Everyday diplomacy – 10 Tips for Diplomatic Communication in Organizations

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Tässä tutkimustyypissä opinnäytetyössä tutkittiin diplomaattisen viestinnän vaikutuskeinoja. Tarkoituksena oli esitellä diplomaattisen viestinnän peruspiirteitä ja selvittää, voidaanko niitä hyödyntää organisaatioiden haastavissa kasvokkaisviestinnän tilanteissa. Tietoperustassa käsitellään diplomaattisen viestinnän peruspiirteiden lisäksi organisaation sisäisen viestinnän ja kasvokkaisviestinnän suhdetta ja sitä, mihin diplomaattinen viestintä tässä asetelmassa sijoittuu.

Työ on rajattu tutkimaan organisaatioissa tapahtuvaa kasvokkaisviestintää. Tutkimusote on laadullinen, mutta tutkimustulosten käsittelyssä on myös hyödynnetty määrlissäntä tutkimuksen piirteitä.

Tavoitteena oli tarjota konkreettisia ehdotuksia, kuinka selvitä konfliktteja aiheuttavista tilanteista ja luoda produktina ohjeistus, jota organisaatiot voivat hyödyntää jokapäiväisessä sisäisessä viestinnassään. Tosielämän esimerkkejä haastettelisista viestintätilanteista kerättiin haastattelemalla, ja nämä tilanteet analysoitiin hyödynämällä produktia.


### Asiasanat
diplomatia, vuorovaikutus, organisaatioviestintä, sanallinen ja sanaton viestintä
This research-based thesis examines diplomatic communication’s modes of influence. The goal was to introduce diplomatic communication’s basic characteristics and to research whether a diplomatic way of communication could be exploited in organizations’ challenging face-to-face communication situations. In addition to diplomatic communication’s basic characteristics the theory framework presents the relation between organization’s internal communication and face-to-face interaction, and situates diplomatic communication to that structure.

This research is outlined to examine only the face-to-face interaction in organizations. Generally the research approach is qualitative but quantitative method is exploited when processing the results. The goal was to bring out proposals on how to manage with conflict arousing situations, and as a product create an instruction leaflet which organizations can exploit in their everyday internal communication. The product was utilized to analyze example cases from real-life that were collected by interviewing.

According to this research, diplomatic communication can be exploited in organization’s internal communication. It can be adapted to be applicable for different kinds of organizations. Diplomatic communication and testing it in practice offer many possibilities for future studies.

**Key words**
diplomacy, interaction, organizational communication, verbal and non-verbal communication
# Table of contents

1 Introduction.......................................................................................................................... 1  
1.1 Thesis goal......................................................................................................................... 1  
1.2 Research methods ............................................................................................................. 2  
1.3 Project outlining ................................................................................................................. 2  

2 Face-to-face interaction........................................................................................................ 4  
2.1 Reviewing face-to-face communication.............................................................................. 4  
2.2 Face-to-face interaction in internal communication.......................................................... 5  
2.3 Managing internal communication ................................................................................... 8  
2.4 Verbal communication ...................................................................................................... 9  
2.5 Non-verbal communication............................................................................................... 13  

3 Diplomatic communication.................................................................................................. 18  
3.1 Tact .................................................................................................................................. 18  
3.2 Compassion ..................................................................................................................... 19  
3.3 Essential content .............................................................................................................. 20  
3.4 Factual speech .................................................................................................................. 21  
3.5 Behavior ............................................................................................................................ 22  
3.6 Correct vocabulary ........................................................................................................... 23  
3.7 Flexibility .......................................................................................................................... 24  
3.8 Responsibility ................................................................................................................... 24  
3.9 Listening ............................................................................................................................ 25  
3.10 Closing positively ............................................................................................................ 26  

4 Research ............................................................................................................................. 27  
4.1 Qualitative work with quantitative finishing...................................................................... 27  
4.2 Creating the product .......................................................................................................... 28  
4.3 Introduction of the product ............................................................................................... 29  

5 Conflicts in organizations ................................................................................................... 32  
5.1 Case 1 Giving negative feedback ...................................................................................... 32  
5.2 Case 2 Decision making ................................................................................................... 35  
5.3 Case 3 Confronting angry person ..................................................................................... 38  
5.4 Case 4 Dismissal ................................................................................................................ 40  
5.5 Case 5 Workplace bullying ............................................................................................... 43
5.6 Results

6 Discussion

6.1 Conclusions

6.2 Reaching the goals

6.3 The success of my work

6.4 Reliability and validity

6.5 Further study possibilities

Sources

Attachments
1 Introduction

The core idea of this thesis is to introduce diplomatic communication to reader. The goal is to bring out its basic factors that adapted to organization’s communication strategy could enable reaching more diplomatic solutions that all parties in controversial face-to-face situation could be satisfied with. This thesis work is not targeted to any specific organization but to all organizations in which leadership and hierarchy are present, for example to students associations or listed companies.

This thesis is basically a research-based work but includes also a product that links the results to practice. To make my research practical and the results easy to adapt I create a leaflet called “10 tips for diplomatic communication” that can be found enclosed to this work. Its goal is to help organizations to redesign their internal communication and make use of it as a tool to manage unforeseen conflict arising situations efficiently.

1.1 Thesis goal

My goal is to examine what diplomatic communication has to offer for organizations’ internal communication and how my research’s results could be exploited most efficiently. I provide guidelines based on diplomatic communication’s theory that applied to any organization’s use could help it survive from challenging communication situations and help finding solutions to controversies.

If I think of my goal from practical view, the aim is to get answers to following questions:

1. What are the basic factors that make the way of communication diplomatic?

2. How these factors could be exploited in challenging face-to-face communication situations in organizations?

3. How and in what kind of situations could organizations use the summary leaflet?
1.2 Research methods

This thesis is research-based, mainly qualitative work with a product that works as summary of my results. Theory for this topic is collected from books and articles. Five different real-life experiences regarding conflicts in organizations’ internal communication are analyzed, and diplomatic solutions to these problems are offered by using the product as a tool to do it efficiently. The topics for the cases are chosen based on the researches of most common controversial issues faced in organizations and the real-life cases are collected by interviewing members of different organizations who have been part of the issues regarding the topics at some point of their lives. Results of the analysis are gathered together at the end of this work.

Diverse data sources are used efficiently to be able to answer to the research questions with arguments based on sufficient facts. In this work theory is important and creates a basis for the whole research but the importance of both my own interpretation and the way how theory is put into practice are emphasized.

The goal is to show innovativeness and ability to bring out the most important findings based on facts when analyzing the issues which are faced certainly in all organizations at some point. This makes the practical part generally applicable. Solutions are presented in the product leaflet as straightforward as possible so that the results are easy to adapt.

1.3 Project outlining

Theory part is outlined to diplomatic communication and face-to-face interaction in organizations’ internal communication. The goal is to clarify the definition of diplomatic communication and bring out the basic factors that make communication diplomatic. I give an explanation on how face-to-face interaction is linked with diplomatic communication and how this entity as a whole is part or organization’s internal communication. I concentrate on aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication in face-to-face interaction. Written communication is excluded from this research.
In practical examples I bring out five common situations which arouse controversies inside organizations: giving negative feedback, decision making in a group, confronting angry person at work, dismissal of employee and workplace bullying.
2  Face-to-face interaction

The definition face-to-face interaction is the form of communication where the parties are communicating personally and have an eye contact with each other (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 13). Together with printed and electronic communication, face-to-face interaction is one of three factors that together form internal communication. It includes meetings, team events, inductions and “walking the talks”. (Juholin 1999, 140).

There are lots of similarities between communicating face-to-face and via nowadays’ new communication tools, that include for example videoconference or teleconference, but still face-to-face interaction is aimed to happen between parties who are in the same place personally. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 13.) Although the optional indirect communication tools develop from day to day, face-to-face communication will likely hold its position also in the future as people’s nature is to make decisions based on not only facts but also feelings and those often require personal contact that negotiating face-to-face automatically provides (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 1). That is also a culture-related characteristic and in diffuse cultures face-to-face contact has even more relevant role (Binder 2007).

Using alternative indirect communication methods in challenging communication situation may result as misunderstood messages and arouse even worse contradictions than there were at the original start point. Face-to-face interaction helps the parties to understand each other’s perspectives and the communication process proceeds more smoothly when it happens directly between the parties. (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 3). That is why it should be recommended method of communication in cases where misunderstandings could be catastrophic or otherwise injure organization’s function remarkably.

2.1  Reviewing face-to-face communication

There are different ways to review face-to-face communication and divide it into smaller entities based on its characters. It can be reviewed for example by dividing it to managed and spontaneous communication. This division emphasizes the context
where communication happens. Managed communication covers those communication situations that are referred to work and are somehow controlled by the working community and managers. Its content is tightly related to work. By spontaneous communication it is referred to the communication that either happens outside work or otherwise is not related to work; nowadays social media has brought spontaneous communication to a new extent as it is a new and easy channel to communicate. (Juholin 2013, 66). The division separates communication based on the formality of the content. Spontaneous communication handles informal topics but managed communication is strongly concentrated on formal content. (Juholin 1999, 142).

In this work face-to-face communication is reviewed by dividing it to verbal and non-verbal communication as it facilitates explaining and giving more comprehensible picture about the diplomatic communication’s characteristics in the next section. Verbal communication refers to spoken words and use of voice in communication and non-verbal communication means all the signals that are communicated in addition to verbal characteristics. They both support each other and have individual influences on the communication experience. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 59-60, 81-82.)

2.2 Face-to-face interaction in internal communication

Internal communication means communication among members of an organization. A traditional way to define internal communication is to say that it is a characteristic that just exists in an organization. Nowadays, more often it is considered as a central process of sharing information that describes and defines the organization. Internal communication occurs both in formal and informal way – formal channel means official newsletters and memos, and informal rumors, opinions and expressions of emotions. (Moyer 2011.)

Internal communication has multiple levels in formal communication context: face-to-face communication, group-level communication and organizational-level communication. Face-to-face communication is the primary form of communication. Group-level communication aims to share information, coordinate tasks and build consensus and
organizational-level communication concentrates on mission and vision and organizational knowledge. (Moyer 2011.)

Members of an organization belong to different hierarchical levels such as managers and employees. Internal communication can be divided into three different types according to the different directions of the communication flow between the levels. (Moyer 2011.) Vertical communication itself has two possible directions: top-down and down-up. In top-down communication the information comes from the higher level and the receivers are on the lower level, for example working instructions given from managers to employees. Down-up pattern works in an opposite way – the information comes from down to up. It works especially well when there is a need for developing the organization’s working procedures as the lower level usually has a closer touch to the work in practice. (Callaway.)

Horizontal communication happens between the parties which do not have any difference in their hierarchical levels. This can mean for example managers of different departments or employees in similar positions. It is often used to share knowledge and bring out the best working methods. The third type is diagonal communication which refers to interaction between employees from different functions. Diagonal communication, also known as omni-directional communication, is more rarely faced and is usually related to project works where it is essential to gather together knowledge of diverse functions inside an organization. (Moyer 2011.)

Internal communication covers informing about organization’s plans and goals for the future, giving and receiving instructions regarding specific tasks and work in general, making and listening suggestions and giving and receiving feedback to create a cooperative atmosphere. (Kaloinen, Suntinen & Vallisaari 2003, 14.) Internal communication is a channel through which the members of an organization can share information, emotions and hopes. (Moyer 2011.) Outdated formula which is based on commands and control does not work in nowadays organizations. Dialogue between the parties from different hierarchical levels is emphasized, if the organization’s goal is to keep on developing its functions and reach better outcomes. Nevertheless, responsibility for successful internal communication is not individual employee’s duty; it should be man-
aged from the higher level in a way that keeps the dialogue open to all directions. (Juholin, E. 2013, 189.)

Internal communication is realized through a variety of media: written communication means for example newsletters, intranet and e-mail, and spoken communication, in the traditional way, personal interaction but nowadays also videoconference and teleconference are in some contexts equated with spoken communication (Callaway). As mentioned before, despite the modern inventions, personal interaction has an important role in organizations’ communication. Communication in sensitive situations must be carefully executed whether it is about giving restricting orders, informing negative news or changing procedures in organization. The type of presentation and arguments must be chosen and considered carefully. (Kaloinen, Suntinen & Vallisaari 2003, 143.)

In early days internal communication was defined as linear one-way interaction. According to the linear interaction there are only sender and receiver needed to be able to communicate. (Åberg 2000, 27). The linear communication form covered only transmission of messages (Moyer 2011). A classic example of that is Shannon-Weaver model established in 1949; there is an information source that produced the message which is encoded to signals and transferred through a channel to a receiver. The receiver decodes the message. (Chandler 1994.) That sender-focused pattern that expected the message to contain everything to enable understanding is nowadays replaced with more complex model. It is now more common to expect interaction between the sender and the receiver and usually the goal is to arouse conversation between the parties. (Moyer 2011.) There are few commonly used terms when talking about communication. Feedback and interaction are sometimes used in similar contexts as almost as synonyms. Conversation is interactive as both parties are actively involved; as a term it can also be considered as giving feedback to each other in turns. (Åberg 2000, 32-33.)

New inventions of technology have caused that internal communication does not always stay inside the organization. The boundaries between external and internal communication have started fading as transferring information happens so easily. (Cornelissen 2011, 164-165.) Working community is not anymore restricted to any physical working environment as virtual tools and social media enable working over the organi-
zation’s boundaries (Juholin 2013, 179). Employees are nowadays connected to each other more electronically than by physical proximity to when taking care of the communication needs in organization. Nevertheless, researches have shown that especially manager’s communication to the employees still happens most of the time by verbal, face-to-face communication. (Cornelissen 2011, 164-165.)

2.3 **Managing internal communication**

Skill of managing internal communication is an essential part of good leadership. Management communication can be divided into two parts: informing about procedures and decisions, and interaction with the stakeholders, most importantly employees. In organizations management has the most recent and comprehensive knowledge of organization’s procedures so their most important job is to let the stakeholders know about the essential information and arouse interaction among the employees. (Juholin 2013, 195). Well-managed internal communication helps employees to be motivated and it builds trust not only among the employees but also between the managers and the employees (Kaloinen, Suntinen & Vallisaari 2003, 14).

Successful management communication strengthens the reputation of the organization, and that raises the level of employees’ satisfaction for working for the organization. Manager creates the atmosphere in organization and works as an example; inspiring manager is admired and that kind of example creates motivation among the employees. Management communication aims to create common values and meanings in an organization so that employee’s role and responsibilities in organization’s functions are clear. It is manager’s duty to collect the separate pieces of information to bigger entities so that it is easy for employees to follow the agreed procedure. (Juholin, E. 2013, 197-199.)

Management’s degree of commitment to communication affects employees’ morale. To make employees committed to organization’s functions, they must be assured that they are not only informed but rather communicated with. That is why definition “internal communication” is in some contexts replaced with definitions “staff communication” or “employee communication” – these emphasize the interpretation of internal
communication’s definition to be communication with employees inside an organization. (Cornelissen 2011, 164-165.) Internal communication has also an influence on well-being at work as a possibility to affect one’s own working environment and duties promote coping at work (Juholin 2013, 184). As challenges such as longer hours, bigger workload and tighter staffing at the workplaces have occurred, the employees look more critically at the manager’s way of communication. They need to feel engaged in the organization’s communication process; they monitor constantly what is being communicated with them and in which part of the process they are connected to the discussion. (Argenti 2007, 13.)

The goal of internal communication is to have positive influence on participation rate to organization’s procedures and through that commitment make also better decisions in future. Commitment is motivated by aiming to mutual benefits. (Callaway). Internal communication should be managed so that transferring information happens promptly and the communication style is open and accessible. Lack of information or inadequate communication channel can cause rumors, uncertainty and dissatisfaction in organization. (Kaloinen, Suntinen & Vallisaari 2003, 143) Participation in conversations is the key to keep the employees satisfied at all levels of organization. Employees nowadays know their rights and wait for their opinions to be listened and acted on when it is necessary. When managers do not involve lower-level employees in conversations it causes negative attitude and hinders the acceptance of changes. Usually when employees feel that they are listened, they get excited of their work and are more engaged to try to reach the organization’s vision and goals. (Argenti 2007, 137-138.)

2.4 Verbal communication

In this part I examine more closely the verbal characteristics of face-to-face communication. Verbal communication includes the characteristics which are based on using one’s own voice in communication situation. Verbal communication includes every factor that has something to do with spoken words and producing speech. (Andersson & Kylanpää 2002, 13.) Sometimes the definition of verbal communication is outlined to cover all actions that are based on using words. That kind of interpretation divides communication a bit differently as using different volume and tone are in that case
characteristics of non-verbal communication. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 59.) The division between these two categories is not clear and that is why there are differing interpretations. This research is based on the first interpretation that divides the characteristics based on using voice.

![Diagram of Verbal Communication Characteristics]

Figure 1. Characteristics of verbal communication (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 5)

Spoken words create the basis of the message which one wants to transfer. There are different ways to exploit the way of using words. One can communicate by using colloquial language that may vary according to the background of the speaker; for example dialects have a great impression on what kind of colloquial language the speaker uses. More formal impression is created by using standard language which eliminates abbreviations and expletives from the speech and emphasizes the importance of foreign words’ correct use and pronunciation. The message is most effective and interesting when the way of speaking is chosen according to listeners; this means that one should first evaluate the listeners’ expectations and then choose the way to speak in a specific communication situation. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 13-14.) Grammatical errors have different impacts on the communication. Generally it is said that they do not matter as long as the message and essential information stays clear. One should be
more precise with the grammar and correct use of words when there is a chance for misinterpreting the main point. In some cases a small error itself may result in losing credibility and seeming unrespecting. (Blundel, Ippolito, & Donnarumma 2013, 59.)

Choices of words and vocabulary create impressions in message receiver. They do not make insufficient communication complete but they increase the chance of getting a message through efficiently. (Blundel, Ippolito, & Donnarumma 2013, 59.) When speaker has done the research beforehand and knows listener’s background, it is easier to choose the words to present the message. Choice of vocabulary is affected by listener’s professional and educational background and depends on the topic of the message. If the topic is unfamiliar the use of standard words is recommended as it is important that the message is understood. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 14.) In situations where the listener is not known beforehand it may be the safest solution to use familiar and short words that are generally comprehensible. Nevertheless, long words should not be artificially shortened. (Åberg 1993, 14). In the communication situation which happens between professionals of the specific area the style can be more informal and using jargon is fully acceptable. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 14.) Jargon means the specialist terminology which is used by a specific group, for example healthcare professionals. All kinds of groups tend to create some own vocabulary which may not be easy to understand by the outsiders. (Blundel, Ippolito, Donnarumma 2013, 68.)

There is a difference between the structures of sentences when they are written and when they are spoken. Although the style of the communication situation would require standard language, the sentence structure in spoken standard language is incomplete and also shorter than in the written text. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 15.) Unnecessary words may easily slip into sentences and tend to hide there. It is worth seeing the effort to eliminate additional words as the result may be that listeners focus on the essential content more precisely. The essential information gets much more attention when empty words are not taking the attention away from them. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 60-62.) It is recommended to keep the sentences about 15 words long and use the structure which contains only main clauses and subordinate clauses. Nested structures in sentences should be avoided in speech as they may confuse the listener. (Åberg 1993, 14.) It requires either natural or trained verbal skills to be able to
maintain the compactness of the message and use interesting and varying sentence structures in the speech. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 15.)

Asking questions brings the parties of the communication situation closer together. Questions should be scheduled in terms of the communication process: if the case is for example a project plan, asking the opinions on how to get started with the project does not work when planning is already started. Asking questions motivates parties to attend the communication situation voluntary and facilitates getting the message delivered. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 10.) Questions can be reviewed as one type of feedback; they show that the message has been received and it has aroused some reactions in listener. Questions should be asked so that they require concrete answers, as a simple question of making sure that everything is understood by the listener may be responded by just nodding. That kind of respond only shows that listener is awake but leaves it uncertain if the message was received. (Åberg 2013, 19.) For example planning project shows that it is important to ask questions also afterwards; the parties of the process may feel more appreciated and get a feeling that their opinions matter when some feedback is collected and questions asked about their future hopes regarding similar projects. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 10.)

Skillful face-to-face communicators do not rely only on facts when delivering a message. They also manage tone and volume of their speech and understand how it affects the message. They use tone and volume as a tool to keep the speech interesting and emphasize specific points in it. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 11.) Repeating is also used to emphasize some important facts. Repeating happens naturally when speaker uses expressions such as “In other words” or “This means that” before bringing out the discussed matter again. Parallel repeating may work if there are many representatives behind the same opinion. Hearing the same thing from multiple sources trivializes the messages fast and may help agreeing on things that at first seemed too unfamiliar. (Åberg 2013, 24.) Showing and sharing feelings is a way to get connected with others on deeper level. In practice this means using tales, anecdotes, songs and symbols in speech. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 11.)
2.5 Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication can be defined as the part of communication that does not include linguistic behavior (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 15). It does not include any spoken words but happens through visual signals, gestures and pictures. Pictures do not only refer to charts or photographs that can in some cases replace the words but also the pictures that people create in their minds themselves. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 81.) It is important to distinguish non-verbal characteristics from signs that represent biological needs such as scratching a leg just because it itches; this is a subconscious act and usually the other party interprets these kinds of acts correctly to be biological needs instead of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication modifies and expresses the meaning of the verbal message and controls the interaction between the parties. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 15.)

Non-verbal factors have as great influence as words in face-to-face interaction and sometimes the non-verbal factors are even more effective than speech (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 11). Already decades ago, British phonetician David Abercrombie has also confirmed that the body language and other non-verbal characteristics have a great importance in communication. He has emphasized that it is misleading to say that communication is just exchanging words verbally. (Abercrombie 1968, 64.) People tend to react non-verbally way before the words come out, especially in surprising communication situations. Visual message is acknowledged first and it may create an impression that is hard to change verbally afterwards. (Blundel, Ippolito, Donnarumma 2013, 84.)
Facial expressions such as smile or grimace work as supplements to the verbal message. They are learned from others and their meaning may vary according to the cultural aspects. It requires repetition and experience to be able to interpret facial expressions fluently when communicating with unfamiliar culture. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 101). Facial expressions can be used to strengthen the message by showing feelings and are usually either following or followed by a verbal message. Humans are capable of expressing a great variety of facial expressions, that can help showing many different feelings such as sadness, happiness, anger or compassion. (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 16). They are easy for counterparty to “speed read”, so they may cause confusion and cause lack of credibility if they are not in harmony with the verbal message (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 84).

Gestures are acts like keeping eye contact, bowing, nodding and shaking head. By gestures one can express for example agreeing or disagreeing, respect or interest. All the non-verbal characteristics are dependent on culture but especially in case of interpret-
ing gestures one should be aware of other party’s cultural background to avoid misunderstandings. Sometimes for example an intense eye-contact may refer to giving the floor to someone but when interacting with some cultures that avoid direct eye-contact it may be safer to use long pause in speech as a gesture of giving the floor. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 16). In any case eye contact can have a powerful impact and it should be used according to the situation. Skillful communicator is aware of the cultural influences and takes them into consideration when communicating with unknown people. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 101).

Body orientation expresses speaker’s tension and formality, and how interested speaker is in its listeners. Rigidity is interpreted as tension and over-informality as disregard. If the speaker stays far away from its listeners, speaker is considered timid and shy and if the speaker takes a step forward the next message is considered to be important. Speaker who is oriented forward shows interest on its listeners. Body orientation is part of using space; balance between own personal space and distance to others expresses one’s attitudes and interest but also cultural aspects. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 17-18). Physical contact is linked to use of space as they usually follow the same rules among a cultural group. In cultures where the need of personal space is little, it may be considered cold and untrustworthy if one is trying to hold on one’s own space and avoid physical contact. In reverse situation, trying to come to other’s personal space may be considered pushy and aggressive. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 102).

By physical appearance one can signal personal status, professionalism and other capabilities. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 103). Physical appearance differs from the previous characteristics of non-verbal communication as it has parts that are fully controllable. Physical appearance refers to clothing, jewelry, hair style and make-up. The part that one cannot have an impact on includes skin color, age, gender and height. By controlling those characteristics that one can have an effect on, the first impression can be customized according to the needs of communication situation. Physical appearance can in best situation refer to reliability and unitive values. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 17). By manipulating physical appearance it is possible to increase persuasive power of the message. If there is background information available before fac-
ing the challenging situation, one can think of the suitable appearance to that specific event; sometimes it may require dressing up to show power and confidence but sometimes blending in the crowd gives a better opportunity to reach one’s goals. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 86.)

Listening refers to receiving the verbal message that the other party wants to deliver. Listening and especially listening style can express strong messages. There is a big difference between hearing and listening. (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 11, 25.) Sometimes people tend to hear only the things that they want to hear or are scared to hear. It is a result of poor listening. (Huhtinen 2005, 26). Active listening involves person to observe the communication situation as a whole and be concentrated on the moment. Just paying attention is not enough to be a good listener. One has to be prepared to capture the essential information for future reference and show that one is receptive and motivated to hear what other has to say. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 86). To express one’s attitude towards the speaker correctly it is important to be aware of the listening strategy that leads to desired result. Listening carefully keeps communication channels open and prevents misunderstandings that can damage the relationships. It is also important to observe the amount of time used in speaking and listening so that it maintains in balance. (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 11, 25.)

To be able to interpret the given message as a whole, it is important to be able to not only control one’s own messages but also observe non-verbal messaging of others. “Visual literacy” means one’s ability to interpret the non-verbal messaging. (Blundel, Ippolito & Donnarumma 2013, 84). Observation of the communication situation starts from evaluating the reliability of the foreknowledge. Some situations such as monthly meetings in an organization may have an agenda that stays broadly the same and is that how already familiar to the communication parties. These kinds of situations do not require much attention to observations. On the other hand, the situations that are unfamiliar are easier to handle when continuous observations are made, so that the speaker is up to date with the situation. (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 20-21.)
Non-verbal messages offer a lot of information about the communication parties. Things such as attitudes, hopes and social background can be expressed through non-verbal messaging but it is important to remember that the data collected that way is the other party’s interpretation of those messages – and it may not always be the same message that the other tries to express. Cultural differences, both parties’ knowledge of non-verbal messaging and one’s own expectations must be taken into account when interpreting non-verbal messages. (Andersson & Kylänpää 2002, 16.)
3 Diplomatic communication

Diplomacy can be defined as a process of reaching for one’s own needs on the condition that other party’s dignity is preserved (Bezroukov 2014). Its goal is to promote understanding, good will, cooperation and peace (Simpson 1987, 4). In everyday life it means trying to reach one’s own goals and at the same time finding a solution that everybody can live with (Jewett 2008). Diplomatic communication requires usually exploiting the circumstances of the situation in a subtle way for one’s own advantage. In practice this could mean that one communicates in negotiations by using home ground advantage and that how fulfills the goals, but in the end saves the face of the disagreeing party by acting humbly. (Bezroukov 2014.)

Communicating diplomacy should be practiced delicately and managed skillfully. It has been quoted that a diplomat should be able to tell someone to go to hell and have them look forward to the trip. This quotation describes well the challenge of diplomatic communication but also shows its possible results that are worth making the effort. It requires profound assimilation of the methods of diplomatic communication to success in adapting them to practical use. (The Success Series 2008.)

Diplomatic communication is fairly unexamined topic. I examined it through finding out its basic characteristics and dividing them to ten main points. Next I will present those characteristics and try to define what diplomatic communication includes. The goal is to increase awareness of diplomatic way of communication. Further I research if those same functions that are used to manage controversies between nations in cases like economic dislocations, environmental catastrophes and wars could be customized for any organization’s everyday use. (Berridge 2010, 25.)

3.1 Tact

Some people are tactful by nature but it may be also developed by training. Tact is a skill of thinking the issue from other’s point of view and taking into consideration different feelings and values. (Bezroukov 2014.) Tactful communication’s goal is to help avoiding conflicts in controversial situations and behave inoffensively.
It is not easy to tell a person something that the person does not want to hear. Tactful communicator is able to communicate in a way that at the end of the discussion the person is thankful for being told about the thing that at first felt unpleasant. That requires communication skills that enable giving hurtful information without causing too much distress. Considering the right pace in delivering certain information is a tactful act. The expected reactions to the information should be considered beforehand and the pace of delivering the news should be decided based on those expectations. (Bezroukov 2014.) Diplomatic communication style is based on suggestions instead of commands (Sennett 2012, 221). Using suggestions is tactful communication and that kind of communication style helps avoiding confrontations (Bezroukov 2014). For today’s leaders this is particularly important fact to remember as in organization’s the hierarchy is getting looser and “command and control” management method does not work as efficiently as before. Managers, who understand what skillful face-to-face communication is and use tactful style, have keys to succeed in internal communication. (Harvard Business School Press 2005, 3.)

### 3.2 Compassion

Putting one to other person’s shoes does not only express tact but also compassion. In challenging communication situations, respective act of showing genuine interest in listening and understanding other’s position may be all that is needed. (Marshall 2010.) Acting diplomatically inspires respect also in others so it is a phenomenon that works in both directions – when one shows respect to others, the others show respect to one. (Bezroukov 2014). Everybody has right to have their own opinions. Usually when a controversy is faced, one concentrates only on sorting out the opinions that differ from one’s own. A diplomatic communicator uses that time trying to figure out why the opinions are so different and find solutions to communication problems based on their background reasons. Seeing things from other person’s angle helps to gain perspective and understand the whole picture more thoroughly. (Marshall 2010).

It is recommended to stay humble in situations where one’s own idea is supported, to avoid seeming boastful. The same pattern works also in reverse situation where one does not get any support; showing disappointment by being arrogant does not lead to
anything positive. One should take into account all the diverse sides of the story and based on the bigger picture try to understand why the disagreeing parties hold the different belief and use some common feature in mindset to persuade others to consider one’s idea. Although the decision would remain the same, it is important to show that one wants to see things also from their perspective and explain clearly and based on facts why one’s own idea seems better. (Wroblewski 2014).

Goals and needs are usually affected by one’s beliefs and opinions and, in turn beliefs and opinions are usually influenced by culture. It is important to try to understand the differences and take a peaceful attitude towards dissenting opinions especially if they are based on cultural differences. Opinions should be presented in a way that does not hurt anyone’s personal feelings although the parties may have very differing opinions or hold on to different beliefs. (Bezroukov 2014).

3.3 Essential content

Communicating diplomatically requires that the content of the speech consists of only the information needed. Skillful diplomatic communicators evaluate the conversation constantly and based on their observations decide whether they disagree or not or when, how and where they show their disagreement. This is because they try to avoid saying out loud anything that they may later regret. (Marshall 2011.) Too much information may cause by accident an opposite reaction that was as a goal. Key for keeping the speech in essentials is self-control. Some people are good at it naturally but most people have to put some thought into it and possibly also train the skill. (Bezroukov 2014.)

When one faces challenging communication situation one should be concentrated on answering only the questions that were asked. One should avoid giving answers voluntarily and control the speech so that any additional information will not be provided. Also stating opinions to side topics in sensitive situations usually result as being used against one. (Bezroukov 2014.) Using expletives is not recommended as they weaken the credibility of the message and it is important to get to the point and stay in essentials (The Success Series 2008). Open-ended question is a type of a question that leaves
lots of room for the answer. They are risky as they invite for long and all-covering answers. That is why one should answer to open-ended questions asked as concisely as possible but without leaving any essential part out so that the answer remains reliable. (Bezroukov 2014.)

One may face difficulties in answering questions that ask for many things at the same time. In these situations “Talleyrand approximation” technique may become useful. This technique refers to communication strategy that can be used to answer questions asking multiple facts. According to this technique one responds to one fact at a time and the others are excluded from discussion by any reasonable ground. One may provide answers to those facts later but the point is to avoid providing any extra-information by accident. The focus stays in the correct topic and it will be more profoundly processes. (Bezroukov 2014.)

3.4 Factual speech

The idea of diplomatic communication is to bring out one’s needs and goals in communication situation honestly. (Bezroukov 2014). Honesty and openness are characteristics that may get mixed in some situation and in this case it is important to remember that they refer to different things. Diplomatic communication requires that facts are based on truth but the communication need not to be brutally honest as the content is outlined to include only the essentials. The key is to make the other party feel that the interaction is happening respectfully, but to do it without revealing any additional information. (Marshall 2011.)

One should be prepared to justify one’s sayings and be able to present factual information that one's statements are claimed to be based on. (The Success Series 2008.) It is one’s own responsibility to be aware of the most recent information and the reliability of the sources. Before stating anything remarkable, once should stop for a moment and take one step back to give some time to see the situation objectively. (Bezroukov 2014.)
There are two main strategies on how to use and provide facts when communicating diplomatically. One should estimate the need in the specific situation and make a choice between these two at earliest point possible so that the strategy is equal during the whole communication process. The first strategy is to provide very specific facts which do not leave any room for interpretation. The point of view is made extremely clear and the counterparty can either agree or disagree. This strategy has a lot of power and sometimes leads to fast solutions; it can work in certain situations that require fast action. The second option for strategy in diplomatic communication is so called “constructive ambiguity”. It means that all kinds of specific expressions and statements are avoided and there is room left for deniability if the situation requires it. With this strategy it is hard to fulfill any precise goals in negotiations but on the other hand it enables a situation where all the parties to the negotiation can interpret the issue on their own way and be satisfied with the results. (Törnudd 2005, 42.)

3.5 Behavior

To success in communicating diplomatically there should be a consensus between the verbal and non-verbal presentation (Bezroukov 2014). It is important to seem relaxed although that may not always be the truth. Body language expresses a lot and acknowledging one’s own challenging subconscious behavior helps controlling the unwelcomed gestures. (Marshall 2011.) One should hold one’s body upright and orient the body forward, so that the appearance is open (Bezroukov 2014). Some body parts tend to become tense when handling difficult things; usually these are shoulders, forehead and hands. One should concentrate on relaxing those parts that are showing nervousness. Some tend to make gestures when they are nervous and these may be misinterpreted easily as they surprise the other party, for example waving a hand or pointing at someone or something may be interpreted as aggressive attitude although one may have meant to just emphasize something. (Marshall 2011.)

Stable eye contact should be maintained during the discussion as it demonstrates attendance and interest (Bezroukov 2014). People who have expressive faces may need to work on how to keep an eye contact which seems neutral but pleasant. Breathing has also impact on facial expressions. (Marshall 2011.) One should try to avoid holding
breath although that may happen subconsciously in unnerving situations. Normal pace in breathing shows relaxation and facilitates speaking out loud. The volume of the speech should be held on a normal level and the obvious expressions of emotions that may have a negative impact on reaching one’s goal in discussion should be hidden by avoiding screaming or laughing showing any other strong feelings in the speech. (Bezroukov 2014.)

3.6 Correct vocabulary

Diplomatic communicators use some time to think which words they are going to use when communicating some specific issue. They do so as they are aware of the importance and power of the words and acknowledge the impact that they have on messages. (Marshall 2011). For example absolute words such as “always” and “never” should be avoided as they are in great danger of being proved false. Hedge word choices including “I guess” or “it seems” are softer and leave room for changing opinion but at the same time they undermine one’s opinion’s power in discussion. They should only be used when one wants to express one’s own point of view so that it cannot be proven false by any facts. Also using slang is normally avoided in diplomatic communication. It may sometimes feel more natural to use a slang expression if the topic of discussion belongs to one’s own expertise but in listener’s ears one can sound almost illiterate. Avoiding slang may sometimes require strict concentration and focusing on communication situation if the topic is very familiar to the speaker. (Bezroukov 2014.)

Using indirect language is recommended. Suggestions are received more positively when they are represented in a way that makes them sounds less like suggestions. One may want to start by saying for example “You might consider” or “Have you thought of” instead of giving the proposal right away. It is also better to bring out the issues in a positive light: it’s better to say that organization’s internal communication works efficiently than saying that organization’s internal communication is not inefficient. (Marshall 2011.) It is also recommended to convert the sentences so that the use of word “you” can be replaced with “I” as the focus in sentence is better to direct to the speaker (Dale Carnegie Training 2011).
One should not be afraid of saying ”no”. Refusing should be made clearly and one must be ready to justify the refusal when needed. Explanations for the refusal are given only when they are needed. They may weaken the power and the meaning of the refusal as they give room for interpretation. If one must answer to a question to which the possible answer is either yes or no but one does not feel that either one of them is the truthful answer, one should ask for rephrasing the question. Also answering “I do not know” or “I do not remember” are acceptable as long as they are truthful. (Bezroukov 2014.)

3.7  **Flexibility**

To be convincing diplomatic communicator it is important to stay behind one’s own point of view. One should try to make it sure that the point is proven and the statement is justified enough. On the other hand, negotiations do not proceed without concessions made by both sides of the issue. Balancing with flexibility in negotiations is not easy. That is why one should monitor the situation in negotiations constantly and try to interpret other party’s motivation and strategy to identify those points where concessions could be made without ruining one’s own strategy. (Bezroukov 2014.)

Ability to make concessions in challenging communication situations is interpreted as confidence, integrity and flexibility. People who refuse to make any concessions during negotiations, and hold on to their opinions rigidly are taken as stubborn and stiff. (Bezroukov 2014.) Rarely people are ready to risk their own goals by making concession and waiting for the other party to do the same without any guarantees. That is why it is important to learn to read other’s communication styles. That how some future actions can be predicted and it helps deciding whether concessions could be made at all and if so, when and in how important matters one is ready to come halfway. (Marshall 2011.)

3.8  **Responsibility**

To success in diplomatic communication, one must always seem reliable in the eyes of the others. That is why one should always take responsibility of one’s own opinions
and feelings, whether one was disagreeing and criticizing or agreeing and supporting. Even though it was a situation where one is disagreeing and the atmosphere is tense, taking responsibility attains trust and creates respect. In verbal communication taking responsibility can be done by giving some thought to sentence structure and vocabulary, as also advised in section 3.6. (Dale Carnegie Training 2011.)

Responsibility is not only standing behind one’s own opinions. Acknowledgement of own mistakes is equally important as all people make mistakes. Mistakes should be apologized honestly and promptly to maintain the trust and to show that they were not intentional (Wroblewski 2014). The error should be corrected as soon as it is noticed and the correction is most effective if it is made graciously. This indicates ability and willingness to admit the mistake and make it right. Attempts to hide mistakes and correct them quietly express unreliability and arouse doubts if one has something more to hide. Instead, honesty results in confidence; also when it means an embarrassing situation of admitting one’s mistakes. (Bezroukov 2014.)

3.9 Listening

Diplomatic communication’s principal is that it does not matter what one wants to say; the important matter is what the listeners think that one wants to say. That how listener’s interpretation has a huge effect on communication process and its success. All kinds of experiences from the past have an impact on the communication process: background information about the topic enables the situation that the listener is already familiar with basic factors about the topic, and those assumptions may either remain the same or change remarkably, and that how arouse some reactions. (Törnudd 2005, 41; Stanton 2009, 4.)

In challenging situations one should be fully aware of the issue that is discussed. In addition to knowing the factual evidence, listening to especially those whose idea is different than one’s own is important. One should be able to articulate their points of view as well to prove why one’s own idea is more applicable. One also wants to show tact and compassion by evaluating the issue from the other point of view. (Dale Carnegie Training 2011; Wroblewski 2014.) One should be equal to the occasion and pay
attention if the conditions of the communication situation deteriorate (Wroblewski 2014). Asking questions is part of the listening; it clarifies the listener’s interpretation as the additional information about the topic’s unclear issues has an impact on the final interpretation. Questions also demonstrate interest so listener can express feelings about the topic by asking some focusing questions. (Bezroukov 2014.)

Diplomatic listener remembers to give attention to the speaker by using comments such as “I hear what you’re saying” or “I appreciate your view” to show interest and attention to the matter discussed. Showing interest is not the only task of these sentences, as they also work as “cushions” when expressing objection. (Dale Carnegie Training 2011.) Objections should be made during appropriate moments, as interrupting is considered impolite. It should be avoided; one should take into notice that by listening and concentrating on the speaker one can also reveal speaker’s weaknesses and identify the communication strategies that are used to have an effect on listener (Bezroukov 2014).

3.10 Closing positively

The last step of diplomatic communication process is to close the discussion positively. It is important to maintain diplomacy throughout the challenging situation so that the impression is coherent and it requires leaving the counterparty in correct impression at the end. One should be able to demonstrate compassion and support in situation where it is needed although the circumstances were not as preferred. If the successful closing is achieved through co-operation, one should share credit with others for accomplishment as it spreads good vibes. That builds a sense of community and the relationship between the parties strengthens. If possible, in case of unpleasant outcome for either party, the negotiation should be closed with suggestions of future success and highlighting the positive sides of the issue (The Success Series 2008).
4 Research

The goal of this research is to examine whether diplomacy could be exploited in organizations’ internal communication and if so, how it could be done efficiently. In the previous section I identified the ten main characteristics of diplomatic communication: tact, compassion, essential content, factual speech, behavior, correct vocabulary, flexibility, responsibility, listening and closing positively. Based on these characteristics I have created a product, an instruction leaflet that contains ten tips to adapt to internal communication to solve the controversial communication situations. The main ideas of the ten main characteristics are summarized to each tip. The product is introduced in the following section. Its main goal is to link this whole research more closely into practice. I have collected five practical examples of common challenging communication situations faced in organizations. In next section I analyze the collected real-life situations and identify the main communication problems that have caused resentment. Based on the product’s tips I give suggestions how similar situations could be handled in future by exploiting diplomatic communication. While analyzing and providing suggestions I also collect data about product’s utilization. That how I examine how many of these problems could hypothetically be solved with help of the product.

4.1 Qualitative work with quantitative finishing

This thesis is a qualitative research in which I exploit interviewing as a research method to collect material for practical cases. There are different research methods available to carry out a qualitative research such as observing and survey. Surveys include both all kinds of interviews and questionnaires. I choose survey instead of observing as it enables me to collect cases from different organizations and from different situations that may have also happened in the past. In some situations the communicational controversy happens privately between two persons and that is why observing would not work. My goal is to examine target persons’ experiences, feelings and thoughts, so interviewing is a natural choice. Collecting the material about real-life cases could also be done by using a questionnaire. Nevertheless, interviewing face-to-face enables me to ask supplementary questions right away and from my point of view gives me more
comprehensive understanding about the faced communication problems. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2007, 180.)

Interviewing is a flexible research method as it allows the interviewer to ask diverse and also additional questions when needed (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2007, 181). The interview type in this research is theme interview as it is a mixture of form and open interview. I have a specific theme for each interviewee but the rest depends on interviewees’ experiences around these themes. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2007, 203.) For themes I choose giving negative feedback, decision making, confronting angry person, dismissal and workplace bullying. These themes come up in web sites and articles regarding organizations’ most common communication problems and are also heard when asking people to identify some problems faced at their work places (Esimies-info; Tienvitotoja esimiehen viestintätehtäviin; Staib, 2010). The interviewees are randomly selected people from my vicinity that work in different fields and positions. For this research, to be as versatile and generally applicable as possible, it is important to collect the cases from different kinds of organizations.

To make the results of this research more practical and to prove the importance of this research I also handle the results in a quantitative way. That is why during the analysis of the cases I collect numerical data about how often each tip of the product offers solutions to these problematic real-life cases. The results are presented at the “Results” section of this thesis in a comprehensible form of excel figure.

4.2 Creating the product

Goal of the product is to provide clarified advice on how to put diplomatic communication’s characteristics to practical use in organizations. I examined each characteristic and figured out its most important point. I converted the points to form of imperative as imperative mood is the mood that is commonly used when creating instructions (BBC Learning Languages). Additional, specified question after each tip leads reader to interpret the tip based on their own challenging situation and makes it easier to understand how one is intended to function to follow the tip.
The product is used in the section 5 where I analyze the real-life cases that are collected by interviewing. For each case I identify five most suitable tips that could help developing similar situations towards more diplomatic solutions. Each tip is implemented separately and the choices for the tips are justified in the analysis. Data about tips’ utilization is constantly collected to an excel table during the analysis, and the statistical rates of using each tip to solve all the five common practical issues are presented in a form of pie figure.

To collect the tips to form of leaflet felt natural as I see this product to be used as a thread in organization’s internal trainings regarding co-operation and motivation. A leaflet with 10 short instructions leaves enough room for interpretation so that one can adapt it to different kinds of situations. Leaflet is easy to read and it can be for example attached somewhere where it can be seen all the time. Consumption of paper is smaller than when creating a booklet and also reading a booklet requires urge and time; it has to be opened and one needs to search the section which one wants to read. Challenging communication may cause frustration and anxiety so I think that booklet may not be as useful as a leaflet that can easily be placed so that it is automatically seen every day. It could also be downloaded as wallpaper to computer at offices. I think that it will be most powerful if reading the ten points will take approximately a minute so that one reads it like subconsciously just when seeing it. I trust that acknowledging these instructions constantly could have influence on one’s behavior in challenging communication situations.

4.3 Introduction of the product

The product of my research is a leaflet that gives practical instructions on how to communicate diplomatically. It carries a title “10 tips for Diplomatic Communication” and can be found as Attachment 1 of this thesis. Each characteristic of diplomatic communication that I handled in section 3 is summarized to form of instruction. The first instruction is “Change commands into suggestions” and it is based on the section 3.1 which is about tact. Tact is all about delivering the information in a right form on the right time (Bezroukov 2014; Sennett 2012, 221). Thinking the working life context I choose to emphasize the communication style so using suggestions became the tip
number one. The second tip “Figure out reason for differing opinion” is based on the theory of compassion that is handled in section 3.2. Tact and compassion are strongly linked to each other but they concentrate on different sides of good behavior; tact is more linked to speaking correctly but compassion refers to expressing feelings. Compassion’s main idea is to think of the issue from others’ points of view and put oneself to the other person’s shoes (Marshall 2010). To be able to do so, it is essential to understand why others’ opinion differs from one’s own.

Diplomatic communication’s characteristic of essential content is summarized to third tip “Concentrate on the question”. It is important, that one responds to the questions that are asked but in controversial situations it is also essential to notice when questions are open-ended and call for long answers that provide additional information. That information may sometimes cause an opposite reaction that was as goal in the beginning. (Bezroukov 2014.) Speech’s essential content is analyzed in section 3.3. Acknowledging what is really asked helps one to answer the question properly. The content of the answer and sayings in general is emphasized in tip number four: “Use only facts that can be justified”. That tip is based on the theory of factual speech in section 3.4. Diplomatic communicator should always be sure about the facts and the sources that the facts are based on. Honesty and openness should not be mixed as the third tip outlines the content to cover only the essential; nevertheless, that should not risk the reliability of the content. (Marshall 2011.) Also the fourth tip “Behave according to your sayings” is linked both to the honesty but behavior itself is also one characteristic of diplomatic communication. In addition to using facts, section Error! Reference source not found. about behavior emphasizes the importance of having one’s verbal and non-verbal performance in accordance with each other (Bezroukov 2014).

Next tip, “Replace “you” with “I”” refers to using correct vocabulary. There are many ways to change vocabulary more diplomatic, but changing the subject of the sentence is really practical and easy to adapt. Skill of communicating diplomatically requires that one acknowledges the power of words and knows how to choose the correct words to each situation (Marshall 2011). In section 3.6 there are more ideas on how to change one’s vocabulary diplomatic. Seventh tip “Offer a concession” refers to flexibility that is handled in section 3.7. Although it may not be easy, diplomatic communicator
should try to find room for concession when facing controversies (Bezroukov 2014). Flexibility is often interpreted as confidence and integrity so it supports the strong and honest picture that diplomatic communicator want to create (Marshall 2010). That is what also the tip number eight “Correct your mistakes immediately” does. That tip refers to responsibility of the communicator, also handled in section 3.8, as acknowledging and correcting one’s own mistakes right after they are noticed maintain the trust and prove that providing false information was not intentional (Wroblewski 2014).

The ninth tip “Show that you are listening” has couple intentions. As told in section 3.9, listening is essential so that one is fully aware of the issue that is discussed and is able to act according to the situation. Listening supports tips number two and three, as it is also an essential part of showing tact and compassion. (Dale Carnegie Training 2011; Wroblewski 2014.) The third goal of listening is to show interest; asking questions and gestures like nodding are ways to express listener’s feelings towards the topic (Bezroukov 2014). Instead of instructing to remember to listen, showing it ensures that one is actually doing so. The last, tenth tip, refers to diplomatic communication’s characteristic presented in section 3.10, that is closing the communication situation positively. Tip reads as follows: “Bring out something positive at the end”. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining diplomacy throughout the challenging situation all the way until to the end. If it is hard to find any positive outcome in current situation that could be brought out to leave a positive impression, the situation may be closed for example by suggesting future with better success. (The Success Series 2008).
5 Conflicts in organizations

This section contains the practical research of this thesis. It presents the real-life cases and the analyses of diplomatic solutions, that are formed based on the product’s tips that were introduced in the previous section. Each case is titled by the theme that the situation refers to. The sections start with a story about the challenging communication situation that each interviewee has faced, and the story is followed by an analysis that explains how diplomatic communication could be exploited in similar situations to reach better solutions. Situations are summarized to be compact and contain only the essential background information that is needed to carry out an analysis. Some points had to be modified so that the person or organization cannot be identified. Instruction leaflet goes alongside during the whole research process and is used as a cornerstone when providing suggestions.

5.1 Case 1 Giving negative feedback

“I was doing a temporary job for this one company. The work was completed individually at changing locations and that is why I did not know personally anyone in the management level of the company. I got my tasks by e-mail or phone call and went to do the job in different places. The job itself was easy so I did not need much information to be able to handle the job. At first I was a bit insecure what were the expectations for me but when I asked about it I was told just to go to do the job and I was convinced that I will handle it.

I had worked there for six months and started to realize that I had not got any feedback on my work even once. I had always thought that maybe I just have done the job well and there was nothing to remark. At first I had tried my best to do the job as carefully as possible to impress the manager but I noticed soon that it did not really even matter whether I used two times the time to complete the job or just cut it down to half – no one ever noticed the change in results. Or that is how I thought it was.

I got bored and did not feel motivated to continue working in the company. I am sure that the lack of feedback had an effect on my decision. I informed the manager that I do not want to receive any tasks anymore and that I am looking for a new job. When it was time to go to get a
testimonial, everything went upside-down. The manager informed me that he was not able to write me positive testimonial as I had been a crappy worker for the whole time. He said that he had got complaints about me and the results of my work already from the start.

I was overwhelmed. I asked why the manager did not let me know about this but he just started yelling how I had made him look bad in the eyes of the customers and said that he hopes that I am not going to be hired to any other company. I never got the testimonial from him but luckily was hired to another company soon where I have got direct feedback from the first day – both positive and negative – and I see that I am more motivated than ever to work as hard as I can to see the results of my work.”

In this case the parties for the problem are employee and manager so we are facing a communication problem in vertical, top-down communication (Callaway; Moyer 2011). For this issue with lacking communication and rude behavior I chose the following tips of the product to adapt:

3. Concentrate on the question.
4. Use only facts that can be justified
6. Replace “you” with “I”
7. Offer a concession
10. Bring out something positive at the end

**Concentrate on the question**

Let’s see how the situation looks like after adapting these instructions to manager’s communication style. The first problem was that the new employee did not get instruction at the beginning and was not sure about what was expected from her. She said that she had tried to ask about it so I see that she made her effort to solve the problem here. If the manager would have concentrated on what the employee was asking and answered the question with essential content, maybe this issue would never have escalated.
Use only facts that can be justified

Next problem occurred when the employee went to get her testimonial after resignation. The manager made multiple mistakes in his communication style at this point as he did not give any feedback based on facts. He saying that he had had complaints about the results of the work is not a way to give constructive feedback about the work. Factual speech would in this case require some examples about practical mistakes that the employee had done when doing the job as the comment about complaints is not reliable – especially when the employee had herself noticed that the quality of her work had changed during the employment but according to the manager the quality had not meet the expectation for the whole time. It seems that no change had been noticed so it is easy to doubt if there even were any complaints from the customers.

Replace “you” with “I”

If there actually were complaints, the manager could have used the tip number six here, replacing “you” with “I” when giving feedback. In conflict arousing situation like this it is improbable that the employee is open to hear any complaints about her work if it sounds like accusing her personally. Reversing feedback to start with “I” makes the atmosphere more approachable and keeps the communication channels open – in practice, although the employee would have made a mistakes, she may have an opportunity to learn about it when the channels stay open and the feedback is received in peaceful mood.

Offer a concession; Bring out something positive at the end

The last two tips apply to closing the issue properly. Offering a concession would be an effort from the manager to end the employment relationship on good terms and it could be made when giving the testimonial. The manager cannot write anything that is not true but maybe he could try to see the bright sides and concentrate on employee’s personal strengths instead of analyzing her work’s results and, that how be able to offer a testimonial that has something good to say. Offering this kind of concessions requires that the manager understands that part of the mistake is his own fault as he did not give essential information for the employee. Last but not least, closing the communication situation with a positive comment does not cost anything to anyone but
leaves the parties on a good mood although the issue was unpleasant. Only stating that it was good that the parties finally communicated with each other and thanking for the conversation possibility can be enough as they leave a positive impression and that how prevent badmouthing each other afterwards.

5.2 Case 2 Decision making

“I work in an expert organization and last year there was a big change in company’s decision making. We adapted this new process that was supposed to help all the departments and employees to feel involved in company’s processes. We put together cross-hierarchical groups in departments and we were supposed to comment managers’ proposals regarding development plans in monthly or bi-monthly meetings. We were also given an opportunity to give new proposals regarding company procedures if managers’ proposals did not respond to employees’ needs from our point of view. This whole idea came from management level as they had figured out that the development plans could be more productive when feedback from people who do the practical job would be adapted already in drafting phase.

As an idea this was great and aroused lots of positive opinions and excitement in departments as there were many issues that could have been developed through this kind of process. Employees felt appreciated as their opinions were asked. The problems of this arrangement occurred when it was first time to gather together and give comments. It was clear that there was a high hierarchy inside the group although the goal was just to discuss and develop the proposals that managers had prepared.

I was a new employee and also one of the youngest. I realized soon that my suggestions were not listened or taken seriously. People from the management level were leading the group and formed our opinions although they were supposed to be more like the listening party in the group as they had already had the opportunity to create the proposals. I tried to present my ideas in different ways but they were never welcomed or taken into account. This kind of behavior from them made me feel useless and unappreciated. Our working community is very individual-centered so I thought this kind of change in decision making would create more co-operative atmosphere and help maintaining team spirit.
Now in these meetings we as employees are the passive party. We do not have any motivation to try to propose anything as we know that it will not be listened. This has affected the relations between my co-workers as the atmosphere at work is now more competitive instead of collaborative.”

This case’s parties are also facing problems in vertical communication as the other party belongs to management level and the other party to employees, but here the problem occurs between groups of people instead of two individuals (Callaway, Moyer 2011). The tips to exploit here are:

1. Change commands to suggestions
2. Figure out reason for differing opinion
5. Behave according to your sayings
7. Offer a concession
9. Show that you are listening

Change commands to suggestions
The first problem here was that the employees felt like they had no power to bring out their ideas as the managers were just forming the group’s “common” opinions based on their own ideas. The first tip, changing commands to suggestions, would work here as it opens the communication channel between the levels and enables the conversation. Although the idea was that the employees would be in the main role of giving ideas and the managers would be more the listeners, the managers ideas would certainly be welcomed when given in the form of suggestion. Commanding kills the idea of the new process as it passivates the employees and does not leave any room for their ideas.

Figure out reason for differing opinion
The second tip is figuring out the reason for differing opinions. If the managers are busy in forming the group’s opinion based on their own knowledge, they may lose important information from the employee’s level. In this kind of case, where the goal is to develop organization’s processes that mainly happen in practical work and where the employees are the main factors, employee’s knowledge is the most valuable thing. Acknowledging why the management level has differing opinions may lead to noticing
the ground problems of the process. Solving the ground problem helps developing the operations to respond to both managers’ and employees’ expectations.

**Behave according to your sayings**

This new kind of process that at first aroused excitement loses its reputation fast, if the managers exploit their position. The managers should behave according to their sayings and do their best to involve the employees to forming the development plans. For the employees it creates an impression of double standard when the managers have at first created this new process of co-operation between the hierarchical levels and then exploit their manager’s status when putting it into practice. Noticing this double standard promotes unreliability and it results passive employees.

**Offer a concession**

Offering a concession here would certainly help motivating the employees to get involved. If forming the opinions together is too challenging task to do, the group could for example divide the task so that the management level will form the group’s opinion in things that is linked straight to management’s processes and the employee’s will handle the things that have the greatest impression on their work. This kind of procedure would give everybody an opportunity to get their voice heard about the things that matter to them.

**Show that you are listening**

My last tip to this issue is paying attention to others, in practice showing that the parties are listening to each other. Only nodding, keeping an eye contact and asking some specifying questions are the acts that show respect to other’s opinion. It is important to express interest especially when one is next going to represent a differing opinion. In this case, the managers should start by showing more interest in the employees’ opinions. If the managers have some ideas about working procedures that could work better in practice, the employees are certainly more motivated to hear and adapt them if the managers have at least listened to their ideas first.
5.3 Case 3 Confronting angry person

“I work in an expert organization, which acts on a field that has traditionally very hierarchi-
cal working culture. Our company has recently gone through some structural changes that have de-
creased the differences between the hierarchical levels. This has annoyed some people at the higher
level who are used to their position. I work at the lower level of hierarchy and usually my tasks
consist of offering support to higher levels in diverse tasks.

One day I was completing this one task that was given to me earlier. I felt good about it al-
though I knew it is a challenging job to do. I was given plenty of time to complete it so I had time
to really put thought into it. I felt that I can handle the task by myself as it was not the first
time that I was doing that kind of task. The instructions were clear enough so I just had to
work hard to finish it. I was doing extra-careful job so that the result would be good enough to
impress my manager and show him my talent as he had emphasized how important the task’s
results were.

I was halfway to completing the task when the manager that had given me the task came at my
desk. He asked to see the results immediately. At this point I had had time to work on it for
two hours and I tried to explain that it was not ready yet as I was given four hours to complete
the job. I also told that I was giving an extra attention to it. The manager raised his voice and
let everybody in our open plan office hear how disappointed he was for not getting the results “on
time”. I froze. He continued shouting and wondered very loudly why he had be given me the op-
portunity to complete the task when I apparently was not able to do that.

I felt really bad. I was not able to comment on his attack in any way as I was just totally
shocked and sat still and just listened. After he rushed off the office was silent. I left the room
and walked around the block. It took five minutes to control my breath again and after that I
went back inside and finished the task. I was not really satisfied with the result and I returned
it to the manager without saying any word. He thanked me quickly without looking me in the
eye. Later on I have been trying to avoid all the tasks that come from that specific manager.
This unpleasant event left me with the feeling that he had something personal against me as he
seems to work well with the others.”
This case is also about a problem in vertical, top-down communication but it differs from the first case as there is a constant face-to-face contact between the parties (Callaway; Moyer 2011). These tips are put into practice here:

4. Use only facts that can be justified
5. Behave according to your sayings
7. Offer a concession
8. Correct your mistakes immediately
10. Bring out something positive at the end

**Use only facts that can be justified; Behave according to your sayings**
In this case the employee was very excited about the challenge that was given to him so the work started on good terms. The first problem was faced when the manager had decided that he needs the task completed faster that he had instructed. He made a mistake when we went to ask for the results and left everybody under the impression that the employee had not completed the task on time although the time frame the manager had giver earlier was different. The manager’s sayings were not based on facts so he was not being fair when slandering the employee. He was not acting according to his sayings as he had emphasized the importance of the careful fulfillment of the task but still he expected the results faster than it was instructed. He gave the employee an impression that it is better to work carefully and use more time to complete the job instead of just doing it rapidly without refining all the details – but was expecting the opposite.

**Offer a concession**
At the point where the manager realized that the instruction that he had given was not responding what he had meant, he should have offered a concession and corrected his mistake immediately instead of accusing the employee and rushing away. A concession could have been for example that the manager is flexible with the time frame and gives an hour to complete the job but do not expect so detailed results as the time is cut down to half what was left instead of that he had originally informed.
Correct your mistakes immediately
Admitting a mistake and apologizing would certainly help employee to adapt to new time frame and motivate to work his best to complete the job according to new limitations. Admitting and correcting mistakes shows responsibility and promotes reliability between the manager and the employee. Everybody does mistakes and acknowledging them honestly enables getting over them promptly.

Bring out something positive at the end
In this case the closing of the issue was one of the biggest problems. When the employee handled the results, there was manager’s last chance to correct the mistakes he had done and try to recover the relationship with the employee. Employee showed flexibility and carried out the task although the circumstances changed and affected his work negatively. Manager should notice that and bring out positive things at the end so that the co-operation would be smooth also in the future. Decent apologies, thanking and an eye contact may already be enough to turn around the situation.

5.4 Case 4 Dismissal

“I was hired to a retail company before new store’s grand opening. I was supposed to work in the evenings and weekends during completing a degree in business school. I was excited about that as this job offered me a chance to gain experience in customer service and at the same time earn money. I had a terminable contract with one month’s trial period. Before the store opening I went through a cashier training and participated in the orientation that was directed to all employees in the company.

It was the last week before the opening. I talked with the store manager and she told me that the owner had informed her in a meeting that all the new employees were not supposed to work on the first weekend as that much capacity was not needed in the store. It was the same weekend that my relatives had asked me to go for a visit them a 4-hour-drive away. I was delighted to hear the news as I had already thought that I am stuck at work on that weekend. Also my colleagues did not have anything against working on that weekend. There was no reason why I should have been working on those specific days if in any case all of us were not going to have a shift.
I was advised to check this arrangement from the store owner by e-mail. I sent him an e-mail and I got an answer during the following night. The message said: “You do not need to come to work anymore”. When I read the message in the morning I was confused and replied him asking what he meant. He answered during the same day that if I was not interested in working for him on that specific weekend, I should not come to work there at all. This is the last message I got from him.

My contract was terminated immediately as I was on trial period. I felt that it was unfair as I got kicked off just because I politely proposed an arrangement. I think the background for his reaction is in overestimating the need for workforce. Maybe he realized that he had hired too many new employees for the new store and this was an easy way to get rid of one. I understand that entrepreneurs have to think from the financial point of view and establishing a successful business is not easy, but still a nice gesture such as explaining the situation would have helped me to accept the dismissal.

I took also this vertical communication’s problem to this research although only store manager’s part of it happened in face-to-face interaction (Callaway; Moyer 2011). The main problem is between the new employee and the owner and communication between them happened by e-mail. This is to promote the importance of personal contact and to show that the whole situation could have also been different only if the conversation with the employee would have been carried out in face-to-face interaction (Kaloinen, Suntinen & Vallisaari 2003, 143). In any case, the following tips are the ones that could solve the problem:

3. Concentrate on the question
4. Use only facts that can be justified
5. Behave according to your sayings
6. Replace “you” with “I”
8. Correct your mistakes immediately
Concentrate on the question
The ground problem in the situation was that the owner did not seem to be open for a conversation. The employee acted according to the instructions that were given to her but the owner did not himself follow them. Store manager was in this case just a middleman who did not actually have any impact on the messaging. If the owner would have concentrated on the question that the employee asked about getting that specific weekend off, he would maybe have realized that he had just a moment ago informed the store manager that all the employees were not needed. The owner seemed to hear the question so that he got an impression that the employee does not care about the job or respect the chance of working for him. This may be a result of stress or hurry that are probably faced when starting a new business, but could be easily corrected by thinking twice the ground for the situation.

Use only facts that can be justified; Behave according to your sayings
The owner did not justify his comment in any way as he had no real facts that expressed the employee’s lack of motivation for working. He relied fully on his impressions that he had created without any reliable background. The owner did not keep his promise to store manager as he was the middleman transferring the message and sure got his part of fault when the information was not truthful. Behaving so that actions are in accordance with the words is an important way of building trust. In this case the owner managed to ruin his relationship with both the store manager and the employees as he did not follow his own instructions.

Replace “you” with “I”
If the background for the problem here is the one that the employee thinks - that the estimation for workforce was incorrect in the beginning – the owner should have handled the situation more delicately. The aggressive way of communication that emphasizes employee’s role although the mistake is made by the owner is harmful. The owner used in his communication the word “you” many times. When he realized the mistake he had done when hiring too many employees, he should have taken all the responsibility and form his sentences starting with “I” so that the emphasis is in him an in his mistake.
Correct your mistakes immediately

To manage to follow all the previous tips, it is required that the mistake is admitted and the owner has a motivation to correct his mistake. Although losing a job is never a positive experience, admitting this kind of mistake, explaining it honestly and correcting it maybe by offering a reference would have made it more bearable for the employee.

5.5 Case 5 Workplace bullying

“I started working in an office last year. I did not enjoy working there even for a day and the reason for that was bullying. For the whole time I felt isolated from working community. No one greeted me in the mornings or asked me to join for lunch and when I was initiative asking people how they were doing, I did not get any response. When I went for lunch alone, no one ever came to sit with me at the same table. This kind of behavior made me feel that I am invisible. I did not know anyone personally at work and there was no one to talk with during the days. It was passive bullying as I was not called names or hurt physically but leaving me out of the community made me insecure and anxious.

Workplace bullying got worse when I was left out of work tasks. I was trying to ask for tasks or something useful to do during the working hours but they did not give me anything to do. Sometimes when I got a task, I was not instructed properly although I asked for the additional information. The results were bad and I was left without work so my days became boring and I felt useless and distrusted. I started questioning my own skills and ability to handle my job and it led to depression. I asked for a reason for this behavior from the manager and let him know that I felt bullied. I thought be listened when be agreed to arrange a meeting for the staff to talk about co-operation. In the meeting I talked openly about the problems but the others seemed to think that the problem was in me and my motivation to be initiative. My colleagues were advised to be more supportive towards new employees and in front of managers they promised to do so.

Finally I quit the job. Afterwards I have realized that the reason for the problems in working community there is the fear of outsourcing the office services if they cost too much for the organization. Employees are managed by fear so the atmosphere there is really competitive. New em-
employees are not accepted as they might replace the old ones in case they seem to do their work better. People who work there try to hold on to their jobs as tightly as they can and think that making all the others look bad in the eyes of managers helps them to keep their jobs.”

This issue is a bit different than the others. The problem is in horizontal communication as the parties of this issue are working on the same level (Moyer 2011). Also in the situation there is one new employee against the group of old employees. In this kind of situations the tips cannot be directly adapted to the communication style to solve the problem but they can still be exploited. It just requires a bit deeper analysis of the situation. For this last case I chose the following tips to create the framework for solution:

2. Figure out reason for differing opinion
4. Use only facts that can be justified
5. Behave according to your sayings
6. Replace “you” with “I”
9. Show that you are listening

**Figure out reason for differing opinion; Use only facts that can be justified**
The first tip is to figure out the reason for this kind of behavior. This is directed to the group of old employees as they should start thinking why they want to isolate the new employee from the group. The reason is probably in this case that the employees are scared of losing their job if the new employee provides better results for the organization. They may have not thought that the organization would have not probably hired an employee if it was not needed. If the workload has increased, more workforces are needed. This is a fact to justify that the new employee is needed – not that the employee is a threat for the old employees. In this case the management style was not maybe the best possible but performing well as a group would probably convince the management to keep the office services instead of outsourcing them.

**Behave according to your sayings; Replace “you” with “I”**
When the meeting for the staff was established, the new employee had some hope that the situation would change. The attack towards the new employee by accusing her not being initiative was the meeting’s first problem. If there were a reason to give feedback
for her about her working methods, reversing the sentences to start with “I” instead of “you” would have worked better as the employee already felt isolated and attacked. The old employees promised to try to make an effort to improve the situation. This was probably because there were also managers in the meeting and they wanted to make a good impression. As the employees did not act according to their promises in practice, the new employee decided to quit. The loose of trust was probably too severe and there was no hope to see any improvement. If the employees would have acted conversely, the new employee may have still been open to start fresh as she had seen an effort to tell the managers about the problems.

Show that you are listening

The last tip for this complicated situation is my tip number nine – showing that one is listening. In this case the ground problem was lack of respect and trust between the colleagues. Listening and paying attention to others are the minor acts to express respect but which result as remarkable step in process of building co-operative working atmosphere. The new employee had already a bad start when the colleagues seemed not to be interested in listening to her or getting to know her, so it has sure been hard for her to try to develop as worker afterwards.

5.6 Results

In this part I summarize the results of this research. In general, all the five practical examples were provided a suggestion on how the situation could have been handled in a diplomatic way. The results of qualitative research are represented after each case in form of analysis for possible solution. I also collected numerical data about utilization to combine quantitative research with the main research about communication styles. The five tips per case that provided most valuable advice were collected to an excel table to create a statistic about different tips’ utilization rate. The excel table shows the tips that were assessed to be most valuable in the analyzed cases that present the common problems faced in organizations. As utilization is easier to deal with by using percent rates I created a pie figure based on the excel table to make the results more comprehensible.
The results show that tips four “Use only facts that can be justified” and five “Behave according to your sayings” were used the most, having the 16% rate each. The second most common tips were tips six “Replace “you” with “i”” and seven “Offer a concession”. The other six were left under 10% utilization; tips two “Figure out reason for differing opinion”, three “Concentrate on the question”, eight “Correct your mistakes immediately”, nine “Show that you are listening” and ten “Bring out something positive at the end” reached each 8% rate and the first tip “Change commands to suggestions” 4% rate. As a result in general, the rates are relatively even.
6 Discussion

The goal of my research was to define diplomatic communication’s basic characteristics and link them to practical use in organizations. In this section I will go through the results of this research from the analytical point of view to see what I have reached. I also evaluate the success of my work and myself as a researcher. As this research is just a start to make diplomatic communication known, I bring out some ideas for future studies to extend the knowledge of the topic. I provide some ideas how already this research could be refined and exploited in practical life in organizations. I also estimate and analyze the reliability and validity of this work.

6.1 Conclusions

Diplomatic communication is a topic that has not been researched very comprehensively before. This research provides focused information about diplomatic communication’s theory and links the theory into practice. Bringing out the factors that can be implemented in organization’s internal communication strategies may help avoiding conflicts in challenging communication situations or at least enable finding more efficient solutions to them.

This research has shown that there is a possibility to exploit diplomatic communication’s traditions and characteristics in everyday life in organizations. There is a lot that could still be studied but this research is a start. Collecting the real-life cases showed that diverse problems are faced in organizations constantly and they are not dependent on the organization’s operational field. Analyses of the cases showed that these kinds of problems could be handled better and avoiding conflicts do not always require any new spectacular communication plans, but only minor acts can have a great impact.

All the tips that I created based on the theory of diplomacy were exploited at least in one of the five example cases but some of them proved to be needed more often. According to the results of this research the reliability and responsibility issues are the main problems in organization’s internal communication. It seems that people tend to accuse each other without having any facts to prove accusations and that people do not
keeping their promises. This may be a result of competitive and stressful atmosphere in organizations. Economic situation today is uncertain and it may have changed the atmosphere during the times. Also all the practical examples used in this research were collected from people working in Finnish organization’s so the results must be examined acknowledging that the culture may have an impact on the problems.

6.2 Reaching the goals

The goal of this research was to solve the three research questions that I stated before starting the main process:

1. What are the basic factors that make the way of communication diplomatic?

2. How these factors could be exploited in challenging face-to-face communication situations in organizations?

3. How and in what kind of situations could organizations use the summary leaflet?

The first research question is answered in section 3, where I have identified the characteristics of diplomatic communication. I divided the characteristics to ten main points using many different sources. Some of the characteristics are strongly linked to each other and could maybe in some other research be combined although in this research is decided to keep them separate. Nevertheless, I think I managed to reach the goal of this research regarding research question one.

Linking the theory into practice was the goal of my second research question. This is mainly handled in section 5, where I analyze the collected real-life cases. As I did not test the solutions when facing similar issues in practice at work places, the practical functionality of the product is based only on assumptions. I did bring out ideas how diplomatic communication’s characteristics could be exploited in organizations to link the theory framework in practice. In writing, there was a direct connection between the diplomatic communication’s characteristics in section 3 and the product’s tips, as the tips were easy to create based on the basic characteristics. Nevertheless, testing the tips
in real life would make this research more reliable and linked to practice. The last research question about the product’s use should also be tested in practice. Regarding this last question I have stated some ideas on how to use the product at work place in section 4.2.

6.3 The success of my work

I chose this kind of new and relatively unknown topic for my thesis although doing the research and collecting the material for theory framework was not easy. There are not many sources available regarding this topic so it took a lot of time figure out where to look for the material. On the other hand, collecting the real-life cases to the practical part was easy and it encouraged me to carry on with this work as it made me feel that there is room and need for this kind of research. I had my doubts about managing through this process, but at this point I may say that I am happy that I stayed with a topic that is personally interesting for me, although it may have not provided as practical results as I hoped. This process of writing a thesis has been a maturing and educating experience. It is different from all the other works that I have completed during BBA degree as it required persistent individual work. It has taught me responsibility and organizing skills and although the process has been tiring, I think it has motivated me to finish my degree.

In general, I am satisfied with the results of my research. Diplomatic communication is relatively unexamined topic and from my point of view it is not exploited as much as it could be in organization’s communication. The knowledge of diplomatic communication can be found as little separate pieces and my goal was to gather them together and create an entity that helps understanding its basics. I think that I reached my goal as a researcher as I managed to create a comprehensible research about the basics that offers many possibilities for further studies. There is no doubt that the theory framework could be more comprehensive and examining more cases by interviewing or putting this research to test in real life would make it more successful. Also examining how communication needs in organizations have changed during the times would enable more in-depth analysis. Examining more closely one specific organization would help channeling the results more efficiently to target organization’s use. Nevertheless, I am
happy with the outcome within this time frame as this work’s goal was to concentrate on the basics.

6.4 Reliability and validity

In this part I analyze how truthful this research is. I use two central terms, reliability and validity. By reliability I refer to reproducibility of the research’s results. In practice I analyze whether the results are reliable and do they provide coincidental outcomes. Its goal is to prove that if the research would be repeated, the outcomes would be similar. I also analyze validity that means examining whether this research provides answers to what I was supposed to examine. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 133.)

The core problem of this research is that I have not tested my theory in practice so that I could see how people react in real life to the suggestions. I had only chance to create hypothetical solutions to real problems but even good proposals do not assure that this theory works in practice. Nevertheless, I think that collecting the situations from real life instead of making them up increases the reliability of this work. It has created a relatively truthful link to practice and makes it easier to believe that adapting the results to organization’s internal communication could result as positive influence. As my goal was to research the diplomatic communication’s possibilities in real life, the real-life cases increase also the validity of my research compared to the situation if I had used fictional cases.

The reliability of this researched could be easily increased by researching more cases. It would provide more data to analyze and the results may be more comprehensible. Five different cases provided a basis that enabled to carry out an analysis but if the time frame and expected work amount for this research would have been wider, the research could have been carried out by getting more cases involved. Examining more cases would have also increased the validity of this research; the idea was to prove that this research is needed in any kind of organization; more cases would have meant more situations where diplomatic communication is needed.
6.5 Further study possibilities

An exciting study possibility would be to put this product to use in an organization that has problems with internal communication. Research could be carried out for example so that at first there would be a survey for employees to examine the most problematic situations inside an organization. Then there could be a training offered for the staff that is based on teaching diplomatic way of communication and where this leaflet would work as a summary and homework for participants. After a certain time period it could be measured if the training and homework had had any influence on the internal communication in organization.

As a researched I would also be interested in seeing the development of diplomacy during the times. It would be interesting to interview people who have worked in the field of diplomacy and examine whether these diplomatic communication’s features have changed and does diplomacy nowadays require different approach than it did when it was relatively new. This kind of research could help predicting the needs of future diplomacy. Also collecting the real-life cases after a certain period of time again and analyzing them in a similar way that I did, could provide a chance to analyze whether the main problems have changed during the times.

The third interesting point of view for research could be examining the differences between cultures when using diplomatic communication in organizations. Diplomacy and studying diplomacy is usually linked to some cultural issues. It would be interesting to see how different the needs of internal communication in organizations are in different cultural areas and see whether the diplomatic communication should be exploited in a different way.
Sources


54


Attachments

Attachment 1 10 tips for diplomatic communication
DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION

1. **Change commands to suggestions**
   What can I suggest to be done differently?

2. **Figure out reason for differing opinion**
   Why do we think differently?

3. **Concentrate on the question**
   What is asked? What information is needed?

4. **Use only facts that can be justified**
   Is this comment based on some fact?

5. **Behave according to your sayings**
   What did I promise to do?

6. **Replace “you” with “I”**
   How can I convert this sentence?

7. **Offer a concession**
   What can I offer in exchange to reach my goal?

8. **Correct your mistakes immediately**
   Have I been truthful?

9. **Show that you are listening**
   Have I concentrated on this? Have I asked anything?

10. **Bring out something positive at the end**
    What has been good in this conversation?