



## **The roles of trust and feedback in organisational leadership: Case study for the Ministry of Finance**

Micaela Mahne

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences  
Bachelor's Thesis  
2021  
Bachelor of Business Administration

## Abstract

**Author**

Micaela Mahne

**Degree**

Bachelor of Business Administration

**Thesis title**

The roles of trust and feedback in organisational leadership: Case study for the Ministry of Finance

**Number of pages and appendix pages**

46 + 14

This is a research-based case study on trust and feedback in organisational leadership. The objective was to investigate how trust and feedback are experienced in remote work and to help the Finnish Ministry of Finance's on-going strategy processes by shedding light on the roles of trust and feedback in their organisation as well as give materials to work towards a better and more flourishing organisation.

Leadership, trust and feedback are ever-evolving concepts with different types and multidimensional aspects. For an organisation to flourish, it is critical to examine these key concepts.

Quantitative methods were used for statistics analysis and qualitative methods for first-hand observation. Webropol-online survey tool was used to collect data from two target groups: management and employees within the Ministry. The online survey used close-ended statements using the Likert-scale, gathering 142 respondents. The main research questions were "What are the roles of trust and feedback in organizational leadership?".

The evidence suggests that trust, as it is one of the Ministry's core values, is embedded in the professional relationship between management and employees. Compared to trust, the views on the current state of feedback within the organisation are not as unified.

Wellbeing at work and open communication are at the heart of management, interaction and collaboration. Trust and feedback are the new ways of modern management, and a by-product of an organisation that is healthy from the inside. To achieve this, it is proposed for the Ministry to strengthen trust and feedback by increasing transparent and open communication and decision-making as well as introduce methods for seeking and receiving feedback.

**Keywords**

Trust, feedback, leadership, case study

## **Acknowledgement**

First, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Kirsi Kannisto for advising me during this thesis process, we did it!

I would like to thank the Ministry of Finance for this interesting case study and survey material, Pilvi Pellikka, Head of Development, and other colleagues for the support and encouragement throughout the process.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to my teachers and classmates in Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences for these past few years of successful studies. We have been able to adapt quickly in these extreme events and circumstances.

Lastly and specially thank you to my family, mom, dad and my two irreplaceable sisters. They have all supported and helped me in every possible way, including my two dogs, Bruno and Diego, for always keeping me company day in day out through all the late nights.

And as my grandmother encouraged me: "If the bar is too high, get a pole vault."

Thank you.

## Table of contents

1 Introduction .....	1
2 Framework .....	2
2.1 Leadership and trust .....	2
2.2 Remote work and the post-COVID “new normal” .....	5
2.3 Feedback in organisational leadership .....	6
3 Methods and data .....	9
3.1 Main objective and purpose .....	9
3.3 Research phases .....	12
3.4 Methods.....	12
4 Results .....	16
5 Discussion and conclusions.....	35
5.1 Age and gender.....	35
5.2 Remote work .....	35
5.3 Trust .....	35
5.4 Feedback.....	37
5.5 Development recommendations .....	38
5.6 Trustworthiness of research.....	39
5.7 Self-evaluation.....	40
References .....	41
Appendices.....	47
Appendix 1. Survey questions for the Ministry of Finance (leaders and employees) ....	47
Appendix 2. Employee report.....	49
Appendix 3. Management report.....	55

## 1 Introduction

Trust and feedback in organisational leadership have been discussed comprehensively over the years but understanding the roles of these two qualities in a remote work setting is still in progress. Today, after the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic, using remote work as a part of the working arrangement has temporarily shifted from occasional to the main form of working out of necessity. Although still in the future, remote working will likely be more frequently infiltrated and blended in as a hybrid form into what has been the “normal” work arrangement and culture in the past. For the hybrid form to work successively, it is imperative to assess work values such as trust and feedback in the work environment.

The Finnish Ministry of Finance (later Ministry) is one of 12 in the Finnish government, and it provides employment for nearly 400 people. The Ministry’s core strategy is to ensure a secure future. For this to take place, it is essential for the Ministry to continuously evaluate and develop their organisational practices. (Ministry - Valtiovarainministeriö, 2021) The Ministry has started their strategy process in which some of the key elements are to determine “values, transparency, trust and solution-seeking, consideration, and implementation in practice”, according to Pilvi Pellikka, the development manager in the Ministry of Finance. This thesis will support the ongoing strategy process with information about the employees' views on the experiences of trust and feedback in remote work. Therefore, the main research question of this study is “What are the roles of trust and feedback in remote work in organisational leadership?”

The hybrid form of working equally includes working on-site “at the office”, and although further understanding how the roles of trust and feedback have changed as a whole since COVID-19, for clarity's sake, this thesis will concentrate on trust and feedback in remote working only. This research will include frameworks of trust and feedback and their definitions, and their roles in organisational leadership.

This is a research-based bachelor’s thesis for the degree program in Multilingual Management Assistants at Haaga-Helia of Applied Sciences, in the major of Leadership and HR. The objective of this thesis was to investigate how trust and feedback are experienced in remote work and to help organisations, especially the Finnish Ministry of Finance, to see and understand the roles of trust and feedback in their organisation and give the Ministry of Finance material to work towards a better and more flourishing organisation. Mendeley was used as a reference managing tool in the writing process.

## 2 Framework

### 2.1 Leadership and trust

Leadership has been studied for many years and it is a complex concept to define. Stogdill (1974) stated that there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people attempting to define it. Current literature still does not seem to have a consensus about what leadership is or how one would define it. It is an ever-evolving concept but there are some commonly held qualities that leaders should have to be recognised as a “good” leader. Trust is one of those qualities. The following subchapter includes central concepts of trust and ethical leadership in an organisational setting.

Trust is a challenging concept to define. In order to define trust, scholars often use research models, specific properties of trust or even algorithms (Mcknight and Chervany, 1996).

The concept of trust in an organisational context has been less studied. According to Mcknight and Chervany (1996), scholars continue to express concern regarding their collective lack of consensus about the meaning of trust. When there is this kind of conceptual confusion, comparing studies on trust can become challenging. Trust is often defined in a specific and narrow way by empirical studies which, creates conceptual diversity but according to McKnight and Chervany (1996), trust is “appropriately difficult” to define in a narrow way. Trust has within itself a broad set of constructs both in everyday terminology and in the research literature which argues that the narrow descriptions of trust do not represent the concept’s rich set of meanings accurately (Mcknight and Chervany, 1996). Trust is relevant and it matters. The culture of trust eases cooperation amongst people, trust allows vulnerability between people, and allows to get to know others more intimately (Friedman, Khan and Howe, 2000).

Trust has multidimensional aspects: it can be interpersonal, a set of inter-related constructs, or institutional in kind (Mcknight and Chervany, 1996; Krot and Lewicka, 2012).. Organisational trust is a crucial element to have in professional relationships between personnel, co-workers, managers and employees (Krot and Lewicka, 2012). Krot and Lewica (2012) explain that in order to measure, explain or understand trust in an organisational setting, one must identify the different types of trust, which are horizontal, vertical and institutional. *Horizontal trust* is the trust between co-workers, *vertical trust* is the trust between both managers and employees, and *institutional trust* is between employees and organizations (Krot and Lewicka, 2012; Hoe, 2013). In the latter type of trust, elements such as organization procedures, technologies, management, goals,

visions, and competence form the essence of institutional trust (Ellonen, Blomqvist and Puumalainen, 2008).

Trust has emerged as an essential strategic asset for organisations since the 1990s' organisational crisis (Kramer and Tyler, 1996). Organisational trust is a central element for effective work relationships and is an important component for any organisation's long-term success. Based on the research done by Sousa-Lima, Michael and Caetano (2013) on a sample of 1300 employees, trust affected the relationship between supervisor and turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Trust is a key element for effective communication and teamwork in an organization. Trust has been found to positively affect the organizational culture and environment by increasing commitment and productivity (Krot and Lewicka, 2012). Trust adds value in an organisation according to McElroy (2002). Trust also enhances information flow, relationships, interaction and cooperation as well as creates knowledge (McElroy, 2002; Connell, Ferres and Travaglione, 2003). Mineo (2014) says that "Trust is the glue that binds the leader to her/his followers and provides the capacity for organisational and leadership success".

Organisational leadership can be examined by how leaders affect their organisations' performance through the levels of individual and organisational influence (Bratton, 2020). With social interactions, a leader can influence an employee or a group of employees, while leaders also have the ability to affect the organisational work culture and structure. Regardless of the personal characteristics of a leader, things like innovation, vision building, and change could falter without followers that trust the leader. Effective leadership is not a singular phenomenon but rather a shared, collective and cooperative phenomenon (Bratton, 2020). Trust in one another is what links the leader and the followers. Positive leadership creates positive employee affect (Kelloway *et al.*, 2012).

In sum, the various attributes of trust have been discussed above. These include, for instance, different types of trust (horizontal, vertical and institutional) and trust being a strategic asset. Organisational trust was also found to have a positive effect on work relationships and the organisation's long-term success. Organisational leadership affects the organisations' performance through individual influence. In addition, positive leadership creates positive employee affect. The concept of trust would remain too narrow if one central element was ignored: ethics.

Ethics is linked to trust in the study of Chughtai, Marann and Flood (2015). Academics and practitioners have put greater attention on the ethical environment and culture in

organisations (Chughtai, Marann and Flood, 2015). The importance and awareness of ethical leadership has been enhanced through empirical research. Ethical leadership relates to the following outcomes, such as higher satisfaction and commitment, greater job dedication, improved performance, willingness to report problems to supervisors, and more organisational citizenship behaviours (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2011; Chughtai, Marann and Flood, 2015).

In some ethics literature, a fundamental element of all relationships is considered to be trust (Hosmer 1995; Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016). Trust is considered a moral phenomenon and has ethical implications for organisations and their management (Greenwood and Van Buren III, 2010; Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016). Trust builds and supports long-term relationships, helps generate supportive behaviour inside and outside of an organisation, and is instrumental in an organisation's success (Ingenhoff and Sommer, 2010; Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016). In management and organisational discussions, trust is said to be an essential resource for building relationships, teams and communities as well as boosting economic success (Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016).

The study of Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč (2016) dives into the ethics of trust in organisational culture. This study brings out the importance of trust and the consequences of distrust, where "fake trust" is not better than distrust and that distrust can increase trust in particular situations. They argue that unity is not always positive and fragmentation negative. Fragmentation can permit the voicing of concerns, being sincere in communication and open in expressing fears. Furthermore, the study proposes that relying on fragmentation rather than unity allows for improving organisational ethics and that building trust is never too late; distrust changes into building trust and trust produces productive working relationships (Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016).

The Chughtai, Marann and Flood (2015) study has important implications for organisations. It provides evidence that ethical leadership can play an integral role in improving employees' health and well-being at the workplace (Chughtai, Marann and Flood, 2015). The results suggest that by building trust-based relationships with employees, ethical leaders can enhance work engagement. Organisations should, then, focus on enabling the development of ethical leaders in order to create and maintain a healthy workforce (Chughtai, Marann and Flood, 2015). In conclusion, trust in an organisation is considered an important element because of the increase of commitment and productivity (Krot and Lewicka, 2012; Sousa-Lima, Michel and Caetano, 2013).

## 2.2 Remote work and the post-COVID “new normal”

The importance of trust in leadership has been highlighted in today’s world amidst a world pandemic (COVID-19), which has globally forced most of the workers to work from home: 88% of organisations have been encouraged and/or required employees to work from home (Gartner Glossary, 2020). This subchapter includes central concepts of remote work, hybrid working and the history of remote working.

The Cambridge Dictionary (2020) defines remote work as “the practice of an employee working at their home, or in some other place that is not [the] organisation’s usual place of business”. Remote work or telecommuting simply means working from outside the office. Remote work is a working style that allows organisations to break the traditional hours of work (9am to 5pm) and offer employees more flexible working hours and work outside of the traditional office environment.

Hybrid working is the merging of office working and fully remote working, essentially meaning flexible working arrangements (Thompson, 2021). According to numerous studies on remote work, hybrid working has existed before the COVID-19 pandemic, but its occurrence has since highly accelerated due to the pandemic (Butler, 2020; Gupta, 2020; Susan Lund, Anu Madgavkar, James Manyika, 2020; Thompson, 2021). Through the pandemic, cultural and technological obstacles have shifted in the workplace structures. Hybrid working is very likely to persist even after the pandemic restrictions are clear (Susan Lund, Anu Madgavkar, James Manyika, 2020). Bondarenko, Rishko and Tardaskina, (2018) state that remote work creates new jobs and has the possibility to transform the labor force, which directly affects the economy. Gartner Glossary (2020) also validates that remote working can help ensure work-life balance, increase career opportunities, and reduce commuting costs, while the benefits for the organisation are plentiful: increased satisfaction and productivity, as well as cost savings on physical resources.

Adapting to the new norm of remote work without any transitional period was challenging for both organisations and employees, but is now the new norm in many organisations around the whole world (Gupta, 2020).

The term telecommuting was created in 1973 by a NASA engineer Jack Nilles. In 1979 as an experiment, five employees from International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) were allowed to work from home. By the year 1983 it had grown to 2000 people (Butler, 2020; Gupta, 2020). By the year 2000 employees and employers recognised the need for remote guidelines. The DOT Appropriations Act was enacted introducing the legitimised

remote work mandate for companies to create telecommuting policies (Butler, 2020; Gupta, 2020). According to Butler (2020) and Gupta (2020) telecommuting has increased by 115% over the last decade, and they furthermore state that remote work is here to stay.

Remote work and trust are interconnected matters. Finland is the most trusting country in Europe, with more than four in five Finnish citizens stating that they trust other Finns according to a recent Eurobarometer study (Hahne, 2021). Remote work in Finland has adapted to remote working so successfully because it is said they have a deeply rooted culture of trust, which enables remote work and flexible working hours to work so well (Savage, 2019).

### **2.3 Feedback in organisational leadership**

Feedback is a tool for personal and professional development and self-improvement. Feedback provides the necessary information for improvement and the necessary encouragement via positive feedback for reassurance, confidence, and trust-building. Constructive feedback, both positive and negative, are vital for employees' ongoing development. Feedback can, for example, clarify expectations, help people to learn from their mistakes, and build personal and professional confidence (HRCentral, 2018). The organisations that have established and developed effective feedback methods have seen the substantial benefits of that success. These methods include, for instance, feedback to harness and apply the skills, ideas, and knowledge of the employees (Roebuck, 1996).

Feedback is a form of communication. Upward communication is an important channel for communication, as it means that information is sent up the organisations' "chain of command" or hierarchy (Atwater and Waldman, 2007). Upward communication is an important communications channel not only for managers and followers, but for successful organisational function, as it promotes organisational health (Atwater and Waldman, 2007). The following example shows how neglecting to use feedback as tool can be harmful: a study done by Kassing and Armstrong (2002) found that "...individuals with concerns regarding unethical conduct or issues that could result in potential harm will seek the attention of the media or regulatory bodies if supervisors or organisational officials fail to acknowledge their issues." The role and importance of feedback becomes more evident (Atwater and Waldman, 2007).

London and Smither (2002) conceptualize feedback as being part of a "longitudinal performance management process" linked to both individual's feedback adaptation and the feedback culture of an organisation. Components such as (a) being comfortable with

feedback, (b) having the disposition to seek and process feedback, (c) allowing the feedback to improve performance, (d) and acting on the feedback to guide behavioural change refers to the individual's relation to feedback (London and Smither, 2002). On the other hand, having a feedback culture, which includes elements such as focusing feedback on behaviour, and having a strong relationship between performance improvement and valued outcomes refer to the organisation's support for feedback and its value (London and Smither, 2002).

Feedback helps an organisation make sense of its internal behaviour patterns and evaluate them properly. This enables the organisation to better initiate and advocate necessary routine changes for a successful organisational transformation (Chen, Ouyang and Pan, 2013). Feedback also helps individuals pursue valued goals while negotiating organisational environments (Ashford and Cummings, 1983).

Feedback illustrates many things such as employees' satisfaction with their environment, learning, and work commitment. Feedback also exhibits the support and guidance employees receive from co-workers and leaders, improves process evaluation, and highlights motivation, which ultimately increases performance and the organisations performance momentum (Farooq and Khan, 2011). Farooq and Khan (2011) argue that employees' feedback regarding operations and processes have an impact: they would compel the organisations' leadership to adjust, train and provide enhanced monitoring for feedback between employees and management, which would create a stronger relationship between the two entities (Farooq and Khan, 2011). Atwater and Waldman (2007) support the argument, as they argue that employees have valuable expertise and important perspectives on the organisation and its issues, as well as valuable feedback on the style and effectiveness of managers.

Feedback is often directional. Van der Rijt, Van den Bossche and Segers (2013) examined the position of employees in the organisational hierarchy and inspected their feedback-seeking behaviour. The study argues that employees often seek feedback from colleagues who are within the same department and find the feedback useful. However, compared to others, managers and leaders seek significantly less feedback from colleagues in the same department. The findings suggest that feedback seeking is valuable and promising (Van der Rijt, Van den Bossche and Segers, 2013). Regardless of the employees' organisational position, feedback from every level and every perspective is highly informative for the management (Farooq and Khan, 2011). Feedback is a source of improvement on quality and strength of performance of the personnel, and helps give the necessary abilities and results required to better the organisational environment (Farooq and Khan, 2011).

Cheramie (2013) explores whether individuals seeking feedback from a supervisor or co-worker can relate to intrinsic (inside factor) and extrinsic (outside factor) career success. The study results support the interactions of feedback seeking and feedback source (both supervisor and co-worker) to predict extrinsic career success (Cheramie, 2013). In turn, the study found no support for the proposed interaction of feedback seeking and feedback source to predict intrinsic career success. The research results support organisations' need to focus on developing feedback environments that encourage feedback-seeking behaviours. Seeking feedback may generate positive outcomes related to extrinsic career success (Cheramie, 2013).

In sum, feedback is a form of communication. It is often directional and helps the organisation understand internal behaviour patterns. Feedback can be useful regardless of the persons' organisational position, and additionally, having a feedback-seeking culture improves performance for a successful organisational development. Having said this, research on feedback remains very limited. According to Baker et al. (2013), scholars acknowledge the lack of understanding of various aspects of feedback and the gap in research literature concerning the value of organisational feedback culture. This study on trust and feedback seeks to fill this gap in literature by studying these concepts in the context of a public institution like the Ministry of Finance.

### 3 Methods and data

Pilvi Pellikka, Head of Development in the Ministry of Finance, defines the case study parameters as follows:

*A strategy process is underway at the Ministry of Finance. One of its key elements is values, transparency, trust and solution-seeking, consideration, and implementation in practice. The thesis provides valuable additional information about the staff's views on the experiences of trust and feedback at work, which are essential elements in the realization of these values. The thesis also provides development suggestions and recommendations for action, which can be utilized to support the strategy process and further development work.*

The Finnish Ministry of Finance (later Ministry) is one of 12 in the Finnish government, and it provides employment for nearly 400 people. The Ministry's core strategy is to ensure a secure future. For this to take place, it is essential for the Ministry to continuously evaluate and develop their organisational practices. (*Ministry - Valtiovarainministeriö*, 2021) The Ministry has started their strategy process in which some of the key elements are to determine "values, transparency, trust and solution-seeking, consideration, and implementation in practice", according to Pilvi Pellikka, the development manager in the Ministry of Finance. This thesis will support the ongoing strategy process with information about the employees' views on the experiences of trust and feedback in remote work. Therefore, the main research question of this study is "What are the roles of trust and feedback in remote work in organisational leadership?"

Research is a controlled, empirical and critical (without bias) investigation of a hypothesis and involves inquiry and examination which results in the discovery of new knowledge and the verification of existing data (Nthakanio, 2015).

#### 3.1 Main objective and purpose

Leadership, trust and feedback are ever-evolving concepts with different types and multidimensional aspects. This is a research-based bachelor's case study on trust and feedback in organisational leadership using a mixed method to analyse the empirical data, quantitative for statistics analysis and qualitative for unbiased first-hand analysis and observation.

The objective was to investigate how trust and feedback are experienced in remote work, help the Ministry of Finance see and understand the roles of trust and feedback in their organisation and give materials to work towards a better and more flourishing organisation.

Webropol-online survey tool was used to inquire important and insightful questions from two target groups, both management and employees within the Ministry. The online survey used close-ended statements using the Likert-scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). Sample survey method was used, a sample of people to collect data using a self-administered questionnaire. The results were used to ascertain the roles of trust and feedback in the organisation and explicate the results.

The research will support the Ministry's ongoing strategy process with information about the employees' and management's views on the experiences of trust and feedback in remote work.

A research question identifies the problem that is to be studied, it helps guides and focus the research so to not lose focus of the targeted research problem and it can be the source of the researcher's personal values and goals, intuition, and the current state of scientific knowledge whether there is a gap or simple animosity (Singleton and Straits, 2010; Nthakanio, 2015).

The research answers the question "what are the roles of trust and feedback in organisational leadership?". This research is aimed at remote work but is not limited by it. The research is applicable to on-site working and expectantly intended to be utilized for such work as it is imperative for any organisation-culture to have.

The main risk in the thesis is the expedited time frame which can have a high impact on the thesis process. Additionally, the necessity of a new thesis topic arose with a fast deadline. The expedited time frame is a motivational facture. To prevent rush, tasks will be distributed evenly to avert overload of work as well as goals and personal deadlines set for accountability and clarity.

The hypothesis for this academic paper is that trust is more of a personal value than it is embedded as part of the organisations culture and feedback is "only a trendy tool" to get positive feedback and feel good, not affecting the organisations culture or wellbeing long-term. Hypothesis is a statement of prediction according to Nthakanio (2015), it narrows down the research question to a specific statement and defines real, solid terms rather than theoretical what is expected from the study.

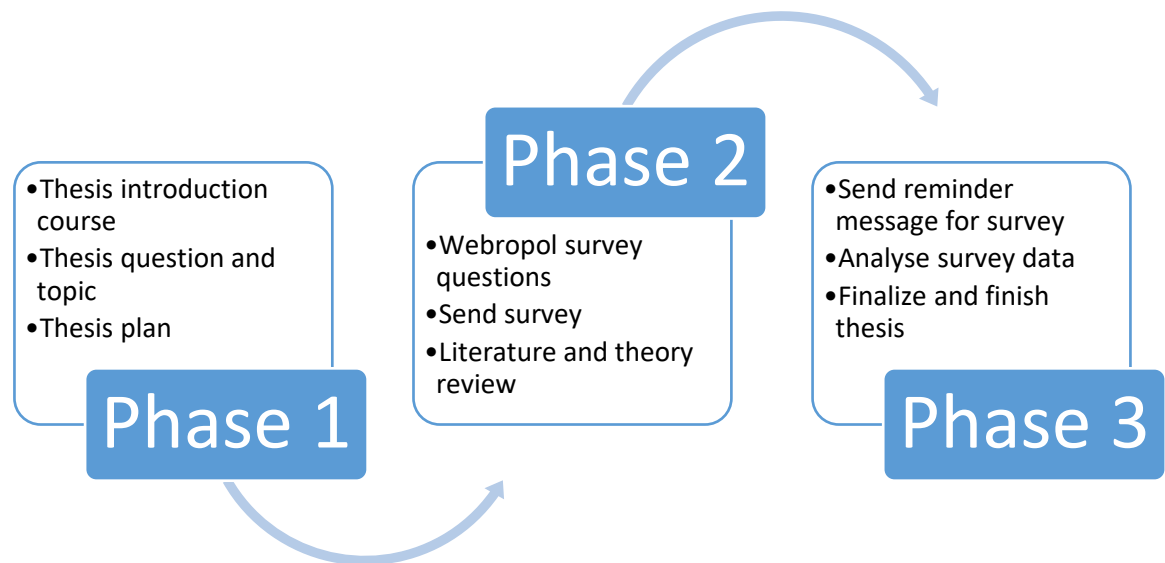
The problem was still adjusting to remote work, wanting to figure out in this day and age, in these special circumstances, how the inner workings of an organisation work, how do they take care of the “basic” things that we could take for granted before COVID-19 and remote work. The interest to examine HR matters and specifically what trust looks like in remote work, and how does remote work affect feedback. To understand the concept fully, for the writer and reader, it was essential to get both the management perspective and employee perspective.

After being in remote work for a while examining how is the dialogue culture, is there trust and interaction and openness, is feedback part of that culture. The effects (of having them and not having them) of trust and feedback in an organisation. From both the employee's and management's point of view, well-being at work, the flow of information, by what means can better work engagement be made and whether the inquiries come through communication or through individual management work and how these all occur in teleworking. Find out how supervision, trust and feedback work on how to ensure they work successfully remotely. Also, a personal sub target of the study was to find out about the overall wellbeing of the employees and management, if building/developing trust and feedback would increase wellbeing and motivation. If they are doing unwell, how do they “keep their nose above water”, so to speak, how do they cope, proving that trust and feedback help to cope with uncertainty. Wellbeing at work and open communication are at the heart of management, interaction, collaboration and trust and feedback are the new way of modern management, success and all the other benefits are the by-product of an organisation that is healthy from the inside.

The thesis grade goal is 4. The benefits and knowledge the topic will provide for the Ministry of Finance and other organisations will be very useful and beneficial.

In conclusion the thesis will focus specifically on the roles of trust and feedback in organisational leadership. The thesis will provide necessary evidence of the importance of both trust and feedback and what those values can inspire.

### 3.3 Research phases



**Figure 1.** Research phases

Figure 1 illustrates the thesis process steps in three separate phases; Phase 1 started with the introduction course provided by Haaga-Helia university followed by the chosen topic that answers to a specific research question, and the thesis plan submitted to the Konto-system; Phase 2 continued with making the survey questions by using the Webropol-online tool, sending the survey to the selected company (Ministry of Finance) and then focusing on the literature and theory review; Phase 3 continues with a reminder message for the possible respondents to answer the survey in the agreed timeframe, after receiving data comes analysis of the results and finally finalization of the thesis.

### 3.4 Methods

As discussed in the framework section trust can be divided into three types, namely horizontal, vertical and institutional (Krot and Lewicka, 2012; Hoe, 2013). In the case for the Ministry of Finance, the statements focused mainly on vertical trust (the trust between managers and employees) as the horizontal trust and institutional trust would have exceeded the scope of this research.

Research studies are conducted to ascertain the similarity or difference between two groups or to estimate quantity in a specific population (Whitley and Ball, 2002). As in this thesis paper the research is focused on two groups, management and employees, and their differences of opinion to the topic. The main methods to gathering data from an

occurrence or phenomenon are by means of experiment or observation directly from subjects; interviewing informants, or from respondents using questionnaires or other survey instruments (Javaid, 2013).

Studies select sample of people to interview and collect data for example using a self-administered questionnaire, this is called sample survey method (Agresti and Finlay, 2014). Hence survey research can be done through interviews or questionnaires to large groups of people to determine the specific characteristics of that population (Singleton and Straits, 2010). As in this research an online questionnaire was used through Webropol.

The survey using Webropol was sent to the Ministry of Finance, the questions were divided into 7: gender, age, job position, how long worked remotely, trust and feedback. Trust and feedback were the main questions and the rest give depth and the possibility for different various comparisons. Trust had in it 10 statements where respondents could then choose according to the Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). The theme of the statements was to determine the importance of trust, its role, and position in the organisation. Feedback had 15 statements using the same scale as trust (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). The theme of the statements was to determine the importance of feedback, its role and position in the organisation. The survey results gathered 142 respondents, analysis will be done by unbiased observation using the mixed method, both qualitative and quantitative method, the research and the results with the development ideas will be sent to the Ministry of Finance's contact person and they will use the data in their on-going strategy processes.

Webropol survey questions (see Appendix 1).

A sample can be considered as a set of individuals or objects selected from a population or large group of people from which a set of measurements are acquired deduce a specific characteristic trait or characteristics of the population (Javaid, 2013). The results of the two groups, management and employees, will be analysed and the differences will be measured in order to discover the richest variations and distinctions.

Singleton and Straits (2010) suggest that many scientists limit themselves when they could just resolve issues and problems by making observations. Scientific inquiry is often based on empiricism by making observations, it is a way of understanding or gaining knowledge through indirect or direct observation or experience through senses rather than theory or pure logic (Singleton and Straits, 2010). Oxford dictionary says that the word empirical is "based on, concerned with, or verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic". Empirical evidence can be analysed using quantitative or

qualitative methods. While this research uses empirical evidence to deduce the results by observation, we use “a mixed method” using quantitative methods to gather the data and qualitative to analyse and interpret the data through observation and experience of feelings.

Qualitative research methods are used in providing rich explanations or interpretations of complex cases, tracking, illuminating and interpreting distinctive events, conduct experiments and test hypotheses as well as providing explanations (Sofaer, 1999). Firestone (2016) states that “qualitative methods express the assumptions of a phenomenological paradigm that there are multiple realities that are socially defined”. The sampling methods in qualitative research are essential to obtain unbiased material and to enable statistically valid conclusions to be drawn based on the observations and finding, and the chosen samples must be representative of the chosen population (Javaid, 2013). In this research the chosen population is from the Ministry and specifically from two target groups: management and employees.

Firestone (2016) also explains that “quantitative methods express the assumptions of a positivist paradigm which holds that behaviour can be explained through objective facts” showing the elimination of bias and error. In other words quantitative research contains a wide range of methods using numerical and statistical data systematically investigating social phenomena and verifying previous research measurements, and that involves measurements assuming that the case/study can be measured in order to draw a conclusion (Watson, 2015).

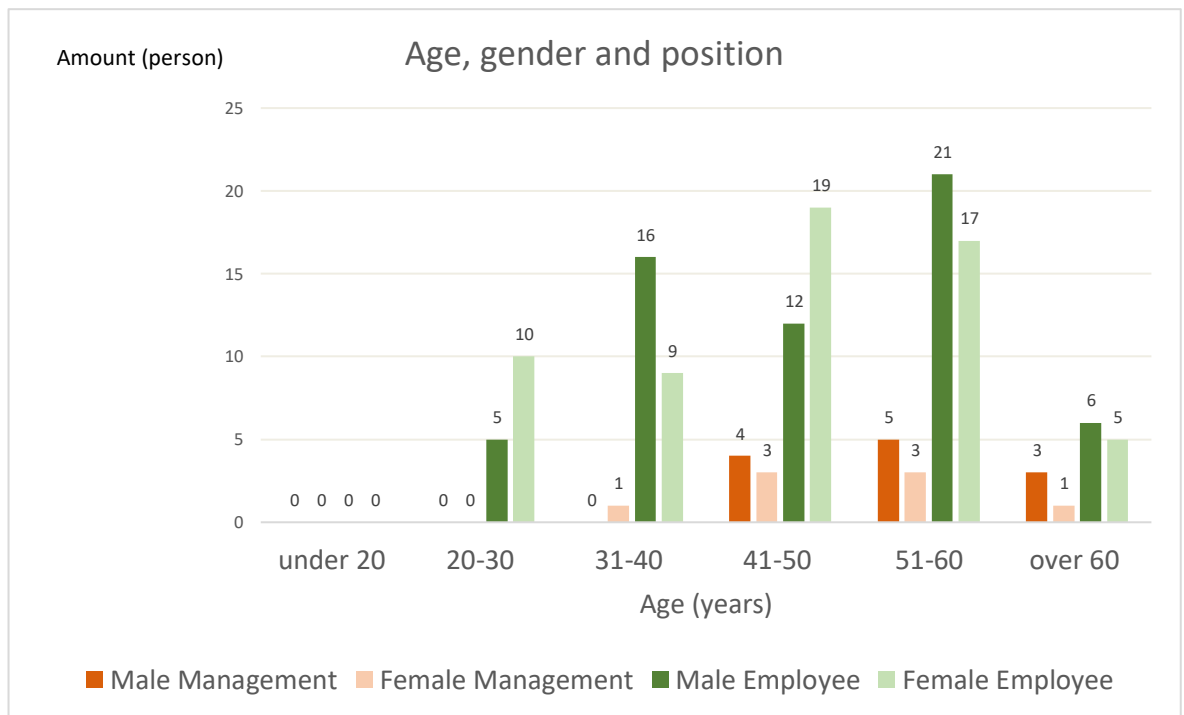
Qualitative and quantitative methods can also be complementary, used in sequence or in tandem, a so-called “mixed method” where both are used in the same research (Sofaer, 1999; Drake & Salmi 2018). The mixed method is used in this research because it best suits the conditions which is to use first-hand observation from the questionnaire (qualitative method) and understand the behaviours through objective facts (quantitative method) through the numerical data.

Being a case study for the Ministry of Finance, Kathleen M. Eisenhardt (1989) explains that using case studies from well-defined research questions to reaching closure is a solid process for inducting theories. And Yin (2012) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g. a “case”), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”.

Action research is used to carry out case studies involving experiments and surveys (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2006).

## 4 Results

The data collected from the survey using Webropol survey and reporting tool was transferred to Word, where the author could analyse the data in detail. Webropol is a useful tool for conducting online surveys where the author was able filter and compare the answers and statistics. The author designed the survey questions to be all close-ended statement questions using the Likert-scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).



**Figure 2.** Age and gender of respondents (N=142).

The conducted survey accumulated 142 respondents in total which was higher than expected. The supposed sample size of 50 respondents, from a population of close to 400 workers in the Ministry of Finance. Growth was near 3 times more than expected which puts overall growth at 184%. The survey acquired 69 females (48%) and 72 males (51%) with one respondent (1%) who would rather not say (Appendix 3).

The appendix 2 and 3 specifies statistical gender details on employees and management and their differences. The employee section (Appendix 2) indicates that, out of the forementioned 69 females (48%), 60 respondents (49,6%) are working as employees and 8 females (40%) are in management. The management section (Appendix 3) indicates that, out of the forementioned 72 males (51%), 60 respondents (49,6%) are working as employees and 12 respondents (60%) are in management. This concludes that in this sample size survey there are more men than female respondents.

The survey responses indicate (**Figure 2**) that there were no respondents under the age of 20 years; 16 respondents (11%) were between 20-30 years old; 27 respondents (19%) were between 31-30 years old; 38 respondents (27%) were between 41-50 years old; 46 respondents (32%) were between 51-60 years old, and 15 respondents (11%) were over 60 years old. The majority of the respondents are between 51-60 years old.

The appendices 2 and 3 specifies statistical details on the age groups of employees and management and their differences. The female employee section (**Figure 2**) indicates that there are 10 respondents (16,7%) between the ages of 20-30 years old; 9 respondents (15%) between the ages of 31-40 years old; 19 respondents (31,7%) between the ages of 41-50 years old; 17 respondents (28,3%) between the ages of 51-60 years old; 5 respondents (8.3%) over 60 years old.

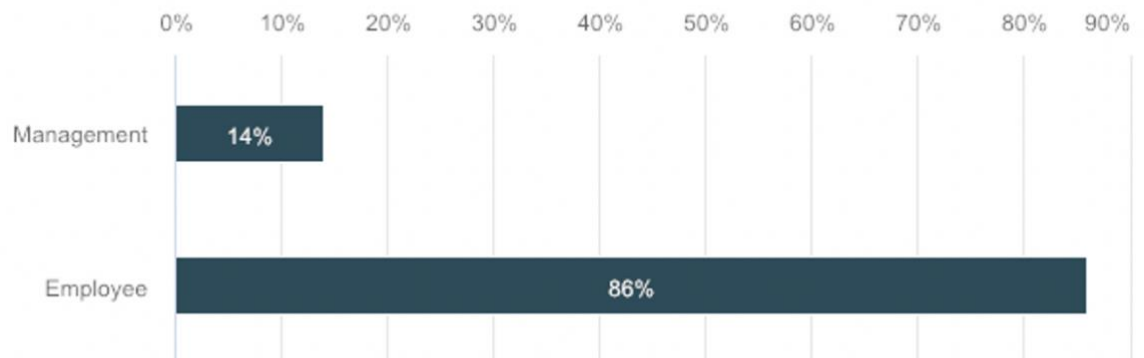
The male employee section (**Figure 2**) indicates that there are 5 respondents (8,3%) between the ages of 20-30 years old; 16 respondents (26,7%) between the ages of 31-40 years old; 12 respondents (20%) between the ages of 41-50 years old; 21 respondents (35%) between the ages of 51-60 years old and 6 respondents (10%) over 60 years old.

The female management section (**Figure 2**) indicates that there are no respondents between the ages of 20-30 years old; 1 respondent (12,5%) between the ages of 31-40 years old; 3 respondents (37,5%) between the ages of 41-50 years old; 3 respondents (37,5%) between the ages of 51-60 years old and 1 respondent (12,5%) over 60 years old.

The male management section (**Figure 2**) indicates that there are no respondents between the ages of 20-30 years old or 31-40 years old; 4 respondents (33,3%) between the ages of 41-50 years old; 5 respondents (41,7%) between the ages of 51-60 years old; 3 respondents (25%) over 60 years old.

### 3. What is your organizational role (job position)?

Vastaajien määrä: 141

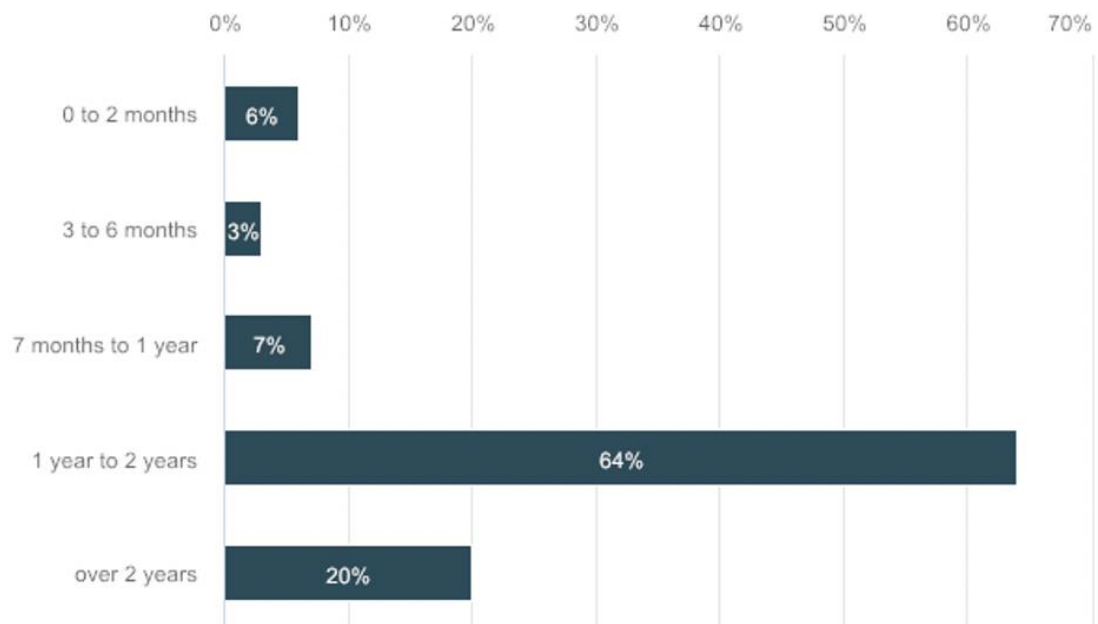


**Figure 3.** Organisational position

Out of the 142 responses 20 respondents (14%) are working in a management position, of which 8 respondents (40%) are female and 12 respondents (60%) are males. Out of the 142 responses 121 (86%) are working as an employee, of which 60 respondents (49%) are female and 60 respondents (50%) are male.

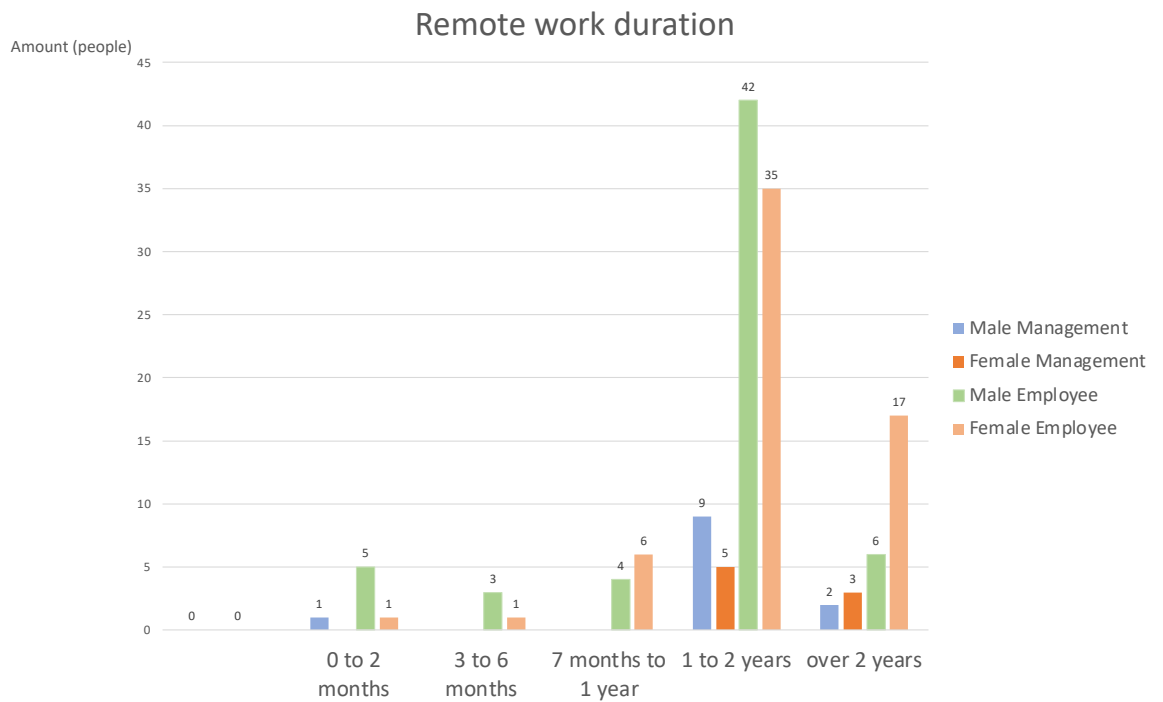
### 4. How long have you been working remotely?

Vastaajien määrä: 142



**Figure 4.** Remote work duration

The survey responses (**Figure 4**) indicate that out of the 142 responses 8 respondents (6%) have worked remotely for 0 to 2 months; 5 respondents (3%) have worked 3 to 6 months remotely; 10 respondents (7%) have worked remotely 7 months to 1 year; 91 respondents (64%) have worked 1 to 2 years remotely and 28 respondents (20%) have worked over 2 years remotely. Majority being in the 1 year to 2 years (64%).



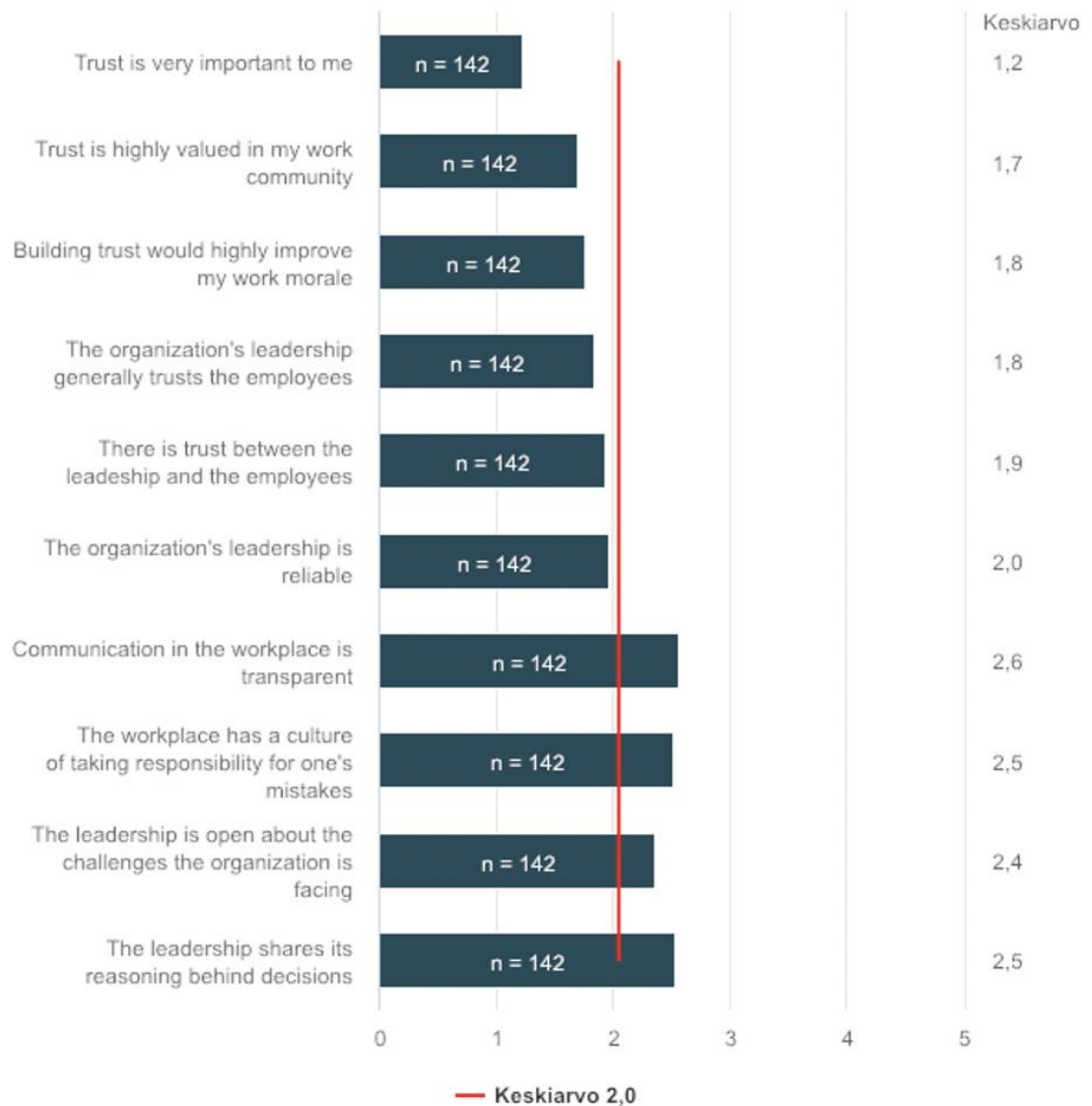
**Figure 5.** Cross-tabulated remote work duration

Out of the 142 responses 20 respondents (14%) are working in a management position, of which 14 respondents (70%) answered their remote work duration to 1-2 years. Out of the 142 responses 121 (86%) are working as an employee, of which 77 respondents (63,6%) also answered their remote work duration to 1-2 years. The gender factors were not significantly related to any of the study variables, and, therefore, was omitted from further analyses.

## 5. Trust

### TRUST

Vastaajien määrä: 142



**Figure 6.** Trust results

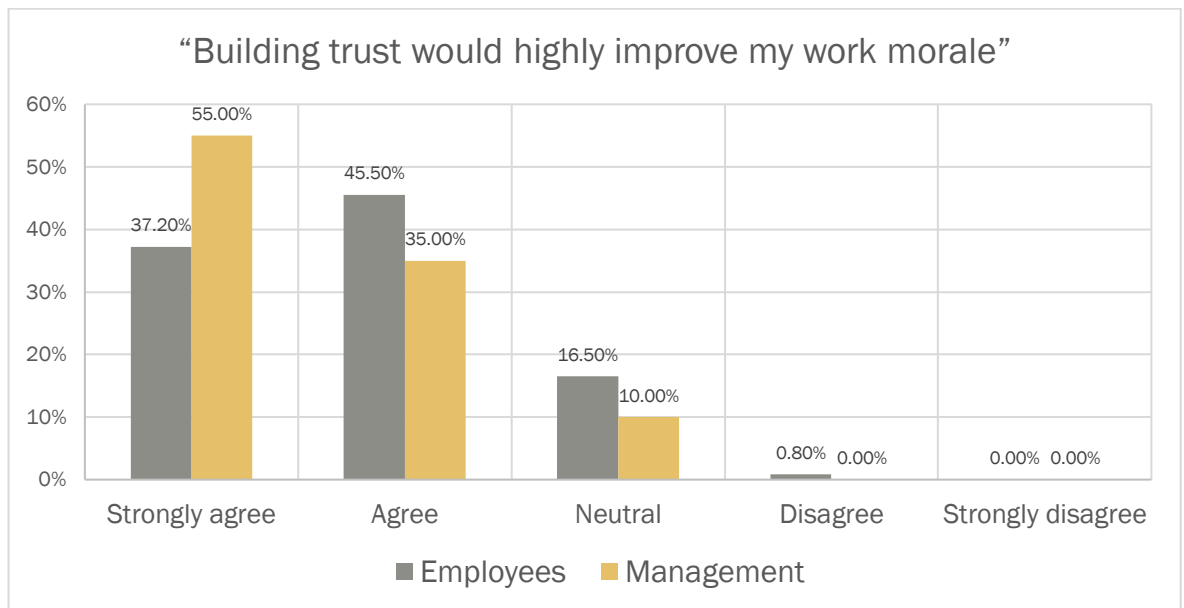
This section of the survey (**Figure 6**) has close-ended statements by which the respondents chose facts best suited for them on the Likert-scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

Out of the 142 responses the statement “Trust is very important to me” was most strongly agreed upon. The employees’ point of view (Appendix 2) indicates that 76% of the respondents strongly agree and 24% agree. The management’s point of view (Appendix 3) indicates that 85% of the respondents strongly agree and 15% agree.

The statement “Trust is highly valued in my work community” is also highly agreed upon. The employees’ point of view (Appendix 2) on the value of trust indicates that 41% of the respondents strongly agree and 48,8% agree alongside with 8,3% of neutral replies and

1,6% of disagreed replies. These results indicate that employees are mostly agreeing (89,8%) that trust is highly valued at the workplace.

The management's point of view (Appendix 3) on the value of trust indicates that 40% of the respondents strongly agree and 55% agree and 5% of neutral replies with no disagreeing replies. These results indicate that management is greatly agreeing (95%) that trust is highly valued at the workplace.



**Figure 7.** Building trust to improve morale

The statement “Building trust would highly improve my work morale” is rather agreed upon. The employees' point of view (**Figure 7**) on trust improving their work morale indicates that 37,2% of the respondents strongly agree and 45,5% agree with 16,5% of neutral replies and 0,8% of disagreed replies. These results indicate that employees are highly agreeing that building trust would improve their work morale (82,7%).

The management's point of view (**Figure 7**) on trust improving work morale indicates that 55% of the respondents strongly agree and 35% of management agree and 10% are neutral. These results indicate that management are highly agreeing that building trust would improve their work morale (90%).

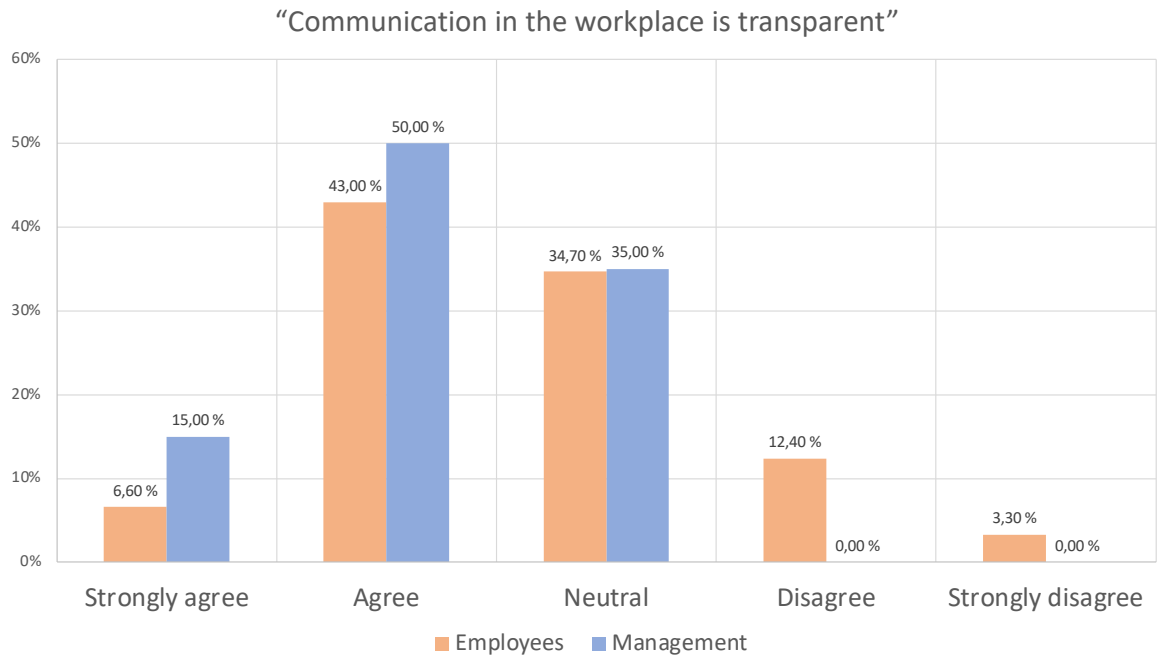
The following statements are mostly agreed upon: “The organisation's leadership generally trusts the employees”; “There is trust between the leadership and the employees”; “The organisation's leadership is reliable”.

The employees' point of view (Appendix 2) on the leadership's trust in employees indicates that 29,7% of the respondents strongly agree and 59,5% agree with 9,1% of neutral replies and 1,7% of disagreed replies. The trust between leadership and employees indicates that 26,4% of the respondents strongly agree and 57,9% agree with 11,6% of neutral replies, 3,3% of disagreed replies and 0,8% strongly disagree replies. The organisation's leadership is reliable results indicate that 25,6% of the respondents strongly agree and 56,2% agree with 11,6% of neutral replies and 6,6% of disagreed replies.

These results indicate that employees mostly agree on the statements: "The organisation's leadership generally trusts the employees" 89,2% of respondents agree; "There is trust between the leadership and the employees" 84,3% agree; "The organisation's leadership is reliable" 81,8% agree.

The management's point of view (Appendix 3) on the leadership's trust in employees indicates that 25% of the respondents strongly agree, 65% agree and 10% of neutral replies. The trust between leadership and employees statement indicates that 35% of the respondents strongly agree and 50% agree with 15% of neutral replies and no disagreeing replies. The organisation's leadership is reliable results indicate that 40% of the respondents strongly agree and 50% agree with 10% of neutral replies.

These results indicate that management also mostly agrees on the statements: "The organisation's leadership generally trusts the employees" 90% of respondents agree; "There is trust between the leadership and the employees" 85% agree; "The organisation's leadership is reliable" 90% agree.



**Figure 8.** Transparent communication

The statement “Communication in the workplace is transparent” is mostly agreed upon with a few stronger disagreements: The employees’ point of view (**Figure 8**) on the transparent communication at the workplace indicates that 6,6% of the respondents strongly agree and 43% agree with 34,7% of neutral replies, 12,4% of disagreed replies and 3,3% strongly disagree replies. These results indicate that 49,6% employees agree that communication is transparent at the workplace and 15,7% disagree.

The management’s point of view (**Figure 8**) on the transparent communication at the workplace indicates that 15% of the respondents strongly agree and 50% agree, 35% of neutral replies and no disagreeing respondents. These results indicate that 65% employees agree that communication is transparent at the workplace and 35% are neutral.

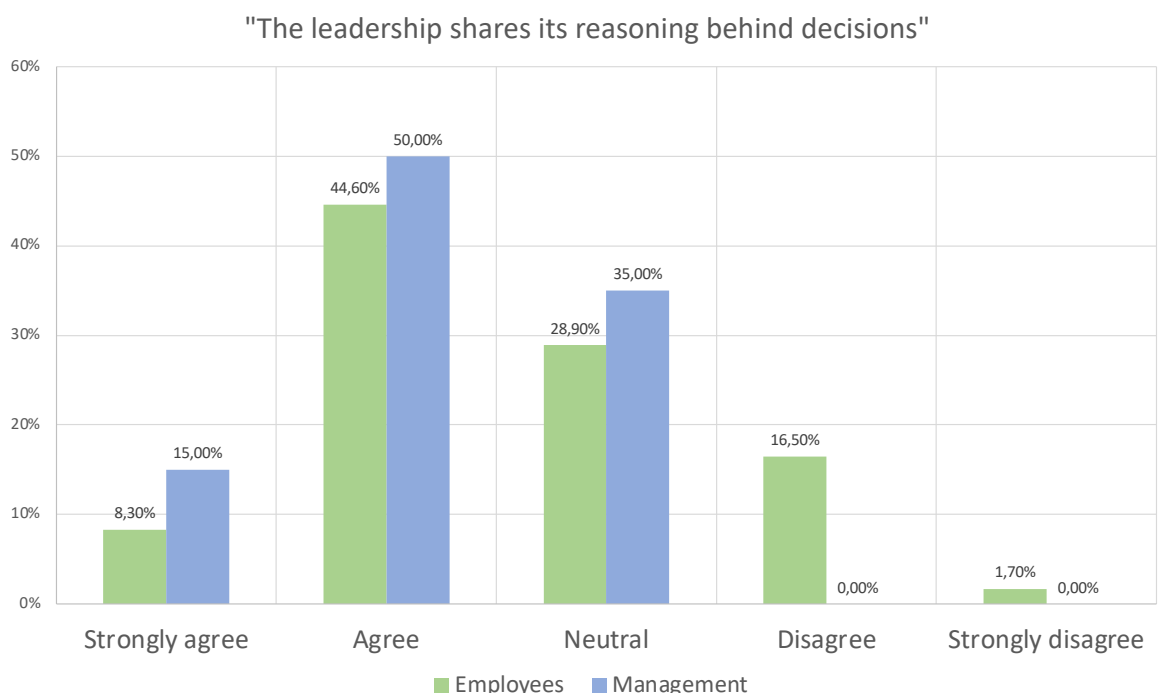
The statement “The workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one's mistakes” is also mostly agreed upon with a few stronger disagreements: The employees’ point of view (Appendix 2) on the workplace having a culture of taking responsibility for mistakes indicates that 7,4% of the respondents strongly agree and 43% agree with 38% of neutral replies and 10,8% of disagreed replies and 0,8% strongly disagree replies. These results indicate that 50,4% of employees agree that the workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one’s mistakes, 38% are neutral and 11,6% disagree.

The management’s point of view (Appendix 3) on the work culture of taking responsibility for mistakes indicates that 10% of the respondents strongly agree and 55% agree with

30% of neutral replies and 5% of disagreeing replies. These results indicate that 65% of the management agree that the workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one's mistakes, 30% are neutral and 5% disagree.

The statement "The leadership is open about the challenges the organisation is facing" is mostly agreed upon with a few stronger disagreements: The employees' point of view (Appendix 2) on the leadership's openness about the organisation's challenges indicates that 9,9% of the respondents strongly agree and 53,7% agree, 25,6% of neutral replies, 8,3% of disagreeing replies and 2,5% strongly disagree replies. These results indicate that 63,6% of employees agree, 25,6% are neutral and 10,8% disagree in the statement; "The leadership is open about the challenges the organisation is facing".

The management's point of view (Appendix 3) on the leadership's openness about the organisation's challenges results indicate that 20% of the respondents strongly agree and 50% agree with 25% of neutral replies 5% of disagreed. These results indicate that 70% of management agree and 5% disagree in the statement; "The leadership is open about the challenges the organisation is facing".



**Figure 9.** Leadership shares reasoning

The statement "The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions" is mostly agreed upon with a few stronger disagreements: The employees' point of view (**Figure 9**) on the leadership sharing reasoning behind decisions indicates that 8,3% of the respondents strongly agree and 44,6% agree with 28,9% of neutral replies and 16,5% of disagreed

replies and 1,7% strongly disagree replies. These results indicate 52,9% of employees agree, 28,9% are neutral and 18,2% disagree in the statement; “The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions”.

The management’s point of view (**Figure 9**) on the leadership sharing reasoning behind decisions results indicate that 15% of the respondents strongly agree and 50% agree with 35% of neutral replies and no disagreeing replies. These results indicate that 65% of management agree, 35% are neutral with no disagreeing respondents in the statement; “The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions”.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Keskiarvo	Mediaani
Trust is very important to me	77,5%	22,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,2	1,0
Trust is highly valued in my work community	40,8%	49,3%	8,5%	1,4%	0,0%	1,7	2,0
Building trust would highly improve my work morale	40,1%	43,7%	15,5%	0,7%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
The organization's leadership generally trusts the employees	28,9%	59,9%	9,8%	1,4%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
There is trust between the leadership and the employees	27,5%	56,3%	12,7%	2,8%	0,7%	1,9	2,0
The organization's leadership is reliable	27,5%	54,9%	12,0%	5,6%	0,0%	2,0	2,0
Communication in the workplace is transparent	7,7%	43,7%	35,2%	10,6%	2,8%	2,6	2,0
The workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one's mistakes	7,7%	44,4%	37,3%	9,9%	0,7%	2,5	2,0
The leadership is open about the challenges the organization is facing	11,3%	52,8%	26,1%	7,7%	2,1%	2,4	2,0
The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions	9,1%	45,1%	30,3%	14,1%	1,4%	2,5	2,0

**Figure 10.** Trust statistics

The **Figure 10** provided specifies statistical details on the (above-mentioned) employees and management points of view on the different trust statements as well as their differences.

## 6. Feedback

### FEEDBACK

Vastaajien määrä: 142

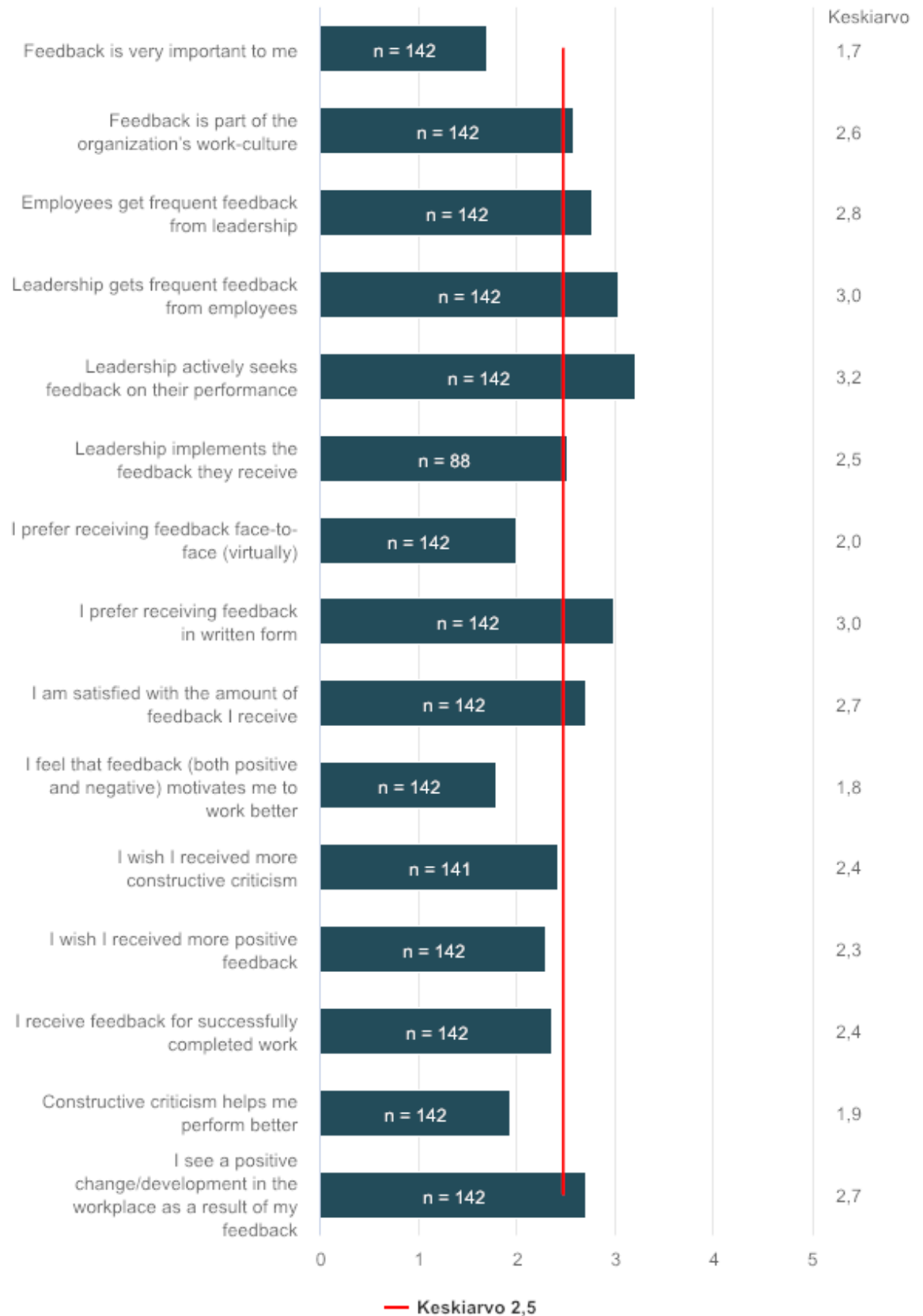


Figure 11. Feedback results

This section of the survey (**Figure 11**) also has close-ended statements by which the respondents chose facts best suited for them on the Likert-scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

Out of the 142 responses the statement “Feedback is very important to me” was most strongly agreed upon. Most of the respondents strongly agreed (35,9%) or agreed (57,8%) on the importance of feedback. The employees’ point of view (Appendix 2) indicates that 37,2% of the respondents strongly agree, 57% agree and 5,8% neutral replies with no disagreeing respondents. These results indicate that feedback is in fact very important for employees when 94,4% agree with the statement with no disagreeing replies.

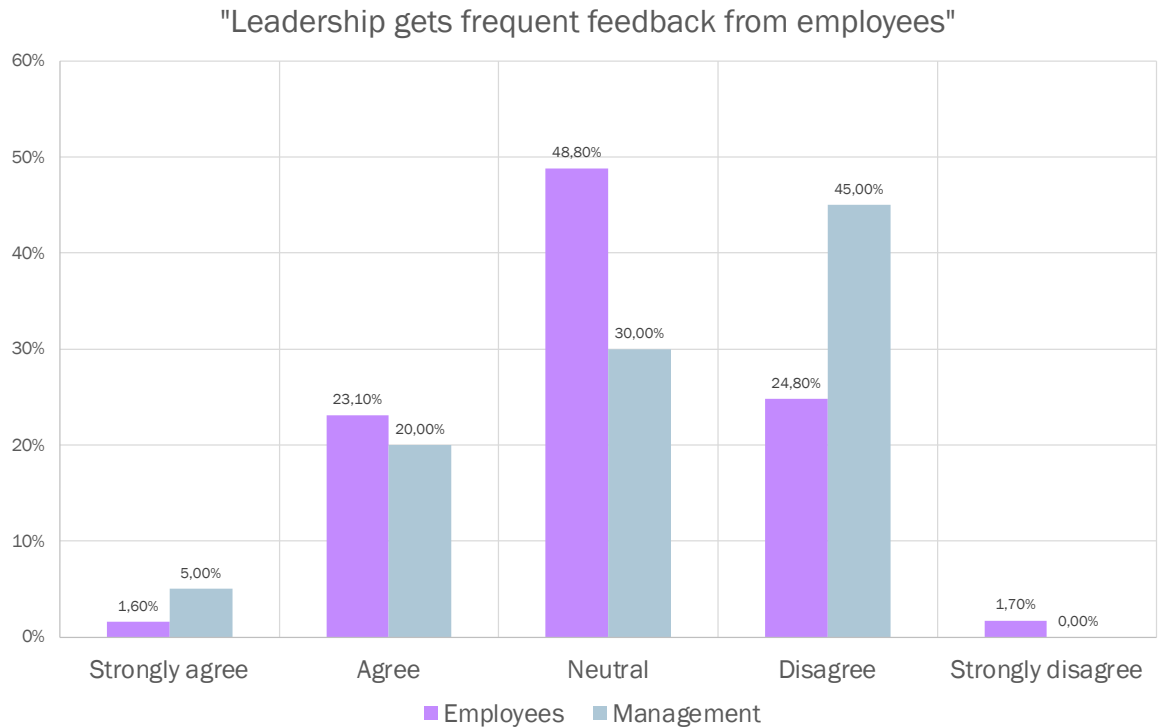
The management’s point of view (Appendix 3) on the statement “Feedback is very important to me” indicates that 25% of the respondents strongly agree and 65% agree and 10% neutral replies with no disagreeing respondents. These results also indicate that feedback is highly important for management as 90% agree with the statement with no disagreeing replies.

The statement “Feedback is part of the organisation’s work culture” is varied with its responses. The employees’ point of view (Appendix 2) indicates that 5% of the respondents strongly agree and 45,4% agree, 33,9% neutral replies, 14,9% respondents disagree and 0,8% strongly disagree on feedback being part of the work culture. These results indicate that 50,4% of employees agree with the statement of feedback being part of the work culture, and 15,7% of employees disagree.

The management’s point of view (Appendix 3) indicates that 15% of the respondents strongly agree and 40% agree with 40% neutral replies and 5% disagree replies. These results also indicate that 55% of management agree with the statement of feedback being part of the work culture, and 5% disagree.

The statement “Employees get frequent feedback from leadership” is mostly agreed upon. The employees’ point of view (Appendix 2) on employees getting frequent feedback from leadership indicates that 3,3% of the respondents strongly agree and 38,8% agree with 34,7% neutral replies, 21,5% respondents disagree and 1,7% strongly disagree. These results indicate that 42,1% of employees agree with the statement on employees getting frequent feedback from leadership, and 23,2% of employees disagree.

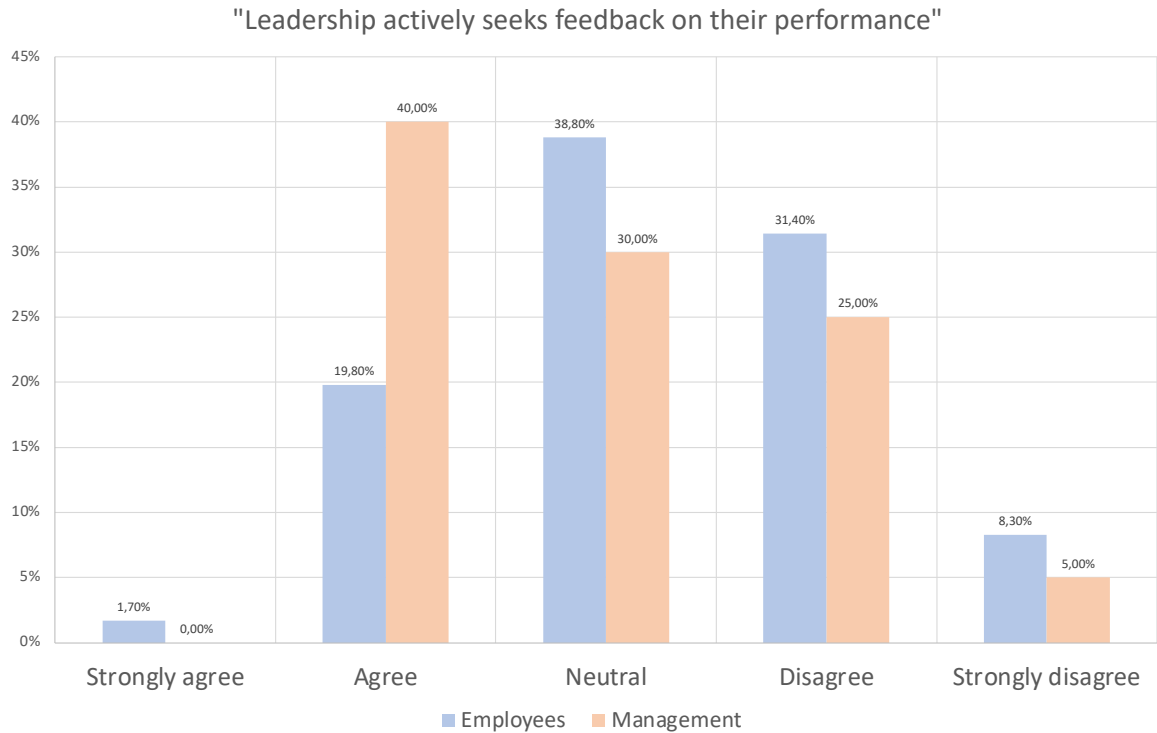
The management's point of view (Appendix 3) on employees getting frequent feedback from leadership indicates that 5% of the respondents strongly agree and 45% agree, 35% of neutral replies and 15% of the respondents disagree. These results also indicate that 50% of management agree with the statement on employees getting frequent feedback from leadership, and 15% disagree.



**Figure 12.** Leadership getting feedback

The statement "Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees" is disagreed upon more than agreed upon. The employees' point of view (Appendix 2) on the leadership getting frequent feedback from employee's results indicate that 1,6% of the respondents strongly agree and 23,1% agree with 48,8% neutral replies, 24,8% respondents disagree and 1,7% strongly disagree. These results indicate that 24,7% of employees agree with the statement on leadership getting frequent feedback from employees, and 26,5% of employees disagree.

The management's point of view (Appendix 3) on the leadership getting frequent feedback from employees indicate that 5% of the respondents strongly agree and 20% of respondents agree additionally 30% neutral replies and 45% respondents disagree. These results also indicate that 25% of management agree with the statement on leadership getting frequent feedback from employees, and 45% disagree.



**Figure 13.** Leadership seeking feedback

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement “Leadership actively seek feedback on their performance” is disagreed with as much as it is agreed with. **Figure 15** specifies statistical details where it is evident that 1,4% of respondents strongly agree, 22,5% of respondents agree, 38% of respondents are neutral thus neither agree nor disagreeing whereas 30,3% of respondents disagree and 7,8% strongly disagree with the statement on leadership actively seeking feedback.

The employees’ results (**Figure 13**) indicate that 1,7% of respondents strongly agree on leadership seeking feedback, 19,8% of respondents agree, 38,8% are neutral, 31,4% of respondents disagree and 8,3% strongly disagree. These results indicate that 21,5% of respondents agree on leadership actively seeking feedback, 38,8% of respondents are neutral and 39,7% of respondents disagree.

The management’s results (**Figure 13**) indicate that 0% of respondents strongly agree, 40% of respondents agree, 30% are neutral, 25% of respondents disagree and 5% strongly disagree. These results also indicate that 40% of management agree with the statement on leadership actively seeking feedback, and 30% disagree.

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement “Leadership implements the feedback they receive” are disagreed upon more than they are agreed upon. **Figure 15** specifies statistical details where it is evident that 3,4% of respondents strongly agree, 44,3% agree, 50% of respondents are neutral and 2,3% disagree on leadership implementing

received feedback. These results also indicate that 47,7% of the respondents agree, 50% of respondents are neutral thus neither agree nor disagreeing whereas 2,3% of respondents disagree with the statement.

The employees' results (Appendix 2) indicate that 2,7% of respondents strongly agree, 42,5% of respondents agree, 53,4% are neutral and 1,4% of respondents disagree on the leadership implementing received feedback. These results indicate 45,2% of employees agree, 53,4% of respondents are neutral and 1,4% disagree.

The management's results (Appendix 3) indicate that 7,2% of respondent strongly agree, 57,1% of respondents agree, 28,6% of neutral replies and 7,1% of respondents disagree on the leadership implementing received feedback. These results indicate 64,3% of management agree, 28,6% of respondents are neutral and 7,1% disagree.

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement: "I prefer receiving feedback face-to-face (virtually)" is highly agreed upon when statement; "I prefer receiving feedback in written form" is disagreed upon more than agreed upon. **Figure 15** specifies statistical details where it is evident that 26,8% of respondents strongly agree on receiving feedback face-to-face, 51,4% of respondents agree, 18,3% are neutral, 2,1% of respondents disagree and 1,4% strongly disagree. Comparably receiving feedback in written form results indicate that 7,1% of respondents strongly agree, and 22,5% of respondents agree, 38% are neutral, 28,9% of respondents disagree and 3,5% of respondents strongly disagree.

The employees' results (Appendix 2) indicate that 29,7% of respondents strongly agree on receiving feedback face-to-face, 49,6% of respondents agree, 17,4% are neutral, 1,6% of respondents disagree and 1,7% strongly disagree. These results indicate that 79,3% agree on receiving face-to-face feedback and 3,3% of respondents disagree and 17,4% are neutral. Comparably receiving feedback in written form results indicate 8,3% of respondents strongly agree, 22,3% of respondents agree, 36,4% are neutral, 28,9 of respondents disagree and 4,1 strongly disagree. These results indicate that 30,6% of employees agree on receiving written feedback, 33% of respondents disagree and 36,4% are neutral.

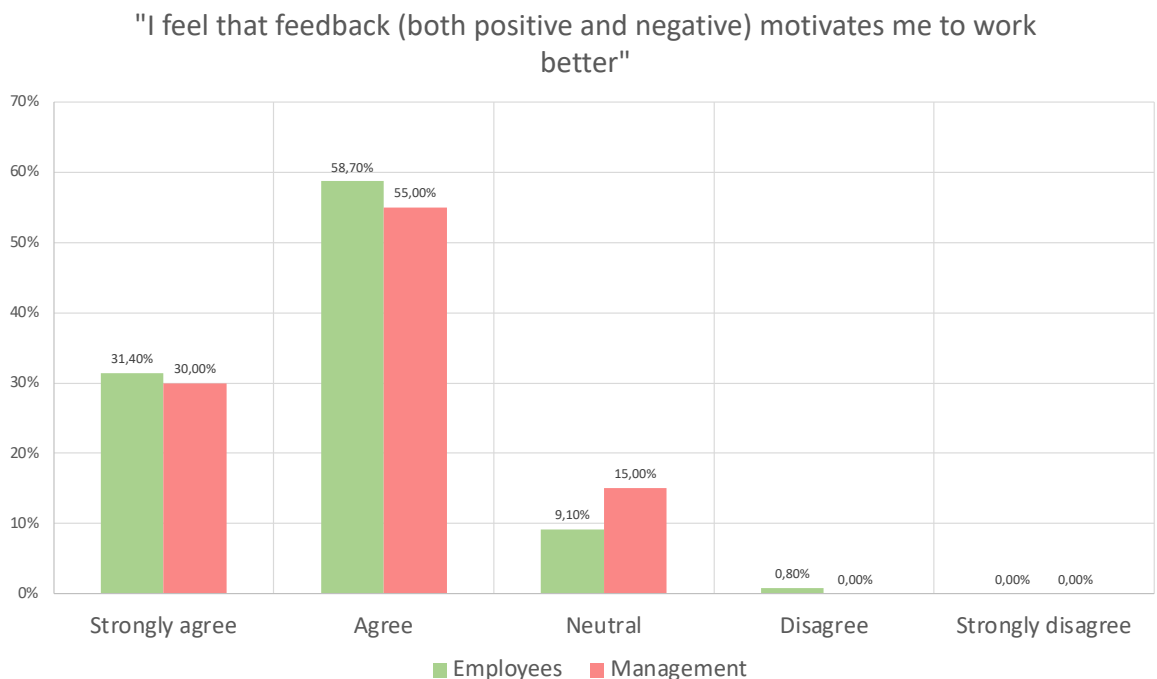
The management's results (Appendix 3) indicate that 10% of respondents strongly agree on receiving feedback face-to-face, 65% of respondents agree, 20% are neutral and 5% of respondents disagree. These results indicate that 75% agree on receiving feedback face-to-face whereas 5% of respondents disagree and 20% are neutral. Comparably receiving feedback in written form results indicate that 0% of respondents strongly agree,

20% of management agree, 50% are neutral and 30% disagree. These results indicate that 20% of management agree, 30% of respondents disagree and 50% are neutral.

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement “I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive” is less agreed upon when statement “I feel that feedback motivates me to work better” is agreed upon more highly. **Figure 15** specifies statistical details where it is evident that 7,8% of respondents strongly agree on the amount of feedback they receive, 40,1% of respondents agree, 28,2% are neutral, 28,2% of respondents disagree and 2,1% strongly disagree. Comparably feedback motivating to work better results indicate that 31,7% of respondents strongly agree, and 57,7% of respondents agree whereas 9,9% are neutral and 0,7% of respondents disagree.

The employees’ results (Appendix 2) indicate that 8,3% of respondents strongly agree, 42,1% of respondents agree, 25,6% are neutral, 21,5% of respondents disagree and 2,5% strongly disagree on the statement “I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive”. These results indicate that 50,4% of employees are satisfied on the amount of feedback they receive whereas 24% of respondents disagree and 25,6% are neutral.

The management’s results (Appendix 3) indicate that 5% of respondents strongly agree, 30% of respondents agree, 45% are neutral and 20% disagree on the statement “I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive”. These results indicate that 35% of management are satisfied with the amount of feedback they receive whereas 20% of respondents disagree and 45% are neutral.



**Figure 14.** Feedback and work motivation

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement “I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better” is highly agreed upon. In the statistical details below (**Figure 15**), it is evident that 31,7% of respondents strongly agree, and 57,7% of respondents agree whereas 9,9% are neutral and 0,7% of respondents disagree on feedback motivating to work better. These results indicate that 89,4% of respondents agree whereas 0,7% of respondents disagree and 9,9% are neutral.

The employees’ results (Appendix 2) indicate that 31,4% of respondents strongly agree, 58,7% of respondents agree, 9,1% are neutral and 0,8% of respondents disagree on the statement “I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better”. These results indicate that 90,1% of employees agree on feedback motivating them to work better whereas 0,8% of respondents disagree and 9,1% are neutral.

The management’s results (Appendix 3) indicate that 30% of respondents strongly agree, 55% of respondents agree and 15% are neutral. These results indicate that 85% of management agree and 15% are neutral with no disagreeing responses on feedback motivating them to work better.

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement “I wish I received more constructive criticism” and “I wish I received more positive feedback” are mostly agreed upon. In the statistical details below (**Figure 15**), it is evident that 11,3% of respondents strongly agree on wanting to receive more constructive criticism, 44% of respondents agree whereas 36,2% are neutral and 8,5% of respondents disagree.

The employees’ results (Appendix 2) indicate that 11,6% of respondents strongly agree, 43,8% agree, 34,7 are neutral and 9,9% of employees disagree. These results indicate that 55,4% agree on wanting to receive more constructive criticism whereas 9,9% of respondents disagree and 34,7% are neutral. Comparably wanting to receive more positive feedback results indicate that 19% of respondents strongly agree, 38,9% agree, 35,5% are neutral and 6,6% disagree. These results indicate that 57,9% of employees agree whereas 6,6% of respondents disagree and 35,5% are neutral.

The management’s results (Appendix 3) indicate that 10,5% of respondents strongly agree, 47,4% agree and 42,1% are neutral with no disagreeing responses. These results indicate that 57,9% agree on wanting to receive more constructive criticism whereas 42,1% are neutral. Comparably wanting to receive more positive feedback results indicate that 70% of respondents agree and 30% are neutral with no disagreeing responses.

Out of the 142 respondents the following statement “I receive feedback for successfully completed work” and “Constructive criticism helps me perform better” are both agreed upon. In the statistical details below (**Figure 15**), it is evident that 66,2% of respondents agree whereas 21,8% are neutral, 12% of respondents disagree. Comparably constructive criticism helping to perform better indicate that 87,3% of respondents agree, 11,3% are neutral and 1,4% of respondents disagree.

The employees' results (Appendix 2) indicate that 67% agree on receiving feedback for successfully completed work, 12,3% of employees disagree and 20,7% are neutral. Comparably constructive criticism helping to perform better indicate that 87,6% of employees agree whereas 1,7% of respondents disagree and 10,7% are neutral.

The management's results (Appendix 3) indicate that 65% agree on receiving feedback for successfully completed work, 10% of respondents disagree and 25% are neutral. Comparably constructive criticism helping to perform better indicates that 85% of management agree whereas 15% are neutral with no disagreeing respondents.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Keskiarvo	Mediaani
Feedback is very important to me	35,9%	57,8%	6,3%	0,0%	0,0%	1,7	2,0
Feedback is part of the organization's work-culture	6,3%	44,4%	35,2%	13,4%	0,7%	2,6	2,0
Employees get frequent feedback from leadership	3,5%	39,5%	35,2%	20,4%	1,4%	2,8	3,0
Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees	2,1%	22,5%	46,5%	27,5%	1,4%	3,0	3,0
Leadership actively seeks feedback on their performance	1,4%	22,5%	38,0%	30,3%	7,8%	3,2	3,0
Leadership implements the feedback they receive	3,4%	44,3%	50,0%	2,3%	0,0%	2,5	3,0
I prefer receiving feedback face-to-face (virtually)	26,8%	51,4%	18,3%	2,1%	1,4%	2,0	2,0
I prefer receiving feedback in written form	7,1%	22,5%	38,0%	28,9%	3,5%	3,0	3,0
I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive	7,8%	40,1%	28,2%	21,8%	2,1%	2,7	3,0
I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better	31,7%	57,7%	9,9%	0,7%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
I wish I received more constructive criticism	11,3%	44,0%	36,2%	8,5%	0,0%	2,4	2,0
I wish I received more positive feedback	16,9%	43,0%	34,5%	5,6%	0,0%	2,3	2,0
I receive feedback for successfully completed work	10,6%	55,6%	21,8%	10,6%	1,4%	2,4	2,0
Constructive criticism helps me perform better	21,1%	66,2%	11,3%	1,4%	0,0%	1,9	2,0
I see a positive change/development in the workplace as a result of my feedback	5,6%	33,8%	46,5%	12,0%	2,1%	2,7	3,0

**Figure 15.** Feedback statistics

The **Figure 15** provides specifies statistical details on the (above-mentioned) employees and management points of view on the different feedback statements as well as their differences.

## 5 Discussion and conclusions

### 5.1 Age and gender

According to the data for the employee's age group section (**Figure 2**) female respondent's majority is 41-50 years old (32%) and male respondent's majority is 51-60 years old (35%), and the females have a younger average age for employees than males. For the management's age group section (**Figure 2**) female respondent's majority lies between 40-60 years old (75%) and male respondent's majority is between 51-60 years old (42%). Although a good number of respondents were gathered the gender profile of the respondents did not exactly match reality; there are more females than males in the organisation but there were more male respondents in this case study.

### 5.2 Remote work

Out of the 142 responses 20 respondents (14%) are working in a management position, of which 14 respondents (70%) answered their remote work duration to be 1-2 years. Out of the 142 responses 121 (86%) are working as an employee, of which 77 respondents (63,6%) also answered their remote work duration to be 1-2 years. The majority of respondents remote work duration

This suggests COVID-19 has had a substantial increasing effect on remote work but also supports Butler's (2020) and Gupta's (2020) claims that remote work has in fact been around before the pandemic: 20% of the survey respondents stated to have worked remotely before the COVID-19 (**Figure 5**). This could mean that they have either worked solely remotely or in a hybrid form.

### 5.3 Trust

Based on the results, trust is highly important and valued as a concept in the Ministry of Finance. Out of the 142 responses the statement "Trust is very important to me" was most strongly agreed upon (100%). The data suggests that both management and employees hold trust in high regard, however statistically, management considered organisational trust at a higher scale than employees.

The two statements, "Communication in the workplace is transparent" and "The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions", were most disagreed with among employees: In the first-mentioned statement 15,7% of employees disagreed whereas most of management agreed with the statement and 5% of management disagreed. Interestingly these statements with these similar outcomes both had to do with communication. The

foundation of trust is formed by organisational credibility, respect, and fairness (Mineo, 2014), which create a workplace with open and accessible communications and optimal and successful organisational function which promote organisational health.

The statement “Building trust would highly improve my work morale” results indicate that employees highly agree (82,7%) that building trust would improve their work morale and management agreeing level was higher (90%). The data suggests that building trust would indeed improve work morale in the Ministry which in turn could reinforce and strengthen the intra-organisational and inter-organisational relationships (Svensson, 2005; Hakanen, 2017), build and support long-term relationships (Ingenhoff and Sommer, 2010; Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016), help individual’s wellbeing (Krot and Lewicka, 2012) and generate supportive behaviour inside and outside of an organisation (Ingenhoff and Sommer, 2010; Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016) which are instrumental in organisational success (Kramer and Tyler, 1996).

Both employees and managers mostly agreed with the statement “The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions”, however, only the employees had disagreeing responses (18,2%) to the statement whereas none of the management disagreed. Part of improving organisational ethics is being sincere in communication and open in expressing fears (Kujala, Lehtimäki and Puč, 2016). This could be interpreted as the employees wishing for more of an open dialogue culture, where there is trust and interaction and openness.

When examining the questions as a whole, the deeper the questions go towards organisational trust, the more the responses moved from agreeing to disagreeing. Another interesting observation was also that management had very little disagreeing responses in general, only using agree or neutral responses, whereas employees were slightly more vocal in the “disagreement department”. The only statements that had some disagreeing responses from management were “The workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one’s mistakes” and “The leadership is open about the challenges the organisation is facing” with both having 5% of disagreeing responses. This suggests that there is a base for acknowledging shortcomings in the organisations’ trust culture and possible areas of development.

As discussed in the framework section trust can be divided into three types, namely horizontal, vertical and institutional (Krot and Lewicka, 2012; Hoe, 2013). In the case for the Ministry of Finance, the statements focused mainly on vertical trust (the trust between managers and employees). The vertical trust in the Ministry was high and rather balanced, as both management (85%) and employees (84,3%) agree on mutual trust.

All in all, it is shown that trust is one of the Ministry's core values, it is also embedded in the professional relationships between management and employees.

#### 5.4 Feedback

Feedback helps individuals pursue valued goals while negotiating organisational environments (Ashford and Cummings, 1983).

There were slight differences between the importance of trust (100%) and the importance of feedback (93,7%) where specifically management agreed 90% and employees agreed 94,4%. The data indicates that both management and employees hold feedback in high regard, however, employees consider feedback to a higher status than management.

The statements in feedback were much more varied and dispersed than in trust, there is evidence of further disagreeing replies. Trust and specifically organisational trust seem to be clearer than feedback in general. The two statements "Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees" (28,9%) and "Leadership actively seeks feedback on their performance" (38,1%) were most disagreed with. The statement "Employees get frequent feedback from leadership" was 21,8% disagreed with yet "Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees" was 28,9% disagreed with. The results suggest that leadership gets less frequent feedback from employees than employees get from leadership.

Going into specific cross comparison, the results indicate that 24,7% of the employee respondents agree with the statement "Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees" and 26,5% respondents disagree. Based on this data the employees disagreed more than they agree. Comparably 25% of management agrees when almost double as many disagreed (45%) with the statement. Strong neutral levels were also detected as 48,8% of employees and 30% management were neutral. Perhaps neutral respondents don't know what to respond if there is little culture of asking for feedback. Employees have valuable expertise, important perspectives on the organisation, its issues, and valuable feedback on the style and effectiveness of managers which helps the organisation to grow healthier and more successful (Atwater and Waldman, 2007).

Feedback section has strong neutral levels, much more neutrals compared to trust. The statement "Leadership implements the feedback they receive" received 50% neutral replies. What does that mean, does neutral/undecided denote a state of confusion of the respondent? As was discovered in the previous section, leadership does not get that frequent feedback from employees, however, 47,7% of respondents agree with leadership implementing feedback. This could be interpreted that the little feedback leadership gets

they implement it. Perhaps neutral respondents don't know what to respond if there is little feedback seeking culture. The data showed that some respondents strongly agreed (3,4%) with leadership implementing feedback, it could be suggested that only a few separate instances have occurred (with those specific people) rather than having a fully functioning and effective feedback culture.

The statement "Leadership actively seeks feedback on their performance" results indicate that 21,5% employees agree and 39,7% disagree whereas 40% of management agree and 30% disagreed. Based on the results both management and employee disagree more than they agree. The results concur with the findings of Van der Rijt, Van den Bossche and Segers (2013) which suggest that feedback seeking, is valuable and promising. Cheramie (2013) study results support organisations' need to focus on developing feedback environments that encourage feedback-seeking behaviours because feedback seeking generates positive outcomes related to extrinsic career success.

The statement "I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better" indicates that both employees (89,4%) and management (85%) highly agreed that increasing feedback would subsequently increase work motivation. Based on the results both employees and management would benefit from more feedback to motivate work because 89,5% feel that feedback increases motivation and morale.

The evidence suggests that the highest agreed upon statements on feedback are with what would help or enhance their performance such as the above-mentioned statement. They are all higher than the actual action of receiving or getting feedback (e.g. "Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees").

## **5.5 Development recommendations**

Below are development ideas based on the results of the study for the benefit of the Finnish Ministry of Finance.

1. More intentional feedback-culture: both management and employees' feedback should be increased as 89,5% feel that feedback would motivate them more.
2. More measures to increase trust: the overwhelming majority of both management and employees feel that trust would increase their work morale
3. Add increased openness and transparency: move to more transparent and open communication, for instance about decision-making (when possible), and improve taking

responsibility for one's mistakes as these were found to be important elements for future development.

4. Introduce more feedback mechanisms: based on the data, leaders receive less feedback than employees. Seeking and receiving feedback for both management and employees was found to be occasionally lacking.

Wellbeing at work and open communication are at the heart of management, interaction, and collaboration. Like Rackham, Friedman and Ruff's (1996) book on partnering aptly quoted a businessman: "...there are a lot of issues in partnering...but trust is truly the key. Everything else has to be based on it. Without trust, there is no basis for partnering. It's the bottom line..." (Mcknight and Chervany, 1996). Trust and feedback are the new way of modern management which are the by-product of an organisation that is healthy from the inside.

## **5.6 Trustworthiness of research**

The author believes the research remained successfully within the clearly limited topic and managed to respond broadly to the presented research problems. The results generated by the research are credible and easily usable to support the development of the Ministry of Finance's strategy processes.

The validity of a research indicates whether it can measure what it was intended to determine, and the reliability of a research refers to the consistency (Weathington, Cunningham and Pittenger, 2012). The credibility of the study is enhanced by the fact that the data came straight from the source, the Ministry, and the 142 professionals who answered the questionnaire.

Due to more questionnaire responses than what was initially expected, the reliability of the research increased. While creating the survey via Webropol, the aim was to gather honest and reliable data concerning the research topic. The statements were formed solely related to the topic, avoiding any statements that would mislead respondents. The questions were also formed in an easy and understandable structure to minimize the risk of any misunderstandings.

The survey was sent to the workers at the Ministry during a time of a worldwide pandemic (COVID-19) due to which most of the workers shifted to remote work by recommendation of the Finnish government. The crisis resulted in transitioning quickly into a remote work environment where the organisation might not have had the measures, methods or

instruments readily available to properly engage the remote workers. The pandemic, then, might have affected the survey results, as respondents might not see the positive or negative sides of trust and feedback in an established remote work environment. Having said this, there has been some time (1,5 years) since the worldwide pandemic began, which would have given the organisation some time to develop appropriate remote work practices.

### **5.7 Self-evaluation**

With the specialization area in HR, I wanted my thesis topic to relate to HR. I started out wanting to solve some of the challenges society faces in remote work, for example common HR issues. I initially wanted to bring out the issues faced in HR and present solutions for them. I was trying to “bite off more than I can chew”, so to speak. Though the topic is interesting, it was too broad and common. Consequently, to limit the thesis topic and make it something that was not as common, I chose to do the thesis topic from a leadership perspective rather than an employee perspective and specifically on the roles of trust and feedback in organisational leadership. From this thought process began the thesis of “The roles of trust and feedback in organisational leadership”. The source for the interest behind the leadership point of view is my wish to one day be in a management position.

With this thesis, I learned a great deal about myself, the inner workings of an organisation and all that goes with it, doing research, how to analyse findings, using and being critical of scientific sources. Doing the work made me develop my self-discipline, self-direction and my English writing skills, and it challenged me to do my best, even though sometimes I wanted to give up. The thesis process was much more demanding and challenging than I expected.

Looking back, of course I think I could have done a better job had I had more time to write and prepare and polish the thesis. If I could do something different, I would plan the process more carefully, seek more advice and tips on the writing process and required content.

As a result of this thesis process of 2,5 months, I feel that my expertise and knowledge have grown immensely, and I am proud of what I have achieved during this time.

## References

Agresti, A. and Finlay, B. (2014) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences, 4th Edition* | Pearson.

Ashford, S. J. and Cummings, L. L. (1983) 'Feedback as an individual resource: Personal strategies of creating information', *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 32(3), pp. 370–398. doi: 10.1016/0030-5073(83)90156-3.

Atwater, L. E. and Waldman, D. A. (2007) 'Leadership, Feedback and the Open Communication Gap', *Leadership, Feedback, and the Open Communication Gap*, pp. 1–164. doi: 10.4324/9780203810101.

Baker, A. *et al.* (2013) 'Feedback and organizations: Feedback is good, feedback-friendly culture is better', *Canadian Psychology*, 54(4), pp. 260–268. doi: 10.1037/A0034691.

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (2006) 'How to Research THIRD EDITION', *Open University Press*, 3, p. 272.

Bratton, J. (2020) *Organizational Leadership - Google Books*. Available at: [https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=nLTRDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=organizational+leadership&ots=hWa5Q\\_faCH&sig=b-BL-EqoSBfZiz5z8MWi3QxNYvE&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=nLTRDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=organizational+leadership&ots=hWa5Q_faCH&sig=b-BL-EqoSBfZiz5z8MWi3QxNYvE&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false) (Accessed: 15 August 2021).

Butler, H. (2020) *The History of Remote Work: How It Became What We Know Today, CROSSOVER*. Available at: <https://www.crossover.com/perspective/the-history-of-remote-work> (Accessed: 3 August 2021).

Chen, J., Ouyang, T. H. and Pan, S. L. (2013) 'The role of feedback in changing organizational routine: A case study of Haier, China', *International Journal of Information Management*, 33(6), pp. 971–974. doi: 10.1016/J.IJINFOMGT.2013.09.002.

Cheremie, R. (2013) 'An examination of feedback-seeking behaviors, the feedback source and career success', *Career Development International*, 18(7), pp. 712–731. doi: 10.1108/CDI-05-2013-0070.

Chughtai, A., Marann, B. and Flood, B. (2015) 'Linking Ethical Leadership to Employee Well-Being: The Role of Trust in Supervisor', *ProQuest*, Vol. 128, p. 12. doi:

10.1007/s10551-014-2126-7.

Connell, J., Ferres, N. and Travaglione, T. (2003) 'Engendering trust in manager-subordinate relationships: Predictors and outcomes', *Personnel Review*, 32(5), pp. 569-587+672. doi: 10.1108/00483480310488342.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989) 'Building Theories from Case Study Research', <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4308385>, 8(4), pp. 2–12. doi: 10.5465/AMR.1989.4308385.

Ellonen, R., Blomqvist, K. and Puumalainen, K. (2008) 'The role of trust in organisational innovativeness', *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 11(2), pp. 160–181. doi: 10.1108/14601060810869848.

Farooq, M. and Khan, M. A. (2011) 'Impact of Training and Feedback on Employee Performance iqra farooq', *ACADEMIA*, p. 12. Available at: [www.fareastjournals.com](http://www.fareastjournals.com) (Accessed: 2 September 2021).

Firestone, W. A. (2016) 'Meaning in Method: The Rhetoric of Quantitative and Qualitative Research', <http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X016007016>, 16(7), pp. 16–21. doi: 10.3102/0013189X016007016.

Friedman, B., Khan, P. H. and Howe, D. C. (2000) 'Trust online', *Communications of the ACM*, 43(12), pp. 34–40. doi: 10.1145/355112.355120.

Gartner Glossary (2020) *Definition of Remote Work - Gartner Information Technology Glossary*, Gartner. Available at: <https://www.gartner.com/en/information-technology/glossary/remote-work> (Accessed: 3 August 2021).

Greenwood, M. and Van Buren III, H. J. (2010) 'Trust and Stakeholder Theory: Trustworthiness in the Organisation–Stakeholder Relationship', *Journal of Business Ethics* 2010 95:3, 95(3), pp. 425–438. doi: 10.1007/S10551-010-0414-4.

Gupta, A. (2020) *The History of Remote Work: How it Came to be What it is Today*, SIWOM. Available at: <https://www.sorryonmute.com/history-remote-work-industries/> (Accessed: 3 August 2021).

Hahne, A. S. (2021) 'The impact of teleworking and digital work on workers and society - Case study on Finland (Annex III)'. Available at:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/662904/IPOL\\_STU\(2021\)662904\(ANN01\)\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/662904/IPOL_STU(2021)662904(ANN01)_EN.pdf) (Accessed: 16 August 2021).

Hakanen, M. (2017) 'The Development and Management of Interpersonal Trust in a Business Network in Health, Exercise, and Wellbeing Markets', p. 156.

Hoe, S. L. (2013) 'Is interpersonal trust a necessary condition for organisational learning?', [https://doi.org/10.1386/jots.4.2.149\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jots.4.2.149_1), 4(2), pp. 149–156. doi: 10.1386/JOTS.4.2.149\_1.

HRCentral (2018) *The Importance of Feedback in the Workplace – HR Central, HRCentral*. Available at: <https://hrcentral.com.au/blog/feedback/> (Accessed: 16 August 2021).

Ingenhoff, D. and Sommer, K. (2010) 'Trust in Companies and in CEOs: A Comparative Study of the Main Influences', *Journal of Business Ethics* 2010 95:3, 95(3), pp. 339–355. doi: 10.1007/S10551-010-0363-Y.

Javaid, M. A. (2013) *Research Methods and Statistics*.

Kassing, J. W. and Armstrong, T. A. (2002) 'Someone's Going to Hear about This: Examining the Association between Dissent-Triggering Events and Employees' Dissent Expression', <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0893318902161002>, 16(1), pp. 39–65. doi: 10.1177/0893318902161002.

Kelloway, E. K. et al. (2012) 'Positive Leadership and Employee Well-Being':, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1548051812465892>, 20(1), pp. 107–117. doi: 10.1177/1548051812465892.

Kramer, R. M. and Tyler, T. R. (1996) *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research - Google Books, SAGE Publications*. Available at: [https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Lo85DQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA261&dq=mis+hra,+A.+K.+1996.+Organizational+responses+to+crisis:++The+centrality+of+trust.+In+R.+M.+Kramer+%26+T.+R.+Tyler+\(Eds.\).++Trust+in+Organizations:++Frontiers+of+Theory+and+Research](https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Lo85DQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA261&dq=mis+hra,+A.+K.+1996.+Organizational+responses+to+crisis:++The+centrality+of+trust.+In+R.+M.+Kramer+%26+T.+R.+Tyler+(Eds.).++Trust+in+Organizations:++Frontiers+of+Theory+and+Research) (Accessed: 2 September 2021).

Krot, K. and Lewicka, D. (2012) 'THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST IN MANAGER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS Startery podlaskiej gospodarki View project THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST IN MANAGER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS', *International*

*Journal of Electronic Business Management*, 10(3), pp. 224–233. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319130798> (Accessed: 1 September 2021).

Kujala, J., Lehtimäki, H. and Puč, R. (2016) 'Trust and Distrust Constructing Unity and Fragmentation of Organisational Culture', *ProQuest*, Vol. 139,. doi: 10.1007/s10551-015-2915-7.

London, M. and Smither, J. W. (2002) 'Feedback orientation, feedback culture, and the longitudinal performance management process', *Human Resource Management Review*, 12(1), pp. 81–100. doi: 10.1016/S1053-4822(01)00043-2.

McElroy, M. W. (2002) 'Social innovation capital', *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, 3(1), pp. 30–39. doi: 10.1108/14691930210412827.

Mcknight, H. D. and Chervany, N. L. (1996) 'THE MEANINGS OF TRUST', *University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management*.

Mineo, D. L. (2014) 'The Importance of Trust in Leadership', *Research Management Review*, 20(1).

*Ministry - Valtiovarainministeriö* (2021). Available at: <https://vm.fi/en/ministry> (Accessed: 16 August 2021).

Nthakanio, P. N. (2015) 'Research Guide : A working handbook Research Guide : A working handbook Paul Njiruh Nthakanio', (October). doi: 10.13140/RG.2.1.2631.4966.

Van der Rijt, J., Van den Bossche, P. and Segers, M. S. R. (2013) 'Understanding informal feedback seeking in the workplace: The impact of the position in the organizational hierarchy', *European Journal of Training and Development*, 37(1), pp. 72–85. doi: 10.1108/03090591311293293.

Roebuck, C. (1996) 'Constructive feedback: Key to higher performance and commitment', *Long Range Planning*, 29(3), pp. 328–336. doi: 10.1016/0024-6301(96)00028-3.

Savage, M. (2019) *Why Finland leads the world in flexible work - BBC Worklife*, BBC Worklife. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190807-why-finland-leads-the-world-in-flexible-work> (Accessed: 16 August 2021).

Singleton, R. A. and Straits, B. C. (2010) *Approaches to Social Research, 5th edition*. 5th

edn.

Sofaer, S. (1999) 'Qualitative methods: what are they and why use them?', *Health Services Research*, 34(5 Pt 2), p. 1101. Available at: [/pmc/articles/PMC1089055/?report=abstract](#) (Accessed: 4 September 2021).

Sousa-Lima, M., Michel, J. W. and Caetano, A. (2013) 'Clarifying the importance of trust in organizations as a component of effective work relationships', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43(2), pp. 418–427. doi: 10.1111/J.1559-1816.2013.01012.X.

Susan Lund, Anu Madgavkar, James Manyika, and S. S. (2020) *The future of remote work: An analysis of 2,000 tasks, 800 jobs, and 9 countries | McKinsey, McKinsey Global Institute*. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries> (Accessed: 2 August 2021).

Svensson, G. (2005) 'Mutual and interactive trust in business dyads: condition and process', *European Business Review*, 17(5), pp. 411–427. doi: 10.1108/09555340510620320.

Thompson, M. (2021) *What Does Hybrid Working Mean for My Organisation? | WeThrive*. Available at: <https://wethrive.net/blog/what-does-hybrid-working-mean/> (Accessed: 3 September 2021).

Walumbwa, F. O. *et al.* (2011) 'Linking ethical leadership to employee performance: The roles of leader-member exchange, self-efficacy, and organizational identification', *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 115(2), pp. 204–213. doi: 10.1016/J.OBHDP.2010.11.002.

Watson, R. (2015) 'Quantitative research', *Nursing standard (Royal College of Nursing (Great Britain) : 1987)*, 29(31), pp. 44–48. doi: 10.7748/NS.29.31.44.E8681.

Weathington, B. L., Cunningham, C. J. L. and Pittenger, D. J. (2012) *Understanding Business Research*.

Whitley, E. and Ball, J. (2002) 'Statistics review 4: Sample size calculations', *Critical Care* 2002 6:4, 6(4), pp. 1–7. doi: 10.1186/CC1521.

Yin, R. K. (2012) *Applications of Case Study Research - Robert K. Yin - Google Books, SAGE Publications*. Available at:

[https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=FgSV0Y2FleYC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Yin,+R.+K.+\(2012\).+Applications+of+case+study+research+\(3rd+ed.\).+Thousand+Oaks:+SAGE.&ots=4397MsxnQn&sig=9FIPtLBIsKuTCITGE5om\\_PbKeZ4&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=FgSV0Y2FleYC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Yin,+R.+K.+(2012).+Applications+of+case+study+research+(3rd+ed.).+Thousand+Oaks:+SAGE.&ots=4397MsxnQn&sig=9FIPtLBIsKuTCITGE5om_PbKeZ4&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false) (Accessed: 3 August 2021).

## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Survey questions for the Ministry of Finance (leaders and employees)

This survey is part of a Bachelor's thesis on leadership in remote work. This survey will only be used for the thesis research that intends to gather data on trust and feedback. All responses will be kept anonymous. Thank you taking the time to answer this survey. The questions in this survey are often in the form of statements. Please select an answer (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) in response to a statement that most closely corresponds to your opinion.

#### GENERAL

##### 1. Gender \*

Female

Male

Other

Rather not say

##### 2. Age \*

under 20 years old

20-30 years old

31-40 years old

41-50 years old

51-60 years old

over 60 years old

##### 3. What is your organizational role (job position)? \*

Management

Employee

##### 4. How long have you been working remotely? \*

0 to 2 months

3 to 6 months

7 months to 1 year 1 year to 2 years over 2 years

TRUST (using Likert-scale Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

##### 5. Trust \*

Trust is very important to me

Trust is highly valued in my work community

Building trust would highly improve my work morale

The organization's leadership generally trusts the employees

There is trust between the leadership and the employees

The organization's leadership is reliable

Communication in the workplace is transparent

The workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one's mistakes

The leadership is open about the challenges the organization is facing

The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions

FEEDBACK (using Likert-scale Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

##### 6. Feedback \*

Feedback is very important to me

Feedback is part of the organization's work-culture

Employees get frequent feedback from leadership

Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees

Leadership actively seeks feedback on their performance

Leadership implements the feedback they receive

I prefer receiving feedback face-to-face (virtually)

I prefer receiving feedback in written form  
I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive  
I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better  
I wish I received more constructive criticism  
I wish I received more positive feedback  
I receive feedback for successfully completed work  
Constructive criticism helps me perform better  
I see a positive change/development in the workplace as a result of my feedback

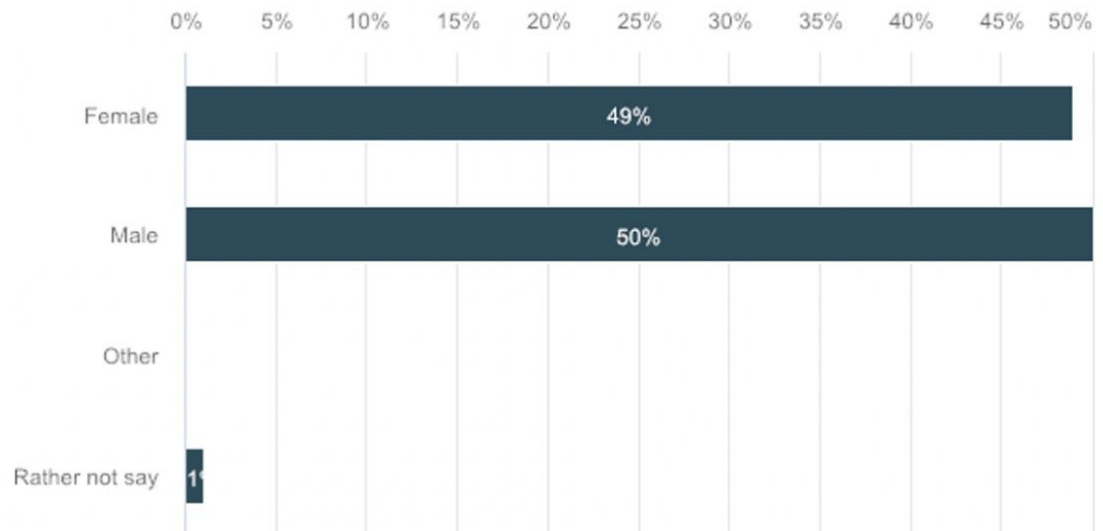
\*NB This survey is anonymous; it will not collect any identifying information of survey respondents.

## Appendix 2. Employee report

### 1. Gender

GENERAL

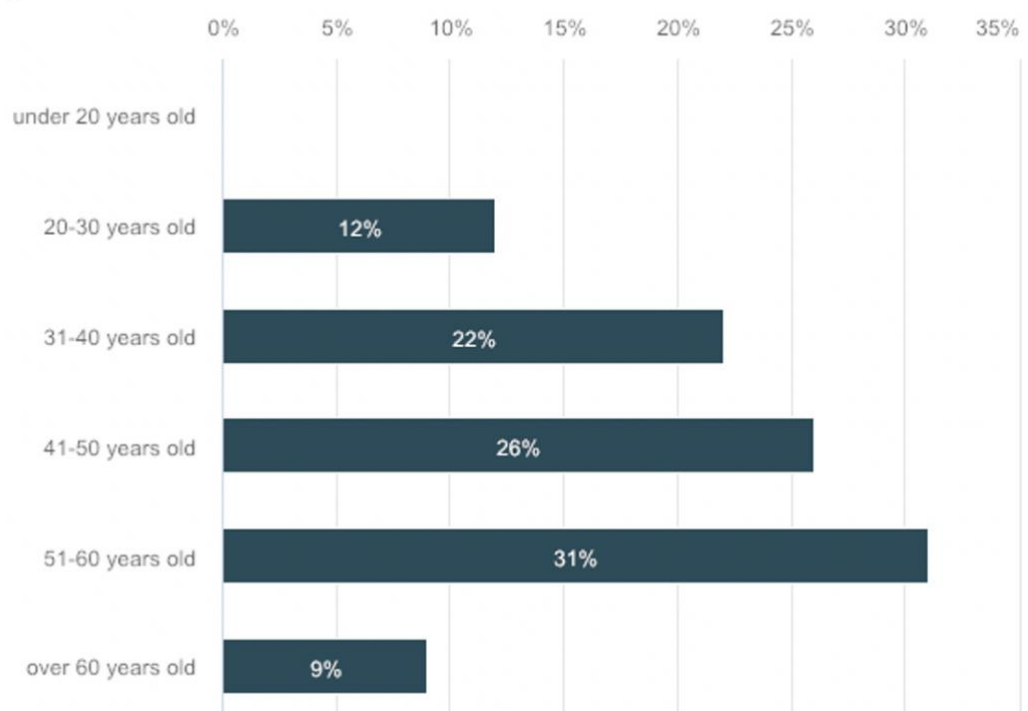
Vastaajien määrä: 121



	n	Prosentti
Female	69	48,6%
Male	72	50,7%
Other	0	0,0%
Rather not say	1	0,7%

### 2. Age

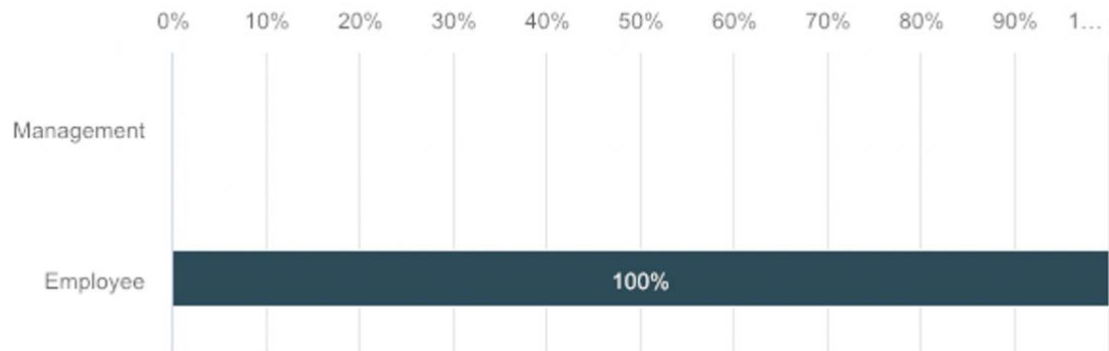
Vastaajien määrä: 121



	n	Prosentti
under 20 years old	0	0,0%
20-30 years old	16	11,3%
31-40 years old	27	19,0%
41-50 years old	38	26,7%
51-60 years old	46	32,4%
over 60 years old	15	10,6%

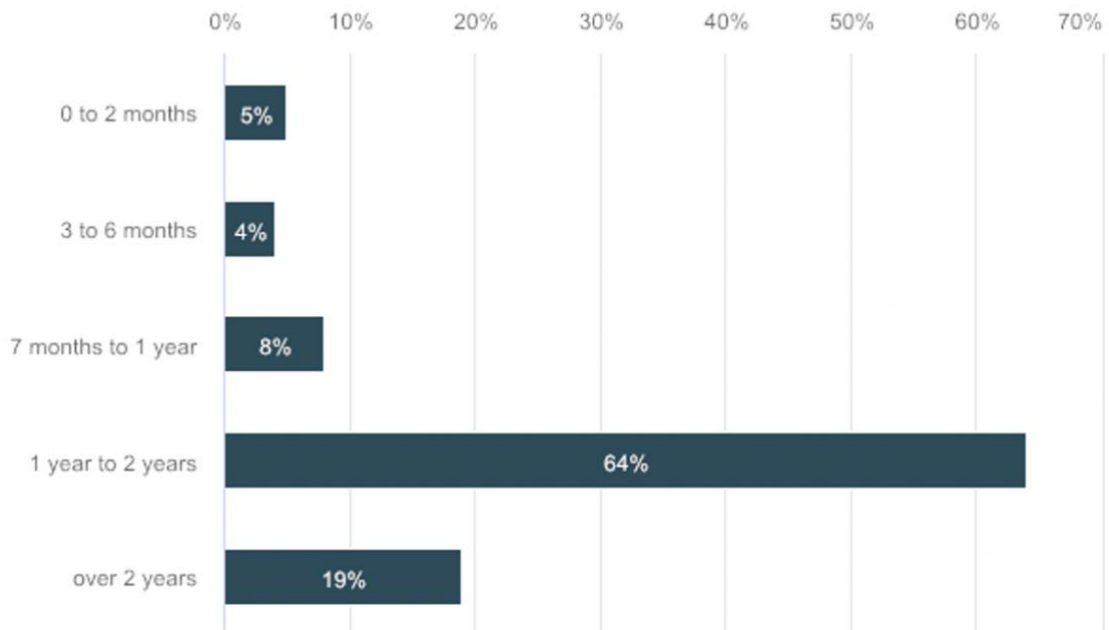
### 3. What is your organizational role (job position)?

Vastaajien määrä: 121



### 4. How long have you been working remotely?

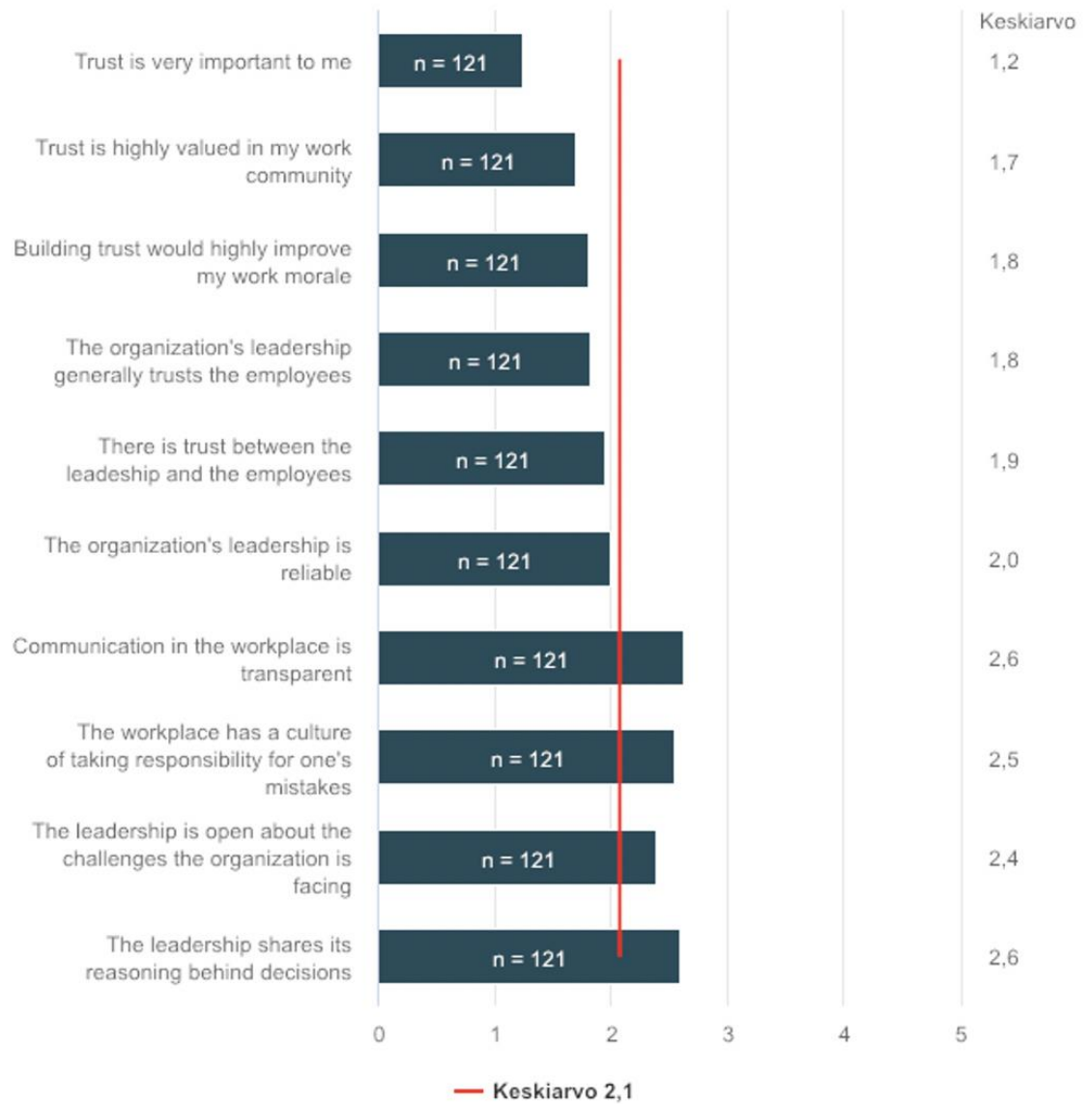
Vastaajien määrä: 121



## 5. Trust

### TRUST

Vastaajien määrä: 121

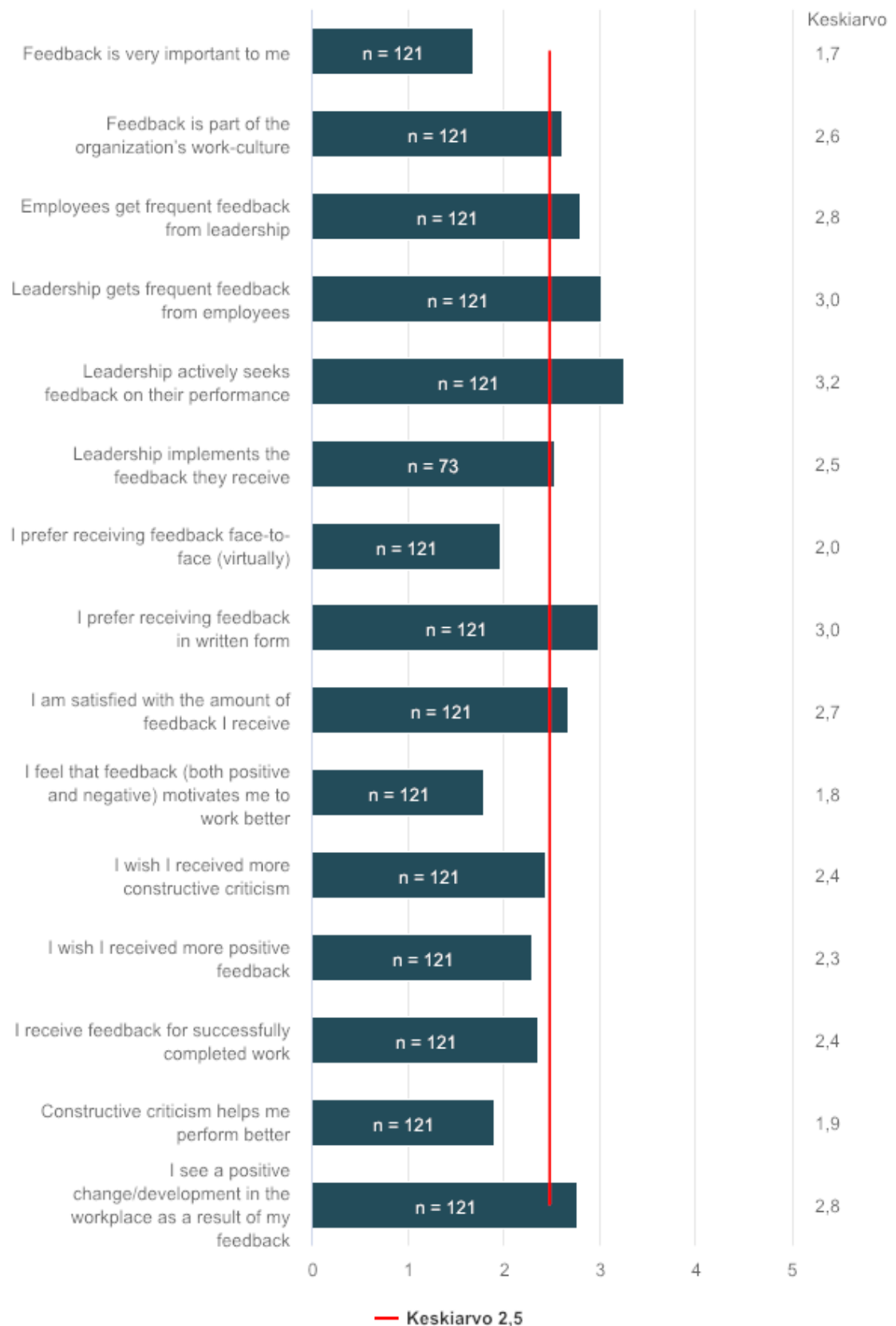


	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Keskiarvo</b>	<b>Mediaani</b>
Trust is very important to me	76,0%	24,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,2	1,0
Trust is highly valued in my work community	41,3%	48,8%	8,3%	1,6%	0,0%	1,7	2,0
Building trust would highly improve my work morale	37,2%	45,5%	16,5%	0,8%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
The organization's leadership generally trusts the employees	29,7%	59,5%	9,1%	1,7%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
There is trust between the leadership and the employees	26,4%	57,9%	11,6%	3,3%	0,8%	1,9	2,0
The organization's leadership is reliable	25,6%	56,2%	11,6%	6,6%	0,0%	2,0	2,0
Communication in the workplace is transparent	6,6%	43,0%	34,7%	12,4%	3,3%	2,6	3,0
The workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one's mistakes	7,4%	43,0%	38,0%	10,8%	0,8%	2,5	2,0
The leadership is open about the challenges the organization is facing	9,9%	53,7%	25,6%	8,3%	2,5%	2,4	2,0
The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions	8,3%	44,6%	28,9%	16,5%	1,7%	2,6	2,0

## 6. Feedback

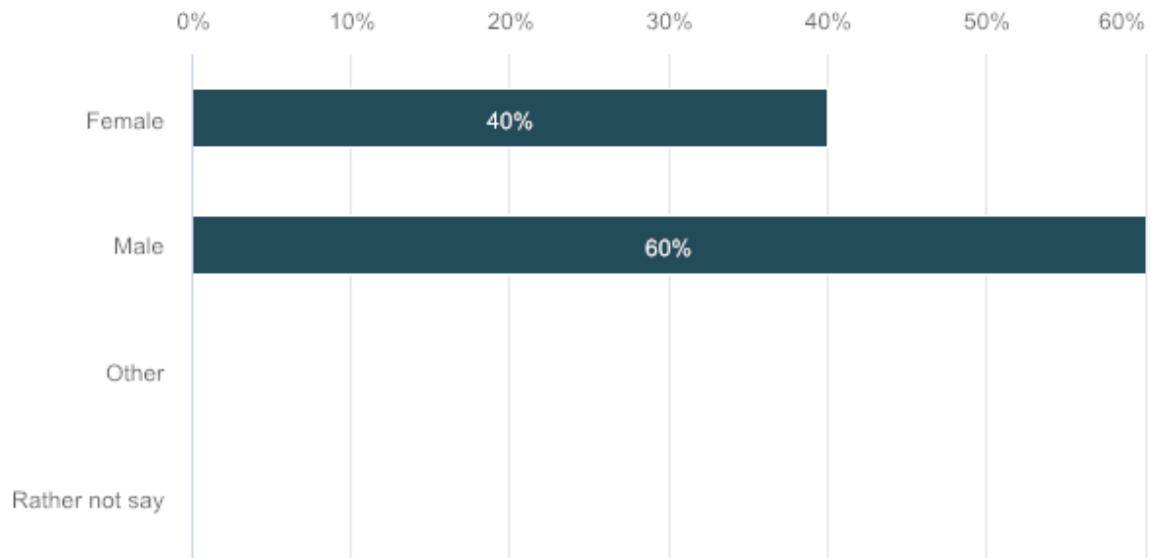
### FEEDBACK

Vastaajien määrä: 121



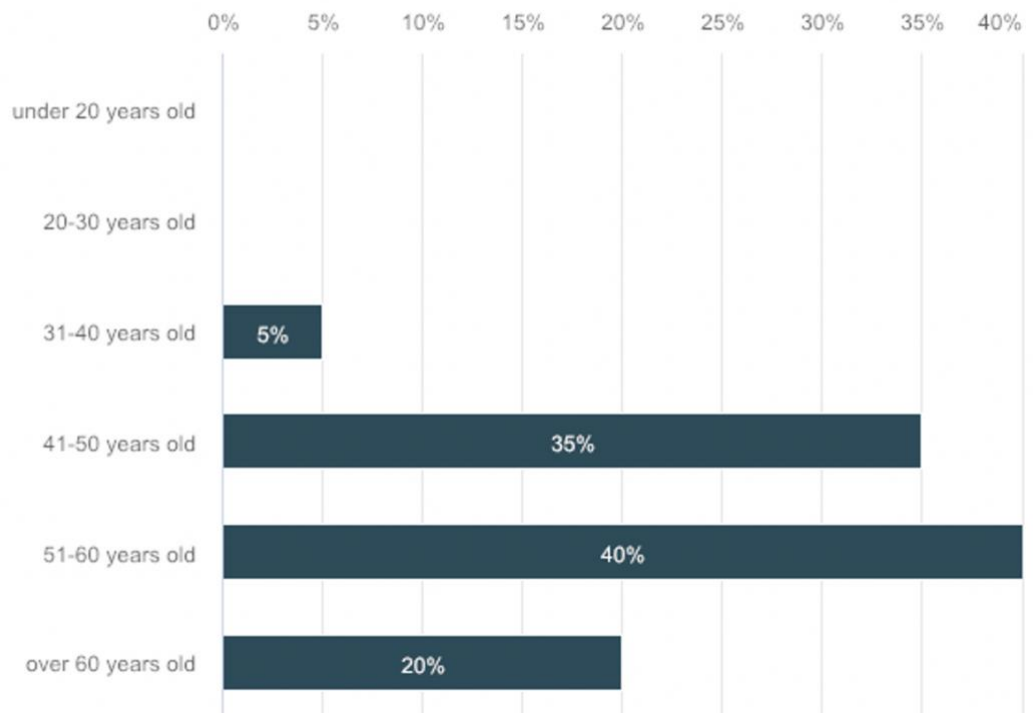
	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Keskiarvo</b>	<b>Mediaani</b>
Feedback is very important to me	37,2%	57,0%	5,8%	0,0%	0,0%	1,7	2,0
Feedback is part of the organization's work-culture	5,0%	45,4%	33,9%	14,9%	0,8%	2,6	2,0
Employees get frequent feedback from leadership	3,3%	38,8%	34,7%	21,5%	1,7%	2,8	3,0
Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees	1,6%	23,1%	48,8%	24,8%	1,7%	3,0	3,0
Leadership actively seeks feedback on their performance	1,7%	19,8%	38,8%	31,4%	8,3%	3,2	3,0
Leadership implements the feedback they receive	2,7%	42,5%	53,4%	1,4%	0,0%	2,5	3,0
I prefer receiving feedback face-to-face (virtually)	29,7%	49,6%	17,4%	1,6%	1,7%	2,0	2,0
I prefer receiving feedback in written form	8,3%	22,3%	36,4%	28,9%	4,1%	3,0	3,0
I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive	8,3%	42,1%	25,6%	21,5%	2,5%	2,7	2,0
I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better	31,4%	58,7%	9,1%	0,8%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
I wish I received more constructive criticism	11,6%	43,8%	34,7%	9,9%	0,0%	2,4	2,0
I wish I received more positive feedback	19,0%	38,9%	35,5%	6,6%	0,0%	2,3	2,0
I receive feedback for successfully completed work	11,6%	55,4%	20,7%	10,7%	1,6%	2,4	2,0
Constructive criticism helps me perform better	23,1%	64,5%	10,7%	1,7%	0,0%	1,9	2,0
I see a positive change/development in the workplace as a result of my feedback	5,8%	29,7%	49,6%	12,4%	2,5%	2,8	3,0

### Appendix 3. Management report



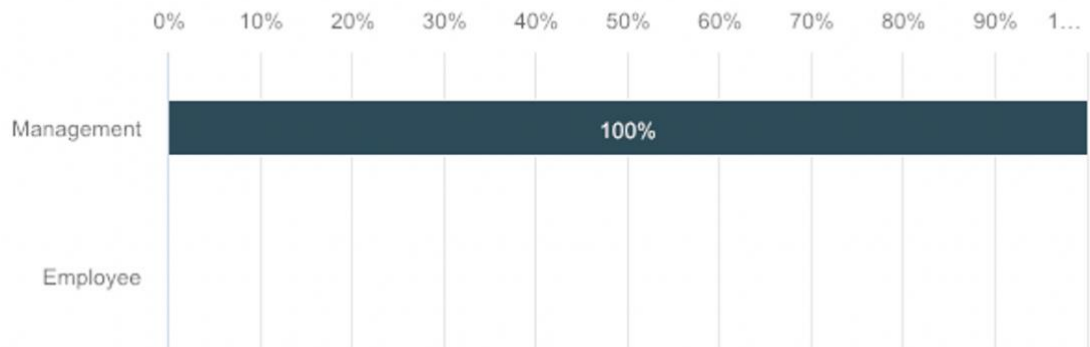
### 2. Age

Vastaajien määrä: 20



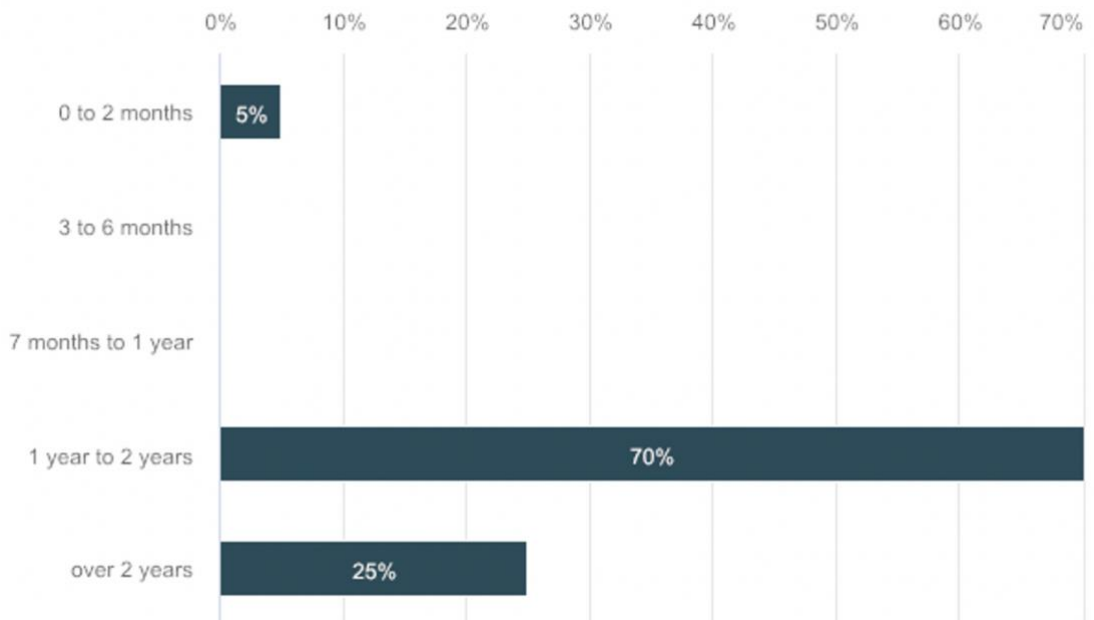
### 3. What is your organizational role (job position)?

Vastaajien määrä: 20



### 4. How long have you been working remotely?

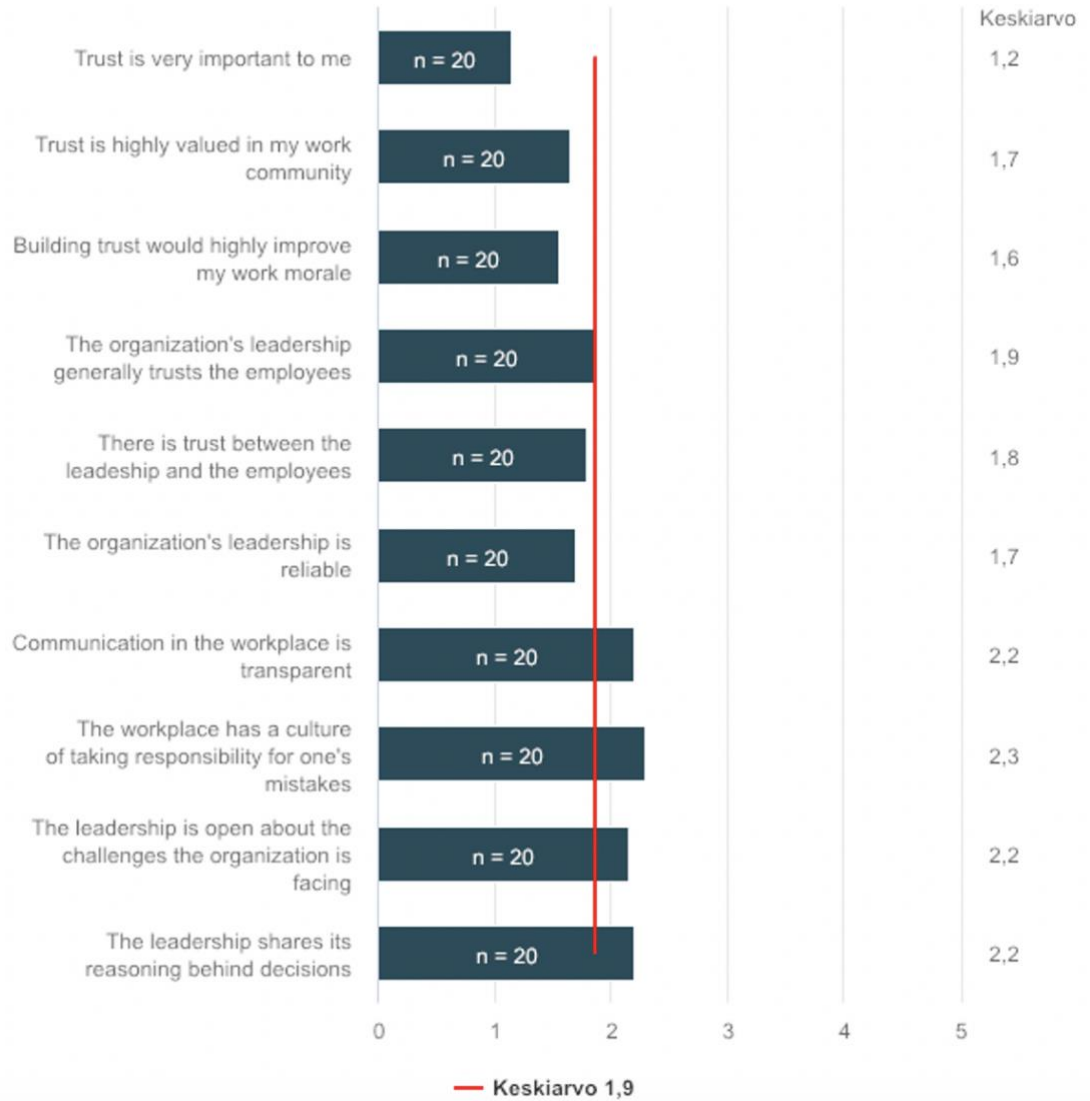
Vastaajien määrä: 20



## 5. Trust

### TRUST

Vastaajien määrä: 20

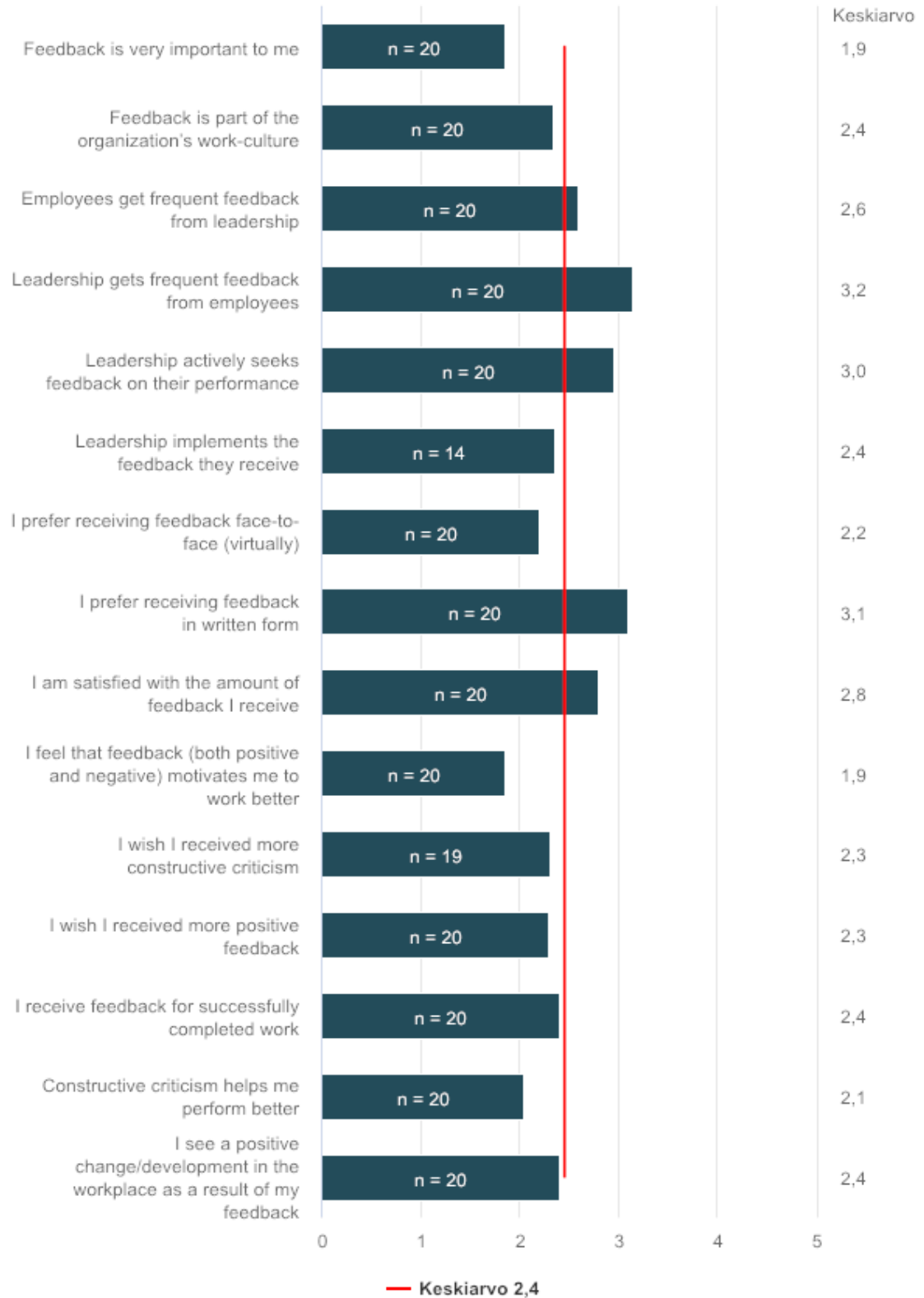


	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Keskiarvo	Mediaani
Trust is very important to me	85,0%	15,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,2	1,0
Trust is highly valued in my work community	40,0%	55,0%	5,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,7	2,0
Building trust would highly improve my work morale	55,0%	35,0%	10,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,6	1,0
The organization's leadership generally trusts the employees	25,0%	65,0%	10,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,9	2,0
There is trust between the leadership and the employees	35,0%	50,0%	15,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,8	2,0
The organization's leadership is reliable	40,0%	50,0%	10,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,7	2,0
Communication in the workplace is transparent	15,0%	50,0%	35,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,2	2,0
The workplace has a culture of taking responsibility for one's mistakes	10,0%	55,0%	30,0%	5,0%	0,0%	2,3	2,0
The leadership is open about the challenges the organization is facing	20,0%	50,0%	25,0%	5,0%	0,0%	2,2	2,0
The leadership shares its reasoning behind decisions	15,0%	50,0%	35,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,2	2,0

## 6. Feedback

### FEEDBACK

Vastaajien määrä: 20



	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Keskiarvo</b>	<b>Mediaani</b>
Feedback is very important to me	25,0%	65,0%	10,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,9	2,0
Feedback is part of the organization's work-culture	15,0%	40,0%	40,0%	5,0%	0,0%	2,4	2,0
Employees get frequent feedback from leadership	5,0%	45,0%	35,0%	15,0%	0,0%	2,6	2,5
Leadership gets frequent feedback from employees	5,0%	20,0%	30,0%	45,0%	0,0%	3,2	3,0
Leadership actively seeks feedback on their performance	0,0%	40,0%	30,0%	25,0%	5,0%	3,0	3,0
Leadership implements the feedback they receive	7,2%	57,1%	28,6%	7,1%	0,0%	2,4	2,0
I prefer receiving feedback face-to-face (virtually)	10,0%	65,0%	20,0%	5,0%	0,0%	2,2	2,0
I prefer receiving feedback in written form	0,0%	20,0%	50,0%	30,0%	0,0%	3,1	3,0
I am satisfied with the amount of feedback I receive	5,0%	30,0%	45,0%	20,0%	0,0%	2,8	3,0
I feel that feedback (both positive and negative) motivates me to work better	30,0%	55,0%	15,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,9	2,0
I wish I received more constructive criticism	10,5%	47,4%	42,1%	0,0%	0,0%	2,3	2,0
I wish I received more positive feedback	0,0%	70,0%	30,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,3	2,0
I receive feedback for successfully completed work	5,0%	60,0%	25,0%	10,0%	0,0%	2,4	2,0
Constructive criticism helps me perform better	10,0%	75,0%	15,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,1	2,0
I see a positive change/development in the workplace as a result of my feedback	5,0%	60,0%	25,0%	10,0%	0,0%	2,4	2,0