

Master's Thesis

Master of Business Administration

International Business Management

2015

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ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORK RESHAPING INTERNAL COMPANY COMMUNICATIONS

– Case Study



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The aim of this study is to map out the value potential of social technologies in internal company communications. In today's complex and fast changing business landscape companies need to find new agile ways to share information that are based on the premises of openness and transparency. Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) are designed to meet this request and the objective of this study is to unfold the cultural attributes that are needed to support a successful ESN adaptation, as well as to map out expected benefits and challenges associated with the social media tool in order to build a ESN strategy for successful implementation. The theoretical framework of the study consists of themes around internal communications in modern companies, such as two-way communications, knowledge sharing and transparency. Specific theoretical themes on ESN are used to gain understanding of ESN value propositions, potential challenges, vision formulation, strategy building, metrics and community management.

The research is conducted as part of a wider NEMO Project framework with the aim to identify business value potential in negative emotions. The study is conducted as a case study for a NEMO partner company who has requested a practical social media tool to bridge the gap between employees and management by reshaping their internal company communications practices. Empirical research is qualitative in nature utilizing findings from interviews carried out within the case company. Also secondary data from a company wide Employee Welfare Survey is used to reflect upon interview findings.

The research shows that the potential benefits of an ESN are widely recognised within both employees and the management of the case company. Challenges for implementation and adoption arise on one hand from the traditional company culture not used to supporting open two-way communication practices and on the other hand due to the setting in which the initiative is being introduced. Using one of their production sites as a pilot for the study sets a unique spin not only to the technological framework of the initiative but also to theoretical application as all of the existing literature on ESN has focused on knowledge workers in office settings.

KEYWORDS:

NEMO, internal communications, two-way communications, knowledge sharing, transparency, social business, social media, social technologies, Enterprise Social Network (ESN), employee engagement, employee empowerment, community management

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ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORK (ESN) YRITYKSEN SISÄISEN VIESTINNÄN UUDISTAJANA

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on kartoittaa sosiaalisen median keinojen mahdollisuuksia uudistaa yrityksen sisäistä viestintää. Nykyajan monisäikeisessä ja nopeasti muuttuvassa maailmassa yritysten pitää kehittää uusia ketteriä, avoimuuteen ja läpinäkyvyyteen pohjautuvia keinoja tiedonjakoon. Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) ovat suunniteltu vastaamaan tähän tarpeeseen ja tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää sitä, minkälainen yrityskulttuuri tukee viestintää ESN:n välityksellä. Tarkastelussa ovat myös ESN:ään liittyvät edut sekä mahdolliset haasteet. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen kehys pohjautuu modernien sisäisten viestinnän teorioihin kuten kaksisuuntaiseen viestintään, tiedonjakoon ja läpinäkyvyyteen. Teoreettinen osuus kattaa myös ESN-spesifin osion, jossa tarkastellaan ESN:n strategiaan ja onnistuneeseen jalkauttamiseen liittyviä aihealueita.

Tutkimus on suoritettu osana laajempaa NEMO-tutkimusprojektia, jossa tarkastellaan yritysten mahdollisuuksia hyödyntää negatiivisia tai ristiriitaisia tunteita. Tutkimus on tehty tapaustutkimuksena NEMO-yhteistyöyritykselle, joka on tilannut sosiaalisen median työkalun lähentämään työntekijöitä ja johtajia sisäisen viestinnän toimintatapoja parantamalla. Empiirinen tutkimus on laadullinen ja pohjautuu tapausyrityksen sisällä tehtyihin haastattelutuloksiin. Myös tuloksia yrityksen itsesuorittamasta ilmapiirikyselystä on hyödynnetty tutkimuksessa.

Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että sekä työntekijät että johto tunnistavat ESN:n mahdolliset hyödyt tapausyritykselle. Jalkauttamishaasteisiin pitää varautua toisaalta sen takia, että olemassaoleva yrityskulttuuri ei käytännössä tue ESN:n vaatimia avoimuuden ja läpinäkyvyyden periaatteita ja toisaalta siksi, että pilottikohteeksi valittu tuotantoyksikkö ei toimintaympäristönä ole sellainen, johon ESN olisi helppo jalkauttaa. Rajoitettu tietotekniikka tuotannon työntekijöiden parissa sekä myös nykyisen ESN:ään liittyvän kirjallisuuden rajautuminen työntekijöihin toimistoympäristöissä luokin tutkimukselle uudenlaisen lähestymiskulman.

ASIASANAT:

NEMO, sisäinen viestintä, kaksisuuntainen viestintä, tiedonjako, läpinäkyvyys, sosiaalinen media, sosiaalisen median teknologiat, Enterprise Social Network (ESN), työntekijöiden osallistaminen, community management

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESN	Enterprise Social Network
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research objectives

Business today is going through of a deep change cycle driven by a hyper-connected global environment that pulls people and information into central focus and puts into the past the old disconnected and siloed models. (IDC exe 2011: 4) Traditionally companies and individuals have held their corporate information and knowledge as closely guarded secrets. However, due to several major trends, such as the consumerisation of IT, mobility, globalisation, rise of the social Web, changing workforce dynamics and a fundamental shift in mindset among customers and employees, companies can no longer rely on withholding information to gain competitive advantage. Instead, successful companies recognise that sharing knowledge more openly across their customers, partners and employees results in deeper relationships, higher internal and external stakeholder satisfaction, faster product and service innovation, and increased organisational agility and efficiency. (IDC exe 2011: 4) In fact, collective decision-making and better access to information and expertise across organisational and geographic boundaries offer great opportunities for enterprises now and in the future. (Bishop 2011) The greatest benefits will be realised by organisations that can develop open, non-hierarchical, knowledge-sharing cultures (McKinsey 2012: 4), also known as 'social business', that has foundations in an open, shared participation that results in high levels of shared business value. (Hinchcliffe & Kim, 2012: 132). Since some specific cultural foundations are essential for the emergence of new, more empowered internal communications that is the focus of my thesis, the first objective is to identify what those cultural factors are:

Objective 1: To map out cultural attributes required from an organisation to become a social business with high levels of employee participation.

As will be discussed in the literature review, one of the main factors in building a social business is the way in which communication and information sharing

takes places. These concepts have been revolutionised by the introduction of social media, or what will be called as 'social technologies' in my thesis. Interactivity aided by technology is strengthened in a way that brings electronic communication closer to the qualities of traditional communication (Sorensen & Skouby, 2008). Web 2.0 can be regarded as the ideological and technological foundation to new technologies (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Morrison, 2009), while 'user generated content' (USG) can be seen as the sum of all ways in which people make use of new media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). However, if social networking sites have established their place in people's private lives, the case is very different with social networking technology use inside organisations. Over the past couple of years companies have started to recognise the potential of social technologies and decision makers are trying to identify ways in which firms can make profitable use of Web 2.0 applications (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) in interacting with existing customers, maintaining corporate image or reaching out new markets and audiences (Hearn et al., 2008). But when it comes to using social networking technologies inside organisations, few business leaders understand what value can be created from a facebook-like status updates within the enterprise. (Li, 2012)

As will be pointed out, social technologies have in fact a great potential to drastically transform traditional inter-company hierarchies and communications by blurring existing power relationships between executives, management and employees resulting in whole new levels of employee empowerment and engagement. As a consequent, even if the objectives and processes still remain somewhat unclear (Hinchcliffe & Kim 2012: 128-129), social technologies, and Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) in more particular, are becoming more strategic business discussions with the aim of creating successful social businesses (Bishop 2011). In a McKinsey Global Institute research report (2012) social technologies are discussed as a way for anyone within a group to access and consume content or information. They include technologies that also have been described as 'social media', 'Web 2.0', and 'collaboration tools'. In the report it is argued that that two-thirds of the value creation opportunity afforded by social technologies lies in improving communications and collaboration within and

across enterprises. Social technologies can enable organisations to become fully networked enterprises, both a technical and in a behavioral sense. (McKinsey 2012: 3-4) ESNs, in other hand, have been defined as a set of technologies that creates business value by connecting the members *within* an organization through profiles, updates and notifications (Lin et al., 2012). For this reason I will use the terms social technologies and ESN in slightly different meanings in this study. By ESN I refer specifically to technical applications used within organisations, while social technologies mean a wider communication phenomenon that encompasses both internal and external activities supporting the formation of a social business. The second objective of the thesis deals with the concept of ESN, discussing its role in supporting the development of more engaged and participatory work culture:

Objective 2: To understand the value potential of Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) in building an engaged social business with improved inter-company communications practices.

Although the potential of social technologies, or ESNs, in internal communications and employee empowerment is generally acknowledged, companies are struggling to make it work for them (Lin et al., 2012; Healey, 2012). As my research will show, there are plenty of reasons for the confusion and uncertainty. Most of them are related to an unbalanced attention to the technological issues over the interpersonal ones (Lin et al. 2012; Kotter & Cohen, 2012) and the lack of a compelling purpose for using a collaboration tool. At the present time, there are many more questions than answers with respect to the best ways in which an enterprise should integrate, or adapt to, the relatively new phenomenon of social technologies. The third objective of the thesis focuses on these challenges and limitations:

Objective 3: To identify potential challenges and limitations organisations should be aware of when formulating an ESN strategy and implementation plan.

The aim of the first three research objectives is to create a theoretical foundation for the empirical part of the thesis, which seeks to build an ESN strategy

and implementation plan for my case study company, a NEMO project partner, looking to aid their internal communications practices and employee empowerment through a social technology tool. The research is conducted as part of a wider NEMO project framework with the aim to identify business value potential in negative emotions. Therefore, the last objective of my thesis can be formulated as follows:

Objective 4: To create an ESN strategy and ideas for implementation most suited for the case company based on the findings through empirical research. The aim with this is also to understand and communicate how the case company's current challenges could be turned into business value with the help of an ESN.

1.2 NEMO project

Negative emotions are often seen as a burden in business and therefore a common practice is an attempt to avoid them. This is natural considering the fact that positive emotions are known to have a positive impact on business processes. It is easier to maintain a relationship with happy customers and therefore it is understandable that companies have focused on creating positive emotions and experiences within their clientele. The NEMO project focuses on the value creation potential of negative emotions. Its founding principle is that by only focusing on the positive emotions, or by not being able to deal with negative emotions in a constructive way, companies are missing out on a considerable business value potential. In the NEMO project negative emotions are seen as a potential, not a threat.

NEMO is being carried during 2014-2015 as a joint project between Turku University of Applied Sciences, Turku School of Economics and Tampere University of Technology. The project consists of three sub areas that each contain topic area specific case studies: "Opportunities in Tears" – Negative and conflicting emotions in customer interface (Turku School of Economics), "Intangible Liabilities or Assets?" – Negative emotions, liabilities or assets? (Tampere University of Technology), "Wake Up and Smell the Coffee!" – Social media strategies for

turning negative emotions into business value (Turku University of Applied Sciences). Each topic area consists of two interlinked parts: i) theoretical part that builds understanding around different phenomena by analysing and utilising real life experiences from the NEMO partner companies. The aim is to identify the value potential of negative and conflicting emotions ii) in an empirical part the new understanding is put into practice. The aim is to create new practices and tools that can be used and adapted into wider business contexts. In order to gain thorough understanding of the different phenomena, various theoretical perspectives are utilised in the NEMO project. The foundations lay in complexity theory, knowledge management, management of intangible assets, open and customer focused innovations, service science, technology aided communications, psychology of emotions, sociology of emotions and consumer behaviour analysis. The aim is to create new, cross-disciplinary understanding of the business value potential of negative emotions.

There are approximately 20 partner companies of different sizes represented in the NEMO project. Both consumer and business segments, as well as service and operational areas are represented. Industries cover food and grocery, IT, finance, medical, private health service, construction, consulting, communications, design and healthcare. The project builds on the themes covered in the TEKES funded *Fiiliksestä fyrkkaa* –programme (Money from emotions) *"Tunteella edelläkävijäksi"* ("Pioneers with emotions") and *"Liiketoimintamallit aineettomassa arvonnluonnissa"* ("Business models in intangible value creation"). (Source: NEMO research plan 2013)

In the next sub chapter I will explain how my thesis is linked to the wider NEMO project framework by introducing my case company and their assignment to Turku University of Applied Sciences with regards to NEMO.

1.3 The Case Company

As part of the NEMO project on generating business value from negative emotions, my case company has requested a practical social media tool to bridge

the gap between employees and management and to improve internal communications. The case company operates in the food sector across Finland and the northern Baltics region. The company currently employs 770 people in total.

The need for a new internal communications tool and practice arises from a situation where the company has been going through a series of organisational and structural changes that have had a practical and emotional effect on personnel at all levels of the organisation. Communication around complex issues and organisational changes, however, is often problematic resulting in confusion and motivational challenges within employees. Traditional top-to-bottom crisis communication is not enough in these circumstances – it is important to provide employees a channel for voicing their concerns and ideas in an open manner. The need for new ways of empowering employees and ways of operating been emphasised and acknowledged across all levels of my case company, as the empirical data in the study will highlight.

There are various sectors within the company and, in order to map out the focus for the study, an initial consultation was held during spring 2014, where one of the company directors, a HR Specialist as well as the Production Manager were present. In the consultation the company's current challenges were briefly discussed and the idea of social technologies and ESN introduced. As a result of the discussion, it was acknowledged that a tool for improving internal company communication would be beneficial. Also it was identified that the Food Business sector, employing 692 out of the total 770 employees, and furthermore, the largest site within the Food Business Sector, employing 205 people out of total 692, would be used as a pilot for the study. In addition, what came up in the discussion was that the factory workers within the Food Sector would be the focus of the study when designing and implementing the new communications approach. Currently there are 487 people working in production units, out of which 125 are based in pilot site of the study. This immediately put a new interesting spin in my study for the following reasons;

- Current literature on the topic of social technologies and specifically on ESN has mainly focused on office workers.
- The use of social technologies and ESN by default requires access to a device connected to internet, which in the case of production workers is not always the case and therefore practicalities around the new approach would need to be navigated accordingly.

The aim of the study is to map out the exact internal communication needs of the case company in the light of their current situation, based on which an ESN tool is introduced for implementation. As will be shown, social technologies, if implemented and executed in a meaningful way, offer an efficient channel for employee empowerment that has potential not only to aid internal relations but also to positively influence the company bottom line. Potentially they can generate a real win-win situation where employees gain a new way to express their concerns and ideas making them feel more empowered and appreciated. Benefits for the management include new ways of connecting with the staff as well as new ways of making ideas distributed and understood. As a result the company as a whole benefits through increased employee engagement and loyalty, improved sense of welfare and increased productivity.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The thesis consists of six Chapters. First Chapter lays out the topic and research objectives as well as introduces the case company and the NEMO project, which provides the framework for the study.

Chapter 2, Literature Review, covers various theories and perspectives around the concepts of social business, internal communications, transparent company culture, knowledge sharing, employee engagement, social technologies and the value propositions as well as challenges of Enterprise Social Networks (ESNs). Also ideas for successful ESN strategy formulation and implementation are discussed from a theoretical perspective.

Research Methodology is laid out in Chapter 3. The process of gathering empirical data has been a multi-step process consisting of five independent, yet inter-linked phases where each step has provided direction and focus for the next;

1. Initial video consultation with a company director, HR Specialist and a Production Manager to introduce the topic and to establish framework and focus for the study.
2. On-site observation at the Production line and face-to-face consultation with the HR Specialist and Production Manager to gain further understanding of the situation and challenges as well as possibilities for the study.
3. Semi-structured interviews with HR Specialist and Production Manager to further investigate the topics and ideas raised during the initial consultations and on-site observation.
4. Semi-structured interviews with a production line foreman & a production line worker to test ideas from the initial consultation and interviews with the HR Specialist and Production Manager and also to gain new understanding from the production perspective.
5. Meeting with the HR Specialist to go through results from an in-company Employee Welfare Survey carried out in 2014. These results enabled me to reflect findings from the interviews and as it turned out, for the large part concerns and ideas discussed in the interviews were in line with the results of the Welfare Survey providing further support for my study.

In Chapter 4 findings from empirical data gathered is layed out and analysed.

Chapter 5 covers the last research objective of the study; to create a strategy for ESN implementation for the case company, based on theoretical framework and empirical data gathered. ESN strategy build out and implementation plan follows main topic areas;

- Vision formation. What does the case company want to achieve with an ESN?

- Linking ESN goals to business goals. What is the business value of an ESN for the case company? What are the metrics needed to measure the success of an ESN?
- Assessment of current company situation and culture. What are the building blocks for the new initiative? Does the existing culture support it?
- Outlining practical measures that are needed to turn a company into a 'social business'. What are the rules of 'working social' – both from the perspective of employees and the management?
- Selling the idea to the employees. What practical measures are needed to sell the idea? How to persuade employees on the benefits of the new approach? Who should be in charge of the implementation process?
- NEMO reflections. Ideas on the value potential of the negative or conflict-ing emotions that have been present at the case company throughout the organisational changes and how an ESN could be used to help turn those negative emotions into an opportunity to generate value.

Chapter 6 pulls all strings together. Research summary covers general reflections and practical implications of the project. Also limitations of the study as well as suggestions for further research are briefly discussed.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Business

The meaning for the concept of 'social business' is still evolving as practice itself evolves. However, there does appear to be some convergence in identifying important core principles of social business. (Weinberg et al., 2013) Hinchliffe & Kim (2012: 22-32) define social business as "open, shared participation that results in high levels of shared business value". They argue that fundamental principles of social business can be pressed into three basic ideas: anyone can participate, shared value is created by default through what is called the "network effect" and that even if participation and contribution are made by individuals, the goal in social business is always about productive shared business outcomes. Kim (2009) states that "We need to improve...the way we work and connect with co-workers, customers, suppliers, shareholders, and other system participants". Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) are on the same line of thinking by arguing that "It's all about participation, sharing, and collaboration." Kiron et al. (2012) outline that the term social business can be used to refer either to activities, a phenomenon or trend or a type of organisation.

Using the term 'social' in conjunction with 'business' can cause a mix of reactions. Critics observe that every organisation is already social in some way, so it is not clear what the new term adds. Another objection is that 'social' activities are seen as unproductive, ie not business-critical. On the other hand, advocates have embraced the term, asserting that social business fulfills the basic human need to connect with others. (Kiron et al., 2012) It is important to note that the term 'social business' (SB) is also used in a very different context. For example Rahman & Hussein (2012) discuss social business as providing an access to the poor and the under-privileged to the economic opportunities by complementing the objectives of profit making business and non-profit agencies. These definitions of 'social good' should not be confused with how I refer to the concept of social business in my thesis.

Some definitions of the concept of social business highlight the role of social technologies as a vehicle for the transformation to take place. For example IBM (2013) states that an important part of becoming a social business is recognising that “social business technologies help people connect, communicate and share information”. Also Deloitte highlights “social tools that drive collaboration and information sharing across the enterprise and integrate social data into operational processes” (see Kiron et al. 2013). Regardless of the emphasis, what is clear with all definitions is that transforming an organisation into a social business requires a considerable change in the way we think about business and how it gets done. Common themes include collaboration, information sharing, engagement throughout the enterprise, and, as many argue, the use of social and collaborative technologies. (Kiron et al., 2013)

Furthermore, the various definitions of social business suggest that a community process is beneficial for guiding a firm in becoming a social business. Weinberg et al. (2013) say that based on recent theorising, they see the role of collaborative community as “a key characteristic of social business”. But what does social business mean for the workforce in practice? What are the elements of organisational culture that are at play when going down the path to become social business, ie building a collaborative work community? Following the lines of Weinberg et al. (2013), I will review participatory internal communications, transparency and knowledge sharing as the key elements in building an engaged social business that has the potential to not only improve business practices but essentially to aid company profitability.

2.1.1 Internal Communications

Most of the cultural factors supporting a social business boil down to internal communications and how they are organised and supported. Therefore the concept requires some further clarification.

Broadly speaking, communications can be divided into external and internal communications. External communications refer to customers and other stake-

holders whereas internal communications deals with inter-company interactions and information flow (Juholin, 1999) although the two concepts are becoming increasingly blurred (Garcia-Morales, 2011). Internal communications have been studied in different domains therefore lacking common terminology, which makes it difficult to establish a common cognitive ground (Damonte-Sipponen, 2013). Welch and Jackson (2007: 183) focus on the strategic perspective defining internal communications as “the strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders at all levels within organizations.” According to Argenti (1996), internal communications have the role of creating an atmosphere of respect for all employees. Soda & Zaheer (2012) emphasise the importance of a holistic view on the both informal and formal elements of an organisation. Åberg (1997) has divided the purpose of internal communications into five categories; supporting activities within a work community, providing a profile for an organisation, information flow, aiding commitment and social interaction. All the categories aim to answer questions on how internal communications can be used to support and improve workplace practices, interaction and welfare. Also Juholin (1999) sees internal communications as a combination of information and knowledge flows as well as the concepts of community, shared experiences and company culture. According to him, internal communications can be seen as a part of inter-company interaction and empowerment, information flow and exchange, company atmosphere, motivation, commitment and building a company brand. (Juholin, 1999) Kalla (2008) has introduced the term integrated internal communications by which she means that communication skills should be combined with an understanding of the business and cultural environment. Kalla includes in the concept of integrated internal communications the processes of business communication, organisational communication, management communication and corporate communication. Kalla’s definition is suitable also for this study, since social technologies most likely have touch points with various internal communication processes.

One of the aims of this thesis is to map out the elements of internal communications that are needed to support the development of a social business. Based on the literature on the topic, two-way participatory communications is essential.

2.1.2 Two-way Communications

In recent years a significant shift from a traditional top-down to an increasingly adopted two-way communication has taken place. In fact, it is widely agreed that two-way communication is crucial to successful internal communications in today's complex work life (Garcia-Morales, 2011). Smythe (2004) criticizes models of internal communications where the aim is to make employees adopt ideas, formed strategies and visions of top management as out-dated. This 'command-and-control' style of management does not take into account the changes in attitudes of employees, caused by the changing working life.

Two-way communication can be seen as beneficial for both the management and the employees. For example Garcia-Morales et al. (2011) argue that two-way communication increases the likelihood that members of an organisation will be satisfied with their individual jobs and consequently with the organisation as a whole. Tourish and Hargie (2004) have studied vertical two-way feedback between organisations' employees and their management. They claim that it is crucial for the management to receive feedback from the personnel, since this way the managers can get a more accurate picture about both the organisation and their own performance. Holtzhausen (2000) proposes that two-way communication should be defined as dissidence. It gives people the freedom to disagree in situations that they find unjust, instead of pushing towards incorrect compromises. According to Holtzhausen, dissidence helps to achieve new ideas and solutions that can lead to real change.

Also Dundon et al. (2004) discuss 'employee voice' as extending beyond employee complaints and contributing positively to an organisation. They have presented an analytical framework that identifies principal ideas connected to employee voice as a positive force. They refer to these ideas as 'purposes' of voice:

1. Articulation of individual dissatisfaction. Voice mechanisms can be effectively used to overcome dissatisfaction and build employee commitment. The extent to

which management addresses issues and how well they are dealt with determines whether employees continue using their voice.

2. Contribution to management decision making. Voice mechanisms do not only give employees the opportunity to influence decision making but also gives them an insight into the rationale for management's decisions and the methods by which those decisions are made. By understanding the logic behind decision making employees are more likely to be co-operative even on challenging matters.

3. Demonstration of partnership, or mutuality and cooperative. This purpose is accomplished when employees perceive themselves as partners in the organisation and are proud to be its defenders and promoters. (Dundon et al., 2004)

Their framework also suggests various organisational mechanisms that can enable employee voice: a formal means of upward communication such as complaints to managers, open door policy, suggestion systems and attitude surveys, joint consultation such as problem solving groups, quality circles and two-way communication systems such as grievance systems and technology aided internal communications systems. (Miles & Mangove 2013)

2.1.3 Knowledge-sharing

A shift from a production orientation to a networked structure within organisations, value is created increasingly through collaboration and the generation and sharing of knowledge as opposed to material products (Vargo and Lusch 2004). Knowledge is defined by Davenport (1999) as a set of experiences, values, skills and information that provides a frame for combination and evaluation of information and new experiences. He suggests that knowledge management has two distinctive tasks: to facilitate the creation of new knowledge and to manage the way people share and apply it.

There are two types of knowledge: explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge can be described as what can be embodied in a code or a lan-

guage and as a consequence it can be verbalised and communicated, processed, transmitted and stored relatively easily. (Hernández Sánchez et al., 2013) In contrast, tacit knowledge is personal and hard to formalise. It is rooted in action, procedures, commitment, values and emotions. Tacit knowledge is acquired by sharing experiences, by observation and imitation. (Kikoski, 2004) Tacit and explicit knowledge are complementary; knowledge is created through interactions between tacit and explicit knowledge and not from either tacit or explicit knowledge alone (Hernández Sánchez et al., 2013). According to Kikoski (2004), competitive advantage will only be gained if companies value their tacit knowledge.

However, the majority of medium to large-sized companies still remain divided by function, organisational unit and geographic location, or what Leistner (2012) calls organisational silos. Top down, hierarchical structures challenge the flow of information and the sharing of knowledge within companies making it complicated for employees to connect, share and support each other through collaboration. (Weinberg et al. 2013) Zack (1999), for example, calls for a company culture that supports open access to relevant knowledge and expertise within the firm. According to him it is important to enable platforms that allow employees from different disciplines and levels of organisation to work together. These platforms can be used to support the exchange of both formal and informal knowledge.

In addition to having great potential for explicit information exchange, it is the ability to share informal, or tacit knowledge, that makes social technologies so relevant for this study.

2.1.4 Transparency

Transparency is another term that lends itself to many definitions. According to Gebler (2012: 147) the three most commonly used ones in a business context are:

1. Lack of hidden agendas and conditions, accompanied by the availability of full information required for collaboration, co-operation and collective decision-making.
2. Minimum degree of disclosure to which agreements and business practices are open to all for verification.
3. Essential condition for a free and open exchange whereby the rules and reasons behind regulatory measures are fair and clear to all participants.

In many ways, transparency can be seen as a process of building a company culture that allows for greater performance of individuals. However, since transparency is not a cultural attribute that leaders can impose at will, how can it be translated into specific behaviours that are manageable in practice? Gebler (2012) suggests that companies should enforce their principles, not only standards to their employees. This is because principles translate into values, which people respond to better as opposed to rules. Also companies should create an atmosphere where questions can be raised. For employees to trust in transparency, they must feel safe physically, financially and emotionally. There cannot be fear of raising difficult issues or admitting mistakes. Transparency is also built on respect; employees must feel they have a personal relationship with their leaders. Gebler goes on to argue that transparency requires leaders not becoming isolated losing touch with their employees' issues, challenges and bottom-up feedback. Further, once problems are identified, they have to be acted upon. In short, embodying transparency means assessing the weakest links in the relationship chain that prevents the truth to be told or heard and systematically developing ways to close those gaps. (Gebler 2012: 159-169)

However, with all its promised benefits, transparency does not come without dilemmas or contradictions. Even if leaders acknowledge the importance of increased openness, they would most probably wonder how it is possible to be transparent while still running a tight ship. Li discusses this in her book *Open Leadership* pointing out that it is not a matter of *giving up* control but of *shifting* control in new ways. (Li 2010: 21) This will be discussed in more detail in relation to social technologies and ESNs.

2.1.5 Engaged Work Community

All of the concepts discussed – two-way internal company communications, knowledge sharing and transparency – are the building blocks, or a foundation for a successful social business. They all lend to same principles of integrity, commitment and transparency that, according to Gebler, are the three “power values” leading to an empowered and engaged organisation. (Gebler 2012) But what is meant exactly by an engaged organisation and what are the value propositions in achieving a company culture that support such an organisation?

It seems almost self-evident that there are many benefits of having an engaged workforce. As Rice, Marlow and Masarech (2012) point out, there are plenty of studies that explain the importance of an engaged workforce from both company external and internal perspective. The benefits from an inter-company point of view they list as follows: higher productivity, more discretionary effort, lower turnover, reduced absenteeism and more resilience to change, which all add to higher profitability. In short, an engaged workforce is a real win-win situation; individuals get what they want from their job, and the organisation gets what they need from its employees. However, even if engagement is critical to business success, the definitions of the term are rather disparate. Mainly, they seem to vary in the importance that they place to the individual as opposed to the organisation in creating engagement. Recent practice has situated the drivers of engagement across this spectrum, from within the psyche of the individual employee to focusing mainly on the actions and investments the organisation makes to support engagement (CIPD Report 2013). Rise, Marlow and Masarech (2012: 4) define engagement as follows:

“Full employee engagement represents an alignment of maximum satisfaction for the individual with maximum contribution for the organization.” (Rise, Marlow & Masarech 2012:4)

According to Gebler, high-performing cultures have the lowest amount of friction among their core elements: principles, goals and standards. The key to this is alignment; making sure the interactions between commitment, integrity and transparency are not at odds with each other. (Gebler 2012: 171) Rice, Marlow

and Masarech (2012) stress the importance of recognising people as individuals. They talk about “the individualised equation” saying that managers need to be aware of the variables that impact each individual's source of engagement. Gebler discusses employees’ awareness levels and claims that an atmosphere of trust where everyone has a voice is what increases the chances of getting people up in the awareness levels. One of the key points is that the higher up on the hierarchy people are, the more self-motivating they become. (Gebler 2012: 67-78)

However, when discussing the cultural building blocks for a social business, it is important to remember that changes in company culture nor processes do not happen overnight. As Weinberg et al. (2013) point out, becoming social is dynamic and a never-ending process. Where should companies start then their journey into a more transparent and engaged social work place?

Community Roundtable (CR), an online forum to help companies become social, has created a helpful tool, a Community Maturity Model (CMM) to help organisations evaluate their level of social maturity and further, to plan and assess the performance of community and social business initiatives (see Figure 1.)

The model articulates two concepts required to advance the social maturity. First, it defines competencies that are needed and secondly, it articulates how these competencies progress from hierarchical organizations to those have in a more networked community based model.

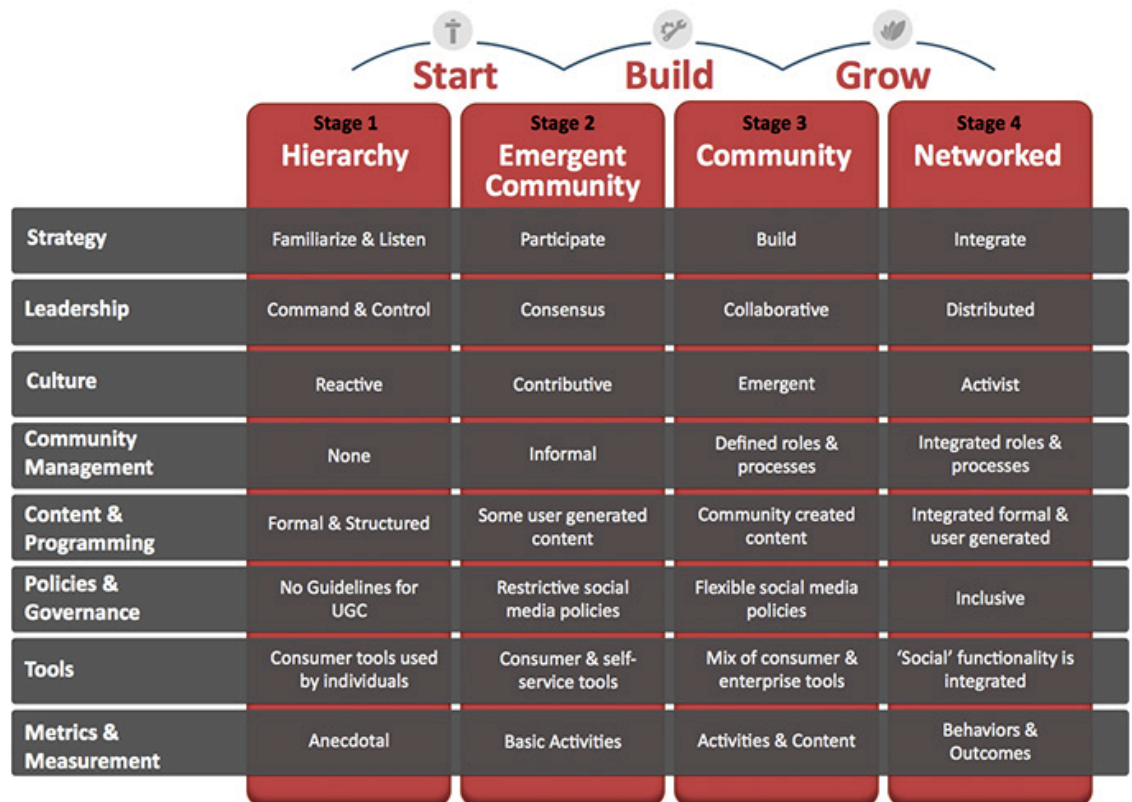


Figure 1. Community Maturity Model. Source: www.communityroundtable.com.

So, what approaches or tools can companies adopt to achieve an engaged culture that has potential to climb up in the Community Maturity Model ladder or, in other words, become a social business?

2.2 Social Technologies

Even if the ideas and principles of social business can work in many contexts, such as email, in-person work activities and so forth, they seem to work best in social technologies. (Hinchcliffe & Kim 2012: 23) Social software is the enabler of a cultural shift and business process changes that must take place in order to transform a company into a social business (IDC executive 2011).

McKinsey Global Institute defines 'Social technologies' as the products and services that enable social interactions in the digital realm, and thus allow people to connect and interact virtually. These are information technologies that pro-

vide distributed rights to communicate, and add, modify, or consume content. Social technologies allow anyone within a group to access and consume content or information. They include technologies that also have been described as 'social media', 'Web 2.0', and 'collaboration tools' (McKinsey 2012: 4). So why are these new technologies called *social*? Leistner argues it is the focus on the lasting social connection, a permanent link between people. Connections are not built by simply transmitting personal data; they work on a deeper level to include all the defining elements of people as social beings. Social technologies provide a sphere where interacting with people is almost like in real life. (Leistner 2012)

"I believe that social technologies have the power to transform the way we live and work. So why should we have anything less than transformation in mind when putting social technologies to use?" (Kim, 2009)

Social technologies, combined with data analysis and mobile technologies are significantly enhancing an organisation's ability to be responsive to market changes. In the near future, companies utilising enterprise social software will be able to spot trends, provide information to their employees in context, and leverage the wisdom of the organisation to rapidly complete tasks and surface previously hidden pieces of valuable information. (Fidelman 2013) They can be used for a variety of relevant purposes, such as creating conversations and access to information and knowledge as well as managing content that reflects organisational beliefs and values. They have a potential to break down hierarchies and create opportunities for people, who might be reluctant in offline settings, to contribute. (Qureshi and Zigurs, 2001)

They may also be used boost an ethic of contribution by helping everyone become aware of their interdependence (Simula and Vuori, 2012). Social technologies support processes of coordination as well as the ownership and involvement called for in collaborative community. Processes can easily be maintained, refined and updated through social technologies and new teams can more easily be incorporated into the structure as they develop. Further, they allow discussions of change and impact throughout an organisation, rather than in isolation. Social technology taps into familiar, basic sociological patterns and behaviors -

sharing information with members of the family or community, telling stories, comparing experiences and social status with others, embracing stories by people with whom we desire to build relations, forming groups, and defining relationships to others. (McKinsey 2012: 5) Such collaborations or conversations facilitate a shared consciousness and environment of trust (Weinberg et al., 2013).

A McKinsey Global Institute Report claims that social technologies, when used within and across enterprises, have the potential to raise the productivity of the high-skill knowledge workers that are critical to performance and growth in the 21st century by 20 to 25 percent. (McKinsey, 2012) So, how do social technologies facilitate and support the emergence of engaged work communities? The term used for specifically describing networking platforms in organisations is Enterprise Social Network (ESN). I will now move on to discuss them in more detail.

2.2.1 Enterprise Social Network (ESN)

Altimeter Group defines Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) as:

"A set of technologies that creates business value by connecting the members of an organization through profiles, updates, and notifications." (Li, 2012)

Altimeter has also provided a useful table (See Figure 2) to highlight the similarities and differences of consumer social networks and Enterprise Social Networks:

	Public Social Network	Enterprise Social Network
People Profiles	Who you are, where you went to school, interests.	Similar to public networks, but also lists work-related associations and expertise (teams, projects, skills).
Object Profiles	Places and brands also have identifies and activity streams.	Business objects (client accounts, documents, expense reports) also have activity streams associated with them.
Updates and Activity Streams	Created by the person. Can also include chats, video, group messaging, and event planning.	Similar, created by people interacting with each other, as well as business objects and enterprise systems.
Notifications	People can completely control from whom they get updates.	Some updates may be required because of work associations, updates from the CEO.
Relationships	Two-way relationships, as well as one-way follow/subscribe, always controlled by the person.	Similar, but relationships may be predetermined because of work associations (departments, team, project, location).
Permissions and Privacy	The nature of relationships dictate permissions, so greater care must be taken to make sure that private information stays within the right circles.	Employees understand that all updates can be seen by their employer; hence privacy becomes less of an issue. Permissions become a greater concern in terms of who has permission to see what information.

Figure 2. Differences and similarities of public and Enterprise Social Networks. Source: Altimeter Group

Fascette (2013) argues that we have seen a cultural shift take place as user behavior moves from the consumer space into the workplace. There is a different set of expectations about the way employees want to interact based on what they have learned on social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. This suggests a fundamental change in the way we work. Fascette goes on to argue that the 'network effect' helps create a level of transparency and engagement across broad employee populations. ESNs provide the foundation to connect employees to each other and to data and content solutions, to embed social capabilities into existing tools such as email systems, and to create a wholly new user experience.

Having an idea of their benefits, a growing number of companies are nowadays launching internal ESN sites to encourage employees to share both professional and personal information with each other (Brandel, 2008). These sites are built with commercial tools and often customised for the company, and they

usually share a core set of features that can also be found on external social networking sites (Wu et al., 2010). However, even if many companies have started to integrate ESN practices into their internal communications, many are yet to realise the actual business benefits related to them (Culnan 2010).

If ESNs support the fundamental human behavior to seek identity and connectedness through affiliations with other individuals and groups that share their characteristics, interests, or beliefs, what business value propositions do they hold?

2.2.2 Value Propositions of ESN

Morgan (2012) lists challenges within many organisations today as follows: too much time spent in email and searching for information, poor communication across departments and geographies, lack of engagement and passion about the work one is doing, lack of growth and ability to keep learning, inability to share or transfer knowledge that can benefit others, inability to form communities of interest and/or passion, content duplication, difficulty in finding information and keeping that information up to date (Morgan 2012). These are exactly the type of challenges that companies try to address and solve with the help of an ESN.

Weinberg et al. (2013) divide the benefits of an ESN in two areas; instrumental (generation of knowledge, ideas, solutions) and social (support, guidance and a sense of belonging). A McKinsey Global Institute research found that two-thirds of the value creation opportunity afforded by social technologies, and ESNs, lies in improving communications and collaboration within and across enterprises enabling organisations to become fully networked. (McKinsey 2012: 3) They estimate that total email use by interaction workers could be reduced by 25 percent and information searching time by as much as 35 percent. (McKinsey 2012: 11) Also Lundy (2012) discusses ESNs in terms of their knowledge sharing ability saying that people often call social networks “the new digital water coolers”. Social networks not only encourage distributed content creation, they

stimulate multiple forms of collaboration by generating a greater sense of involvement and community. Workers in a thriving social network will interact more with a wider circle of collaborators, participate in more activities with more enthusiasm, and share more knowledge. Social networks let workers create, share and update information faster and more effectively. A well-run intranet can help workers update content, but the ESN approach eliminates a layer of postings and approvals while allowing others to rate content and contribute comments. Activity streams, wall postings and other ESN mechanisms can inform participants of content updates and changes faster than traditional notifications. ESNs let people find and use more information faster, not only because more information is available, but also because categorisation, tagging and taxonomy tools help them find the right information. (Lundy, 2012) Also, for new employees it is easier to ask advice in an ESN, which makes it a great training tool (Leistner 2012: 28). IDC Executive Brief (2011) lays out the importance of ESNs listing the benefits as follows:

- More transparency and agility to respond to positive, negative, or competitive events due to a flattened organisation.
- Higher productivity and satisfaction among employees by providing the tools to collaborate and communicate effectively, deliver faster access to information, highlight professional achievements, contribute opinions, and promote expertise.
- Accelerated innovation through harnessing ideas and feedback from employees to improve company strategy or bring new products and services to market.
- Increased efficiency by contributing, following, tracking, and recommending the people, content, data, and conversations pertinent to individuals' interests and/or roles.
- Better visibility into organisational dynamics for management to understand the daily activities, successes, and possible challenges being faced.

- Less duplication and better reusability of work through enhanced organisational connectedness and creation of a searchable archive of employee knowledge.

Leistner discusses ESNs in the context of knowledge management and how they function as great platforms for scaling stories. People's posts are not just bits of information but serve as a kind of narrative. Even if a post is not an extensive narrative description of events, it still often resembles that of storytelling. This ability to 'package' information in a narrative form, Leistner argues, is the key in knowledge flow management these days where everyone is awash with data. Storytelling taps into the primary way we used to transfer and adopt knowledge before modern technology offered additional means and channels. Leistner also refers to ESNs as global watercoolers that offer a sphere for both formal and informal information exchange across departments and countries to take place. (Leistner, 2012: 30-31)

Altimeter Group has divided business value drivers of ESNs in four categories:

Encourage Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates two-way dialog • Makes business personal • Reduces power distance to leaders • Connects globally, person by person • Forms private groups
Capture Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify expertise • Avoid duplication and have better coordination • Transfer knowledge • Improve best practices
Enable Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solve problems faster and better • Bring outsiders in • Streamline processes
Empower People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give employees a voice • Make meaningful contributions and innovations • Increase engagement, satisfaction, and retention

Figure 3. Business value drivers of ESNs. Source: Altimeter Group.

2.2.3 Choice of Different ESNs

There is a host of different Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) available – Yammer, Tibbr, Jive, Slack, Convo and Kaltura, just to name a few. It is of course decided by the case company themselves which one they would choose but as a suggestion Yammer would be choice to consider. It was founded in 2008 is now part of the Microsoft Office Division. (Yammer website) The reason why Yammer is suggested as the ESN tool for the case company is the fact that a signup for the basic network is free – this way the implementation carries lowered risk to begin with. If everything goes to the plan and Yammer is adopted as part of the day-to-day running of the business, there is a possibility to upgrade the application to a more premium tailor-made version at a later stage.

Yammer is accessed privately and securely in the cloud. Data is backed-up and protected and only employees – or teams in the case of the case company of this study - with a verified company email address can access data in a given company's network. (Bishop, 2011) Yammer is built around the same principles as most social networking sites, such as Facebook. Therefore it is easy to use for employee who are used to using social media in their free time. The advantage of Yammer is its simplicity; simple interface, groups and content categorisation, security, a good set of statistics, flexibility to grow with the needs of users, intergration capabilities and mobile access. (Leistner 2012: 120-122).

Via Yammer it is possible to connect everyone within a company to improve internal communications. Employees, managers and executives can participate in two-way dialogues, aiding engagement throughout the organisation. The idea is to give everyone a voice, create opportunities beyond job description and share ideas. Yammer is built around open communication – conversations only happen in private when they need to and everyone benefits from shared information. Another benefit of Yammer, or any ENS, is that they enable public praise of employees who are performing well. Some of the features available in Yammer include: microblogging, groups, topics with tags, following, notifications, profiles, company directory, private messages, file sharing, communities,

knowledge base, mobile access as well as various applications and possibility to intergrate with other software. (Yammer website) Yammer can nowadays even be harnessed for tracking employees' emotions with a new emotion recognition technology (Simonete, 2012). However, it would be a study topic on its own to analyse the implications for this type of use of an ESN.

Despite the numerous benefits of ESN, there are also some challenges that need to be taken into account when planning for the implementation process. I will discuss these in more detail in the following sub chapter.

2.2.4 Potential Challenges of ESN

With any ESN tool it is important to remember that the value is derived from the content and not from the technology or system per se. Technology provides merely tools for communication. (Levy, 2009) Also O'Kane et al. (2004) underline that technology alone is not sufficient to create progress, but that it offers new opportunities that need to be properly harnessed if benefits are to be seen. Chui et al. (2009) suggest that participatory technologies have the highest potential for success when they are incorporated into the daily workflow of people. Furthermore, as is pointed out in McKinsey Global Institute report (2012), for social technologies to deliver their potential economic benefits, enterprises must be open to information sharing and create cultures of trust and cooperation.

So, even if there are many benefits to using ESNs in business, there are also plenty of challenges. An IDC survey (2011) results indicate that getting people to participate and finding the time to use another application or tool are the top two concerns associated with adopting social software from the employees perspective. Also Leistner (2012) brings up the perceived lack of time as one of the top barriers for ESN adoption. However, as he points out, ESN is not and should not be seen as a completely new add-on to the existing channel portfolio as its purpose is to replace some of the old channels. The key word is integration – previous communication channels, such as email and instant messaging

should be well integrated with the new ESN in order to keep the system/ multiple systems as simple as possible.

Any technology change and organisational transformation can be challenging for a number of reasons, but because social software changes the fundamental way people interact in the organisation and the organisation's culture itself, it can meet with varying levels of resistance. An individual may be hesitant to participate in a community or write a post because opinions and content are much harder to take back or delete. According to Skeels and Grudin (2009), ESNs cause more tensions to their users than the non work-related social networks. Different relationships cannot be selectively expressed on different tools in the enterprise because the tools are linked to one another and this tension between professional identity and non-professional identity is brought together. Therefore, tensions can arise in terms of what information to share with whom. (Skeels & Grudin, 2009) In practice there are also different barriers of trust with regards to critical upward feedback (Tourish & Hargie, 2004). In addition to the possible hesitance for open feedback, another barrier in people's minds is what Leistner (2012) calls "unlearning". Certain ways of thinking and acting are deeply embedded into people's behaviour: "We have always done it this way". "This will not work here". According to Leistner, unlearning is not only necessary for the acceptance of the platform itself, but also concerning the discussions that go on in the platform.

Senior management may be hesitant about adoption because an open culture increases exposure and accountability. In fact, a study of Finnish companies as adopters of social media shows that the 'fear of the unknown' may impact on company willingness to adopt social media for business use. (Vuori, 2011) Also Leistner (2012) brings up the fear of losing control of information flows and employee action. However, he points out that with or without social technologies the 'old days' of management are over. Also he emphasises that loosening control does not mean giving up on control and ending up in chaos, rather it means giving up managerial control to enable visible employee engagement, which is monitored by peer pressure and peer control. Fauscette (2013) also discusses

the need to re-consider management structures. In older so-called industrial age businesses, a lot of pressure was put on the middle layer of management to control the flow of information up and down a hierarchical framework. In this new world of the enterprise social network, however, information flows in every direction. Managers need to learn to coach and encourage employees and help them learn, and they need to make sure the right systems and processes are in place to foster the cultural shift. (Fauscette, 2013)

Li (2012) discusses the reasons why ESNs often fail to meet expectations:

1. An initial enthusiasm and usage followed by slow decline – reality of everyday work pushing ESN usage aside causing people returning their old ways of communicating.
2. Adoption of the new system by only some employees or departments.
3. Cultural confusion and lack of executive engagement. How 'personal' should ESNs allowed to be? Li argues that the more non-business freedom people are given, the more they provide business related content too.
4. Lack of social business maturity; despite deployment, lack of understanding and commitment hinder the leverage of ESN.

Li also brings up three, what she calls “Pain Points” of ESNs: lack of metrics resulting in unmeasured business impact or metrics only related to the start up phase, rapidly developing technology platforms creating too many confusing options and lastly integration into existing workflow. (Lee 2012)

Implementing enterprise social tools is not simply a technology challenge but mainly a cultural and behavioral challenge. Changing behavior and culture does not happen quickly, and it does not happen either from the top down or from the bottom up. The reality is that it happens when both of those approaches are aligned to help move the organisation in the right direction. It's something that companies have to change gradually by having a strategy in place. According to Fauscette (2013) the process starts with identifying key stakeholders who can influence behavior with the intent of making it a critical system tied to important

information and activities across the business, particularly among company executives. (Fauscette, 2013) Hincliffe and Kim (2012) discuss the importance of a support function within an organisation that they refer to as "community managers". Their function is to help build and maintain a social business environment resolving problems, providing solutions and training social business skills. This is a notion that plays a key part in the implementation plan of the case company, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

2.2.5 ESN Vision Formulation, Business Goals and KPIs

In order for an ESN initiative to be successful, it is essential to have a strong vision of what would be the goals that includes measures in place to see whether the ESN is generating expected business value. (Leistner 2012: 62) Li (2014) discusses objectives when setting up an ESN strategy. One of the objectives is to identify and prioritise the gaps that an ESN can fill. In reflection to the four ESN value drivers; encourage sharing, capture knowledge, enable action and empower people, what are the gaps that exist at the company and what are the elements that should be focused on when planning for the new initiative. As part of the vision formulation, it is crucial that the goals of an ESN initiative are linked to wider business goals of the company. In other words, what is the business value of an ESN for the case company?

Once a vision and expected business value have been formulated, it is important, as Fidelman (2013) points out, to add ways to measure the success of the new initiative. What are the metrics needed to measure the success of an ESN? Li (2012) claims that ESN metrics should measure gap closing, not engagement. What this means is that it is more important to set metrics that identify how well an ESN fills the value propositions that are set for the tool, whether it was encouraging information sharing or empowering people. This information is more relevant than measuring mere engagement, for example number of posts per user or so forth.

Related to this, also Leistner (2012) makes a distinction between measuring activity and measuring value. Activity measures are useful in for example tracing adoption of an ESN or identifying certain problem areas. They do not usually reveal the cause of the problems but they are good indicators of where to start digging on a more qualitative level. He suggest that good metrics for this are: Number of registered users, number of connections (follower relationships, number of posts (total, per user, per group, per topic etc.), percentage of users posting, percentage of users commenting on other posts and percentage of users reading content. However, the activity metrics do not serve the purpose to map the business value of the system. What is needed, according to him, is a more specific analysis that focuses the business value of a social media tool. It is much harder to measure value and as Leistner points out, in fact many of the companies that have implemented an ESN have not gone beyond measuring activity. So, what are good value measures that companies could utilise? Using qualitative methods, such as questionnaires or surveys to ask employees to estimate the value of their ESN experiences is one way but, according to Leistner, probably not a very effective one only leading to survey fatigue. (Leistner 2012: 140-144) In fact, there are no ready-made solutions for value measurement and there is no point in trying to measure everything. Leistner emphasises the importance of a balanced KPI portfolio that provides a full picture of the entire usage and implications of ESN. (Leistner 2012: 154) Li (2012) suggests that the key KPIs should symbolise some closing gaps between issues in the organisation, which means tying the ESN metrics to the highest-value business metrics within the organisation (Li 2012). These are notions that I will pay attention to when thinking of the wider business goals and metrics that could be used to assess the success of an ESN within the case company.

2.2.6 Rules of Working Social

For any social media tool adoption to be successful, it is also important to outline practical measures that are needed to turn a company into a social busi-

ness. What are the rules of working social, both from the perspective of employees and the management?

Specifically in relation to internal social media, it has been argued that the development of emotional capital, described as “the aggregate feelings of goodwill towards a company and the way it operates”, is a key success factor (Huy and Shipilov 2012: 74). Huy and Shipilov (2012) identify four underlying dimensions, including feelings of authenticity, pride, attachment and fun. Authenticity refers to the perception of employees that what the company management say and say and promise aligns with what they do. Pride implies whether the company values and rewards employees’ contributions in the social media tool, while attachment is the degree of sense of belonging that employees experience for the company. Fun in turn refers to elements of playfulness when experimenting with new routines in the daily jobs. The way in which top managers in companies actively are involved in promoting these elements will determine internal social media success, as opposed to large investments in technology tools (Huy and Shipilov 2012).

Rules, that Leistner (2012) lists as typically needed in a successful ESN training include: 1. Business versus social content 2. Information to make clear that anything that is posted is open (apart from closed groups) 3. Rules on how to use pictures and what kind of pictures are appropriate 4. Guidelines for commenting 5. Any company specific rules. The key is that guidelines are clear, simple and well communicated. (Leistner 2012:87)

Participation from management is essential as it send a number of key messages such as 1. This tool is for everybody 2. Open communication is wanted in this organisation and we want everyone (including us) to learn from each other 3. Knowledge and sharing across all levels counts and is valuable. Negative comments from the leadership team should be limited but neutral and positive comments and personal posts are more than encouraged and can have a greatly positive effect at the launch phase. It is crucial that management participation remains a personal activity – a series of 'ghostwritten' posts are quickly noticed and carry a negative impact. Management need some guidance too to get

started but once it becomes a natural routine in the daily work, they often see the potential of an ESN and become frequent users. (Leistner 2012: 95-96)

2.2.7 Selling the Idea to Employees for Successful Adoption

Li (2010) emphasises that an ESN may be slow in getting off the ground. She further points out that employees will display differing levels of engagement - watching, sharing, commenting, producing, and curating. The majority of employees are likely to be watchers who passively read or observe. This will be the starting point for many employees when new voice mechanisms are initially introduced. Being a watcher does not necessarily mean that employees are not interested; many are simply observing to see if management is truly interested in their voice and willing to respond without retaliation. Curators are at the highest levels of engagement and put much effort in community and discussion board moderation helping make sure that the content is well organized and that people are participating well in the community (Li, 2010: 60-61) The goal for many organisations is to maximize the value of their internal voice mechanisms by progressively moving employees through the various levels of engagement. (Miles and Mangold, 2013)

So how do companies manage the transition from strategy to implementation and further to adoption by the work community so that people can start moving through the various level of engagement?

2.2.8 Community Management

Initiatives do not take off ground by themselves. Visions and strategies can be in place but unless there is someone with ownership over the initiative, in this case the ESN tool, likelihood of success is very limited. The Community Roundtable forum from where the Community Maturity Model is adopted, emphasised the importance of community management and the role of a 'Community Manager'. In their web publication *State of the Community Management 2014* they

define community management as the discipline of enduring productive communities. Depending on the purpose, size, and strategic importance of the community initiative, one or more people usually share community manager's responsibilities that are very varied from training, community engagement to content creation. Often when an organisation starts a community program, community management is not defined, staffed role but is operated by someone as an additional assignment. As communities mature, organisations define the need for community management and its impact on business outcomes. They will formally assign responsibilities – including moderating, developing content, administering the technology, encouraging member engagement, and evangelizing the effort internally – to individuals or entire teams.

In the State of the Community Management 2014 report it is stated that dedicated community managers make a huge difference in "engagement, maturity and ability to measure value" (communityroundtable.com).

3 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I present the various methodology used to gather empirical data throughout the research project. The empiria is composed of both qualitative and quantitative data, drawn from both primary and secondary sources.

Methods used for data collection will be presented in sub-chapter 3.1. The mix of research methods used will be introduced and justified. Sub-chapter 3.2 presents the ways in which collected data has been analysed for the purpose of this study.

3.1 Collection of Data

The study was conducted around a single case for various motives. The main reason is that the need for the study rose from a NEMO partner company requesting a practical tool to aid employee engagement and work welfare. Focusing solely on the case company enabled for a deeper insight into the topic matter. Another reason for the choice to focus on a single case was the fact that a very limited amount of research exists on ESNs, especially in the context of Finnish companies. For this reason, the present study can be considered exploratory in its nature. In fact, the natural advantage of case studies in research is their exploratory nature (Gerring, 2007). Case study as type of research has been defined in several ways. George & Bennett (2005) define it as a study that investigates the properties of a single phenomenon, instance or example. Gerring (2007) defines this phenomenon further by saying that it is spatially limited and observed at a single point of time or over some period of time. The study supports these notions for the pilot case focusing on a single location and one particular unit within it; production. Data was collected during a phase when some major organisational changes were happening representing a phenomenon taking place within a certain period of time, relevant for the purpose of the study.

The following mix of methodology was applied in order to collect the empirical data from the research under exploration:

- On-site observation (primary data)
- Semi-structured interviews (primary data)
- Employee welfare survey (secondary data)

The data gathering was done in a particular order with the aim to build a step-by-step process where findings from one step would guide and support the next. For example initial observation was done with a view of finding out what where the realistic possibilities for a social media tool in a production environment. Based on the findings questions were formulated for management interviews, based on which then questions were further refined for interviews with production representatives. I will cover each data collection method in detail in the sub-chapters to follow, but here is a summary of the stages followed during the data gathering process;

1. Initial video consultation where the Head of Food Business Sector, a HR Specialist and a Production Manager were present took place on 24th April 2014. The aim of the consultation was two-fold; to introduce the topic of ESN and establish whether it was something the case company would be interested in as a form of social media tool. Once this was accomplished the aim was to establish the exact needs and a target group for the new initiative, based on which a focus and framework for the study would be formulated. The outcome of the consultation was that the case company was interested in pursuing the initiative and that it wanted to limit the pilot group to the production workers within the largest unit in the Food Business Sector. Once this was established, some discussion on the practicalities took place, more specifically in how a social media tool could be introduced in an environment where employees do not have personal computers or user accounts. Based on these considerations a face-to-face consultation with the HR Specialist and Production Manager was agreed, upon which I would also have an opportunity to

carry out on-site observation in the production environment with the guidance of one of the team leaders.

2. The on-site observation at the production line and a face-to-face consultation with the HR Specialist as well as the Production Manager took place shortly after the initial video consultation, on 28th of April 2014. The purpose of both the observation and the consultations was to further understand the situation and challenges as well as possibilities for the study, mainly figuring out a way in which we could work around the fact that the production workers do not use personal computers in their work. What would be the limitations and the possibilities of the ESN usage based on this reality? The outcome of the on-site observation and discussions that took place afterwards, was that a new way of communicating and circulating information was certainly welcome and that we could overcome the lack of personal computers in establishing user accounts for each team within the production unit as each unit has one computer available for use. This way ESN would not be used as a personal tool with the individual user identified but, as a team tool where the whole team would be grouped behind one user profile thus being identified on a team level, not individual one. This notion has many implications, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.
3. Once the possibilities of ESN introduction had been established, semi-structured interviews with the HR Specialist and the Production Manager took place on 3rd of June 2014. The purpose of the interviews was to map out the general atmosphere in the workplace in the light of the ongoing organizational restructuring, current practices and tools in place for internal communications as well as discuss in detail what the desired outcome of the introduction of ESN would be based on wider company objectives and values and what would be the best practices in introducing and implementing the new tool.

4. Second round of semi-structured interviews took place on 16th October 2014, this time with one production line foreman and a production line worker. Questions in the interviews followed similar lines to the interviews with the HR Specialist and the Production Manager but the purpose was slightly different; to test findings and ideas from the previous stages but also, to gain new understanding from the production perspective.
5. The final stage at data gathering was a meeting with the HR Specialist to go through results from an in-company Employee Welfare Survey carried out in 2014. Focusing on the areas of the survey relevant to my study, I was able to reflect the survey results with observation and interviews findings with the aim to question or further validate them. As it turned out, for the large part concerns and ideas discussed in the interviews were in line with the results of the Welfare Survey. This will be discussed in more detail in sub-chapter 3.1.2.

3.1.1 Gaining Access to Data

As Saunders (2009) points out, it is crucial before entering into details of any research project to consider possible issues in gaining access to data that is needed for the study – on all levels; physical, continuing and cognitive (Saunders 2009: 168-172).

I was aware from the beginning that as an external researcher, I was fully reliant on the goodwill of the organisation and the people I liaised with to gain all mentioned types of access to data sources relevant to my study. However, no challenges with access were faced at any point of the research, in fact quite the contrary. Communication was very smooth and efficient throughout the process, I was given the privilege to visit the production line environment in an informative tour, also I was able to contact my liaison person via email in between data collection stages in case I had any questions that required clarification. In addi-

tion to having physical and continuing access I was also able to gain cognitive access that allowed for a realistic and reliable picture to be created. All interviewees talked openly and were willing to discuss even sensitive matters and pain points that are occurring due to the extensive organisational restructuring.

However, despite the goodwill and smooth communication demonstrated throughout the process, some organisational restrictions were present, as is also argued by Saunders often being the case (2009: 179-180). Firstly, I was aware of the limited time resources that could be used to support my research. Organisational restructuring itself, combined with some temporary lay-offs within the office workers meant that everyone was far stretched to begin with, without the extra work of being involved in my research. Therefore I tried to keep the interview lengths to a minimum and also otherwise be as precise and quick in my actions as possible.

Other concerns arose due to the sensitivity of the topic and especially the organisational climate awash with changes and consequent unrest within the personnel. For this it was agreed that the study would be conducted in confidentiality granting anonymity to the organisation itself as well as all individual participants.

3.1.2 On-site Observations

The purpose of the visit to the production line of the pilot site was mainly for me to see the environment in which the people work. The exercise was not done with a purpose of collecting any data that would be analysed and documented afterwards but merely, to provide me with understanding of the working environment in the factory. However, there were some elements of structured observation, as discussed by Saunders (2009), mainly the fact that I had a clear idea of the type of things that I would need to pay most attention to whilst in the premises;

1. How are channels for internal communications organised currently? Can I see any visible tools, such as notice boards etc.

2. How are the units and teams within the production site organised? Do units have any contact with each other or do they function completely separately?
3. What does the IT set-up look like within the units? Where is the one computer within each unit located etc.

There are currently six units in production, each in charge of their own area of food production. Each unit has a foreman and one or two shift supervisors, depending on the size of the unit. I was shown around by one of the six foremen, which provided a good opportunity to ask questions whilst doing the observations.

3.1.3 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to support the explanatory nature of the study, as discussed in sub-chapter 3.1. Furthermore, the reason for choosing a semi-structured format was the fact that I had a clear list of themes and questions to be covered but, also wanted to have the option of personalising questions regarding the role and responsibility area of each interviewee in order to get a more holistic picture of the case in its context. Also I wanted to be able to change the order of questions depending on the flow of the conversation.

In total four interviews were conducted, in two separate stages. The first stage included two interviews, one with the HR Specialist and one with the Production Manager. Both interviews took place in the offices of the pilot site. The interviews were scheduled to last for 45 minutes each and questions were sent to the interviewees beforehand via email. Interviews were conducted in Finnish and recorded. Questions in both interviews were divided into four question categories that each contained from four to eight questions. First category of questions covered general questions regarding the interviewee's position at the company, a brief description of the current company culture as perceived by the interviewee as well as a description of a wider strategy and how the HR or Production strategy is linked to the company wide one. The second category of

questions dealt with the current climate within the organisation, focusing on the changes brought by the restructuring and also, what actions the interviewee would see as beneficial in order to improve the general climate. The third category of questions covered topics around internal communications, what channels are currently in use and mainly, if and how any of them support two-way communication and feedback between the personnel and management. The last category of questions drilled deeper into the idea of ESN and how the interviewee would see it benefiting the company and employee engagement. Also ideas around how the production workers would adopt an ESN, what would incentivise them and what concerns they might have about it were discussed. Interview questions in full (in Finnish) in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

The rationale for interviewing the HR Specialist was to gain wider understanding of the company strategy, values and communications culture as well as gain insight into the current company culture and climate from a HR perspective. An interview with the Production Manager was a crucial element in my research, providing a window into the management perspective of production work and how it is currently organized and run. The main objective of both these interviews was to map out the possibilities the company management saw in the new initiative and what expectations they would have on its outcome.

The second stage of semi-structured interviews also included two interviews, this time with a production line foreman and a production line worker. Both interviews took place in a meeting room within the pilot site and were scheduled to last for 30 minutes each. Interview questions were sent to the foreman beforehand via email and she had also briefed the other interviewee who works in her unit. Some time was also reserved before the actual interviews started to briefly introduce myself and the topic to the interviewees, since this was the first time they were involved in the research. Both interviews were conducted in Finnish and recorded. As with the interviews in the first stage, also these ones were divided into four question categories. The category topics followed the same format as in the first stage but the number of questions was reduced to two to five. The main focus during the interviews was to gain production workers' per-

spective into how they see internal communications currently working and how beneficial they would see a system that allowed for improved communication flow between them and the management. A full list of questions (in Finnish) in Appendix 3.

The reason for choosing these interviewees in the second stage of interviewing was to reflect ideas and input from the previous discussions with the HR Specialist and Production Manager and most importantly, to gain new understanding from the production perspective. They were crucial pieces within the research project, allowing for a holistic picture to be built that included both the management and personnel views on current company climate, internal communications, two-way communications and the need for improved employee engagement.

3.1.4 Employee Welfare Survey

Like most research projects, I felt that my study would benefit from a combination of primary and secondary data to meet the research objectives. The source of secondary data used in my study was results from an Employee Welfare Survey carried out across the case company in May 2014. I did inquire a chance to carry out my own survey within the pilot site but since the company wide survey had just taken place the management felt we could not justify another survey within such a short interval.

Due to the confidentiality agreement with the case company, it was agreed that I would not have access to the survey itself or the results by myself but that I could visit the pilot site to go through the results face-to-face with the HR Specialist. This was done in February 2015. Not having access to the raw data meant that the scope of analysis would be very limited and be merely based on my own notes made during the 1 hour meeting with the HR Specialist. However, secondary data can be used in a variety of ways and even with the access limitations I had I felt I could utilize the data given to me in some way. The chosen

approach was to compare the survey results with the findings from the interviews in order to reinforce or question proposition valuations.

The positive aspect of going through the survey results face-to-face with the HR Specialist was that I was immediately able to focus on the areas and topics of the survey results that carried most relevance to my study and ask clarifying questions as we went along. This helped to ensure the measurement validity of the data proving very useful in the light of my research objectives. (Saunders 2009: 273)

As Hakim (2000) points out, an important suitability criterion for secondary data is coverage. The data needs to cover the population about which the data is needed, for the time period that is relevant, and also contain data variables that enable the researcher to answer research question(s) and to meet research objectives. (Hakim 2000: 25) Even if I was not able to carry out any scientific analysis on the secondary data due to access limitations, I wanted to make sure at least these criteria listed by Hakim were met.

The Employee Welfare Survey is a company wide survey that is carried out on regular intervals by an external survey provider. This one was conducted during one week in May 2014 for the entire personnel of the case company, approximately 770 people. The previous one had been conducted four years earlier, in 2010. According to the HR Specialist, the interval is too long and going forward, the company is planning to have the survey carried out once a year, as part of their strategy to shape up internal communications and employee welfare.

Out of the 770 employees a total of 433 took part in the survey. This translates into 56 % total respondent rate. Out of the 152 pilot unit production workers 55 had responded to the survey translating into 36% response rate. The latter represents quite a usual response rate for internal employee surveys that usually fall somewhere between 30% and 40% (Surveygizmo website).

Table 1. Employee Welfare Survey respondent %.

	No of employees	No of Respondents	%
Entire company	770	433	56
Production workers at the pilot unit	152	55	36

The personnel had two ways of responding to the survey; electronically via a link that was posted in the company intranet or in paper format at a dedicated room that was set up for the purpose. According to the HR Specialist, a majority of respondents, including production workers, utilized the electronic option.

In the survey questionnaire each question had to be ticked by the respondent in the axis of 1 (weakest) to 5 (strongest), depending on how satisfied the respondent was with the particular topic presented in the question. In addition the questionnaire also had free fields where respondents could elaborate on the answers and ideas. The survey questionnaire was divided into 13 different topic areas;

- Work - life balance
- Physical wellbeing
- General climate and social support at workplace
- Management of one's own work
- Leadership
- Sense of purpose at work
- Organisation at work
- Opportunities provided by the employer
- Sense of employee empowerment
- Company culture that supports learning and development
- Change management
- Internal communications
- Experience of stress

Hakim (2000) further argues that an analysis of secondary data should ensure that a) unwanted data is excluded b) sufficient data still remains once unwanted data has been excluded (Hakim 2000: 26). Following this I wanted to identify from the listed 13 topic areas the ones that carried most relevance for my research objectives, directly or indirectly.

The ones being directly related to my research objectives were;

- General climate and social support at workplace
- Leadership
- Sense of employee empowerment
- Internal communications

The topics I wanted to also include, as having indirect impact on the areas that my research focuses on were;

- Sense of purpose at work
- Change management

In addition to looking at how my chosen topics ranked in the survey (in the axis of 1-5) I also looked at the comments that production workers had made in the free fields.

As part of the survey employees were also asked which topics they thought should be the focus of improvement going forward. These results I will also reflect upon. Details on the survey results on all of the above mentioned areas will be covered in Chapter 4.

3.2 Analysis of Data

The research methods contained both qualitative and quantitative data, I will elaborate on the analysis process of each one in separate sub-chapter.

3.2.1 Interpreting Qualitative Data

Qualitative data in my research consists of the four semi-structured interviews. As explained previously, the observation that took place on-site was merely with a purpose for me to see the environment in which production workers operate, not to observe any particular teams or individuals. Therefore the outcome of the exercise was not meant to provide any specific data to be analysed but rather, to give me direction and focus for the following data collection stages that would in turn generate data to be analysed.

The approach used to analyse data derived from the semi-structured interviews is a deductive one. What this means is that I have sought to use existing theory to shape the approach that I have adopted to the qualitative research process and to aspects of data analysis. (Yin 2003) The methods and consequent actions of deductive analysis used in my study were as follows;

- Deriving categories from theoretical framework and grouping interview questions based on those categories. The categories created were;
 1. Case company's current cultural climate and internal communication set up with the view to estimate the level two-way communication and feedback and thus the level of social business maturity (based on the Community Maturity Model presented in Literary Review)
 2. Thought benefits regarding the introduction of an ESN
 3. Thought concerns regarding the introduction of an ESN
- Developing propositions for testing for the listed categories. As Saunders (2009) points out, the use of a deductive approach is underpinned by the need to specify theoretical propositions (Saunders 2009: 502). The propositions were developed using existing theoretical framework and initial consultations with the case company management. The propositions developed for testing were;

1. Case company's current company culture and internal communications practices do not support two-way communications and feedback ranking it in Stage 1 on (lowest level) of the CMM chart.
 2. Case company would benefit from the introduction of an ESN
 3. Due to the production environment and unfamiliarity of the ESN concept, there will be various concerns and challenges with the adoption of the new initiative.
- Unitising and summarising data with the help of the audio material from the interviews. This allowed me to pick relevant information from the interviews and attach them to one of the three identified categories. This method was also used for the fact that due to the confidentiality agreement with the case company, no transcribed material was allowed in written format. Therefore the audio material was merely summarised and unitised and then deleted.
 - Pattern matching was used to analyse patterns that emerged within each category. This was made possible by using similar questions under question categories when interviewing each four participant. (Yin 2003)

The benefit of using a deductive approach was that it provided me with key themes and patterns to search for during the data collection phase. Carrying out my research and conducting analysis through attaching units of data to categories, and examining these for emergent patterns, my analysis was guided by the theoretical propositions and explanations with which I commenced the study.

Saunders (2009) points out that the use of predicted explanations requires that the pathway to research question answer and objective is reasonably defined. He claims that the extent to which this is the case will depend on two factors;

1. The level of thoroughness in using existing theory to define clearly the theoretical propositions and conceptual framework that will guide your research project.

2. The appropriateness of these theoretical propositions and the conceptual framework for the data revealed.

I would argue that my study fulfills these factors justifying the benefits of a deductive approach in qualitative analysis.

3.2.2 Interpreting Quantitative Data

Quantitative data utilised in my study consisted of the Employee Welfare Survey results. As explained before, I had no physical access to the data but visited the pilot site in February 2015 to go through the results with the HR Specialist. This arrangement took place for two reasons; firstly, due to the confidentiality agreement the case company did not want to give out any physical data on the actual survey or the survey results and secondly, the results were in a format that would have been difficult to interpret without having a verbal explanation to go with the raw data.

Doing it this way had its pros and cons. Not having any physical files to work with meant that I was not able to carry out any scientific analysis on the quantitative data resulting in a situation where survey data could only be used as *supportive* data in my study. The upside was that going through the results verbally with the HR Specialist I was able to only focus on the areas and topics in the survey that had most relevance for my study and thus being able to utilize the data in a way I felt contributed to the research in a meaningful way - testing the propositions formulated for the primary source data gathering and patterns identified.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Notions from On-Site Observation

Based on the initial consultations with the case company management I had already gathered a basic understanding of the current cultural and physical framework within which the introduction of an ESN tool would need to be adapted within the case company. A visit to the production environment within the pilot site provided an opportunity via on-site observation to gain further understanding on current set up for internal communications, production unit set up as well as the current IT set up within the factory.

As highlighted in the Chapter 3, the purpose of the on-site observation was not to gather data that would be systematically documented and analysed but to provide me with better understanding of the working environment in the factory. Here are some observations from the tour and notions from the discussion with the foreman that acted as my tour guide:

Table 2. On-site observation notes.

How are channels for internal communications organised currently? Can I see any visible tools, such as notice boards etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No internal communications currently done via computers within the production environment • Weekly task lists in paper format • Verbal briefings • Tv info screens and traditional notice boards in social areas.
How are the units and teams within the production site organised? Do units have any contact with each other or do they function completely separately?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six units within production • Each unit tied to their own production line, little chance to interact across units during work time. • Due to health and safety arrange-

	<p>ments access to units restricted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High noise levels restricting communication during work time, even within each unit.
What does the IT set-up look like within the units?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is one computer within each production unit. • Currently only foremen & shift supervisors use the computer • For production workers difficult to leave the production line, therefore challenging to use a computer • Computers not always working and sometimes challenge accessing even the company intranet.

4.2 Interview Findings

As outlined in Chapter 3, the approach used for analysing qualitative data in my research was a deductive one. Based on the theoretical framework on social business and ESN, interview questions for the four interviewees were grouped in three different categories to represent a theoretical theme each. Additionally, before the interviews took place I had formulated propositions for testing for each category that the interview questions represented, based on reflections from the initial consultations with the case company management & on-site observation within the production environment.

After the interviews had been conducted, I unitised and summarised them in order to;

- 1) Collate answers from each four interview under each of the three question category.

- 2) Identify any possible emerging patterns across the four interviewees' answers to reflect the validity of the propositions formulated prior to the interviews.

I will now go through findings from the interviews listing answers from each interviewee in relation to each question category.

Table 3. Interview responses to Question Category 1

Case company's current cultural climate and internal communication set up.	
HR Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes company culture with the word "change". • Positions and tasks have changed and lay-off have taken place within the office workers. Even if production workers not affected by lay-offs, atmosphere tense. • Very traditional company culture, changes not adapted quickly. • A very "Finnish company" in that in theory employees allowed to go directly to higher management to give feedback. However, practice very different. • Trade union tradition very strong and active. Feedback travels through union representative. • Monthly meetings within higher management • Weekly meetings at production • HR only involved in the weekly production meetings when some larger scale announcements need to be made. • Tv info boards in social spaces in each production unit, should have someone responsible to update them, now often out-of-date. These can only be seen during break times, breaks not long enough to cover a full info cycle.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper info boards never up-to-date • Intranet used within office workers. • Ideas box but not actively promoted
Production Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional set-up, people not used to changes. Generally personnel have reacted very strongly to current situation. • Production workers feel that the current changes have only been "for the worse" for them and that there is "nothing fun for them". • They also feel that they are being "monitored" and that rules have become stricter, for example mobile phones and smoking have been banned during work time. • Production workers afraid of lay-offs even if not been affected by them so far. • Production workers often see office workers as "useless" as "they do all the work" • Is concerned that management never gets a real picture of how production workers feel as feedback gets filtered by either union representative or on of the unit formen • Weekly production meetings. However not everyone present in these meetings and also, employees don't easily give feedback in the meetings. • Tv info boards available but information not up-to-date. Points out that in general the company would need someone in charge of internal communications to keep information timely and relevant. • Intranet available but in limited capacity for the production workers, even on things that might be relevant for them (technical issues).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly info meetings • No new internal communications channels planned. • Ideas always asked from a selected group of production workers on things like machinery investments. Drawings available for all for commenting. Positive feedback on this from employees.
Production worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmosphere within production workers good but tense with management • Unit foremen are considered close but higher management distant and "only concerned about their own matters" • Possible lay-offs worrying • New rules annoy workers, for example banning mobile phones and smoking • Information does not flow well from management to production unit foremen. • Information on strategy available but practical information relevant to production workers always lacking behind. • Production workers want to have impact, especially on topics directly concerning them • Tv info boards available but information too generic. • Weekly task lists in paper format, does not support information on last minute changes. • Weekly meetings, but they are challenging due to noise levels • Intranet, nobody uses in production as is not relevant for them. • Performance reviews once a year • Employee welfare survey • Ideas box but nobody uses as is not incentivised well

	<p>enough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational changes have muddled up comms channels, information gets repeated or not delivered at all, "sometimes there are days when we just don't know what to do or where to go". • Even if unit foremen considered close, their ability to have an impact not considered high either. Therefore passivity even to try.
Production Foreman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmosphere OK within production workers • Challengins with relationship between management & production • Problems with information flow in all directions • Attempts to create more structured comms, for example regular weekly meetings but, "so many moving parts at the moment with the re-structuring that channels very unclear"

Table 4. Interview responses to Question Category 2

Thought benefits regarding the introduction of an ESN	
HR Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production would feel that they are more involved in decision making • Currently no official channel for production workers to give feedback • No active focus on idea sharing. For example, there is an idea box but is not actively promoted or used. Would need someone to be in charge of this, HR cannot take the lead as production workers would only feel it's another "management initiative". Would

	need to come from them.
Production Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing production workers to see office workers in a different light, that they "are not so different, like a different species" • Would allow for quick opinion polls • Currently the more vocal 20% overrule the quieter ones. ESN would allow the quieter ones to voice their opinion too. • Would allow production workers within units and across units to solve problems, not always assume management will solve all problems. • Would give production workers a channel to give negative feedback, which would be important for them as well as for the management. • Could maybe conduct Welfare Survey via ESN • Obligatory safety surveys (every 3 three years) could be done via ESN • Would serve both practical and social needs
Production worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would allow information to flow directly "without so many middlemen" • Would enable real time information to be delivered • Would help delivering information in the noisy environment • Would allow workers in different shifts to have access to same information
Production Foreman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production workers might feel more valued • More informal way of communicating, would be more natural for employees to participate • Daily operations would become more fluid • Ideas for improvement would go to right people straight away

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even strategic information could be presented in a more approachable/ familiar format • Units would have a way of working closer together
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Table 5. Interview responses to Question Category 3

Thought concerns regarding the introduction of an ESN	
HR Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would need to be well explained and emphasised that it is built specifically for production workers so that it's not "just another tool for the office workers" • Employees would not feel comfortable using their own name. "Where does information that I post show & for how long"? • The new tool might get quickly forgotten if not properly adopted • Time restraints – how much time would the company be able to devote to this? • Who would take the lead on this? Who would have the time to focus on it?
Production Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer literacy not a problem, thinks that "almost everyone" within production would be skilled to use the tool • They would probably first be hesitant and think that "this is just another thing that is started and then stopped" • Would need to have someone to be responsible for this. Could be selected from within the production team by democratic vote. If person responsible from the management team, the tool would not be adopted. • Would need to work by units, individuals would wor-

	ry about "being singled out and being in trouble"
Production worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older employees may not be familiar with computers • Time restrictions – how can production workers "get away from production line" • How can employees trust that information in the system is always up-to-date and relevant to them? Would need clear rules on how often information is updated and when employees need to check it
Production Foreman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not everyone would be excited, at least older employees. However, all units have a wide age scope (from 18 to 65) so there would be someone from each unit who would feel comfortable to use computers • Employees would feel worried about giving feedback as individuals • Not every unit has an email address, this would need to be fixed.

4.3 Identifying Patterns for Proposition Testing

Based on the interview answers from the four interviews I was able to identify some generic patterns that I then used to reflect the theoretical propositions formulated prior to the interviews.

Question Category 1: Patterns Identified

- Atmosphere within production workers OK but tense towards company management
- Set up considered hierarchial and supporting a traditional us/them divide

- Information often dated in existing communication channels, no one in charge of keeping it up-to-date
- Lack of direct feedback channel between production workers and management

Based on the initial consultations with the company management I had become aware of the various challenges affecting the atmosphere and work morale within the case company. These challenges were mainly caused by the ongoing organisational restructuring affecting the entire organisation. Recent lay-offs had caused concern across the organisation even if so far only office workers had been affected by them. These challenges combined with the initial insight into the rather basic technical set up of the production environment and current internal communications set up and culture not designed to support continuous feedback loop led into;

Proposition 1: Case company's current company culture and internal communications practices do not support two-way communications and feedback placing it on Stage 1 (Hierarchy) of the CMM chart.

Proposition valuation based on identified patterns:

The case company can be seen as having foundation in a traditional command & control type of set up placing it on Stage 1 (Hierarchy) of the CMM chart. Even if there are a lot of good intentions and willingness for change, which is also demonstrated by taking part in this research, the reality is still very much hierarchical, especially in the relations between production workers and management. Culture is reactive in that employees do not actively contribute to decision-making. Some of the internal communications elements are designed to support two-way communications and ideas sharing but it is not working in reality. Social media is not currently part of the internal communications activities, which further supports the proposition of low-level social maturity of the company. Traditional attitudes and approaches live strong and production workers give feedback through union representative rather than directly. Production workers

see themselves distant from management and do not feel empowered to contribute to decision-making.

Question Category 2: Patterns Identified

- ESN would provide production workers a new way to give feedback
- ESN would provide a way to bring people closer together, both management and production workers as well as different production units
- ESN would clarify communication channels
- ESN would help with both practical information delivery as well as delivering strategic and "boring" data in a more approachable format

Based on the literature review on the benefits of ESN in aiding two-way communications, idea sharing and employee empowerment and the fact that the company management had requested a social media tool to bring management and workers closer together indicating a need for such improvement in the company culture and communications strategy, the second proposition for testing was formulated as;

Proposition 2: The case company would benefit from the introduction of an ESN.

Proposition valuation based on identified patterns:

It can be seen that both the management as well as production representatives see many benefits in an ESN. The management representatives – the HR Manager and Production Manager – had more information on the ESN prior to their interviews, which can partly explain their readiness to acknowledge the benefits of the new tool. However, the two production representatives had no prior information on ESN before the interviews. Even with a 5 minute brief introduction to the topic at the beginning of their interviews they were quick to see the possible benefits of the new initiative.

Question Category 3: Patterns Identified

- The new tool would need to be properly explained and sold from the perspective of the production workers – how would it benefit them?
- Someone from the production team needs to be in charge of the new tool implementation & training for it to be accepted within production workers
- Concern over time resources
- Production workers have the need to voice their opinions but, they would not be willing to do so using their own name

Based on the research on common challenges of ESN as well as the findings from initial consultations, especially on the traditional cultural set up as well as the limited IT set up, I deducted that;

Proposition 3: Due to the production environment and unfamiliarity of the ESN concept, there will be various concerns and challenges with the adoption of the new initiative.

Proposition valuation based on identified patterns:

What was surprising was that the basic IT set up and the thought unfamiliarity of computer work within the production environment were not emphasised as sources of concern for the adoption of the new tool. Instead, all interviewees seemed quite positive on the skill and willingness of the production workers accepting computer work as part of their daily routines, with the exception of some concerns over the older employees. It could be that the popularity of social media tools such as Facebook within a wide range of general population helped in this regard. However, other expected concerns such as lack of time resource and the question over anonymity of feedback were highlighted in the interview responses. Especially the question on feedback anonymity was so strongly emphasised in all interviews that it would probably not be possible to introduce an ESN in the production environment in the usual manner where each participant uses their own profile in all ESN correspondence. In this regard the fact that an ESN would need to be adapted in the existing IT set up within the case

company so that teams, not individuals, form ESN user profiles is actually a good solution in all respects.

4.4 Employee Welfare Survey Results Validating Propositions

In the survey questionnaire each question had to be ticked by the respondent in the axis of 1 (weakest) to 5 (strongest), depending on how satisfied the respondent was with the particular topic presented in the question. Here are the results, with the most relevant topic areas for my study marked in **bold**.

Table 6. Employee Welfare Survey results

	Topic Area	Average rating (1-5)
1	Work - life balance	3,93
2	Physical wellbeing	3,85
3	General climate and social support at workplace	3,8
4	Management of one's own work	3,77
5	Leadership	3,68
6	Sense of purpose at work	3,57
7	Organisation at work	3,43
8	Opportunities provided by the employer	3,4
9	Sense of employee empowerment	3,16
10	Company culture that supports learning and development	2,96
11	Change management	2,89
12	Internal communications	2,78
13	Experience of stress	2,52

In the open fields the production workers called for more open discussion and more joint events. The importance of teamwork was also emphasised in the free comments fields which one respondent writing "Better results together".

Votes for the areas for improvement within the Food Sector went as follows with the most relevant topic areas for my study marked in **bold**:

Table 7. Topic areas voted for areas of improvement by Food Section workers

	Topic Area	No of votes
1	Internal communications	58
2	General climate and social support at workplace	52
3	Organisation at work	49
4	Leadership	44
5	Physical wellbeing	42

The approach chosen for the data usage of the Employee Welfare Survey was to compare it against the findings from the qualitative sources to either reinforce or question the proposition valuations, as mapped out in previous sub-chapter. What this means is that I will look at the valuations for all three propositions one by one reflecting them to the survey results, assessing whether they are in line with my proposition valuation or if they indicate a different outcome.

Reflection on Proposition Valuation 1:

General climate and social support at workplace ranked as third best (3.8/5) out of all of the topic areas, which is in line with the proposition valuation that the general atmosphere within production worker seems to be OK. However, what is surprising is that Leadership ranks as fifth best (3,68/5) in the chart. The result differs from the impression from the interviews and consequently proposition valuation that leadership is considered distant and "only concerned with their own matters" by the production workers. It would be interesting to get more detailed idea on how Leadership has been interpreted by the production workers - whether it refers to leadership by their line management (shift supervisors and foremen) or, the higher management. This result would indicate towards the first option, that Leadership is considered line management as based on the interview responses line management is considered close and easily approachable.

The organisational restructuring and the consequent general unrest is reflected in the survey results and is in line with the proposition valuation, namely change management that appears third lowest on the list (2,89/5). Also Sense of employee empowerment ranks as fifth lowest (2,78/5) on the chart indicating that the proposition of placing the company on Stage 1 (Hierarchy) in the CMM chart holds true.

As to internal communications, the proposition valuation of wide dissatisfaction on the communication and feedback channels as well as the relevance of information is strongly reflected in the survey results placing Internal Communications second lowest (2,78/5) on the list.

In the survey the development areas that got most votes within the Food Sector were 1. Internal communications 2. General atmosphere and social support at work. This further supports the importance of finding new solutions for organising internal communications at the case company and highlights the value that employees place on the general atmosphere and team work in their daily work.

Reflection on Proposition Valuation 2:

Based on the survey results it can be said that the company would benefit from an ESN. Sense of employee empowerment ranks as fifth lowest (3,16/5) indicating perception within the employees that their voice does not get heard. Also the fact that there is clearly a need for improved internal communications ideas, supports the quest and thought benefits of ESN.

Reflection on Proposition Valuation 3:

There seems to be a strong 'us spirit' amongst the production workers which is also reflected in the survey. General atmosphere and support at work place ranks, despite the distrust towards higher management, at third highest (3,8/5). Also in the free fields provided for feedback in the survey support the idea that production workers are keen to work as a team – "Better results together". This supports the proposition that production workers would be more willing to adopt a tool that is presented as 'theirs'.

5 ESN STRATEGY AND IDEAS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE CASE COMPANY

Having laid out a theoretical framework for an ESN and uncovered findings from the empirical research within the case company, I will now move on to link the theory and findings to build an ESN strategy and ideas for successful implementation. Also, as the research is conducted as part of a wider NEMO project framework with the aim to identify business value potential in negative emotions, the aim is also to seek answers to how this could be achieved within the case company. In line with this, the last research object, which this Chapter aims to fill, was stated as follows;

Objective 4: To create an ESN strategy and ideas for implementation most suited for the case company based on the findings through empirical research. The aim with this is also to understand and communicate how the case company's current challenges could be turned into business value with the help of an ESN.

The Chapter is divided into sub-chapters covering ESN vision, links to wider business goals, implications of the current company culture and communications set up to the initiative, rules of working social and ideas for selling the initiative to the employees.

5.1 Defining a Vision

As with any initiative, it is crucial to have a clear idea of what the company wants to achieve with an ESN.

During the initial consultation with the company management the first thought that was brought up was that the case company wanted to find new ways to connect production workers and higher management. As has been discussed before, the company has been going through a series of organisational and structural changes that have had a practical and emotional effect on personnel at all levels of the organisation. Communication around these issues however,

has been problematic resulting in confusion and motivational challenges within employees. The case company has realised that traditional top-to-bottom communication is not enough in these circumstances but that it is important to provide employees a channel for voicing their concerns and ideas. Being a long established company where traditional values and attitudes sit tight, employees have traditionally followed a command and control type of leadership which has left them unheard, even if there have been attempts to improve this some initiatives, as laid out in the research findings. Looking at Li's chart on the value drivers of ESN, the vision was to reduce power distance to leaders and empower people by giving them a voice and a way to make meaningful contributions.

Encourage Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates two-way dialog • Makes business personal • Reduces power distance to leaders • Connects globally, person by person • Forms private groups
Capture Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify expertise • Avoid duplication and have better coordination • Transfer knowledge • Improve best practices
Enable Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solve problems faster and better • Bring outsiders in • Streamline processes
Empower People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give employees a voice • Make meaningful contributions and innovations • Increase engagement, satisfaction, and retention

Figure 4. Business value drivers of ESNs. Source: Altimeter Group.

Following this, the company management had a clear idea that the ESN initiative would need to include the production workers, even with the practical challenges of them not having similar access to computers as office workers.

However, even if the 'people perspective' was the starting point for the vision formulation, it became clear during the research process that the value potential of an ESN could be fully utilised at the case company where there is an apparent lack and need for more efficient internal communications approaches. Thus

not only employee empowerment but also improved information flows and practical support for daily operations were also brought into focus. In the interviews many good points came up in how an ESN could be used in the production environment to not only aid employee engagement but to actually provide a practical way to share information.

Thus the ideological aspect of the vision of ESN is to bridge the gap between production workers and leadership by providing a communications tool that on one hand provides the opportunity to engage and participate, and on one hand functions as a practical tool to streamline and smooth out daily operations in the production environment.

As to practicalities, the vision is to implement the tool into the existing production set-up where each unit has one computer available for use. It was brought up in the initial video consultation that the company might be willing to put some investment into this, for example buying some new computers or tablets for the units but, even this is not necessary given that the existing computers work and are connected to internet. The only practical adjustment that needs to be made is to set up an email address for each unit as it was brought up in the interviews that all units do not currently have one.

When we first discussed a solution of working around the computer challenge by creating an ESN user profile for each unit, not employee, I was hesitant on the idea, mainly for the reason that I was not sure if the value potential of ESN be realised if discussions did not take place on individual basis. Would the whole idea of ESN not be overruled by the lack of individual access to the network? However, throughout the research it became clear that a unit level access is actually the only way an ESN could probably be introduced in the production environment. It was brought up in all interviews that even if the production workers have a need to give feedback and contribute to decision-making, they would not be willing to do so in their own name. So strong lived are traditional concerns over being 'singled out' or 'ending up in trouble' that a jump over this particular ideological chasm would be too wide at this point. A unit level access can be seen as a 'soft landing' into the new approach, with an open door

to future adjustments in case attitudes start taking new shape with the aid of ESN.

5.2 Linking ESN Goals to Business Goals

Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted. (Albert Einstein)

Having established a vision for what should be achieved with the new tool, it is important to map out some metrics to measure how well the objectives are being met. In order for these metrics to be meaningful, it is crucial they have a link to the business goals of the company.

So, what are the metrics needed to measure the success of an ESN at the case company? As covered in the literary review, Li (2012) claims that ESN metrics should measure gap closing, not engagement. Also Leistner (2012) is in the opinion that ESN metrics that measure value rather than mere activity, such as number of posts per unit or so forth, produce much more relevant and thus valuable information.

These are the approaches I would suggest the case company take when setting ESN metrics. Firstly, looking at their ESN vision, metrics identifying how well the ESN fills value propositions set for the tool would be a good starting point. These could be formulated as follows;

- To what extent has the ESN helped in empowering employees?
- To what extent has the ESN helped in improving information flow and sharing?

Measuring value is of course more difficult than measuring activity but, there are ways that could be used to quantify the above mentioned metrics. For example, Employee Welfare Survey results could be used to measure gap closing in these areas. For example, the case company could identify certain questions from the Survey and use those questions as indicators for the effectiveness of the ESN, comparing the 2014 results with the next Survey results. The questions

should be those concerning sense of employee empowerment, leadership and internal communications. For example, the target could be to have both sense of employee empowerment and internal communications as topic areas in the Survey to be in the Top 5 list, when now they hold spots 9/13 and 12/13. Perhaps it might even be possible to include in the Survey a direct question regarding the ESN thus having a direct way to measure employees' opinion on the effectiveness of the tool.

Discussing with the HR Specialist, she pointed out that one of their goals is to start carrying out these surveys annually, as opposed to the every four years as has been done so far. The target could be to have 2016 Survey results analysed with this in mind. This is of course dependant on the timeline for the initiative launch and implementation. The effectiveness of ESN would need a while to be realised and to be shown in the survey results.

Also, the company could use the Community Maturity Model (CMM) as a metric to measure success of the ESN. In the model there are four stages and as indicated in Chapter 4, the case company currently stands at Stage 1 not filling any of the criteria for a more advanced social business maturity, as reaching higher stages of the model would require. Goals could be set in a step-by-step manner that for example within one year of the implementation of the tool the company should have reached Stage 2 within the model and within two years Stage 3. If the CMM chart was used as a metric, it would need to be considered what the goal of the company could and should be in terms of which level it would want to achieve. I would argue that due to the production context and consequent adjustments to ESN approach, as compared to how companies usually use the tool, the goal for CMM should not necessarily need to be the highest stage. Instead, the implication of reaching Stage 3 would already be a sufficient improvement in the context of the case company. What this means is that some of the elements in Stage 4 would not even be relevant for the case company or at least the production function. By reaching the criteria in Stage 3, such as collaborative leadership, emergent social culture, defined roles and processes in community management as well flexible social media policies, would be good

enough improvements in the context in which they would take place. However, the metrics and measurement criteria should be set at Stage 4 level, to measure behaviours and outcomes of ESN rather than activities as content, as listed in Stage 3.

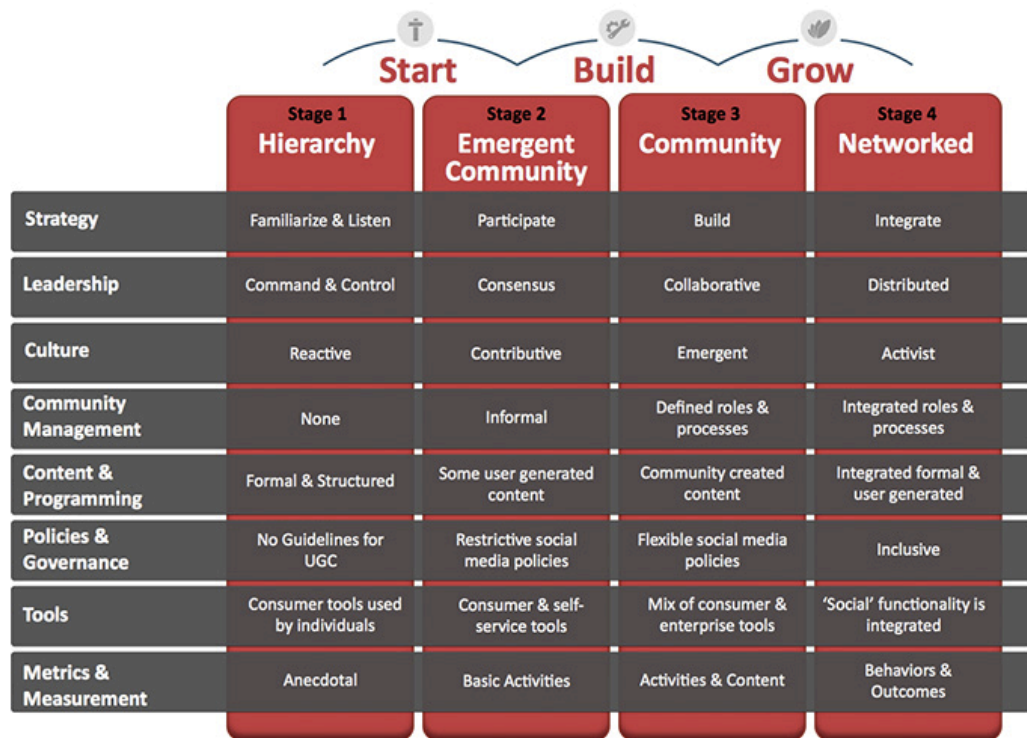


Figure 5. Community Maturity Model. Source: www.communityroundtable.com.

As to linking ESN goals to wider business goals, the fact that the case company has requested a social media media tool to improve employee empowerment and internal communications already sends a strong message that ESN is in line with the wider company goals. This is also reflected in the new company values as one of the outcomes of the organisational restructuring. In the interview with the HR Specialist she listed the new company values as follows;

1. Delighting customers
2. Excelling in everything we do
3. Responsibility
4. Joy at work

Including the last one, joy at work, in the company wide goals the company management indicates that they are willing to place more focus on the employees and their wellbeing in the aftermath of all of the organisational restructuring.

5.3 Implications of Current Company Culture and Communications to ESN Implementation

Analysis of current company culture and communications set-up is a crucial piece in mapping out a suitable implementation strategy for the case company. What are the building blocks for the new initiative? Does the existing culture & internal communications set up support and ESN and if not, how can that be solved?

This is topic that has been touched upon throughout my work and it has been established through the research findings that the existing culture and set up do not provide much support for ESN implementation. The will and intention is there but plenty of work is required from the management part to take some major steps in steering the company from a traditional command-and-control style leadership model into a more open and collaborative leadership style. As covered in the literary review, for social technologies to deliver their potential economic benefits, companies must be open to information sharing and create cultures of trust and cooperation, as for example a McKinsey Global Institute report (2012) states.

The main challenge for the case company is not so much the limited tradition for information and idea sharing but mainly, the culture of control and command that not only seems oppressive to the production workers but also creates lack of trust between employees and higher management. Initiatives such as banning mobile phones during work time are a strong signal to the employees, as reflected in the interview answers, that they are not being trusted which in turn is a hinderance on a way to increased social maturity of the company.

Most likely all companies considering an ESN would face some challenges in this area. As was pointed out in the literary review, implementing enterprise so-

cial tools is not simply a technology challenge but mainly a cultural and behavioral one. Changing behavior and culture does not happen quickly, and it does not happen either from the top down or from the bottom up. The reality is that it happens when both of those approaches are aligned to help move the organisation in the right direction. It is something that companies have to change gradually and purposely.

Practical steps towards starting to build a more open and social mature culture within the case company could be such as;

- Evaluation of current practices that might be a hinderance on the path towards a more open and trusting company culture. What is function of these practices, such as the mobile phone ban? Undoubtedly there are reasons behind each decision that has been made however, a suggested step would be to re-look at these decisions in the light of what their possible trade-offs. For example, does the assumed benefit of increased control over employees' work time activities be shadowed by the flip side of them being pre-occupied by for example a worry that they are not reachable for their children during work time, as pointed out by the production worker in her interview.
- Identification of key stakeholders who can influence behavior and help build and maintain a social business environment resolving problems, providing solutions and training social business skills. This type of 'community management' will be a key element in successful implementation of an ESN at the case company. I would argue that even if the case company did not choose to make any financial investments per se into the ESN introduction, such as new technology, the one investment they would need to make is the allocation of someone's time to take over a community manager's role.

What seems positive in the light of the research findings is that one of the most common reasons for ESNs failing, what Leistner (2012) calls 'unlearning', is not so much present at least with the employees and managers who were part of

the research project. I did not hear thoughts such as 'We have always done it this way' or 'This will not work here' but rather positive reactions to the possibilities offered by an ESN. Of course this is something that would only get verified after the entire production team had started to use the tool.

5.4 Rules of Working Social

There are some generally acknowledged factors that play an important role in how an ESN is adopted. What are these rules of 'working social', both from the perspective of employees and the management?

The rules of working social can be divided into three areas 1) training and guidelines provided 2) commitment from management's part 3) commitment from employees' part.

As to training and guidelines, with a new tool and a whole new approach to internal communications and information sharing, it is crucial the training and guidelines provided are as clear and concise as possible. In the case of the case company, it is probably the case where with some of the employees training may need to include practical computing training and in the case of many, training on social media in general. This needs to be taken into account in order to provide inclusion for everybody. Guidelines need to include topics such as business versus social content, information to make clear that everything posted is open as well as guidelines on commenting and giving feedback. What is appropriate and what is not. In addition, with the case company it is extremely important to have guidelines on the practical information sharing timelines in order for the production workers to know when they should be checking ESN. This was one of the main concerns brought up in the interviews with the production workers. Since they are tied to the production line most of the time not being able to check computer the same way office workers do, they need to be aware of what practical information and when is being broadcasted via ESN in order for them not to miss anything relevant. Of course there needs to be room for spontaneous information flow within ESN but in this particular setting, it is im-

portant to have agreed timelines over information that is delivered on a regular intervals, for example weekly task lists.

With such emphasis on sufficient training and guidelines, the role of a Community Manager is again emphasised. Someone needs to be in charge of creating guidelines applicable to the case company as well as planning and carrying out training to the entire pilot unit as well as their management.

As covered in literature review, the way in which management in companies are actively involved in promoting and contributing to ESN content is crucial in its success. Participation from management is essential as it sends a number of key messages such as 1) This tool is for everybody 2) Open communication is wanted in this organisation and we want everyone, including management itself, to learn from each other and 3) Knowledge and sharing across all levels counts and is valuable. It is of course the case where management will also need ESN training and practice in order to become good ESN contributors. However what should be emphasised is their willingness to commit to the adoption of the new tool. The tone in which management communicate via ESN should be positive and encouraging for idea sharing. ESN provides a great way to give positive feedback to employees and units in an open forum and this is an opportunity that should be utilised at the case company. Here though it is important to consider the 'authenticity line' – posts from management should not seem forced, otherwise they lose their positive impact. Also, even if the production workers have unit profiles rather than individual ones, it is crucial that management participation in ESN is a personal activity where they are also able to share own ideas and thought rather than always speaking 'on behalf of the company'. This can be very tricky and will probably require time to find its shape.

From the employees' part the rules of working social involve commitment to timelines agreed for practical information checking, such as weekly timesheets. Also it is employees' responsibility to start utilising the new possibilities for information sharing and feedback. Again, it will not be easy in an environment where information or especially feedback has traditionally not traveled in such a straight line. In the case company however this is smoothed out by the fact that

the employees operate with unit level profiles, as discussed previously. Even so, it is important to start establishing a culture of constructive feedbacking within each unit – feedback that is actually communicated to management, not just discussed with colleagues.

5.5 Selling the Idea to Employees

Two of the patterns identified for doubts regarding ESN amongst the employees and management that took part in the interviews were 1) that the new tool would need to be properly explained and sold from the perspective of the production workers and how it would benefit them 2) that in order for production workers to accept the new tool the idea would need to come from one of the production workers rather than from the management team.

With this in mind, the most important aspect of this whole initiative, as I see it, is that the case company identifies someone from within the production team to take lead in this project. Furthermore, as was discovered in the interviews, it would not only be the case of nominating someone but to actually let the production workers vote within themselves who they would like to have as the leader of the ESN initiative.

Ghosh (2014) argues that organizations need to listen and 'discover' their experts that they don't even know they have (Ghosh 2014). This is absolutely the case with the case company. It was brought up in the interview with the Production Foreman that someone in the pilot unit studies business information technology and that they are looking for a topic for their thesis. This kind of project integrated into their daily work might be a great motivator – not only being useful in their studies but also enriching their daily work in the production unit. However, this would of course require that this person was selected for the job by democratic vote.

This particular finding was the one that I got most excited about during the research process. ESN being a tool aimed to increase employee empowerment, it makes such sense to have the 'brain and soul' – the Community Manager -

chosen from within the group that it is aimed to benefit. Of course company management can, and should, benefit from an ESN too however, in the case of case company it is the employees who are in the focus.

As Ghosh (2014) points out, "it is only when the employees discover that an ESN helps them get their work done better that its adoption will skyrocket". (Ghosh 2014) Therefore the key skill of Community Manager is to help employees discover that. And what better way to do so than using yourself, as a production worker, as a promotor and 'showcase' for the new initiative.

In addition to having a right resource to own the ESN initiative, it is also important to create sufficient hype around it prior to launch as well as after. This is emphasised by Leistner (2012) who discusses the importance of internal marketing and regular little campaigns (Leistner 2012: 47-53) as well as the interviewees who also brought up the idea that the ESN would need to properly marketed to both employees and the management by creating some hype around it. Again, the Community Manager would play a key role in this.

5.6 NEMO Reflections

As discussed in the Introduction, my work is done as a part of a The NEMO project, carried during 2014-2015 as a joint project between Turku University of Applied Sciences, Turku School of Economics and Tampere University of Technology. NEMO focuses on the value creation potential of negative emotions. Its main principle is that by only focusing on the positive emotions, or by not being able to deal with negative emotions in a constructive way, companies are missing out on a considerable business value potential. In the NEMO project negative emotions are seen as a potential, not a threat.

Companies taking part in the NEMO project have taken a proactive step to tackle some challenges taking place within their organisations, was it with customers or like in the case of my case company, the employees. My case company has been going through major organisational restructuring resulting in widening trust gap between the employees and management. By taking part in the

NEMO project the company has demonstrated a willingness in not trying to hide away or avoid the difficulties borne out of the recent challenges but is taking action in improving the situation and possibly even looking at turning the negative or conflicting emotions into an opportunity. So, how could an ESN help turn these negative or conflicting emotions into an opportunity for business value for the case company?

The research findings have shown that there are many potential benefits to the case company in introducing an ESN however, the aspect that stands out most in terms of value potential within the NEMO framework is the premise of an ESN to function as a two-way feedback channel. This is something that is currently missing from the case company and something that has great potential in turning negative emotions into an opportunity. An ESN would give a means for two-way feedback and a channel for employees to voice their concerns. This would allow the management to get a more realistic picture of the 'pulse' in the production environment, which alone has great value potential in helping the company spot any arising issues earlier and becoming more proactive in solving them. Tackling any potential issues or negative emotions head on has a direct impact on the bottom line by enabling the management as well as employees focus on the task at hand, not concerning over or trying to solve problems that have escalated into large scale issues.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 Research Summary

A successful business in this new social age understands and rapidly adapts to change. Its foundations lie in a culture that encourages sharing, collaboration and engagement. The first objective of my study focused around identifying these cultural factors:

Objective 1: To map out cultural attributes required from an organisation to become a social business with high levels of employee participation.

Literature covered for the study indicated a clear emphasis on concepts such as two-way communications allowing information sharing and feedback travel freely across employee and management benefiting all parties. Also the concept of transparency was highlighted throughout the literature. Companies need to find ways to bring information out of existing silos and readily available for wider audiences within and outside of the company. Transparency also decreases employee/management divides driving employee engagement.

Based on the research findings at the case company, some changes will need to be initiated to start practicing a more open and transparent culture. Currently feedback practices and channels are not supportive of two-way dialogue between employees and management and consequently the two parties are not very well aligned. In its current state the company stands at Stage 1 of the Community Maturity Model (CMM) where traditional 'control-and-command' ideas still live strong. However, company management is very open to work on these challenges, which taking part in this study demonstrates well.

Working towards higher levels of social maturity is a holistic approach but one of the main pillars is a technological infrastructure that organises companies' intelligence to create an environment of empowered communities, in which employees are collaborating and communicating across silos and hierarchies.

As has been shown in my research, social technologies have a great potential in helping companies achieve these qualities required in today's agile business. The second objective of the thesis dealt with the concept of social technologies and ESN in specific, discussing its role in supporting the development of more engaged and participatory work culture:

Objective 2: To understand the value potential of Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) in building an engaged social business with improved inter-company communications practices.

ESNs do not only hold the value potential of improving the way in which information and knowledge is transferred across a company and action enabled by streamlining processes and solving problems faster and better but also, in the way in which it empowers employees by allowing them to provide feedback in a whole new way and take part in decision-making. This way ESNs really have the potential of having a direct impact on the bottom line by increasing employee engagement, satisfaction and retention.

Research conducted at the case company revealed many ways in which an ESN could benefit their internal company communications and employee empowerment. Employees clearly have a need to have their voice heard and acknowledged the value potential of ESN in this respect. Also they identified many practical benefits that an ESN could bring into their daily work in the production environment. Most of the information flow is currently delivered verbally or in paper format. Challenges with these approaches are noisy environment and the fact that employees are always unsure whether for example weekly task lists in paper form are up-to-date. ESN was identified as a potential solution for these challenges as well as for providing a more approachable way to deliver high-level strategic information to the production workers.

At present time, when social technologies are still a very recent addition to the internal communication tool kit, there are many more questions than answers with respect to the best ways in which an enterprise should approach them. The third objective of the thesis focused on these challenges and limitations:

Objective 3: To identify potential challenges and limitations organisations should be aware of when formulating an ESN strategy and implementation plan.

In the literature covering ESNs, one of the main challenges that was highlighted was lack of time resource. In today's hectic work life, employees are already struggling to make sense of all available tools and ESNs can easily fall into a category of 'just another tool' unless they are well promoted, implemented and efficiently supported within the work community. Also ideas around companies needing to have clear guidelines on how to use a social media tool in a work context were highlighted in the literature. Transparency as a concept can be a challenging one both from the perspectives of employees as well management. This was also clearly demonstrated at the case company – even if the employees supported the idea of having a channel to voice their opinions more openly, their concern of being 'singled out' or 'in trouble' was too great for them to have been willing to give feedback using a personal profile in an ESN tool. Thus the suggested solution of them operating on group level using a unit profile would work well both in terms of the limited IT resources as well as the concern over anonymity.

The last objective of the study was aimed to bring together all theoretical framework and findings through empiria:

Objective 4: To create an ESN strategy and ideas for implementation most suited for the case company based on the findings through empirical research. The aim with this is also to understand and communicate how the case company's current challenges could be turned into business value with the help of an ESN.

"Every organization will need to discover its own use case for enterprise networking" (Ghosh 2014)

When considering an introduction of an ESN, organisations need to assess important issues that come into play when using social media, such as control, openness, engagement, co-creation, and return on the investment, among others. Also, since organisations vary on many dimensions, such as leadership, culture, resources and the nature of industries, the optimal degree to which an

organisation should adopt and integrate social media and transform itself will vary. (Fidelman 2013) In my study I have tried to provide a relevant theoretical and practical framework for a successful implementation for an ESN given the current set up and cultural foundations at the case company, as identified throughout the research project. Based on the research findings I have created a framework that I believe would work for the case company but it will need to be validated by the people using the tool in the case company, both the production workers as well as their management. Also, what needs to be highlighted is that what works for other companies may not work for others.

As Hinchcliffe & Peter (2012) point out, social business benefits accrue in many interesting but often unexpected places, and trying to figure out in advance what these undefined outcomes are is largely a fruitless exercise. Instead, companies should begin by solving small set of well-defined business problems with social business solutions. Over time, it is very likely that emergent and highly opportunistic solutions and outcomes will appear. (Hinchcliffe & Peter 2012: 129) Also McKinsey research (2013) emphasises the role of experiment and learning with ESNs. Since they are made to respond to the needs of agile business also they themselves should be seen as agile tools that need to be deployed and tested rather than planned ahead in all possible detail. This is something I would also like to highlight for the case company. As long as there is someone – a Community Manager - in charge of the initiative so that it has a chance to get off the ground and start evolving, the rest can be done on a more try and learn basis. Of course there needs to be a business case for the initiative and a vision of what the company would like to achieve with the tool. However, especially in this type of 'unknown ESN territory' as the production environment presents, there are likely to more unexpected benefits, as well as challenges, as those that can be predicted.

Lastly, it is important to reiterate that implementing enterprise social tools is not a technology challenge but a cultural and behavioral challenge. As we know, changing behavior and culture does not happen overnight. Therefore patience, together with proactive approach to facilitate and create change are both needed in equal measures to help move the organisation in the right direction.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

Since all of the literature on ESN has been done on office workers, it was rather challenging trying to fit some of the theoretical framework into the specifics of the production environment in the case company. Since a lot of the theory focused on technological specifics of ESNs as well as the premise that workers use personal profiles to access the network, I had to be rather selective in what theory I included in my work. I am aware of the limitations this poses to the study but at the same time I genuinely believe that much of the social business and ESN theory holds true regardless of the environment in which the tool is being used. Ideas around employee engagement and empowerment as well as improved internal communications practices are just as applicable in context of office workers as they have proven to be in a production setting.

The decision of the company to have the research conducted anonymously posed some further limitations to the study. Even if all participants discussed openly with me and I was able to gather what I believe to be very genuine primary data, the fact that I was not granted access to the raw secondary data for the Employee Welfare Survey results meant that I had to base my analysis mostly on the interview findings and only use the survey results as reference data in order to reflect the validity of the interviews. Due to the limited time resources the case company could allocate for my research, the number of interviews had to be limited to four, which of course sets limitations in terms of sampling. What is positive is that I was able to capture the perspectives of representatives from each group involved in the ESN initiative – HR, production management, production workers and their foreman. However, it would have been advantageous for the validity of my research to have a wider interview sampling, especially within the production workers. For example interviewing different age groups would have provided interesting information on whether age for example plays a role in how the benefits of an ESN would be perceived.

Finally, due to scope and time limitations of the study I had to limit the output of the research into ESN theory and implementation ideas. It would have not only

been useful but also highly interesting to be able to see through the implementation process when it takes place. As I see it, my role has been to plant the seed and work as the initial promotor of the new tool. With this study I will hand over ideas on the benefits of ESN and some practical suggestions of how I see the tool best implemented in the case company. It would be great to see in the future if the company management has decided to make the time investment in this and further, how they have made it successful within the pilot unit and possibly even beyond that.

6.3 Ideas for Future Research

Given the extent to which social business maturity requires a cultural change within organisations, a more in-depth analysis on leadership and business process redesign would be a natural addition or a continuum to the topics covered in my study. Especially different aspects of leadership theory allowing for a social business to emerge would be highly fascinating topic to dig into since without leadership businesses cannot turn the course of actions and cultural foundations. In a global context the benefits of ESNs are already being widely realised if not fully understood yet. In a Gartner Inc. press release (2013) it is emphasised that in order for businesses to gain full benefits of new social initiatives, they need to realise that they are very different from previous technology deployments. As opposed to traditional technology rollouts, for example ERP or CRM that have been implemented with a 'push' mentality, the social initiatives require a 'pull' approach and a very different style of leadership. It would be great to be able to elaborate more on these theories and focus areas.

Also it would be great to have more – or at least some to begin with - research done on the specific context of blue-collar workers and ESN. My impression, based on the findings through my own research, is that much of the ESN theory is applicable to both white and blue collar workers however, it would be interesting to have some more in-depth research done in this area.

Furthermore, as ESN become more and more common across companies also in Finland, it will be interesting to see some real concrete results in how they have been adopted and what business value they have delivered.

I also have a specific interest in this area as during my research process with the case company I have had a chance to introduce an ESN in my own workplace. The setting is very different to the case company in that we are a team of currently ten knowledge workers however, I can clearly see in practice that the benefits of an ESN really are starting to unfold. In our company we have moved a majority of our conversations from email into ESN channels and are almost organically starting to build a great momentum with the help of the ESN. Social media really has the potential of having great power in making business personal, giving it 'a face'. Being able to send quick comments, post pictures and share any updates whilst seeing the full conversations taking place live creates a feeling of togetherness and sense of common purpose. A few months ago I would have been doubtful of ESN being able to replace email but I now notice that most of our discussions take place in ESN channels rather than email chains. Some information still seems more relevant to be sent via email but in general, email is now starting to seem clumsy and faceless compared to the ESN we are using. Gartner Inc. press release (2013) claims that "by 2016, 50 percent of large organisations will have internal Facebook-like social networks, and 30 percent of these will be considered as essential as email and telephones are today". I would be inclined to believe that this indeed seems a very likely future, also in Finland.

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Interview Questions HR Specialist (in Finnish)

Yleisiä kysymyksiä tehtävästä ja yrityksestä:

1. Mikä on toimenkuvasi?
2. Miten pitkään olet toiminut siinä?
3. Kuvaile lyhyesti strategianne HR:n osalta
4. Miten HR-strategianne linkittyy yrityksen strategiaan?
5. Miten kuvailisit yrityksenne nykyistä yrityskulttuuria?

Työilmapiiri & Yrityksen sisäinen viestintä:

6. Millainen yleisilmapiiri yrityksessä vallitsee?
7. Miten henkilöstö on kokenut viimeaikaiset organisaatiomuutokset?
8. Mitkä asiat omasta mielestäsi kaipaisivat parannusta henkilöstön hyvinvoinnissa ja osallistamisessa?
9. Mitä henkilöstön hyvinvointiin liittyviä mittauskeinoja yrityksessä on käytössä?
10. Mitä kommunikointikanavia yrityksen sisällä on käytössä tällä hetkellä?
11. Mitä haasteita kommunikoinnissa on tällä hetkellä?
12. Onko työntekijöillä mahdollisuus antaa palautetta johdolle?
13. Osallistetaanko työntekijöitä päätöksentekoon? Millä keinoin?
14. Onko teillä ollut suunnitteilla uusia kommunikaatiovälineitä/tapoja?

Tuotannon työntekijät & ESN:

15. Minkä takia mielestäsi kannattaa keskittyä tuotannon työntekijöihin ESN:n pilottivaiheessa?
16. Miten tuotannon työntekijät mielestäsi hyötyisivät ESN:stä?
17. Miten luulet työntekijöiden ottavan ESN:n vastaan?
18. Mitä huolenaiheita heillä olisi?
19. Mistä he pitäisivät?
20. Miten sen saisi myytyä heille?
21. Mitä hyötyä/arvoa näkisit ESN:stä olevan omaan työhösi?
22. Haluatko vielä lisätä jotain?

Interview Questions Production Manager (in Finnish)

Yleisiä kysymyksiä tehtävästä ja yrityksestä:

1. Mikä on toimenkuvasi?
2. Miten pitkään olet toiminut siinä?
3. Kuvaile lyhyesti strategianne tuotannon osalta
4. Miten kuvailisit yrityksenne nykyistä yrityskulttuuria?

Työilmapiiri, tuotannon työntekijät & viestintä:

5. Millainen yleisilmapiiri tuotannossa vallitsee?
6. Miten luulet tuotannon työntekijöiden kokevan viimeaikaiset organisatiomuutokset?
7. Mitkä asiat omasta mielestäsi kaipaisivat parannusta henkilöstön hyvinvoinnissa ja osallistamisessa?
8. Mitä erityispiirteitä nousee esiin kommunikoinnissa tuotannon työntekijöiden kanssa?
9. Mitä kommunikointikanavia käytössä on tällä hetkellä?
10. Mitä haasteita kommunikoinnissa on tällä hetkellä?
11. Onko teillä ollut suunnitteilla uusia kommunikaatiovälineitä/tapoja?
12. Luuletko, että tuotannon työntekijöillä on tarvetta avoimempaan vuorovaikutteiseen kommunikaatioon?
13. Minkälaisiin asioihin/päätöksiin haluaisit osallistaa heitä?

ESN tuotannon työntekijöiden parissa:

14. Minkälaisissa haasteissa uskoisit ESN:n olevan avuksi?
15. Miten luulet työntekijöiden ottavan ESN:n vastaan?
16. Mitä huolenaiheita heillä olisi?
17. Mistä he pitäisivät?
18. Miten sen saisi myytyä heille?
19. Minkälaiset asiat motivoivat tuotannon työntekijöitä?
20. Miten uskoisit työnjohtajien suhtautuvan ESN:ään?

21. Uskotko, että ESN toisi lisäarvoa heidän ja tuotannon väliseen kommunikointiin?
22. Mitä hyötyä/arvoa näkisit ESN:stä olevan omaan työhösi?
23. Haluatko vielä lisätä jotain?

Interview Questions Production Foreman and Production Worker (in Finnish)

Yleisiä kysymyksiä tehtävästä ja yrityksestä:

1. Mikä on toimenkuvasi?
2. Miten pitkään olet toiminut siinä?

Työilmapiiri, tuotannon työntekijät & sisäinen viestintä:

3. Millainen yleisilmapiiri tuotannossa vallitsee?
4. Mitkä asiat omasta mielestäsi kaipaisivat parannusta henkilöstön hyvinvoinnissa ja osallistamisessa?
5. Mitä viestintäkanavia yrityksellä on käytössä tällä hetkellä?
6. Mitä haasteita viestinnässä on tällä hetkellä?
7. Onko tuotannon työntekijöillä tarvetta avoimempaan vuorovaikutteiseen viestintään?
8. Minkälaisiin asioihin/päätöksiin tuotannon työntekijät haluaisivat osallistua?

Tuotannon työntekijät ja ESN

9. Minkälaisissa haasteissa uskoisit uuden työkalun olevan avuksi?
10. Miten luulet työntekijöiden ottavan työkalun vastaan?
11. Mitä huolenaiheita näkisit työntekijöillä olevan työkalun suhteen?
12. Minkälaiset asiat motivoivat tuotannon työntekijöitä?
13. Uskotko, että uusi työkalu toisi lisäarvoa johdon ja tuotannon väliseen viestintään?