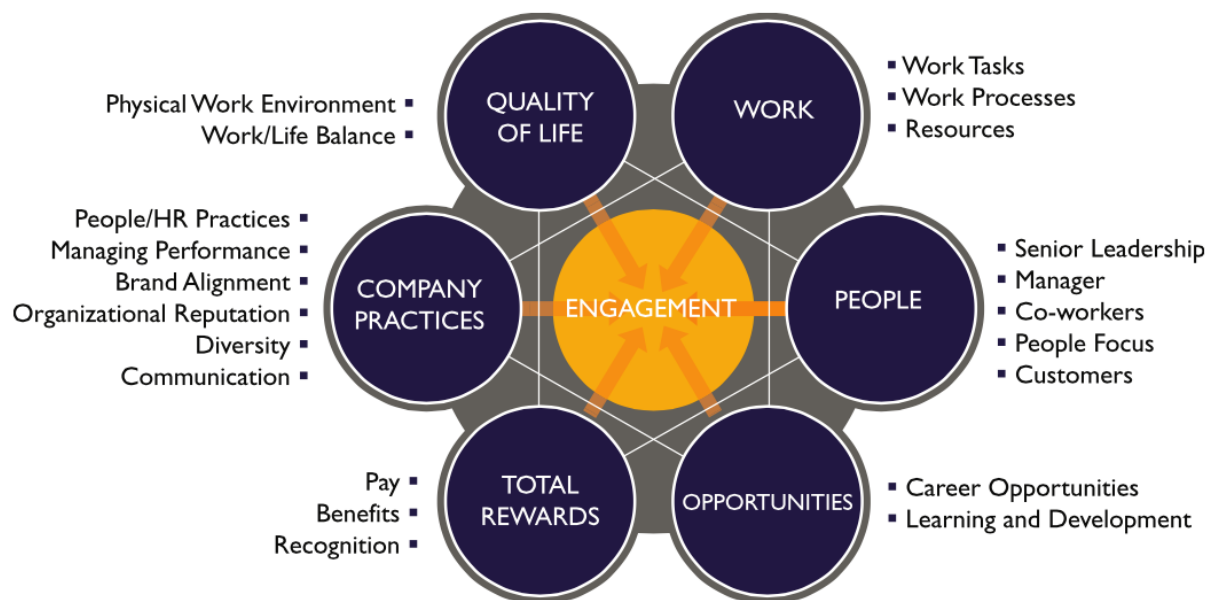


Figure 6. Drivers of Employee Engagement (Gupta & Sharma 2016)

A large range of drivers are affecting employee engagement. These drivers are based on needs that employees have, such as:

1. Clear goals and purpose
2. Having enough resources
3. Career opportunities
4. Recognition
5. Caring for them as a person
6. Encourages career development
7. Getting to say their opinion
8. Connection with leadership and company vision
9. Co-workers are committed to the quality work
10. Having good friend at work
11. Feedback
12. Opportunities to learn and grow

By boosting these drivers and reacting to employee's needs, employees become more positive towards the organisation and its values. Organisations should give plenty of attention and recognition to employees contributing to their needs and expectations. (Gupta & Sharma 2016, 52S-59S.)

4.6 Organisations supporting autonomous teams

The increased level of autonomous teams has also increased the amount of research performed over them, but it is still an intrigue over what really makes an autonomous team effective. As the role of management diminishes in self-managing teams, it increases the role of the organisation (Levi 2014, 31). Certain dynamics can be identified and by nurturing these, organisations could get their teams succeed. Recent studies show three main dynamics that are found in organisations where autonomous teams are succeeding; (1) organisation-wide commitment to using autonomous teams, (2) upfront allocation of organisational resources for team use and (3) frequent face-to-face feedback from leaders. (Hess 2013.)

Support from the organisation is important when teams are succeeding and are asking for praise, but also when teams are failing. This organisation-wide commitment to support autonomous teams has a huge impact on how teams strive. Top management can support autonomous teams by creating an ideal environment for them by fostering team orientation, encouraging people to participate in autonomous teams and optimizing teams' level of autonomy. Top management has to give responsibility and power to the team and by supporting the team decision, guide them forward. (Hess 2013.)

When teams can count on having the needed the resources at the right time, team productivity increases significantly. By reserving these resources early for the team, leaders can show their commitment in ensuring teams' success. Actually, a correlation has been seen between failed teams and having no early commitment from the management in providing the resources needed. (Hess 2013.)

Feedback is one of those things that always seem to pop up when asking people what they would like more in their work. Frequent face-to-face meetings are more effective than some electronic updates and are essential in nurturing effective autonomous teams. Using autonomous teams diminish the traditional role of managers by changing its nature towards a more coaching or mentoring style. Constructive feedback is needed, but managers should be careful with not interfering too much in the team activities. (Hess 2013.)

Organisations can be categorized depending on the level of autonomy given to the individual or team and the organisational structure supporting teams. The traditional organisational structure and employee nature of work is the one where the organisation has a strong hierarchical structure and the employee does what he/she is told to do and reports to his/her manager. When an organization decides to give more freedom and autonomy to the employees but still provide the framework and boundaries it has moved towards a more coaching organisation. If the organisational structures are almost removed but the employees are heavily controlled, this organisation is one based purely on performance and result-driven. As an example, many new platform-based services.

Finally, if both the organisational barriers are minimized and employees can truly be self-directing the organisation can call themselves self-directing. (Martela & Jarenko 2017, 14-15.)

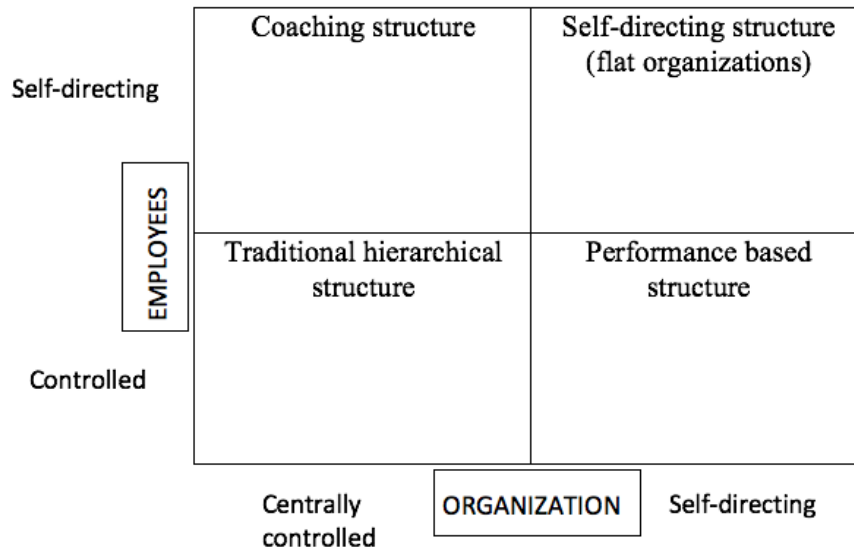


Figure 7. Organisational Structures (Martela & Jarenko 2017, 14-15)

There is not one right organisational structure, but it is good for the company to understand where to place itself in the grid above (Figure 7). Organisations can utilise this grid in order to understand where they would place themselves now and where they would like to be. It supports strategic decision-making.

Empowering teams requires work. It sets the manager into a position where she/he has to give the power and responsibility to the team. The manager has to learn to lose her/his ego because otherwise the team will never find or trust their own intelligence and solutions. Qualified employees are totally capable of doing their job without the interference of the manager, but employees do need why they are doing their work. (Carney & Getz 2018.)

The company's vision provides common criteria for team decision-making and the manager or leader needs to share the same vision. Managers also have to create a respectful environment by leading by example. By removing obstacles that slow down the team's work, managers can show their trust and respect towards the team. Managers

should also ask independent teams to develop the organisation further as they see is best. Having liberated teams means that many of the manager's decisions-making and responsibilities are now given to the team and the manager can concentrate in serving the team. (Carney & Getz 2018.)

5 Team effectiveness

Both the team research sciences, the one focusing on psychology and social sciences, and the other one on management research, are supporting our understanding on how teams work and how management should act in order to develop team effectiveness.

(Levi 2014, 1.)

A team dynamic is difficult to describe. It is an entity where different parts work together and form a group of people that is more than the sum of its part. Teams exist also outside our working life, for example in sport or in music activities. In sports the whole team is responsible for its success as well as in the music industry, where the members of a band are all involved in how the band sounds. In both cases, if one member is sick, other members help out.

The performance of a team depends on the nature of the work that is performed. Where productivity, sales or error rates are measured, an objective and quantitative measure can be taken in place. But for specialist or managerial teams that do qualitative work, such measures are more difficult to apply. In this case, measures that are more subjective must be used. (Senior 1996.)

According to Zigon (1998) it is important to have a clear view of the target when deciding on the measurement process. This process is not linear, but it differs because there are so many different types of teams. There are three main reasons for explaining why team measurement is so difficult; 1) It is not clear what results should be measured, 2) It is not clear how the measurement should be done, 3) Teams consist of individuals so measurement should concern both individual and team levels.

New trends in performance management, or as Sloan, Agarwal, Garr & Pastakia (2017) call it, the performance management revolution has started. The main reason for this is the fact that our nature of work has changed. Traditionally performance management has been focusing on the performance of an individual's work. In this transformation the goal of performance management is transformed from boosting an individual's employee's performance towards the success of the team. Shortly, as Sloan et al. (2017) state in their

article: “if the team wins, the employee wins”. The shift of measuring performance away from an individual level towards the team level is a strong message from the organizations. In their point of view, when the team wins, the company wins also. (Sloan et al. 2017.)

These new trends in team performance reflect in new rules also in performance management. The whole process will be renewed by continued feedback and performance management that is incorporated in the work itself, not something to return to once or twice a year. This change is more than new processes, it is shaping our whole way of working. (Sloan et al. 2017.)

Table 3. The Rules of Performance Management (Sloan et al. 2017)

Old rules	New rules
Performance appraisals and goal-setting conducted once a year	Check-ins conducted quarterly or more frequently; regular goal-setting occurs in an open, collaborative process
Feedback collected by manager at end of the year	Feedback collected continuously and easily reviewed at end of year (often through apps and mobile tools)
Goals kept confidential with focus on individual achievement	Goals made public and transparent with increased focus on team achievement
Employees evaluated by their manager	Managers also evaluated by their employees
Employees force-ranked on a quantitative scale	Employees rated on a qualitative scale; rankings considered, not forced
Compensation kept confidential and focused on equity; bands based on performance ratings	Compensation levels more transparent, more frequently discussed, and focused more on pay for performance than on equity
Managers focused on evaluating performance	Managers focused on coaching and developing people
One leader evaluates each individual in a qualitative, opinion-based process	Many contribute to an individual's performance evaluation; evaluation draws heavily on data
Process considered to be a burden and waste of time	Process is agile, faster, continuous, and lighter

Table 3 shows us some of the factors that are or will be changing in future. Performance appraisals and feedback are conducted continuously in a collaborative process, not once a year as in many organisations so far. Goals and compensation levels are made transparent and the focus is shifting from individual achievement to team achievement. Not only employees are evaluated but also managers by their own employees. Managers are not focused on evaluating an individual or team performance, but on coaching and developing people. Employee evaluation is based on multiple contribution that is qualitative, not force-ranked and relies on pure data. Overall the whole process is not something extra, but something that is agilely incorporated in the work done. (Sloan et al. 2017.)

In the past decades research has become more complex and not only focusing on the outcomes of team performance. Nowadays it is focusing more on team characteristics and variables and reviewing the role of behavioural science (cognitive, behavioural and affective processes) in team success. Teams are learning entities that develop themselves further and this is partly why research has to take into consideration also the role of different processes in the team as trust, adaptation, bonding and learning. (Northouse 2013, 288.)

As team effectiveness is affected from learning processes, teams need time. A high level of integration and expertise that support operating in a dynamic and complex environment requires reflection, both individually and collectively, on how the team managed on a selected solution. The whole process involves considering the consequences of the team's choices, how they ended up to the solution, and how well the team worked together. This is a laborious process that is difficult to perform successfully. Still, it is at the centre of team effectiveness, developing and learning. (Zaccaro et al. 2001.)

5.1 Successful teams

What makes teams successful? Certain characteristics can be found in common, but there isn't one right answer to this question. Success of teams always depends on multiple factors, both internal and external.

Five common variables are presented by Hackman (Levi 2014, 29):

1. Clear vision and goals
2. Good leadership
3. Teamwork suitable tasks
4. Necessary resources
5. Support from the organisation

These factors relate much with the view of Zaccaro et al. (2001) presented previously that emphasises effective team performance into three main characteristics; clear roles and ability to coordinate individual contributions, coping with a complex and dynamic environment, and finally effective leadership in defining team direction and maximising the team's progress.

These factors listed above all focus on common variables of successful teams. The success of the team depends on the definition of team success. This definition works as the base to research on team efficiency. Often, the view of the leader or manager can differ from the view of the team members. Nevertheless, three main definitions of success can be highlighted: (1) the team completes its task or reaches its goals, (2) team members develop social relations and team dynamics in order to maintain the group, (3) team work is individually rewarding. (Levi 2014, 20.)

Team effectiveness can also be seen as a function of specific leadership actions. Not all actions contribute to team effectiveness, so it is relevant to identify which factors are enhancing it and which are not. A critical factor in identifying these is defining and validating the contextual effects that are affecting effectiveness. Zaccaro et al. (2001) list seven of these contextual imperatives: cognitive, social, personal, political, technological, financial and staffing. It is up to the leader to see which ones to highlight to enhance team effectiveness. (Zaccaro et al. 2001, 454-455.)

There is danger in simplifying too much the criteria of team effectiveness. In this case the attention may be drawn into the wrong factors while trying to improve the team.

(Levi 2014, 20.) In the functional leadership theory, the leader usually knows how to identify actions needed to enhance the team's efficiency. The team's circumstances are indicating what the team may need from leadership. In this approach it is important also to remember that not all result from the leader's actions. In other words, if the team is successful it does not mean automatically that the leader is effective. (Zaccaro et al. 454-455.)

5.2 Measuring team effectiveness

Even the dynamics of teams are always different, team's effectiveness can be measured according to two critical functions: performance and development. Team performance meaning the level of task accomplishment that the team is achieving. This includes teams' decision making, the quality of decisions and ability to implement them, the outcomes of team work including solved problems and work done, and the quality of institutional leadership prevailing in the team. In addition to how teams perform, team effectiveness can be measured also by the level of maintenance of the team. Maintaining the team members' needs satisfied while working with others is critical for having a functional team. Team development should be monitored in order to see how cohesive it is. (Northouse 2013, 299.)

As discussed earlier, successful teams do share some distinct characteristics and research shows us that the following criteria are supporting teams succeed: clear and engaging goal, organizational support, competent team members, unified commitment and collaboration, recognition, and good leadership. (Northouse 2013, 299-303; Levi 2014, 19.)

Team performance is evaluated by different metrics. Some of the critical ones are trust, diversity, inclusion, and clarity of roles. In addition, teams need leaders that are close to the team, engaged and hands-on. Teams are also dependent on other teams in order to succeed because only by a network of teams, they can succeed. Performance measurement revolution and its new practices look at performance and ratings using multiple sources. (Sloan et al. 2017.)

Hersey & Blanchard (2008) have developed the ACHIEVE model to help managers in finding why performance problems occur and then to develop strategies to overcome these problems. Two main goals have to keep in mind when using this model: determine key factors that influence team member's performance and present these factors in a way that managers can use them in practice. In total seven variables are identified: (1) Ability, (2) Clarity, (3) Help, (4) Incentive, (5) Evaluation, (6) Validity, (7) Environment. Managers should use these variables in evaluating how each factor affect performance for a given task. Consequently, managers should take actions that fit the causes of the performance problem. (Hersey et al. 2008, 70-72.)

6 Methodology and methods

This chapter presents the methodology and methods utilised in this study. This part will introduce to the research strategy chosen as well as issues concerning the ontology, epistemology and axiology. The research philosophies are presented with argumentation. Finally, the research background will be described.

6.1 Research methodology and strategy

I have chosen to perform a qualitative study. In qualitative studies, the researcher needs to make sense of the subject and socially constructed meanings expressed about the phenomenon being studied. My role in this study is from an outsider point of view. I use in this case a cross-sectional time horizon. (Saunders et al. 2016, 168.)

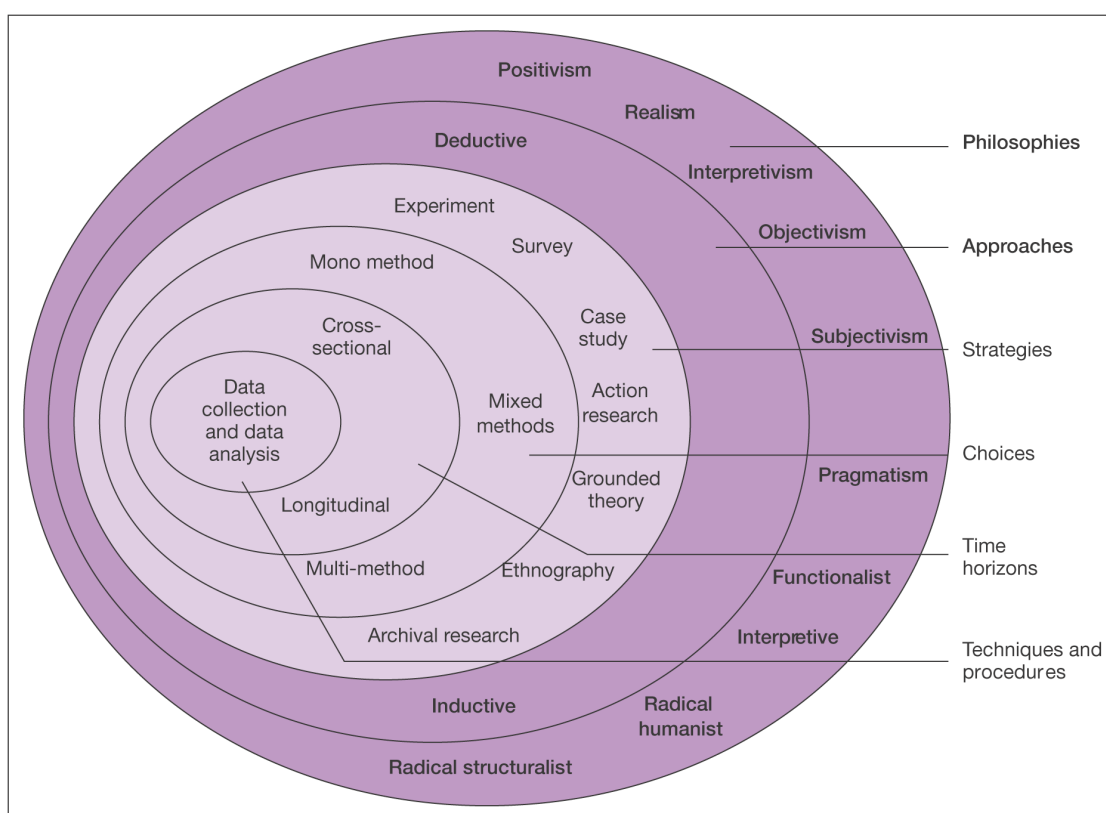


Figure 8. The Research Onion (Saunders et al. 2016, 164)

The methodology used in my study gave the opportunity to utilise multiple methods when collecting and analysing data. Since this study is made to tailor Company X's needs, I had to continuously reflect on methodologies used. I had to identify and resolve many issues during this project, most of which I could not have anticipated in advance. This methodology and strategy made me develop active skills in identifying key issues, working on how they can be resolved, and understanding the intellectual, practical, moral and political implications of possible solutions. Therefore, a passive way of following of methodology is not highly recommendable. (Mason 2000, 4.)

Case study strategy suits best my study since it is an in-depth inquiry into a phenomenon within its real-life setting. This strategy enables me to use the understanding of the case and analyse it in a bigger context. (Saunders et al. 2016, 184-187.)

Case study research has been criticised for lack of generalisation. Many states that one cannot generalise from one single case and therefore cannot contribute to scientific development. Thankfully, case studies are starting to be more appreciated thanks to their practical knowledge and theory development. (Flyvbjerg 2006, 1-2.)

This case study can be used in an explanatory way, using theoretical propositions to test their applicability in this particular case – to build and verify an explanation. This study will be a holistic study case concerning the organisation as a whole, Company X. (Saunders et al. 2016, 185-187.)

Because of the nature of the case, I have chosen to apply a single case study approach. Data collection will be gathered through monomethod qualitative study, using a survey. The survey is executed in order to explore what are the factors that Team A's members are valuing in leadership. Based on the current evaluation and analysis of the team members' needs, guidelines for leadership will be produced. The results help me to conclude which are the factors that team members highlight and how leadership could be developed. After the conclusions, guidelines to leadership are delivered in order to enhance Team A's effectiveness and performance.

6.2 Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology

Ontology states for the assumptions that one has towards the nature of reality.

Ontological assumptions shape the way I see this research project and the way I study different research objects. Ontology choices determine how I see the world and therefore the choice of studied objects in this study. (Saunders et al. 2016, 127.)

It is important to recognize which extreme is represented in the study. One extreme is objectivism that incorporates assumptions of the natural sciences. Objectivism considers social entities to be like physical entities of the natural world that exist independently no matter how we think of them. In practice this drives researchers to remain detached from their own values and beliefs throughout the research process. The other extreme is subjectivism that states reality is based on perceptions and actions of people. It incorporates assumptions of the arts and humanities and is divided to two extremes: nominalism and social constructionism. In nominalism, the study and the studied phenomena all deliver from the researcher/s. No underlying reality can be found since each person experiences the issue differently. Social constructionism is a less extreme version and states that reality is constructed through social interaction. (Saunders et al. 2016, 128-131.)

Due to the fact that objectivism states for research external to social factors, I chose subjectivism as my perspective. For this study, a subjective perspective suits better because of the nature of the research. I believe that people involved in this study are by their beliefs and actions affecting the results and conclusions delivered from the research. As a subjective researcher I had to seek to understand the different realities lying in Team A and possible other stakeholders. (Saunders et al. 2016, 128-132.)

Epistemology represent what knowledge can be accepted in the study. There are several methods that can be used for collecting the data. Depending on the nature of ontology and assumptions made, a research philosophy will also have to be chosen. (Saunders et al. 2016, 127-129.)

What kind of data is accepted in my study? How to know what to know? A big part of the accepted knowledge is gathered based on the research design selected. I chose to perform a survey and connect it with theories commonly acknowledged in this field of study. This is one of the reasons why I have chosen a subjective point of view.

The role of values and ethics within the study is named axiology. This forms the question about me, as a researcher, dealing with values – both my own and of the participants. Recognizing reasons behind for example my choice of study is one big step. Am I following only facts, or am I including to my study social aspects? In my study I am including also social factors since I believe that they have a great impact on the conclusions and finally on the leadership guidelines for Team A. (Saunders et al. 2016, 128.)

6.3 Research philosophies

Five major philosophies are recognized in the field of business and management research. I will briefly present all of them and finally describe my own philosophical choice.

Positivism represents a philosophy that relates to scientific research. This philosophy focuses on strictly scientific data and facts with leaving social interpretation and researcher's values out. Therefore, a positivist study's conclusion could be law-like generalizations. The philosophy of critical realism concentrates on explaining what we see and how we perceive it. This suits best studies where it is important to see the whole picture and not only a part that we usually see, but also to analyse the researcher's objectivity to the study. Interpretivism, in contrary to the two previous philosophies, study meanings created from social stances. The purpose of interpretivist studies is to create new interpretations of social world and contexts. Postmodernism goes even further in its interpretation of the studied issue and so also subjectivity. This philosophy emphasizes the role of language and power relations and suits best research that challenges theories and seek to demonstrate new perspectives or issues. Lastly, there is pragmatism philosophy stating that concepts are only relevant when they support

action. In pragmatic research the most important determinant is to choose the research design and strategy aligned with the research problem and question, so that these will be answered. (Saunders et al. 2016, 135-144.)

I have chosen to apply a pragmatic philosophy to my study. One reason is that I believe that multiple methods could be applied to this study. The main reason is that my research questions incorporates the pragmatist emphasis of practical outcomes. (Saunders et al. 2016, 143-144.)

Three main approaches can be identified in research; deductive, inductive and abductive approaches. Deductive approach deals with testing existing theory. In contrary, inductive approach starts with data collection that will lead to theory development. An abductive approach combines deductive and inductive approaches and moves forth and back, creating a combination of the two. (Saunders et al. 2016, 144-149.)

This study incorporates a deductive approach. Plenty of theoretical knowledge already exists in my field of study and the time range is short that would suggest choosing a deductive approach. My deductive research strategy enables me to test existing theory using qualitative procedures. (Saunders et al. 2016, 146-150.)

6.4 Research background

Empiric data was collected using survey as a method. The questionnaire (Appendix 1) was built in order to gain a holistic view of the team. This was achieved by structuring the survey in parts concerning factors at the individual, the team (including team leadership) and the organisational level. Existing models were utilised as a base and modified to match better the context of the team in question. Prior small group empirical studies of Magpili & Pazos (2018) were useful in determining the variables involved in team effectiveness. Their adapted team effectiveness framework was modified further in this research and simplified to present Team A's situation.

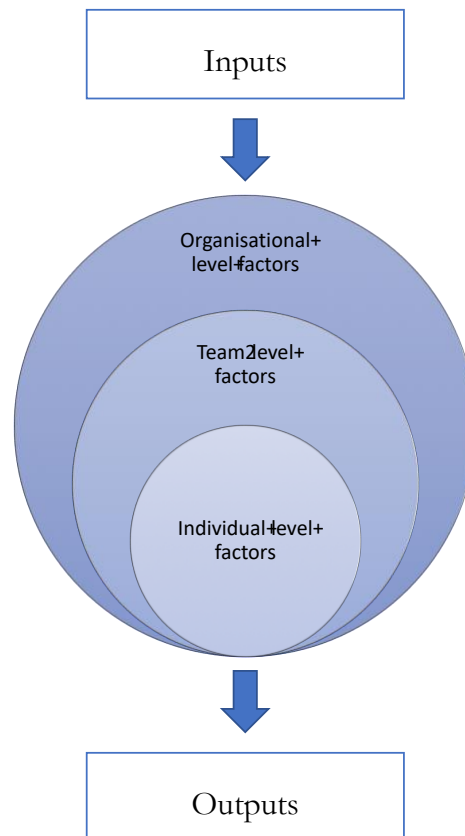


Figure 9. Structure of the Survey (Magpili & Pazos 2018)

The team effectiveness model examines factors that affect the team functions on an individual, team and organisational level. The individual variables include for example the autonomy that one has in his/her work and role clarity. The next level inspects factors that influence the team. These variables include leadership and team autonomy. Finally, the organisational layer looks into factors that affect from the organisation itself, for example the organisational structure and resources available. (Magpili & Pazos 2018.)

In order to understand also the current situation of the team and its leadership, the team diagnostic survey instrument from Wageman, Hackman & Lehman (2005) was partially utilised. The instrument was built to both diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of work group and for research on team behaviour and performance. (Wageman et al. 2005.)

Magpili & Pazos (2018) and Wageman et al. (2005) provided excellent basis to inspect the factors that affect Team A's work. For gaining a deeper perspective to leadership, or

more specifically to the team leader, both London (2002) and LaFasto & Larson (Northouse 2013, 313-314) provided some insight in acquiring leader-related data. London's (2002, 137-138) survey displays the satisfaction of employees towards their leader from a feedback point of view, while LaFasto & Larson's (Northouse 2013, 313-314) team excellence and collaborative team leader survey provided data on factors on both team and leadership.

The majority of the questionnaire were questions with the scale from 1 = highly inaccurate to 5 = highly accurate. All team members (n=11) answered the questionnaire. Every question had the option 'Not applicable' in case the question or statement didn't match the situation. The survey included open-ended questions in order to handle strengths and weaknesses and to minimize the possible biases of setting questions by only one scale. This allows team members to answer also on issues that need to be addressed but have not been included previously. (Northouse 2013, 193.)

7 Presentation of the findings

The findings of the research are presented in this chapter. The questionnaire was conducted in four conceptual levels: individual, team evaluation, team leadership and organisational. The results will be presented as in the previous parts of the study where team leadership is included in team-level analysis. At first, I will look into the individual point of view of working in Team A. After this part the team current situation is presented. As the third point, I will look deeper into the team leader evaluation and leadership needs. Lastly, the organisational factors will be presented.

7.1 Individual level

The answers related to the individuals can be divided into three sub groups: personal performance, team related issues and leadership. At individual level, all answers indicate that the respondents are motivated and enjoy doing their work even role clarity divides answers. At a team level, the majority of the answers show that team membership is quite strong. Members are experiencing that they are part of the team. The leadership level shows that respondents do not receive enough feedback and support concerning their development.

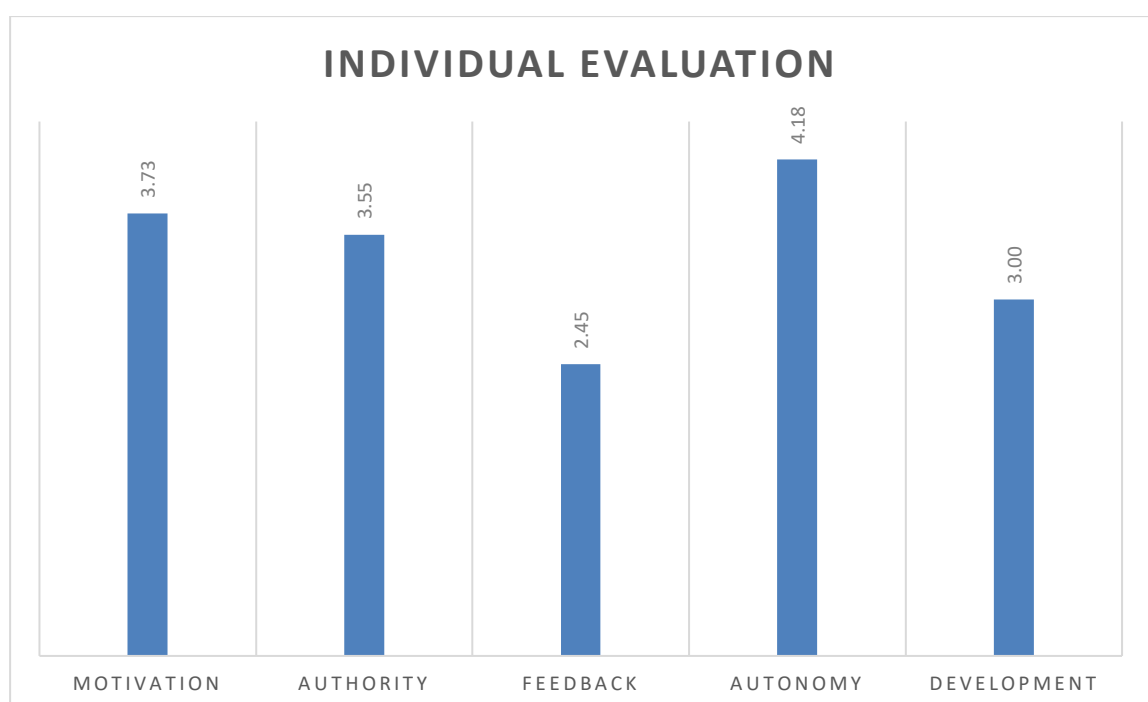


Table 4. Individual Evaluation

This part of the questionnaire raises two themes that are well below the average: feedback and development. These two issues are closely related to the team leader evaluation that is discussed later but from an individual point of view, this is showing that team members are not receiving enough feedback from the team leader. According to the answers there is some variation on how individuals experience their development, but overall the average is lower than in other issues.

7.2 Team-level

When surveying the team as a whole, the results reflected multiple individual answers. The team has a clear goal and team membership seems to be quite clear. Respondents feel highly confident in performing their work because they own the needed abilities and skills. Members are also actively sharing their knowledge with each other and are motivated in having the team succeed.

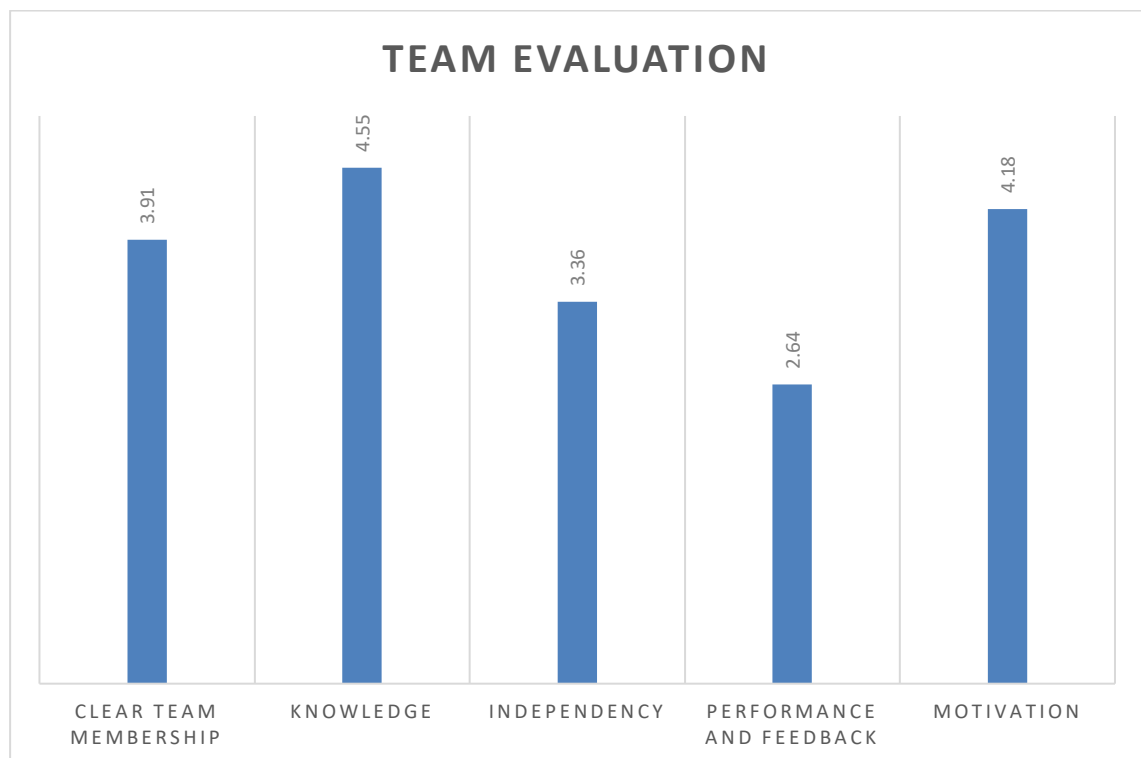


Table 5. Team Evaluation

As can also be seen in Table 11, one issue stands out again: feedback. The respondents answered that the team do not have an established method for monitoring performance and providing feedback. Over 60% of the respondents scored this as the lowest factor.

The same issues continue to raise up also in the part of the questionnaire concerning team leadership. Respondents answered clearly below the average performance setting, career plans support and performance feedback. Team members are not experiencing that the team leader is jointly setting performance objectives.

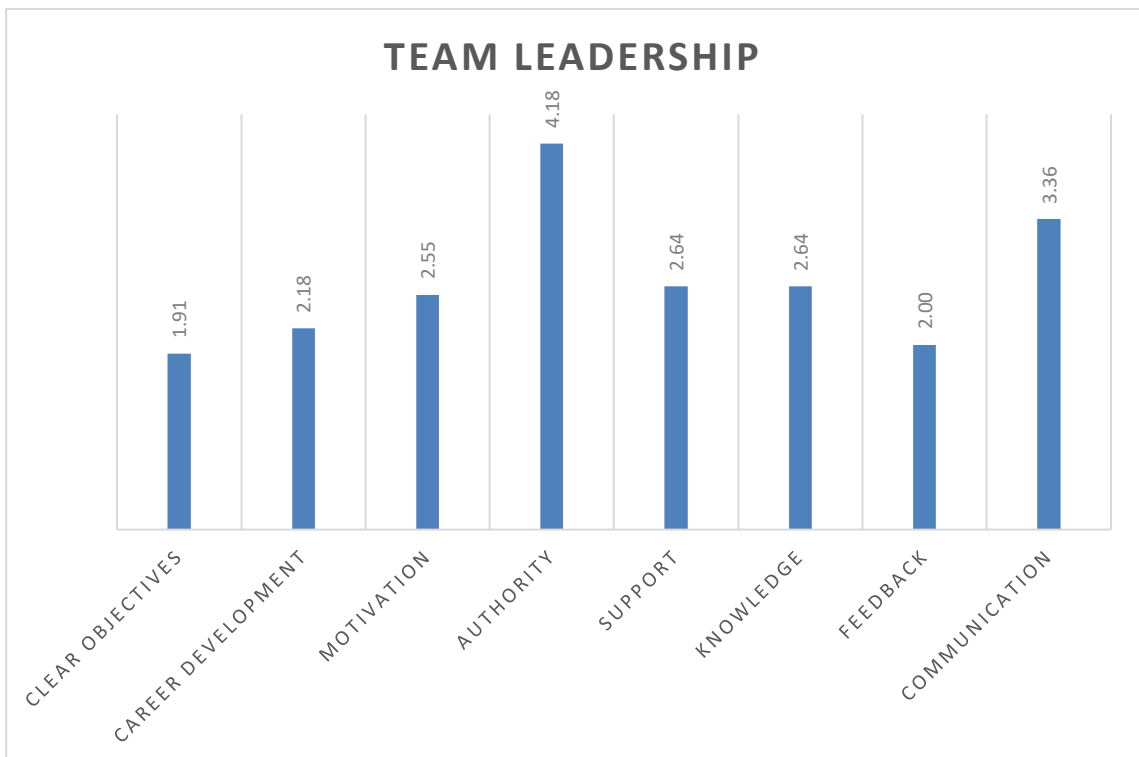


Table 6. Team Leadership Evaluation

In addition to these clearly below the average issues, there are multiple mediocre results. The team leader support for the team to do the job and the understanding of the work that is done in the team is rated quite low. Information flow seems to be a challenge as well as the skill development offered by the team leader.

Some issues are raised above the average including the fact that the team leader is treating the team members with dignity and respect. The team leader is also giving enough authority to the team to do the job and she/he is modifying his/her position based on feedback from team members.

The team leader is seen quite separate from the work of the team. Team responses indicate that the team leader is not very familiar to the work in question, is not involved in the team problem solving and does not look for the best approaches to do the work. On the other hand, enough authority and autonomy are given to the team to organise themselves independently.

7.3 Organisational level

Finally, the survey looked into the organisational perspective of teams. The respondents' answers show that excellent team work does not pay off in Company X. Teams that perform well are not recognised or rewarded. The flow of information regarding work is also something that is placed quite low. Respondents feel that teams in Company X can't get whatever information they need to plan their work.

Coaching is used to some respondents only and causing variation in the answers. Clearly it is something available only in some part of Company X. The organisational culture is not supporting teams on how to work well together but this is left to do entirely by the team.

The team set-up, including clarifying its purpose, picking members, structuring the task, setting expectations, done by the organisation is dividing answers in to two main group; in those who think the organisation barely supports and in those that think that the organisation is supporting often. The majority of respondents (>70%) belong to the group mentioned first.

7.4 Summary of the findings

Overall the same themes seem to rise from the individual, team and organisational perspective. The figure below represents the key concepts and issues that Team A's members miss the most from leadership. Team members have been able to choose multiple subjects at the time. The findings represent the situation at the time the survey was answered.

The majority of team members (>80%) have chosen career and future plans as one of their mostly missed issue. Half of the participants chose feedback and support and guidance as their second biggest deficiencies. A third of the respondents feel that the goal and the purpose of the team needs to be clarified. Other issues involved motivation and capable leadership that can be seen covering all of the subjects mentioned above.

Summarizing all the needs raised in the survey shows us the holistic view of leadership needs from the team member's perspective, shown in Figure 10 below:

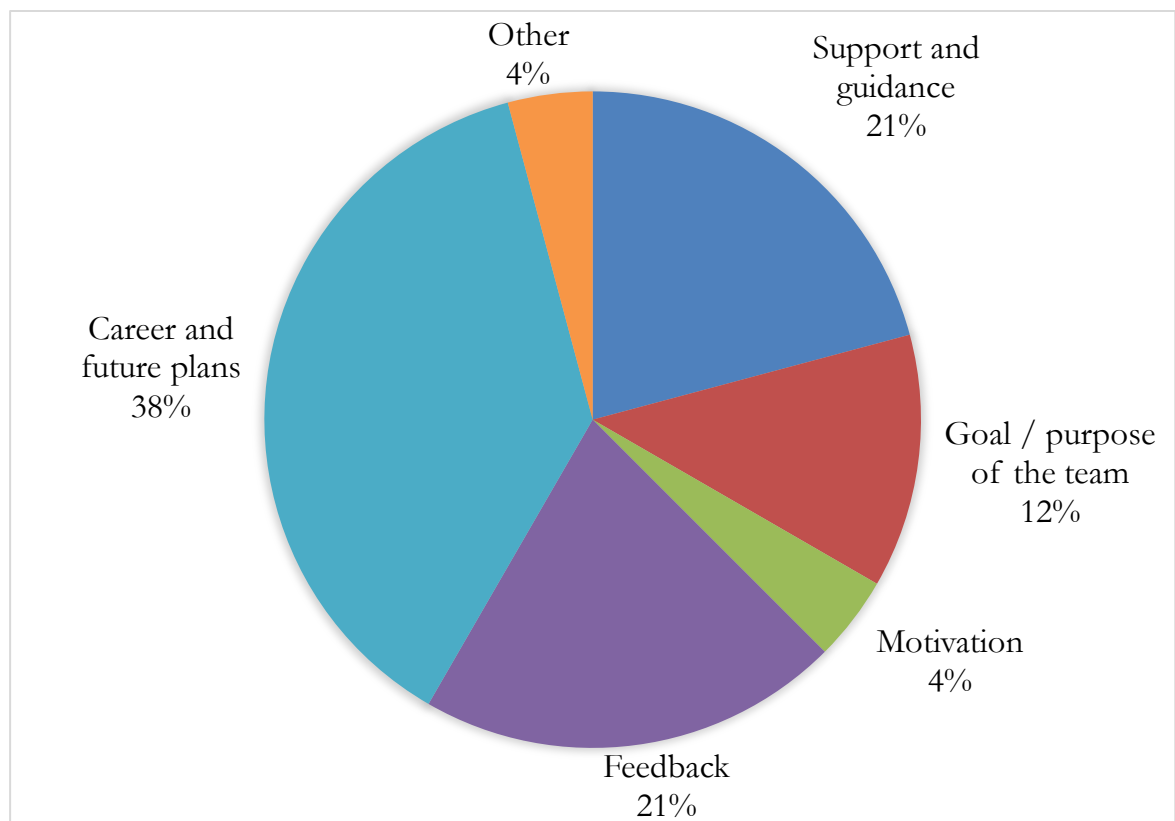


Figure 10. Team A's Leadership Needs

Leadership needs involve some traditional leadership tasks. It is obvious that team members are enjoying working in this team, but they lack support, guidance, feedback and future plans from the team leader.

The questionnaire had also open questions where respondents could highlight some actions that could improve performance at work. I am satisfied to see that respondents have actively answered the questions and some key words are identified in Figure 11.



A word cloud of leadership actions. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with some words being significantly larger than others. The largest words are 'support', 'training', 'development', 'feedback', 'future', 'leader', 'individual', and 'clear'. Other words include 'actual', 'advice', 'autonomous', 'benefits', 'better', 'capable', 'changes', 'collaboration', 'communicated', 'company', 'constructive', 'contribute', 'could', 'course', 'difficult', 'doesn', 'either', 'etenemismahdollisuudet', 'exactly', 'existence', 'getting', 'guidance', 'however', 'ideas', 'independently', 'information', 'instead', 'käyttöoikeuksia', 'latest', 'leadership', 'level', 'long-term', 'longer', 'means', 'monipuolisilta', 'motivated', 'motivation', 'multiple', 'needs', 'offered', 'often', 'oikeuksia', 'organisation', 'organization', 'other', 'positive', 'positively', 'possibilities', 'procedures', 'quite', 'really', 'relevant', 'resource', 'rights', 'saataisiin', 'short', 'should', 'steady', 'sufficient', 'superiors', 'tarvitsisi', 'tasolla', 'there', 'think', 'työnkuvan', 'työntekijä', 'ulkoinen', 'up-to-date', 'vaikuta', 'which', 'within', and 'would'.

Figure 11. Word Cloud of Leadership Actions

One interesting issue that was raised up few times was the level of independency that Team A has. On one hand it is highly autonomous, but in the other hand it seems to lack leadership in some key areas. Leadership seems to be quite distant from the work of the team and the team is left alone to perform their work.

8 Guidelines for leadership

In this chapter, guidelines for leadership based on the theoretical framework and the results from empirical research are presented. First, a short summary of leadership factors is highlighted and after, each factor will be analysed further including their implementation recommendations. The focus of these guidelines is to enhance Team A's effectiveness by certain leadership actions.

The following leadership actions are affecting Team A's effectiveness:

1. Career development
2. Feedback
3. Support and guidance
4. Learning and development
5. Clear goal, objective and purpose
6. Motivation
7. Monitoring system for sustaining and developing team effectiveness

(1) Invest in career development. It is the factor that needs most input and development from leadership. This is an issue that influences, at both individual and team level, Team A's effectiveness by decreasing motivation, willingness and engagement. The team leader is recommended to display certain career paths or career development actions in order to offer team members some prospects for the future. As concrete actions, the team leader could for example link career development discussions to performance appraisals, listen to the team members' needs and dreams, and actively seek for possible career development paths. Already listening and asking about one's future hopes will be seen as a supportive leadership style. As Gupta & Sharma (2016) present, career development increases employee engagement.

- (2) Establish a system for regular and constructive feedback in Team A. Since Team A is already working quite independently, it would be more efficient to the team leader to build an ongoing feedback giving culture. It is recommendable to start from giving individual and team feedback. The team leader could start from asking the stakeholders how they see team members and the team as a whole are functioning. Later on, this could be incorporated in the team's daily work as the basis for an open culture to constructive feedback is established. The team members could give feedback on each other as well on the team leader. As Hess (2013) states, frequent face-to-face feedback is essential for achieving the right dynamic in nurturing successful teams. This means that the team leader must increase her/his presence both physically and psychologically. As feedback is given and collected often, quick changes are possible to test and see which factors are working in Team A's opinion and which are not. Feedback can be used as a tool to ensure Team A's continuous improvement.
- (3) Increase the team leader's presence and support in Team A's work. This does not mean that the team leader should decrease the level of autonomy of the team. It means that the team leader should be more present, as recommended also above, especially when the team is facing problems. The team leader should increase her/his knowledge of Team A's work in order to be able to support and coach them. The team leader must show interest in Team A's work by gaining knowledge on the issues faced by the team. At the beginning, the team leader will be needed more, but as the team develops, more and more tasks will be on the team's responsibility. Once the optimal level has been reached, the team leader could apply a more coaching approach to leadership. Then the leader will be able to concentrate more on issues outside of the team.
- (4) Give team members opportunities to learn and develop themselves. In addition to career development, team members are seeking more opportunities to learn and develop both as an individual and as a team. It is important to nurture all activities that help the team acquire a better connection between team members. The team leader should value collaboration and teamwork and encourage the sharing of best practices. A concrete action could be fixing a yearly budget for

seminars, webinars, or individual studying that each member can utilise as they see its best. In addition, there should be some support from the team leader or Company X that provides guidance to operating together as a team. Another possible action could be organising team development sessions with the team in order to empower the team itself in developing its operations.

- (5) Clarify and communicate the goal, objectives and purpose of the team. All theories and views presented in this study, including Zaccaro et al. (2001), Levi (2014), Hersey et al. (2008), Drucker (1999), Northouse (2013) and Gupta & Sharma (2016), agree that for achieving effective team performance the goal and purpose of the team must be clear. It is not enough that the majority knows the goal, every team member must know it. The team leader must communicate and ensure that all team members are aware of the goal and purpose of their work. The team's purpose must be linked to the organisation's vision and strategy.
- (6) Enhance motivation. The team leader should make sure that Ryan & Deci's (2017) three basic psychological needs autonomy, relatedness and competence are all fulfilled. The current level of autonomy satisfies Team A, so the team leader should make sure the team members are maintaining their motivation by investing in factors as continuous learning and team building activities producing relatedness. Team A should be given more authority so that they would be more responsible for their own actions, in other words the team leader should empower Team A. If the team members experience that they have a role in the decision-making process, they will probably become also more motivated. Gupta & Sharma (2016) described that the connection to leadership is increasing the team member's motivation and make them more engaged in the team. If we go back to the readiness levels of Hersey et al. (2008), Team A is probably at level R3 where the ability to perform the task is high, but the willingness is low. Empowering the team will probably make Team A develop to stage R4.
- (7) Develop a system for monitoring Team A's effectiveness. For making sure that the team's work is valued and monitored a system must be developed to gain comparable data. All leadership decisions concerning for example recognition

must be fair and based on data. The system must be transparent so that it can build trust between the team and the team leader. The team leader could utilise the survey created in this study in order to gain comparable data. In that way the team leader could quickly see which factors are strengthening and which need improvement. Still, the focus of measuring performance should be at the team level, because as Sloan et al. (2017) stated when the team wins, both the employee and the company win too.

9 Discussion

This chapter is demonstrating the conclusions of this study. Also, the validity, reliability and ethics are going to be discussed and analysed in detail. This study has an impact on Company X's operations and especially on the functioning of Team A. The assessment of business value will be evaluated as well as future research recommendations. Finally, my role as a researcher will be discussed as my personal learning reflections.

9.1 Conclusions

This study was conducted in order to answer the questions 'what are the leadership factors that affect Team A performance' and 'how could leadership be developed in order to maximize Team A effectiveness'. For understanding what today's business environment demands from leadership, different leadership styles were introduced. Multiple views and theories helped in gaining a theoretical basis for looking into Team A's leadership at the moment. Maybe even more importantly, they helped in considering which leadership style and needs are most important for Team A.

In order to understand team members as individuals, some psychological branches of research were inspected concerning motivation and basic psychological needs. Teams are built from individuals, so it was important to comprehend which forces drive us forward as humans. When analysing the research findings, I found that most of the factors between individual and team-level were overlapping.

The research concerning team effectiveness included understanding the measurement of knowledge workers' job. Measuring team effectiveness includes many different factors and one model does not suit all kind of teams. Still, many successful teams shared the same attributes. This study combined a number of these factors in order to gain a framework of leadership functions.

The research findings introduced clear areas where leadership should be developed. The leadership style should be developed towards a more supporting and coaching one. Team A's performance is affected by the low level of certain leadership actions such as career development, feedback, support and guidance. Guidelines for leadership were produced and these are a relevant benefit for the team leader. When these guidelines are implemented, Team A's performance should increase and even be maximised.

9.2 Validity, reliability and ethical issues

Validity refers to the chosen measures used, accuracy of the results' analysis and generalisability of findings. Validity can be divided on three main groups: measurement, internal and external validity. Measurement validity analyses if the measures used are appropriated for studying the chosen phenomena. Internal validity is established when the researcher accurately shows a causal relationship between variables and analyses accurately the results. External validity deals with generalisation: can study results be generalised to other contexts? (Saunders 2016, 202-204.)

Case study research has been criticised by not being generalizable as discussed earlier in this report. But according to Flyvbjerg (2006), case studies can provide generalisation just as other more traditional research methods. In my study, I have structured my research methods, philosophies and approaches so that the results could be more generalizable.

I think my study will be generalizable to some extent. For example, other independent teams may benefit from my findings since it will provide a holistic view of Team A's case. How and why leadership should be modified to fit Team A's needs? Any organisation that have independent teams could benefit my study because it showcases Team A's needs that may have common features with other teams.

Reliability is important through the study and the researcher can achieve good reliability only by being consistent on his/her work. Maintaining a certain standard in all actions and talking with the same terminology helps a lot in achieving a consistent project. Reliability deals with replication and consistency. Reliability can be divided into two

main groups: internal and external reliability. Internal reliability deals with ensuring consistency throughout the project. External reliability refers to the replicability of the study using same analytical processes and research methods. (Saunders et al. 2016.)

In order to ensure my study's reliability, I have kept my study and all its phases transparent. This will enable others to repeat my study and get the same results. One example is that I am going to have a researcher's diary to mark all my thoughts in. All the results are also presented to Company X and Team A.

Threats to reliability involve participant error and bias, and researcher's error and bias. Both participant and researcher errors must be avoided by careful planning. All possible factors must at least be acknowledged and taken into consideration. Biases will be more difficult to identify, but for example participant bias can be diminished by anonymity in data collection. The survey was created using common terminology and already tested questions that are not too guiding. (Saunders et al. 2016.)

Another factor in developing the design of a research are the ethical issues regarding the research. Is all information achievable? Would it be unethical to get information the way a certain design implies? In my study I have been sensible with potential social factors that may cause biases. Data collection itself was easy to collect, because both Company X and Team A were committed in this development project.

9.3 Assessment of business value

Organisations need to react increasingly quicker to changes. Having competent autonomous teams create relevant business value and comparative advantage to the organisation. Company X was interested in gaining more knowledge about Team A's leadership. Team A's members were all actively participating because they wanted to develop their team. This study brings together findings from the individual and team-level for the use of leadership.

Team A is just one of the R&D department of Company X, but the results can be utilised also in with other teams. This study and the guidelines produced for leaders can

develop Company X's teams' performance. The team leader is interested in looking into the results and ready to adapt actions advised in the guidelines for leadership.

This study has such a close relationship with the development of an actual business context that it is quite easy to assess its value. Both the team leader and Team A will benefit from this study since the team leader can develop functions enhancing team performance, but Team A can develop functions between team members in order to achieve better results.

9.4 Reflections of further future research

This study has inspected the individual, team and organisational evaluation concerning Team A. It would be interesting to continue the research on how the implemented guidelines are affecting the performance of Team A. Are certain leadership factors affecting team performance more? Which are these factors?

In addition, the correlation between autonomy given to the team and the team performance would be one subject for future research. This survey could be used also to multiple teams and so getting data for compare the results with each other. Company X could then evaluate if some teams in a certain department are performing better than others.

9.5 Reflections of learning

This study has taught me plenty about leadership, teams, autonomy and surely about myself. I am satisfied to have chosen a subject that interests me and that is such a hot topic in modern organisations. Both the theoretical part and the empirical research taught me about the subject and helped me to understand the bigger picture. Probably the biggest thing I learned was utilising theory in order to plan practical leadership functions. I have been able to utilise both my professional experience in working in autonomous teams that my personal interest in building an extraordinary place of work. Organisations consist of individuals; however big they are. This project happened just in

the right time and I am also satisfied since it is pursued in close collaboration with the team members and Company X.

Initially, I planned to carry out a multi-method study, but that changed during the process and I decided to utilise only one method. Surely having a multi-method study could have given my work a broader view of the state of Team A's leadership. During this study I learned about different methodologies and learned to conduct a structured research respecting the methods chosen. A concrete thing that helped me to stay focused was keeping a researcher's diary. Especially during the day while working, some thoughts occurred to me and I always tried to write them down. Also, the initial thoughts about the research problem and questions were useful for keeping the focus on the problem.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey questions.

1. Individual evaluation

	Highly inaccurate				Highly accurate	Not applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	
I enjoy talking and working with my team members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy the kind of work we do in this team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel motivated in doing my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have enough authority to perform my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a manageable workload	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My role is clear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get enough feedback from my team leader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have enough autonomy to perform my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I can develop in my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I am part of this team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Team evaluation

	Highly inaccurate				Highly accurate	
	1	2	3	4	5	Not applicable
There is a clearly defined goal / purpose that justifies the existence of the team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team membership is quite clear – everybody knows who is on this team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team members possess the essential skills and abilities to perform their work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The team can make decisions independently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The team has an established method for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Everyone on this team is motivated to have the team succeed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some members of our team do not carry their fair share of the overall workload	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of our team actively share their special knowledge and expertise with one another	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team members take leadership actively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Team goal / purpose – Pleads check one of the following:

- The purposes of our team are specified by others, but the means and procedures we use to accomplish them are left to us
- The means or procedures we are supposed to use in our work are specified in detail by others, but the purposes of our team are left unstated
- Both the purposes of our team and the means or procedures we are supposed to use in our work are specified in detail by others
- Neither the purpose nor the means are specified by others for our team

4. The team leader..

	Highly inaccurate				Highly accurate	Not applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	
Jointly sets performance objectives with you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supports you in developing your career plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivates you to do a good job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gives you authority to do your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides the support necessary to help you do your job (e.g. advice, resources, or information)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understands the work to be done within your work group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is available to you when needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourages innovation and creativity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Holds employees accountable for meeting performance objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keeps commitments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Takes care of adequate training time for you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides ongoing performance feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provided a useful performance appraisal within the past year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conducts productive staff meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates trust and confidence in you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Treats you with dignity and respect	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Informs you about issues affecting you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Balances the work load fairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicates the reasons for his/her actions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supports and backs you up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has the subject matter knowledge to do your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The team leader..

	Highly inaccurate 1	2	3	4	Highly accurate 5	Not applicable
Helps the team build a high shared commitment to its purposes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps the team sustain the motivation of all members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Works with the team to develop the best possible approach to its work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keeps the team alert to anything that might require a change of work strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps members learn from one another and from the team's work experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps the team identify and use well each member's unique talents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Micromanages the content and process of team discussion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructs the team in detail about how to solve its problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tells the team everything it is doing wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creates a safe climate for team members to openly and supportively discuss any issue related to the team's success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. How is the organisation supporting your team?

	Highly inaccurate 1	2	3	4	Highly accurate 5	Not applicable
Excellent team performance pays off in this organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Even teams that do an especially good job are not recognised or rewarded by the organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teams in this organisation can get whatever information they need to plan their work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In this organisation, teams do not receive adequate training for the work they have to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When something comes up that team members do not how to handle, it is easy for them to obtain the training or technical advice they need	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How often is the organisation coaching individual team members? (from never to often)
8. How often is the organisation helping team members learn how to work well together? (from never to often)
9. How often the organisation is getting the team set-up right – clarifying its purpose, picking members, structuring the task, setting expectations, and so on? (from never to often)
10. How often the organisation is running external interference for the team – getting resources, securing outside assistance, removing roadblocks, and so on? (from never to often)
11. How long have you been working in this team?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- More than 2 years

12. What do you miss the most from team leadership at the moment? Choose at least one of the following:

- Support and guidance
- Goal / purpose of the team
- Motivation
- Feedback
- Career and future plans
- Other _____

13. Which factors and/or leadership actions could help you perform better at work?
14. Which factors are frustrating your team and disturbing your performance at work?
15. Comments/feedback on this survey (voluntary)