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Proposal to Develop the Roles and Responsibilities in an Organization

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<p>The objective of this thesis is to propose an development plan for organizational roles and responsibilities. The case company had released the first version of the roles and responsibilities matrix before this study. Due to this, the company is seeking improvement ideas to improve the matrix further overall.</p> <p>This study included seven different sections. This thesis is based on the company's internal documents, interviews with employees and leadership team, insight gained during employment in the company, and best practice. The study starts with current state analysis on the company's current roles, responsibilities, and the structure of them. After this, available knowledge and best practices were explored. Lastly, the initial proposal building and validation of the proposal were executed.</p> <p>The key findings of this study revealed that the company's roles and responsivities were inadequate, and there are difficulties affiliated. The roles and responsibilities matrix is lacking in user-friendliness, and it is not seen as a useful tool to be used. The last key finding was that the company is lacking in future procedures to improve the matrix.</p> <p>The outcome of this study consist of three main proposals: a proposal for solving the overall lack of roles and responsibilities, a proposal for creating a Finnish visualized roles, tasks and responsibilities chart and a proposal for implementing a continuous improvement process.</p>	
Keywords	Continuous improvement, Responsibility, Communication

Tekijä Otsikko Sivumäärä Aika	Ingvar Junolainen Organisaation roolien ja vastuualueiden kehittäminen 52 sivua + 5 liitettä 01.06.2020
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<p>Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on esittää ehdotus organisaation roolien ja vastuualueiden kehittämiseen. Kohdeyritys oli julkaissut ennen opinnäytetyön aloitusta ensimmäisen version roolien ja vastuualueiden matriisista. Yrityksen tavoitteena on kehittää roolien ja vastuualueiden matriisia ja saada uusia ideoita sen kehittämiseksi.</p> <p>Tutkimus koostuu seitsemästä eri osasta ja perustuu yrityksen sisäisiin dokumentteihin, yrityksen työntekijöiden ja johtoryhmän haastatteluihin, yrityksessä työskentelystä saatuun tietoon ja parhaisiin käytäntöihin. Tutkimus alkaa nykytila-analyysillä yrityksen nykyisistä rooleista, vastuualueista ja niiden rakenteesta. Tämän jälkeen tutustutaan käytettävissä olevaan teoriaan ja parhaisiin käytäntöihin. Tutkimus etenee tämän jälkeen ehdotuksen rakentamiseen ja ehdotuksen validointiin.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyössä tehdyt löydökset osoittavat, että yrityksen roolit ja vastuualueet ovat puutteelliset ja niiden kokoamisessa on haasteita. Roolien ja vastuualueiden matriisi ei ole käyttäjäystävällinen ja sitä ei pidetä yrityksen työntekijöiden kesken nykyisellä hetkellä hyödyllisenä. Lisäksi tulevaisuuden suunnitelmat ovat puutteelliset tulevaisuuden osalta.</p> <p>Tämän insinöörityön lopputulos koostuu kolmesta osasta, jotka ovat ehdotus roolien ja vastuualueiden kokonaisvaltainen selkeytys, ehdotus suomenkielisestä roolien, tehtävien ja vastuualueiden kaaviosta ja ehdotus jatkuvan parannusprosessin käyttöönotosta.</p>	
Avainsanat	Jatkuva kehittäminen, vastuullisuus, kommunikointi

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List of Abbreviations

SLA	Service Level Agreement
CSA	Current State Analysis
R&R	Roles and Responsibilities
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
EB2B	Electronic Commerce Business-to-Business
CIP	Continuous Improvement Process

1 Introduction

For a company to be efficient, the roles and responsibilities must be well structured and defined. This may be challenging when the company expansion and processes are not determined in the process. When the company roles have to engage each other regularly, it is imperative to ensure the functionality of the responsibilities. This is preferably executed by preventing duplication of effort from appearing. One important consideration is to have roles and responsibilities communicated and defined to the employees. For a company to reach the Service Level Agreements, tasks must be executed as expected.

1.1 Business Context

The case company in this study is a European company that is one of the market leaders. The company provides products that are used in building, demolition, and interior finishing, but they also provide software and services. Founded in the mid 20th century, the company is self-sufficient and has a wide range of expertise in different departments of the company. The company has over 29 000 employees worldwide and had a yearly revenue of 5.2 billion euros in 2018.

This study concentrates on roles and responsibilities and how the case company could increase transparency and decrease obscurity. The case company currently reviews the roles and responsibilities monthly in the leadership team meetings. The study focuses on multiple different levels of the organization, including General Manager, different Directors, Regional Managers, and Account Managers.

1.2 Business Challenge, Objective and Outcome

The company seeks to be able to sustain the accountability and service levels with the rapidly growing employee count due to which a decision has been made to revise the current roles and responsibilities in the case company. At the time of conducting this thesis (Spring 2020), the case company has made the first version of the R&R matrix. Due to this, all of the roles and responsibilities need an audit to determine adjustments and whether the R&R is up to date.

The case company leadership team is seeking to develop the current model for everyday use in the organization. One of the development needs is to increase accountability throughout the organization to improve the operations. Roles and responsibilities matrix is new output, and there is a lack of knowledge in the case company on further developing this matrix. For further development, the case company culture and way of operating need to be taken into attention. The case company is lacking in feedback from the current model, which has brought uncertainty in the leadership team from the current model.

The business challenge of this thesis is centralized on the operations, roles, and responsibilities to improve accountability for different roles overall in the company structure. **The objective of the study is to propose development ideas for roles and responsibilities that clarify accountability across the organization.**

The outcome of this study is to produce a proposal on how the roles and responsibilities of the case company could be developed further so that they are ready for continuous growth and possible organizational changes in the future. From the business context point of view, the result of this thesis is crucial, since the case company employee count is continually increasing.

1.3 Thesis Outline

The study will inspect the current roles and responsibilities matrix and propose development ideas for the future. This study focuses on the overall level of the roles and responsibilities to improve overall accountability throughout every individual role. This thesis was built by various methods to ensure quality. The current process was researched, it was analyzed, and employees from various roles were interviewed to gain a solid overall understanding. Interviews were held on every level of the organizational hierarchy from General Manager to Account Manager. Every opinion from individuals interviewed was taken into account, and this ensured that the proposal is suitable for the various levels in the case company.

This study contains seven sections. The first section of this study includes an introduction of the thesis and the case company. An overview of the materials and methods used in

this thesis is presented in the second section. The third section presents an analysis of the current roles and responsibilities in the case company. Available literature and conceptual framework are presented in the fourth section of this study. The thesis then continues with the fifth section, describing how the proposal was build and the outcome of the study. The sixth section includes the validated proposal as the final outcome. The final section, section seven, consists of an overall evaluation and summary of the study.

2 Method and Material

This thesis is conducted as a case study on the organizational level of the case company. The data is collected from the material provided by the case company, analyzing data, and interviewing different employees. Interviews included employees and supervisors. This section is divided into two different parts, and it first gives an overview of how the study was conducted by explaining the research design. The second part presents the methods of data collection used to conduct this study.

As an employee of the company, it is worth mentioning that the author of this study has used the knowledge obtained from employment in the case company to build this study. In the proposal building stage, this knowledge has been taken into account.

2.1 Research Design

As shown in the diagram below, this study was conducted in five different stages. The purpose of the diagram is to visualize which kind of data were used in different stages of this study. The Outcomes of the different stages are also visualized in the diagram.

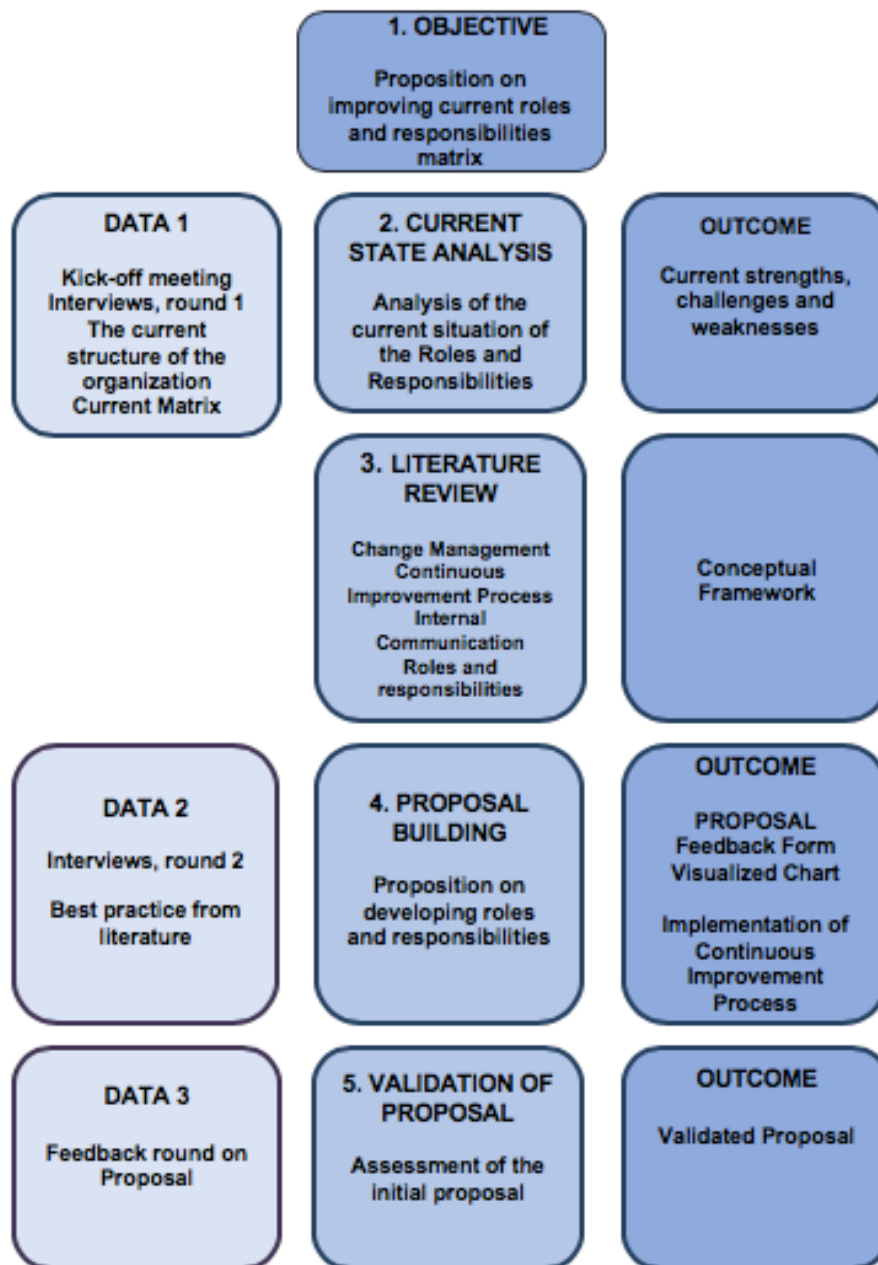


Figure 1. Research design diagram

As shown in Figure 1 above, the diagram is divided into three different sections to clarify the purpose of this study and to explain how a particular outcome is achieved. As shown above, the data and outcomes are tied to each other.

The study was started by defining the objective of the study. The objective gave guidelines for conducting this study, and it also included the business challenge of the case company.

After defining the objective, in the next stage, the study focused on the current state analysis of the case company. This section of the study was carried out to understand the current baseline of the case company and what their strengths and weaknesses are throughout the current state. This stage contains data 1 that was gathered from interviews and material provided by the case company. This stage resulted in an outcome that defined the current strengths, weaknesses, and challenges in the case company.

After appraising the current state of the roles and responsibilities, the study proceeded to research available literature. The literature used for this study included change management, continuous improvement process, internal communication. Available knowledge from roles and responsibilities is also used. The conceptual framework of this study is the outcome of this stage.

The proposal building stage was the fourth stage of the study. This stage contained data 2 that included round 2 interviews and drew information from the literature review as the best practices. The outcome of this stage was the proposal in the form of development ideas for the future. The proposition included implementing a new feedback form, visualizing the current matrix, and implementation of a continuous improvement process.

The fifth and final stage of the study was a validation of the proposal, and it was conducted from feedback received from the proposal stage of the study. The outcome of the fifth stage was the validated final proposal for the case company to be implemented.

2.2 Data Collection and Analysis

To ensure the reliability and credibility of this study, the data used was collected from multiple different data sources. To secure the quality of the data, multiple different types of data were used. The interview rounds that were executed are presented below in Table 1.

Table 1. Details of meetings, interviews and discussions, in data 1-3

	Participants / role	Data type	Topic, description	Date, length	Documented as
Data 1, for the Current State Analysis (Section 3)					
1	Interview 1: Finance and Operations Director	Face to face interview	Current roles and responsibilities & How they are specified.	9 March, 0.5 hour	Field notes
2	Interview 2: Marketing Director	Face to face interview	Current roles and responsibilities & How they are specified.	9 March, 0.5 hour	Field notes
3	Interview 3: General Manager Finland	Skype interview	Idea behind R&R – matrix, current operating structure & future goals.	17 March, 0.5 hour	Field notes
Data 2, for Proposal Building (Section 5)					
4	Interview 4: Account Manager	Skype Interview	Life of an Account manager, how tasks and responsibilities are defined & development ideas.	17 April, 0.5 hour	Field notes
5	Interview 5: Store representative	Skype Interview	Importance of teamwork, Double work & current matrix.	20 April, 0.5 hour	Field notes
6	Interview 6: Regional Manager	Skype Interview	Task and responsibility definition for Account Manager and Regional Manager, communication & current matrix.	20 April, 0.5 hour	Field notes
7	Interview 7: Regional Manager	Skype Interview	Importance of sharing, heading level vs. details, 20/80 rule, current matrix & overall clarity.	22 April, 1 hour	Field notes
8	Interview 9: Regional Manager	Skype Interview	Accountability, added value, current matrix & master data.	23 April, 1 hour	Field notes
Data 3, from Validation (Section 6)					
9	Finance and Operations Director	Skype Interview	Validation of the initial proposal & feedback round.	27 April, 1 hour	Field notes

The data for this study were collected in three rounds, as seen in the table introduced above. Data 1, the first round, focuses on the current state analysis. The data was collected to get a clear view and knowledge of the starting state as possible. The collection

of the opinions of the employees was conducted from the start of the study. This enabled that the project approach was made from the right angle.

Data 2, the second round of data collection, was conducted to collect further knowledge about the case company needs in particular areas and also including current precondition for evolving the operations. The current case company preconditions and the critical success factors of the proposed implementation were defined with the help of Data 2. The data collection round was done to ensure that the presented proposal as the end result was as suitable as possible.

In the final round of data collection, Data 3, was executed as a Skype meeting after the proposal presentation. The meeting was with the project stakeholder, and it gave the possibility to give feedback on the proposed changes. The data collected was used in the validation part, and with the received feedback, changes were made to the proposal.

The interviews construct the fundamental method of data collection in this study. This is since it was very crucial to build a proposal as relevant as possible for the employees and the case company. The first round of interviews was conducted as face-to-face interviews and Skype interviews with predefined questions and some time for conversation (Appendices 1-3). The second round of interviews was organized as Skype interviews with predefined questions. The second round of interviews focused more on the opinion of the employees with predefined questions (Appendices 4-5). The final round of data collection was written down as notes.

The internal documents provided by the case company that were used in this study are presented in Table 2

Table 2. The internal documents used in the current state analysis, Data 1

	Name of document	Number of pages	Description
1	Roles and Responsibilities Matrix	2 tables	responsibilities of the case company
2	Organizational chart	1 table	Roles of the case company
3	Skill matrix	1 table	Employee's current knowledge

The study also included internal documents provided by the case company that were analyzed, as seen in Table 2 above. The documents were primarily used for the current state analysis, as the documents covered important information to gaining a clear and deep understanding of the overall status.

In section 3 below, the findings of the current state analysis are discussed.

3 Current State Analysis

This section presents the result from the current state analysis of the case company operations and the roles and responsibilities in the organization. The current state analysis is covered in six different subsections. This section starts first with an overview of the current state analysis describing how this section was executed. This is followed by an explanation of the background and requirements for the roles and responsibilities project. The third subsection describes the current organizational operating structure. After this, the current roles and responsibilities are presented. Findings from the analysis are presented in the fifth subsection. This section ends with a summary of the key conclusions obtained from the current state analysis.

3.1 Overview of CSA Stage

The current state analysis was conducted in three stages. The first stage was conducted to gather knowledge about how the different departments were organized in the case company. It was essential to recognize the current departments and tasks between them in the current operating model. A meeting with the stakeholder was organized, regarding the subject to view the available documentation.

The interviews with key managers related to the roles and responsibilities were included in the second stage of the CSA. These interviews were conducted using pre-defined questions (Appendices 1-3), building on the knowledge achieved at the start of the CSA. The interviews focused on giving to the directors involved the opportunity to allocate their opinions and reflections of the current status and also a possibility to gather information about the activities that were currently in progress.

In the final stage of the current state analysis, all of the data gathered was included to identify the improvement needs about the organizational roles and responsibilities. The relevant company documentation was reviewed in the analysis stage to expand the understanding.

3.2 Background on the Demand for this Study

Demand on this study was required after the case company published the first version of the roles and responsibilities matrix. The leadership team did not receive any feedback from the matrix, and there is uncertainty if the matrix is used. The current case company understanding is that the roles and especially the responsibilities for various tasks were not entirely assigned to specific roles or teams. The case company has developed a rough matrix of the current roles and responsibilities.

The case company's concern is that without clear roles and responsibilities, accountability is inadequate, which results in duplication of effort and average execution time on the performance of the business. The case company wishes to clarify accountability across the different departments and roles in the organization to obtain agile operations for future expansion.

3.3 Structure of the Current Organization

The performance of the operations in the case company is currently divided between different directors, and the director manages the roles and responsibilities of their team. In total, there are eight various directors, from sales to HR. The directors of the case company have leadership meetings every month, where relevant topics are discussed, and different deficiencies are raised. Since the organization has multiple different roles, the leadership team prefers to maintain the ownership of the different roles and responsibilities in the upper level of the company hierarchy. Figure 2 below illustrates the current organizational structure of the case company.

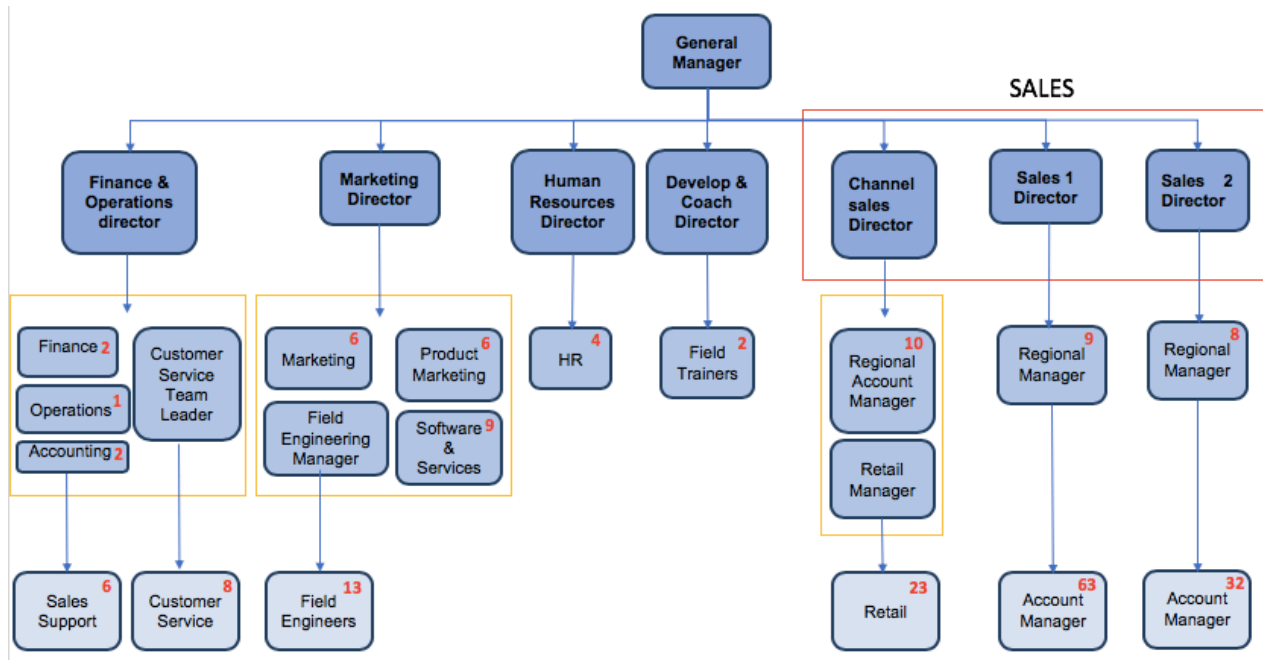


Figure 2. Current organization structure

Figure 2 above presents the current organizational structure of the case company. The number after a specific role indicates the number of employees in that position. The roles that are missing a number consist of only one person. The rectangles compound-specific relevant topics and units together to clear out obscurity of the structure. As seen in the figure, most of the case company employees work in the sales, and quantitatively the most sizable role is Account Manager. It is safe to state that the roles of Account Manager and Regional Manager are the foundation of the company.

The headquarters in the capital area include daily 40 people, and the remainder of the employees of the company are either on the field facing customers or working in different stores all around the country. Since employees might rarely see their supervisor, there are monthly meetings or team meetings where the employees have the chance to discuss particular changes or other issues in general.

The case company encourages people to be entrepreneurial in terms of actions and decisions made in daily business. The current structure is based on territories in which the Regional manager of the region is primarily accountable for the account managers and territory outcome. The Regional Manager is responsible for the account managers

and accountable for the outcome produced in the territory. The directors of the case company are accountable for the Regional manager's regions. They have the authority to accept or decline changes in the area.

3.4 Roles and Responsibilities

This section introduces the different data currently used and a broad explanation of the current state. The case company currently has two different tables about the roles and responsibilities of the organization. The different roles of the organization are defined in the organizational chart that places hierarchy over the roles in the case company. The responsibilities are defined in the R&R Matrix that the leadership team has conducted from autumn 2019 to early spring 2020. This study was initiated right after the matrix was introduced to the organization. The current logic behind the roles and responsibilities are shown below in Table 3.

Table 3. Roles and responsibilities matrix logic

EXAMPLE OF A PROCESS		EXPLANATION
DEPARTMENT	Sales	Discloses which department is the most relevant for the task
CLUSTER	Account development - Execution	Discloses which topic is the most relevant for the task
AREA	Order Entry	Refines the cluster and topic
TASK	Customer order with standard term and pricing in the threshold	Explanation for what is supposed to be done and executed in an task
KEY DELIVERABLE	Orders processed via CRM7	Clarify what is the end result of an task
EXECUTED BY	Account Manager	Who is supposed to execute the task
ACCOUNTABLE PERSON	Regional Manager	Who is accountable that the task is done right and inside the SLA
SUPPORTED BY	Customer service / Sales Support	Department / Person who could help when problems occur
FREQUENCY	Daily	How often certain task is supposed to be executed

As seen in the table presented above, the Roles and Responsibilities matrix consists of nine different headers. The headers are darkened on the left side of the table. These headers are the most relevant and give the most extensive overview of a task, according to the directors. The intermediate column describes a sales order entry process and how the data is written in the matrix. Tasks in the R&R matrix are conducted similarly, and the same rationality was used when the matrix was built, according to the directors. The final column explains different headers and what is the purpose of them. The Explanation gives a brief overview of specific tasks and responsibilities beyond it.

According to the directors, the introduction of the roles and responsibilities matrix did not produce any feedback from the case company employees. At the current state, the directors are not sure of the usefulness of the matrix. The leadership team utilized a considerable amount of time to conduct the matrix. The lack of feedback on something substantial and unique generates plenty of concern in the leadership team, according to the directors.

According to the Finance and Operations Director, the Regional manager's responsibilities are not entirely clarified, and some more specific task and responsibility descriptions are required. Digital marketing and electronic commerce business-to-business, later referred to as EB2B, roles are missing from the matrix, according to the Marketing Director. According to the General Manager, the matrix was done mainly for roles that have numerous employees. As seen in Figure 3, roles and responsibilities that have only one employee are the different directors, managers, and operations. According to the marketing director, it is essential to define the tasks and responsibilities for the roles for equality and accountability. According to the directors, remnant roles have a transparent and accountable specification.

3.4.1 Service Level Agreements and Duplication of Effort

According to information gathered from the interviews, Service Level Agreements and Key Performance Indicators, later referred to as SLA and KPI, generally differ in different

teams and variate inside different teams. Roles such as account manager and customer service that are straightforward customer-facing roles have advanced and clarified SLA's and KPI's as the roles are visible with sales and customer satisfaction. The roles that were defined as back-office roles and the roles that are measured quarterly are missing SLA's and KPI's as there are not always evident and apparent targets according to the marketing director.

A monthly meeting between employees and the supervisor is conducted between every employee of the case company. Meetings are necessary and provide an opportunity to view SLA's and KPI's according to the directors. According to the directors, company changes are mainly informed via e-mail and explained in the monthly meetings if requested. Directors are not convinced whether the current way of informing is the best way as feedback is occasionally lacking, and employees might not follow them.

According to the general manager, the addition of more clear KPI's and SLA's improve response time and duplication of effort. The leadership team is continually seeking new clear objectives to clarify roles and responsibilities. The addition of clear KPI's for different roles enhance productivity and employee development, according to the general manager. Tracking of employee development is uncomplicated as objectives and targets are clear.

3.4.2 Accountability

Accountability is on an acceptable level, at least in theory; however, in actual operating structure, the lack of accountability is a concern, according to the marketing director. R&R matrix defines for each task a specific person who executes it, who is accountable for it, who supports the task, and how frequently the task is fulfilled. According to the marketing director, it is still unidentified whether the employees of the case company are using the R&R matrix to identify what tasks are supposed to be done, who is accountable for it, and who is the contact person for support. At the current state, each employee's supervisor or the customer service is approached when facing a stalemate. The logic of accountability is visualized in Figure 3 below.

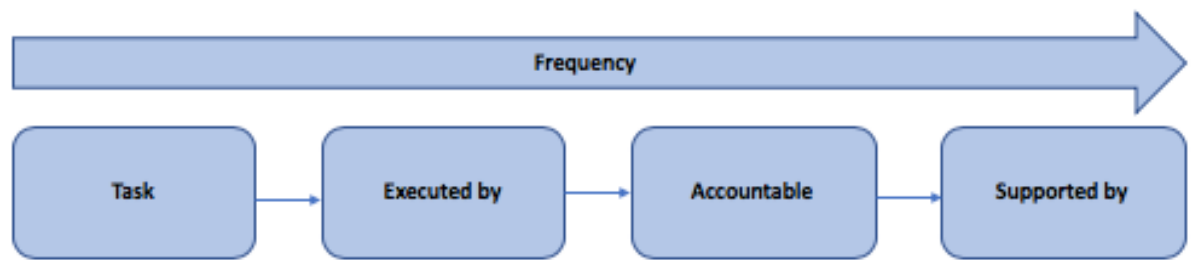


Figure 3. Accountability in the case company

According to the Finance & Operations Director, accountability is currently lacking in some roles, and by defining all the roles and responsibilities, accountability is gained. It is relevant for accountability to describe the R&R on a high level due to it enabling a transparent way of operating. The elimination of unclear roles and responsibilities decreases insecurity and increases accountability, according to the Finance and Operations director.

3.5 Findings from the Current State of the Roles and Responsibilities

This section presents the findings from the current state analysis. The data that was conducted in the current state analysis was displayed in headings 3.3 – 3.4. The conclusions separated from the data are displayed in this chapter, with the key findings constructing the outcome of this chapter. The key findings define the key components of the proposal to be conducted as the outcome of this study. The logic of the current state analysis is presented below in Figure 4.

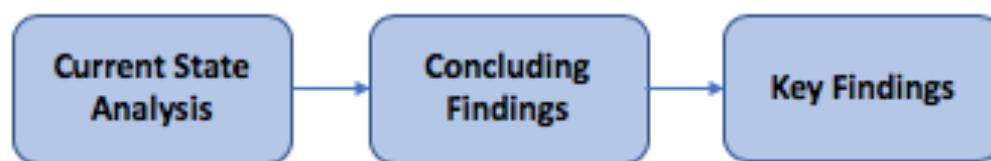


Figure 4. Current State Analysis logic

3.5.1 Strengths

The Roles and responsibilities required to execute day-to-day assignments are generally defined in the case company R&R matrix. The case company directors have obtained clarity on accountability and responsibilities after the matrix was discharged for the employees. When ambiguities occur on the responsibilities, the case company employees have the opportunity to review the task from the matrix. Discovery of knowledge is enabled to one file when indistinct tasks appear.

Further adjusting the description of the roles and tasks is uncomplicated as the data can be found in a single table. The case company has preferred Excel since constructing a clear structure using Excel is uncomplicated. There is profound internal knowledge of different tasks performed in the case company. The individuals that manage the roles and responsibilities have extensive experience from different roles previously.

3.5.2 Weaknesses

The current state of the roles and responsibilities is incomplete. Although most of the daily tasks get done without complication, there are multiple tasks without defined responsibilities. Due to lacking tasks, a clear view of who should be performing these is inadequate. This is causing the accountability not to reach the level it could. The incomplete responsibilities include both managerial and operative responsibilities. Though the current responsibilities for the generality of the tasks are determined, these have not been informed clearly enough for the individuals.

As described in the identified strengths, there is a high level of knowledge from different roles. The leadership team has experience from most of the roles in the case company. However, the difficulty is that some of the roles and responsibilities are developed quickly in the past years, or there is not any experience of them in the leadership team. This is causing a risk of lacking accountability

The ownership of the R&R matrix is currently not defined, and this means that the responsibility for the matrix is lacking. This is causing further inadequate responsibility for future changes in the roles, tasks, and responsibilities. At the current state, there is not

any responsible individual who is accountable for potential adjustments in the future to the matrix. There is no feedback for the current R&R structure, and this is causing uncertainty in the case company. It is safe to state that the current matrix is not used daily, if at all. The current structure is not as convenient as the matrix is not seen as a single point of access.

The opinion of every employee of the case company is not collected as the leadership team has interviewed only a portion of the employees. Lack of quality assurance may occur as different employees from the same role have different opinions. The leadership team of the case company has not built a procedure on how to improve the matrix continually and how to get every employee to interact with the matrix. This disables continuous improvement as liability is only on the leadership team. The main problem with this way of operating is that only a fragment of the people is involved. It is challenging to implement the current matrix to frequent usage when there are no plans for the future.

3.5.3 Challenges

The challenges regarding roles and responsibilities are related to the lack of definition of all roles. Roles that are not defined at all or are missing crucial responsibilities are gathered to table 4 below.

Table 4. Incomplete responsibilities

	Roles	Brought up by	Problem
1	Regional Manager	Finance & Operations Director	All of the tasks and responsibilities are not in the R&R – matrix.
2	Digital marketing	Marketing Director	The role is not defined in the R&R – matrix.
3	EB2B	Marketing Director	The role is not defined in the R&R – matrix.
4	Directors	General Manager	The role is not defined in the R&R – matrix.
5	Finance & Accounting	General Manager	The role is not defined in the R&R – matrix.
6	Team Leaders	General Manager	The role is not defined in the R&R – matrix.

As seen in Table 4, six roles are missing responsibilities and tasks from the R&R matrix. The Regional manager role is missing tasks and responsibilities from the matrix. Digital marketing and EB2B roles are entirely missing from the matrix. Identification for digital marketing and EB2B has been a difficulty for the leadership team, and this will most probably cause some difficulties if not solved. In addition, roles and responsibilities are not defined for the different directors, finance & accounting, and team leaders. All of these six roles are missing crucial information and lacking responsibility. When all of the roles are not defined on a high level, it might cause a lack of equality in the company.

3.6 Summary of Key Findings from the Current State Analysis

Three key findings have been identified from the findings presented in this section. These are the overall lack of roles and responsibilities in the current R&R matrix, the rough

usage of the matrix of the case company employees, and the lack of procedures regarding the future changes in the R&R matrix.

Overall, there is a lack of roles and responsibilities in the case company. Most of the required roles and responsibilities are currently defined, but not in a precisely defined way. The Regional Manager can be mentioned as an example that is missing crucial roles and responsibilities. All of the smaller roles are not defined at all, and the outcome of this is that possibly obscurities occur. The roles, responsibilities, and tasks that are not communicated precisely enough have led to a status where nobody is sure which department should execute what and who is accountable for it. The outcome of this is that the individual tasks are currently not operated consistently, and task performing has a longer length than required occasionally. As a result of the current state analysis, roles that are not defined, are displayed.

The missing roles and tasks were identified in Table 4, which presents the roles that are missing tasks and responsibilities, or the role is missing altogether. Most of the roles are superior roles that consist of more than one person under the role. This has resulted in uneven uniformity in the case company as all of the roles are needed to be defined. The main reason for the matrix should be defining all of the roles and responsibilities of the company.

The third key finding is the lack of procedures regarding the changes in the future for the matrix. This is a result of an undefined plan for this recent new output and lack of resources. As mentioned earlier, this way of operation is causing problems for future changes as employees are not involved actively. Without a proper plan, it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain everyday usage from the employees.

This study aims, therefore, at conducting a proposal based on the three above-mentioned key findings. The goal is to increase clarity and increase the usage of the current matrix. In combination with this, the proposal will seek to add a future plan by defining a suitable improvement procedure for the R&R matrix changes.

In section 4, this study concentrates on discussing available knowledge and best practice that provides a basis for developing the current roles and responsibilities and creating the proposal.

4 Available Knowledge and Best Practice on Roles and Responsibilities

This section discusses relevant knowledge available and best practices in the field of improving roles and responsibilities. This section aims to explore relevant knowledge from topics related to solving the identified three key findings from the current state analysis. The topics discussed in this section are change management, continuous improvement process, internal communication, and roles and responsibilities. Knowledge is drawn from multiple different sources to conduct this literature study.

4.1 Change Management

Change management refers to organizing, leading, planning, and controlling a change in an organization to develop its performance and to accomplish the predetermined objects. Change Management consists of the adoption of various techniques, mechanisms, and instruments to manage the human and technical factors. (Huong 2014, 1).

Modern-day companies need to have acquirements for changes and the ability to innovate. The changes are necessary for success and to maintain competitiveness. The reasons behind changes can be divided into internal factors and external factors (Stenvall 2007). External factors can be, in an example, changes in the competitive situation or operating environment changing. Factors that cause internal changes can be changes in the operating model or new decision-making model. The introduction of a new service or system may cause the need for change in the company. (Stenvall 2007, 27).

Change can take place at all levels of the company, from a person to an international level affecting multiple countries or continents. Changes can deliver both positive and negative results depending on how early the change has been initiated to be carried out. Companies will face changes at some point, and these are unavoidable since the external and internal environments of an organization develop and evolve. Failing to follow changes could result in an increase in problems in an organization, negatively impact the organizational operations and processes or damage the company cash flow. (Huong 2014, 4).

4.1.1 Ten Step Change Management

Change management can be divided into multiple sectors, and George Vukotich (2011), has divided change management into ten stages:

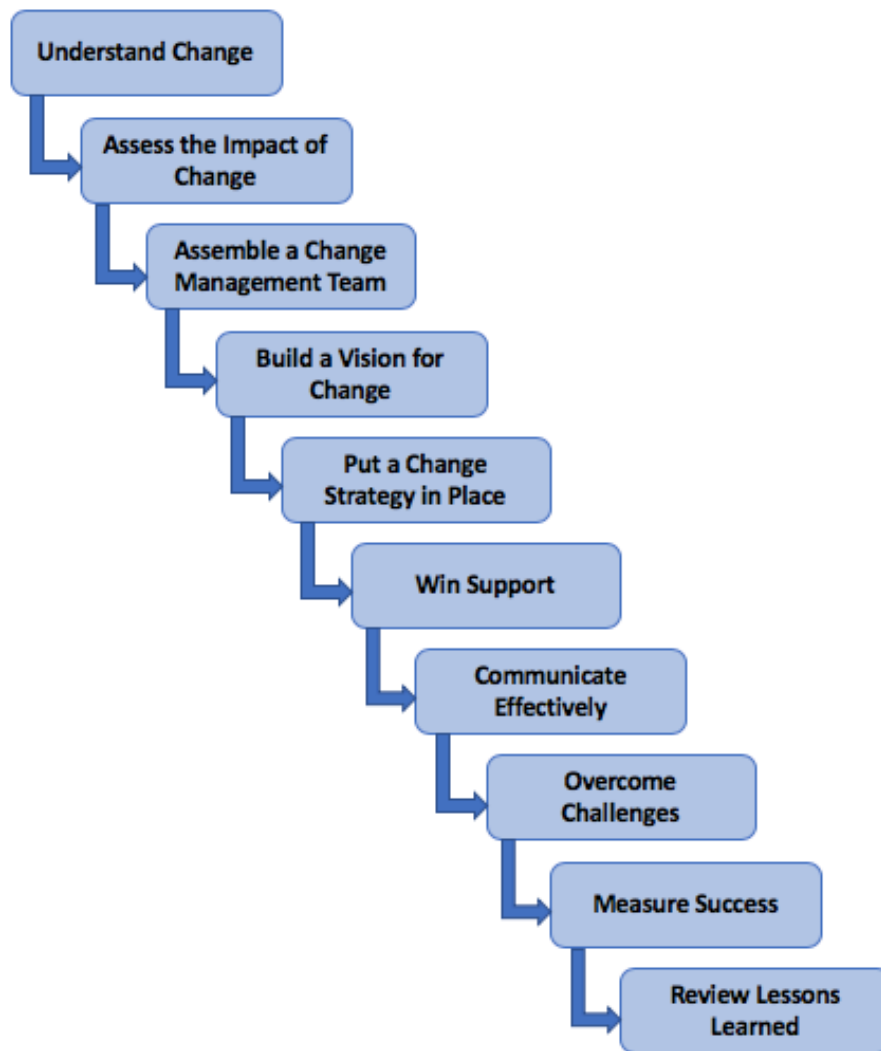


Figure 5. Ten step change management

Understand Change

Change in the workplace or organizational change affects every employee, and adjustments on their business are often needed. Change is commonly divided into continuous or discontinuous change. A continuous change, also known as continuous process improvement, goal is to modify current processes and systems. The continuous change is used when an organization wants to get the most out of the current situation. The changes made are generally adjustments, and processes remain the same. A discontinuous change, also known as reengineering, produces significant changes that change people, processes, and business. Discontinuous changes are used when an organization needs to change the way of operating, and employees need to learn new skills. (Vukotich 2011, 2-5).

A clear understanding of the current issue and opportunities available is essential to start the change. Without a clear foundation, the change efficacy decreases. Communication of the end goal from the start gives more time for employees to prepare. A clear set of goals is needed, as employees need an idea of what is changing, why change is made, and when the change takes place. Explaining risks and rewards in the early phase further support the trust of the employees. Regular communication regarding the change is essential. Otherwise, employees might make the information up with incorrect facts. Valid communication transfers into credibility as employees want to know the current situation and results gained. (Vukotich 2011, 10-13).

Assess the Impact of Change

Available opportunities and existing threats are identified by assessing the impact of an organizational change. Preparedness for the change and probability for success is raised through the assessment process. Understanding the impact of a change on organization benefits on determining the level of importance and what resources are needed for successful change. Ensuring understanding of different stages of the change and addressing every phase separately increase certainty. Individuals of the organization and their motivation for the change is an aspect that should be observed for a successful assessment. (Vukotich 2011, 32-34).

Assemble a Change Management Team

A team is needed to execute the change, and the team has a direct impact on the success level that is achieved. The right people with the right skills are needed to execute the change from the start for the change to be efficient. Individuals from different levels of the organization provide constant awareness on how the change impacts different levels. The number of team members depends on the size of the change; however, the team leader is needed to define the roles of the team members. Based on the goals set in the first phase, tasks must be set from the start that ensures the success of the change. Frequent meetings with team members give a perspective on what the situation is and a chance to talk to everyone. (Vukotich 2011, 32-34).

Build a Vision for Change

Vision for a change is essential for the company employees as it states where the organization is going and what it means to them. The vision gives guidelines to accomplish the goal, and it identifies reasons for the change to individuals. Retaining vision apparent increases understanding from the employees. Communicating vision to employees is essential before, during, and after the change. Vision takes elements from those sections. Why the change is made and what is supposed to be accomplished comes at the before phase. How the team works and is the team on time comes in during phase. How successful the change was according to the original goals comes at the after phase. (Vukotich 2011, 45-47).

Put a Change Strategy in Place

Change strategy regards resources available and how the tasks are efficiently performed. This helps to ensure that everyone in the team has agreed with the changes, a process is recognized, and goals are set in terms of time, cost, and deliverables. The strategy for change can be changed subsequently while still keeping substance-related. A plan can be made for one individual team, group, division, or for the whole organization. Considering strategic (what is accomplished), operational (to who and what), and tactical components (task to be completed) serve basis for change strategy. (Vukotich 2011, 60-63).

Win Support

Successful change management includes understanding various groups and individuals from the organization. Recognizing how change is seen from different individuals is meaningful as individuals tend to support, resist, or have not decided how the change is seen. Individuals supporting the change are open-minded and want to be involved during the change. Individuals resisting are against the change, or how it is planned, and individuals without opinion need more information before deciding. Finding the leaders of groups, and addressing the concerns, are beneficial for increasing confidence in the change. (Vukotich 2011, 69-71).

Communicate Effectively

Individuals need information at all stages of the change, and effective communication provides credibility for the change. Effective communication can be divided into outwards communication and inwards communication. Outwards communication consists of getting a message to everyone in an accessible form that it is uncomplicated to understand. Receiving information from others, understanding it, and implementing it is seen as inwards communication. Lacking communication expands the chance for uncertainties, and excessive communication increases the potential possibility to realize the most critical points. (Vukotich 2011, 78-80).

Overcome Challenges

Challenges during change occur from several sources and in several forms. A clear understanding of indicating issues and apparent asset management affects the result directly. Individuals create comfort zones from routines, and resistance from individuals is a general challenge. The unconsciousness of the future and abandon of the current routines are seen as unfavorable. Potential opportunities from the change are ignored by individuals leading to resistance. Obtaining the individual level support from the start reduces challenges on the human level. (Vukotich 2011, 88-91).

Measure Success

Evaluation and measurement of the results and success are vital to recognize the outcome of the change. Credibility is formed when stakeholders have agreed areas to measure and in what cycle the measures are made. Regular measurements reveal actual progression compared to the original change plan. Measurements allow issues to be noticed early on, preventing any significant problems eventually. Metrics used for measurements should be aligned with the original goals and organization to provide relevant data on change. Long-term and short-term performance separation offers variants for measurements. (Vukotich 2011, 108-110).

Review Lessons Learned

Review lessons learned end successful change management. Analyzing the change from start to end allows the change management team to see success factors and topics to be developed. Raising clear development targets, and awareness of development areas benefit the organization in the future changes. (Vukotich 2011, 114-116).

4.2 Continuous Improvement Process

A continuous improvement process later referred to as CIP, is a continuing business intention to improve processes, services, or products for employees or customers. The intention is to target improvements in overtime or occasionally quantum leaps at once gradually. The most utilized tool for CIP is a four-step quality guarantee method, the Plan-Do-Check-Act, later referred to as the PDCA cycle. (ASQ, n.d).

4.2.1 Plan-Do-Check-Act

The Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle, known as PDCA, is a process-oriented approach for process improvement. The origin of the PDCA cycle originates from statistics expert Walter Shewhart in the 1920s. Shewhart's concept was a plan, do, see which Dr. William Edwards Deming modified and made famous as the plan, do, study and act which later was

changed to plan, do, check, act for a logical sequence of these four steps. Figure 6 illustrates the different PDCA phases. (Singh 2019, 11).

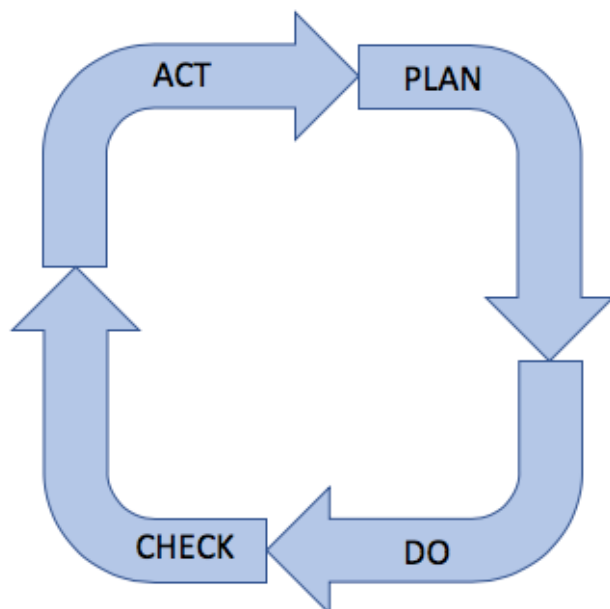


Figure 6. PDCA

The concept consists of four fundamental basis phases. In the first phase, Plan, the objective is to make a plan for the change. The current situation of the process is analyzed, and predictions of the process change are made. Next, the completed plan is executed by taking short steps one by one. The steps are conducted in controlled circumstances on a trial basis to exclude any unexpected results. In the third phase, Check, the results achieved are studied profoundly. The effect of changes is examined to notice if the desired end result is achieved. In the last phase, Action, the organization conducts actions to improve the process. (Singh 2019, 11).

The desired achievement of this cycle is to clear out abnormalities in the work process and generate conformity before implementing a new improving cycle. The current work process is maintained by a standardized cycle. Improvements are made simultaneously with the improvement cycle. (Singh 2019, 11).

4.3 Internal Communication

Internal communication provides sufficient information flow and cooperation among all individuals in an organization. Communication impacts employee productivity, experience, teamwork, and employee engagement. Everyone in the organization is responsible for communication and information flow. Communication is vital to all organizations. There are two parts to internal communication in modern spread-out companies. The two parts of internal communication include a platform that is used to spread out the information and an individual that delivers the information in a convincing and understandable form. Excellent communication is precisely planned in its entirety, supported in writing, and is business-focused. (Corrado 1994, 4,10).

Communication affects the organization's success as it does the organization's products and services. Internal communication should be seen as a resource worth investing time and money in it. Communication is one of the areas of leadership and an appliance for managing a business from all areas and dimensions. (Salin 2002, 18.) Organizations see communication as a fundamental component; however, the organization's investments are generally minor compared to other investments. Focus invested in external communications dominates internal communication as it affects the organization's outcome directly. Internal communication can drive the organization forward when executed to involve every individual and stakeholder in the organization. (Malmelin & Hakala 2005, 155).

4.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Management is a subject that involves every engaged individual in an organization and directly impacts the goals set. Management is often seen as hiring, recruiting, training, and retaining the right individuals for organizational success. Roles and responsibilities aim to provide clear guidelines on organizational operations. A clear description of roles and responsibilities ascending from individual-level clarify entirety. Accountability from individuals can be expected when roles and responsibilities are clear, which leads to the growth of productivity. Organizations target efficiency and effectiveness of operations, although unclear roles affiliate on misused resources. (Clevversim 2016).

The definition of roles and responsibilities has three central aspects that are important for determination. The first aspect is to define who is superior and where reporting is executed. Individual role responsibilities and expectations of outcome definitions are conducted in the second phase. The borderlines of decision making and authority needed for the performance of tasks is the last aspect for defining roles and responsibilities. Managing roles as a universal term and the responsibilities as role specifications bring clarity to the role overall. (Cleversim 2016).

Conducting an organizational audit is one way to bring clarity to roles and responsibilities. One transparent procedure is to produce two tables, of which the first one centralizes on all of the employees in the organization, and the second one centralizes on all of the roles and tasks executed in the organization. By conducting two different lists, the organization obtains evident information on what the organization currently has and what roles and responsibilities are missing. Combining two charts to one raw organizational chart and precisely describing every position can be used as a guideline. (Cleversim 2016).

The written roles and responsibilities are seen as futility, without clear communication to every individual in the organization. The employees of the organization should be aware of what is expected from their role. The approach for the communication method chosen to report can be anything when every individual is taken into account. (Cleversim 2016).

4.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework built in this section is guided by the findings from the Current State Analysis. The framework is aimed at tackling the specific weaknesses identified in the CSA. In Figure 7, the conceptual framework is presented.

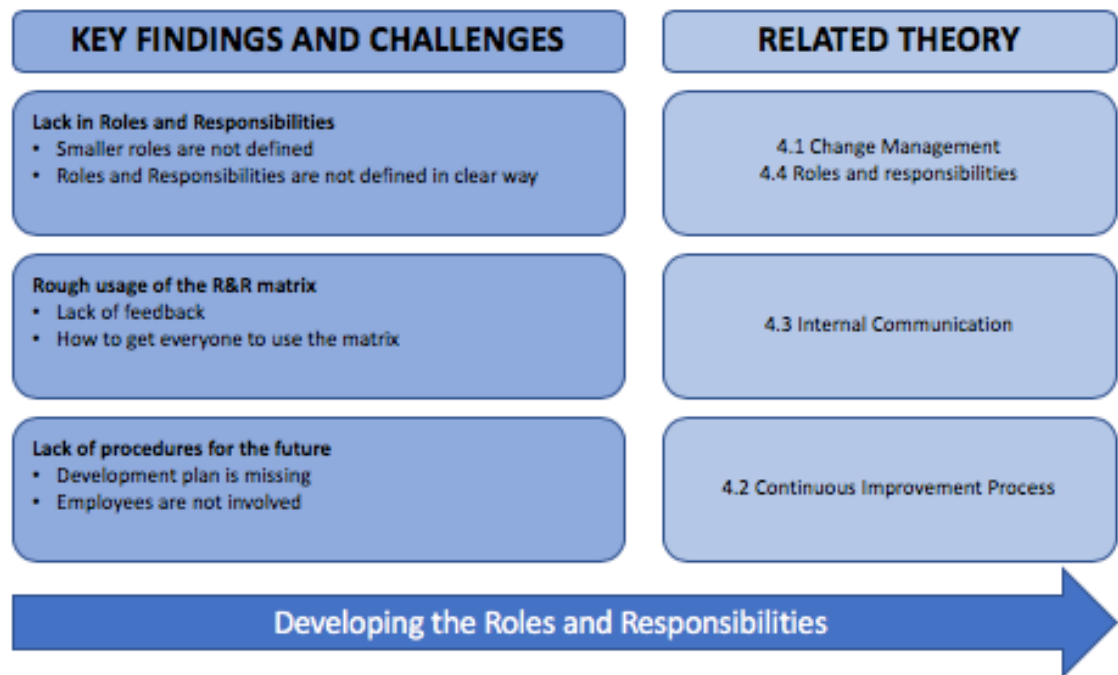


Figure 7. Conceptual framework.

The following chapter introduces how the proposal of this study was built based on the current state analysis, and the conceptual framework.

5 Building Proposal for the Roles and Responsibilities Matrix

This section discusses the proposal building for developing the roles and responsibilities of the case company. The proposal building was conducted on the three key findings from the current state analysis and the available literature explored in this study as well as experiences gathered from working in the case company. This section starts with an overview of the proposal building stage. In the second phase of this section, a proposition for developing the roles and responsibilities is introduced based on the gathered data. This section ends by summarizing the proposal.

5.1 Overview of Proposal Building Stage

Developing the roles and responsibilities of the case company was the objective of this study. During the time of conducting this study, the case company had released the first version of the roles and responsibilities matrix. For this reason, the proposal is built on the knowledge available and key findings from the current state analysis.

At first, the proposal building stage initiated by interviewing the case company employees from different roles to gain extensive knowledge of employee perspective. All of the second round interviews were arranged through Skype, and an overview of the study was explained briefly in the e-mail invitation. Three different roles participated in the interviews, including Account Manager, Store Representative, and three Regional Managers. The summary of the interviews is presented in Table 6. After this, the conceptual framework findings were taken into account to support the interviews. After conceptual framework findings were discussed, organizational needs expressed at the beginning of the thesis project were reviewed to improve the suitability to organizational operations. The final part of this stage is the initial proposal of this study. Figure 8 visualizes the logic behind the proposal building.

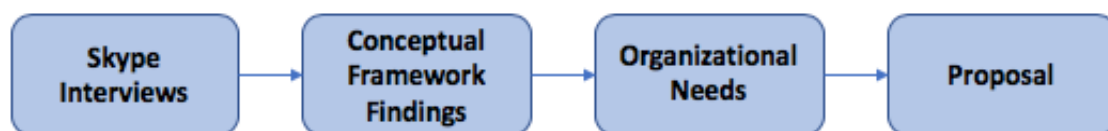


Figure 8. Proposal building logic

Feedback and gathered data from all of the interviews were used to build the initial proposals. Table 5 below summarizes the Interviews and relations between Data 1 and Data 2.

Table 5. Suggestions from interviews for proposal building (Data 1 and Data 2) in relation to findings from the CSA.

	Key focus area from CSA	Suggestions from an interviewee, categorized into groups	Description of the suggestion
1	1) Rough usage of the matrix 2) Lack of procedure for the future	a) A clear definition for all of the roles b) The goal is to make a living document where changes can be made	The Finance and Operations Director suggested that the matrix should be revived by multiple different employees to find out improvement points. It was also suggested first to change the platform into something different where changes are more natural to make.
2	1) Lack of roles and responsibilities 2) Lack of procedures for the future	a) Definition of the R&R matrix owner b) Clarification of the red line and new processes	The Marketing Director suggested that clear owner from the leadership team is vital for the future. It was also suggested to create new processes for the future when new roles and responsibilities are introduced.
3	1) Rough usage of the matrix 2) Lack of procedures for the future	a) Clarification to details and employee involvement b) Improvement to single-source truth	The General Manager suggested that all of the unclear details must be clarified first. It was also suggested to improve the current model into a single-source of truth, where employees could use it everywhere.
4	1) Lack of roles and responsibilities 2) rough usage of the matrix	a) More information from responsibilities and what is supposed to be done b) Addition of accountability	The Account Manager suggested clarifying more tasks and responsibilities as currently, header levels are only wrought. The Account Manager also suggested adding more accountability to the role, as the Regional Manager has almost all of the accountability.

5	1) Rough usage of the matrix	a) Clarification into tasks and responsibilities	The Retail Representative suggested clarifying the tasks and responsibilities. It was also suggested to make a clear list of store tasks to be performed for new starters.
6	1) Lack of roles and responsibilities	a) Re-inspecting the current processes and tasks	The Regional Manager suggested re-inspecting the current processes as there is sometimes the wrong person contacting the customer. The salesperson is not always the best contact point, in an example, in billing cases.
7	1) Lack of roles and responsibilities	a) Work the heading levels to accurate b) Focus on the main tasks, roles & responsibilities	The Regional Manager suggested working on the heading levels to give the overall picture of a specific role. It was also suggested to focus mainly on more everyday tasks and responsibilities as minor things are done rarely, and they are not remembered.
8	Lack of roles and responsibilities 2) Lack of procedures for the future	a) Clarification to heading levels b) Divide responsibility	The Regional Manager suggested to clarify the heading levels as ideally as possible and suggested to maintain details. It was also suggested to divide responsibility evenly throughout the different roles.

As seen in Table 5 above, the interviewed employees had different suggestions on improving the roles and responsibilities. Employees from different roles have a different perspective on the lack of roles and responsibilities, and due to this, extensive information was gathered. These suggestions were taken into account in the proposal building.

The following chapter introduces the initial proposal for developing the roles and responsibilities based on the key findings from current state analysis.

5.2 Proposition to Solve the Overall Lack of Roles and Responsibilities

The first key finding from section 3, Current State Analysis, was the overall lack of roles and responsibilities in the current R&R matrix. The roles, tasks, and responsibilities defined in the matrix are not defined clearly enough, resulting in tasks not being performed consistently and systematically. As discussed in section 4.1, for a change to be successful, including every individual from an organization is crucial. In section 4.4, it was stated that accountability from individuals could be expected when roles and responsibilities are clarified.

5.2.1 Documentation and Definition of Lacking Roles and Responsibilities

For the case company to enable transparency, a precise definition, and documentation on all of the roles and responsibilities is required. The scope of this is to conduct a clear overview of specific roles and responsibilities that it has, which increases clarity overall on the particular role. Conducting documentation and definition in a similar organized form ensures that the gathered data has uniformity. This ensures that the crucial tasks and responsibilities performed in everyday operations are documented and can be as a base for continuous improvement. Building the base can be done by dividing crucial tasks and responsibilities operated daily, weekly, and monthly.

As mentioned in section 3, Current State Analysis, the case company leadership team desires to keep ownership of the roles and responsibilities high in the organizational hierarchy. This enables data gathering to be efficient. As the leadership team is not always the closest contact with some roles, internal communication comes to prominence. Supervisor closest to the role missing tasks or responsibilities in some situations could be preferable contact for conducting data. The case company operations differ extensively in various regions, and therefore a difference in the same role is possible. Figure 9 visualizes the lack of roles and responsibilities.



Figure 9. Incomplete roles in organizational hierarchy.

Figure 9 visualizes the incomplete roles in the organizational hierarchy, mentioned in Table 3, Incomplete roles and responsibilities. The number after a specific supervisor role indicates the number of different roles combined below one header. As seen in Figure 2, Current organization structure, there are 26 different roles in the case company. As seen above, there is a total of 12 supervisor roles and four employee roles that are either missing tasks and responsibilities or are not defined at all. This means that over half of the case company roles are not defined as a whole. Due to this, all of the supervisor roles are lacking in tasks and responsibilities, which generates a lack of accountability and transparency on a higher level.

5.2.2 Two-Way Communication on Tasks and Responsibilities

As e-mail is the central information distribution platform in the case company to reach every individual, receiving direct feedback is inefficient. Implementing feedback form with the possibility to give feedback nameless or with name encourages the case company employees to give feedback more constantly directly across the organization. The case company is already using form stock for various processes. Due to this, implementing a new feedback form is uncomplicated as the organization is familiar with forms, and there is a missing process for direct feedback. Figure 10 below visualizes two-way communication.

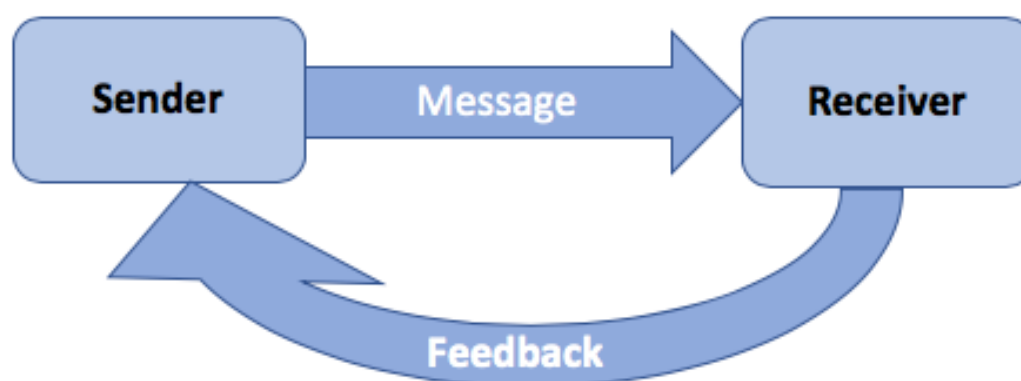


Figure 10. Two-way communication

In two-way communication, the information is delivered to the company employees, and improvements are made based on feedback. As mentioned in section 3, Current State Analysis, the case company leadership team has not received any feedback on the roles and responsibilities matrix. Due to that, the matrix was entirely new output by the leadership team; feedback plays a crucial role in the beginning. Developing and implementing a feedback process for the case company raises the feedback that is received. Figure 11 visualizes the feedback form.

Feedback on

Describe Feedback

Development Proposal

Other Comments

Figure 11. Feedback form

Having a clear way of giving feedback regarding information that affects every individual in the case company enables feedback to be received quantitatively more and evenly. The feedback form can be used throughout the company as there is option to select who will receive the feedback. Therefore this form will increase the feedback received in the case company.

5.3 Proposition to Solve the Rough Usage of the Matrix

The second key finding from section 3, Current State Analysis, was the rough usage of the current roles and responsibilities matrix. As the overall structure is lacking, the usage level of the matrix is directly proportional to it. As discussed in section 4.3, every individual from the company should be taken into account as it impacts productivity, company success. and employee engagement.

5.3.1 User Experience on the Roles and Responsibilities

The second round of interviews focused mainly on developing the current roles and responsibilities matrix to be more user friendly. Interviews were held to gather information from different roles and how the matrix is seen through the role perspective. Interviews with Account manager, Store Representative, and Regional Managers went into more details that built proposal is suitable. Table 6 Summarizes second round interviews.

Table 6. Summary of the second round interviews

The Role of the Interviewee	Key points	Interview Summary
Account Manager	How tasks, responsibilities, and accountability are defined, Team communication, current roles, and responsibilities matrix.	Tasks and responsibilities are explained when relevant. The team has weekly team skype, once a month's face-to-face team meeting, and WhatsApp group. E-mail is used for a larger entity. Needs to be more visualized with pictures and in the Finnish language. Tasks and responsibilities could also be more clarified and who is accountable. Have not used matrix, and Excel is not usable.
Store Representative	Tasks and responsibilities, Importance of teamwork, double work, Current matrix	Clear responsibilities and accountabilities are missing. Information is received from the most experienced store worker. Teamwork and communication are crucial in preventing double work. The matrix should be in Finnish and visually lighter. Store responsibilities are not clearly in the matrix. One-stop-shop for an overall picture would be great. Have not used once the matrix.
Regional Manager	Account Manager & Regional Manager tasks and responsibilities definition, Importance of communication, Overall	Own role definition is mainly done with the sales director; key points are written. Account Manager roles are gone through different contents. As a supervisor, communication to the team is essential and needs to filter irrelevant information. Overall lack in process description

	process clarity, Current matrix	produces double work. Good that roles and responsibilities are gathered to one place, but Excel is slow to use. Hard to filter irrelevant information. Should be translated to Finnish. Have used few times inefficiently
Regional Manager	Importance of sharing, heading level, and details, 20 / 80 rule, Overall clarity	Important to share new findings, files, and information. Things are not always thought on the overall picture, and their own success dominates in operating. It is more critical to define heading levels in the best way and not to centralize in detail. The tasks most often executed are 20% of the tasks, and it takes 80% of the time. From the current matrix, it is tough to find a specific task or understand overall of a particular role. More information into heading levels which bring clarity. Excel is not the best as an end result. Have looked a few times the matrix.
Regional Manager	Accountability, Added value, Master data	Accountability is raised throughout the past years through management control. Accountability is clear and follows clear indicators. Added value from the matrix is gained by defining in a clear way heading levels and that the data is in one place. The current matrix is good as master data, but it is not user friendly. Have not used the matrix and considers the current model futile.

As seen in Table 6 above, the usage of the current matrix is extremely low, and some of the individuals have not even viewed the matrix once. As stated earlier, the current matrix is not used daily, if at all and these interviews support this view.

5.3.2 Developing the User Experience

As the case company operates in the Finnish market, and most of the employees are Finnish, translating the roles and responsibilities to Finnish increases overall understanding. Due to the difficult vocabulary used in the matrix, the matrix is expelling some employees from using the matrix. As the communication from the case company is both in Finnish and English, the matrix at the current status is outside the guidelines. The Regional Managers felt that heading levels of subjects are more crucial than small details. Details are continually changing, and it is crucial to keep large entities updated.

Based on the gathered data, Excel is seen as an inoperative method for roles and responsibilities. The general desire was to have a more visualized method that is suitable for finding all the relevant information regarding roles, tasks, and responsibilities. It was also crucial for the individuals to be able to find data quickly. Based on the same platform

as the case company organizational chart, Figure 12 visualizes the first version of the improved roles and responsibilities matrix.

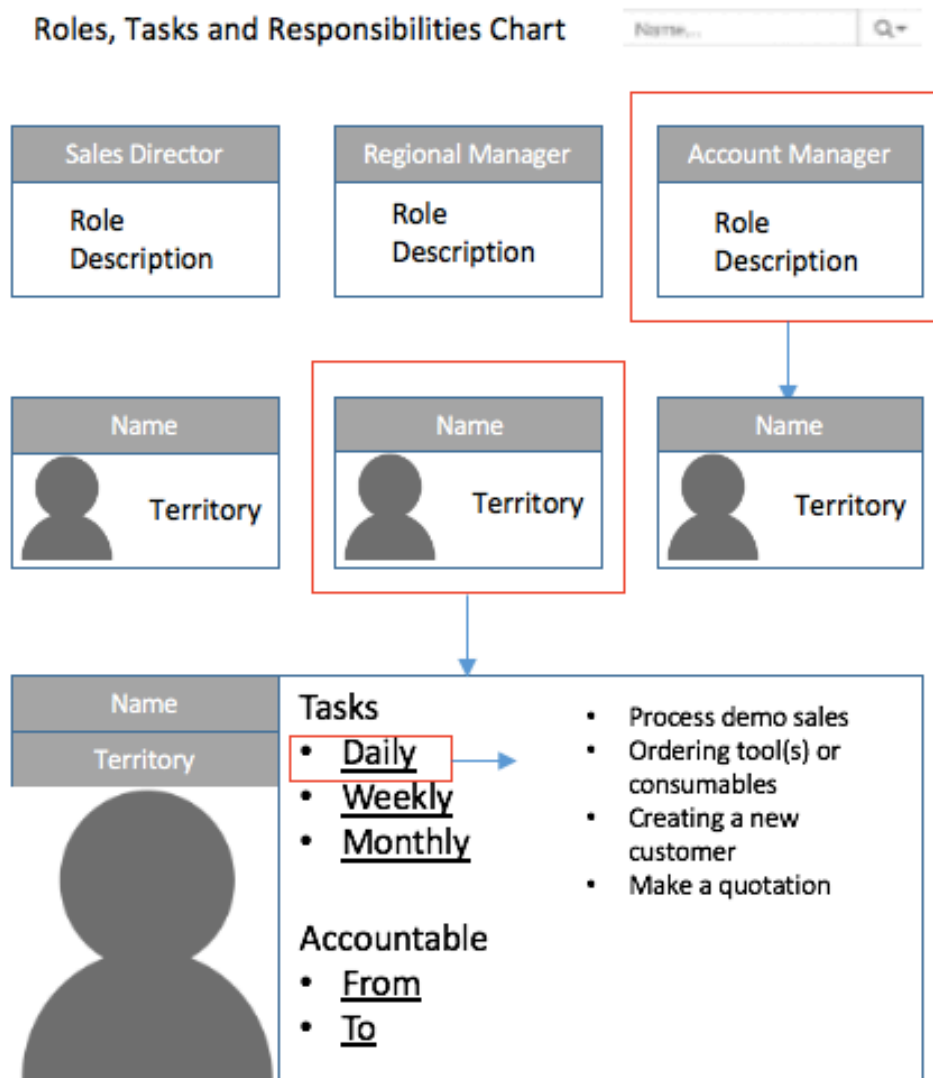


Figure 12. Visualized version of the roles and responsibilities chart

Figure 12 is a simplified version from the visualized version. As it is possible to create a limitless amount of pages, the information is possible to divide as extensively as there is demand. As visualized in Figure 12, clarity of the chart is taken as the most important topic. The roles are divided into own categories, which makes finding relevant tasks and responsibilities accessible quickly. The search option also exists, and finding data through keywords is also an option.

5.4 Proposition to Solve the Lack of Procedures for the Future Changes.

The final key finding stated in section 3, Current State Analysis was the lack of procedures regarding the changes in the future. The matrix at the current moment lacks ownership as there is no owner for the matrix. Due to this, the accountability is lacking without any tracking of continuous improvement. As stated in section 4.2, process improvement can be done through Plan, Do, Check, and Act cycle.

5.4.1 Clear Ownership and Accountability from the Matrix

The current matrix ownership is on the leadership team, but it is missing a specific description. Accountability is lacking, as the ownership is indistinct. For the roles and responsibilities matrix to be in everyday use, clarity on the ownership is crucial. Deciding who is the most relevant person to be the owner of the matrix is recommended to perform. As multiple roles and responsibilities are missing, having more than one accountable person, in the beginning, is helpful.

5.4.2 Continuous Improvement of the Matrix

As the matrix is entirely new output, and it is desired to be on everyday use by the case company employees, a continuous improvement plan is necessary. As the leadership team has monthly meetings, implementing a continuous improvement cycle is logical. The iteration of the cycle goes around logically monthly. However, regulation on the length of the cycle can be made. Figure 13 visualizes monthly iteration on the continuous improvement process.

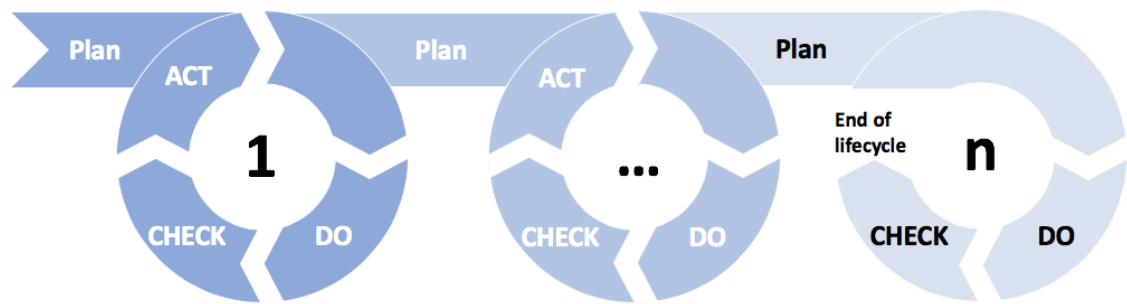


Figure 13. Monthly continuous improvement process.

As visualized in Figure 13, with implementing the continuous improvement process for the matrix, the development of the matrix is visible. The continuous improvement process ensures that the matrix always has an improvement plan planned. Since this process is suitable from minor changes to significant changes, it guarantees quality output when used effectively and in several cycles.

5.5 Summary of Proposal

The summary of the proposal created for roles and responsibilities is presented in this section. The various parts included in building the proposal were presented earlier. Figure 14 visualizes the proposal.

Section	Theory	Proposal
5.2 Proposition to Solve the Overall Lack of Roles and Responsibilities	Change Management Roles and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documentation and Definition of all roles and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feedback form ▪ Communication improvement
5.3 Proposition to Solve the Rough Usage of the Matrix	Internal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Translation to Finnish ▪ Roles, Tasks and Responsibilities Chart
5.4 Proposition to Solve the Lack of Procedures for the Future	Continuous improvement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementing Continuous Improvement Process

Figure 14. Summary of proposal.

As visualized in Figure 14, the proposal contains three parts. The first part proposes solving the overall lack of roles and responsibilities. The main outputs were documentation and definition of all roles and responsibilities, implementing a feedback form suitable for the whole organization, and improving communication in general. The second part proposes solving the rough usage of the matrix. The proposition was to translate the roles and responsibilities to Finnish and implementing a visualized roles, tasks, and responsibilities chart, for more effective use. The third part proposes solving the lack of procedures for the future. The proposition included the implementation of the continuous improvement process to guarantee the lifecycle of the roles and responsibilities.

The built proposal is validated in the following section.

6 Validation of the Proposal

This section describes the results of the validation of the proposal developed in section 5. The section starts with an introduction to the logic of the validation stage. The received feedback is then described from a validation meeting with the case company finance and operations director. This section ends with the final proposal, where the expected benefits are included.

6.1 Overview of Validation Stage

To ensure that the developed proposal is aligned with the case company requirements, a validation of the proposal was conducted with the stakeholder. The validation was organized through a Skype meeting with the case company's Finance and Operation Director. Confirmation of the expedience of the proposal was the objective of the validation stage. The validation stage is visualized in Figure 15 below.

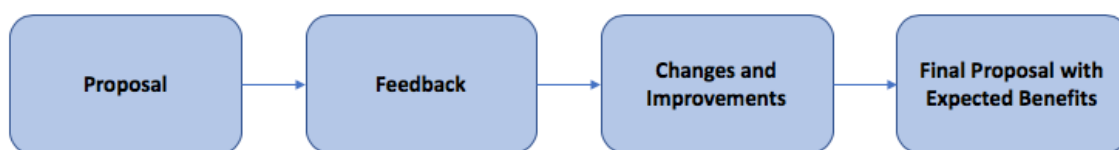


Figure 15. Overview of validation

The validation stage was executed in four steps, as seen in Figure 15. The validation stage started by presenting the proposal for the stakeholder. Feedback gathered from the stakeholder was transferred into Data 3 of this study. Changes and improvements to the proposal were implemented based on the received feedback. This section ends by introducing the final proposal with benefits that are expected from the implementation.

6.2 Further Developments to Proposals

Minor changes were made on the feedback form based on the validation feedback. The case company had released a feedback form intended to give anonymous feedback for

the leadership team day after the validation. To the feedback form proposed, it was clarified as a feedback form for the whole organization. Through the feedback form, employees are possible to give feedback on any department by choosing the receiving department.

6.3 Summary of Validation with Expected Benefits

The objective of this thesis was to propose development ideas for the current roles and responsibilities matrix. The outcome of this study fulfills the expected end result set by the case company to develop the current roles and responsibilities matrix. A summary of the expected benefits from proposals is presented in Figure 16 below.

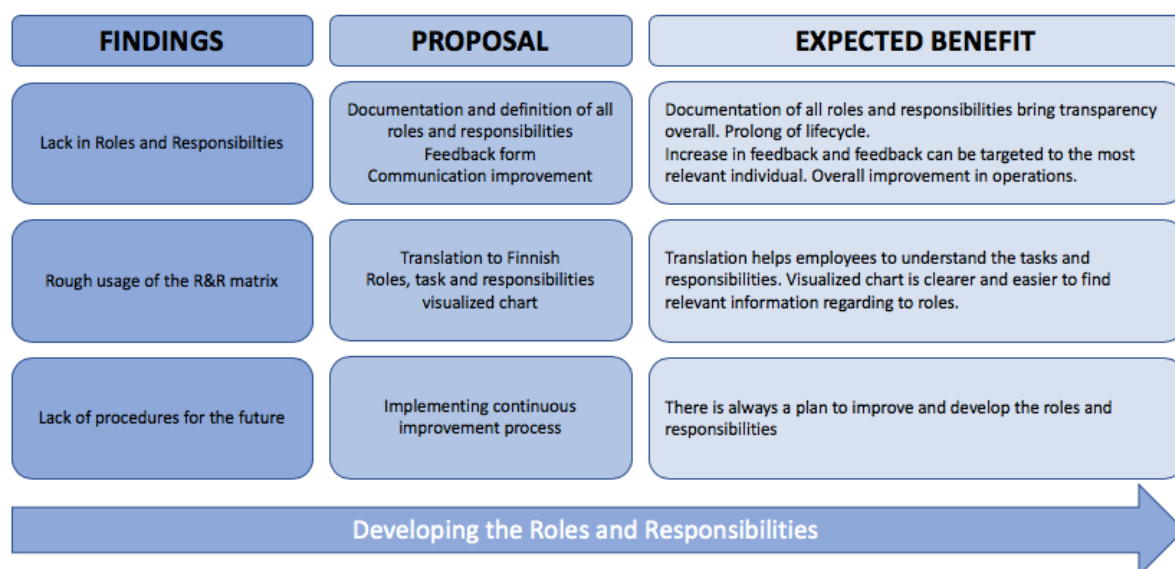


Figure 16. Summary of results with expected benefits

The documentation and definition of all roles and responsibilities increase transparency overall in the case company. This also enables the usage for every individual role in the case company, which extends the lifecycle. By conducting the missing roles and responsibilities, the accountability of a specific role is also defined, reducing the obscurity. This requires output from multiple individuals throughout the case company. However, this is a base for every other proposal, and it is essential to be conducted.

By implementing the feedback form increase in feedback received is expected. The case company employees have the opportunity to give feedback nominally or anonymously directly to any department. With two-way communication, the case company would increase overall operations as feedback is given and received more often. By demanding feedback on new output or a new process, an increase in improvement can be expected, as the feedback is used as a source of development.

Translating the roles and responsibilities into Finnish reduces obscurity and increases usage of the matrix. It also increases transparency as it was seen essential to have the matrix in the native language. Defining the roles and responsibilities in Finnish fulfills the inconsistency in the case company policy by communicating everything in Finnish and English.

Visualizing the roles, tasks, and responsibilities chart increases the overall rise in usage and user-friendliness. Finding relevant information from the matrix would be more comfortable as tasks can be found under a specific role or through the search bar. By having every role in the same chart, will most certainly raise accountability and knowledge throughout the employees. This requires the clear owner of the matrix, as changes are needed to be done regularly.

Implementing continuous improvement process guarantees the improvement of the roles and responsibilities. As through the process, there is always a plan on improving the current model, and stop on the improvement is improbable. Continuous improvement can also be implemented in other areas of operations to develop the case company operations further.

The following section introduces the summary and conclusion of this thesis.

7 Summary and Conclusion

This section presents the summary and the conclusion of the thesis. It includes the executive summary, next steps of the proposal, thesis evaluation, and final words.

7.1 Executive Summary

The objective of this thesis was to propose development ideas for the current roles and responsibilities matrix. The case company had released new output for the roles and responsibilities, and due to this, the company is seeking ways to develop the current matrix. The case company leadership team prefers the roles and responsibilities matrix to be used in everyday business. Due to this, it is crucial that the proposed proposal is suitable for the development of the matrix. The sections for proposal building are visualized in Figure 17.

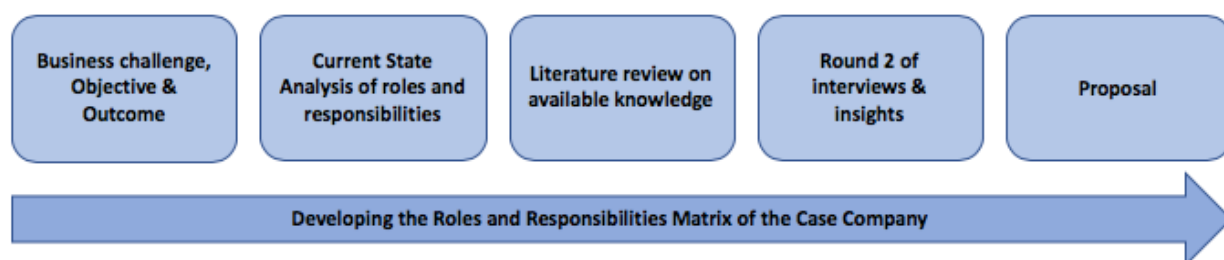


Figure 17. Proposal building

The study initiated by identifying the objective and outcome of this study. After the outlines were defined, this study continued with the current state analysis of the current roles and responsibilities matrix. Based on the analysis, three development areas were identified. These development areas were also considered as the key findings to be solved in the proposal; 1) overall lack of roles and responsibilities, 2) rough usage of the matrix, and 3) lack of procedures for the future changes. The information was mainly gathered from interviews, as there were not multiple documents available for this new output. Detailed current state analysis was presented in Section 3. The study was carried out in five different stages. The research design of this study is presented in section 2.1.

After the current state was analyzed, and key findings were identified, the study continued with relevant available knowledge and best practices to produce the proposal. The gathered insights from the case company employees were taken into account. By working in the case company and by data collection, the case company requirements and needs were identified. These were included and assessed in the proposal building process.

The available knowledge and best practice were based on four different subjects that were relevant for the findings from current state analysis. The literature investigated covered subjects such as change management, continuous improvement process, internal communication, and roles and responsibilities. Below in Figure 19, it is summarized how the proposal was conducted based on the three key findings.



Figure 19. Base of the proposal

The figure above summarizes key findings from current state analysis, what are the challenges related, relevant theory based on findings, and proposed proposal to develop the key findings. Each aspect of the challenges was taken into account, and these were seen as individual problems in proposal building. The lack of roles and responsibilities was seen as the main challenge, and therefore multiple proposals were made. It consists of documentation and definition of all roles and responsibilities, feedback form, and communication improvement. Rough usage of the current matrix was seen as the second

challenge, and translation to Finnish and visualized chart was proposed for that challenge. The third challenge was the lack of procedure for the future, and implementing a continuous improvement process was proposed for that challenge.

As this study contains multiple proposals, there are expected benefits from the proposal. In Figure 20, the expected benefits are summarized.

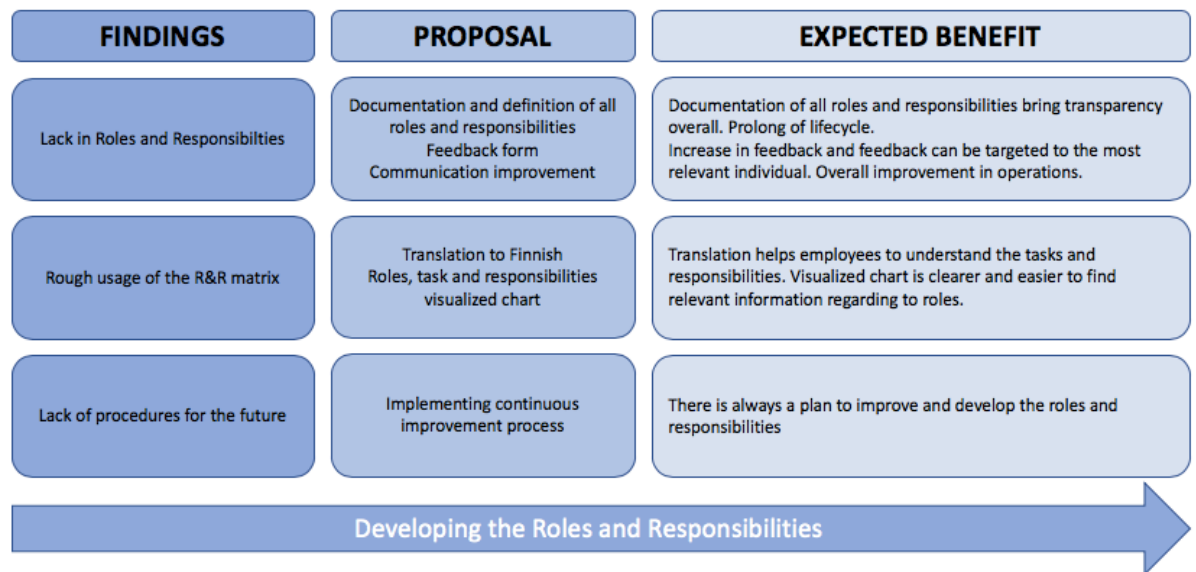


Figure 20. Expected benefits from the proposal

As seen in the figure above, solving overall lack of roles and responsibilities gives the most benefits expected. It is expected to raise the overall transparency, prolong the lifecycle, increase the feedback received, and increase in overall operations with improved communications. By implementing the proposal for rough usage, the translation to Finnish benefits the understanding, and visualized roles and responsibilities chart deliver a more effective way of operating regarding roles and responsibilities. For the final proposal on implementing a continuous improvement process, it is expected to give clear guidelines on improving and developing throughout the lifecycle of the roles and responsibilities.

7.2 Next Steps of the Proposal

The next steps recommended to the implementation of the proposal are mainly focused on the accountability of the current matrix. The next steps are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Next steps of the proposal

Step		Content
1	Defining clear ownership and accountability	Ensuring that the roles and responsibilities have clear ownership and accountability is clarified.
2	Clear definition of roles that are missing tasks and responsibilities	Defining every individual role in the case company that there are precise tasks and responsibilities.
3	Translation to Finnish	Translating the roles and responsibilities matrix into Finnish that employees more easily understand it.
4	Implementation of the continuous improvement process	Implementing the first continuous improvement cycle to guarantee the lifecycle of the roles and responsibilities.

The first proposed next step for the future is to define clear ownership and accountability from the roles and responsibilities matrix. The benefit of this is that the matrix has a clear owner who is responsible for it and the future of it. This ensures that there are transparency and overall clarity on this new output.

The second proposed step is to define all of the lacking roles and responsibilities from the current matrix. This is important to conduct, as it ensures usage for every individual in the case company. This definition will give the overall status of the roles and responsibilities and might also give some improvement ideas on responsibilities between different departments.

The third proposed step is to translate the roles and responsibilities into Finnish. This ensures that every individual from the case company understands tasks and

responsibilities related to their own role. As most of the case company employees are Finnish, this enhances the overall transparency and usage.

The final proposed step is to implement a continuous improvement process for the roles and responsibilities. This ensures that the current matrix has future plans and that development objectives are reached. Continuous improvement should be used as a tool that supports the development of roles and responsibilities.

7.3 Thesis Evaluation: Objective vs. Results

This thesis aimed to give guidance on improving the roles and responsibilities in the case company. This study was adjusted into a more consultative study as the study moved forward due to a substantial lack in overall of roles and responsibilities. Comparing the objective to the outcome in the form of a proposal created, it can be stated that the study reached expectations set in the beginning. The proposal delivers ideas for the future development of the current matrix that can be implemented into current operations.

This study could have been limited to one particular department for a more concrete outcome. With a narrower objective, the outcome could have been a new model that the case company could have implemented into the operating model. This would have been possible if the definition had been more accurate between the author and the stakeholder. Due to the broad objective, the outcome is not detailed. Overall the study was a constant learning process, and changes were made after the new subject was understood.

The interviews held can be considered as an area where success was achieved. The information gathered gave relevant feedback for the leadership team, of which the team was not aware. The interviews were also a key point for the proposal to be relevant as the information gathered gave a new perspective to the study.

Guidelines for this study were provided from the research design, which was created at the beginning of the study. The objective described in the beginning was corresponding with the outcome of the study. Interviews were the single most important source of data,

and due to this, a broad range of case company individuals was interviewed to obtain a clear overall understanding. The literature gathered for this study was relevant to the proposal building. Based on these, the reliability of the study, on the whole, can be stated as good.

7.4 Final Words

Valuable learning experience has been obtained from conducting this thesis. During this thesis, my professional skills have improved, and professional thinking has developed significantly. Learnings obtained from this thesis will be developed and put into good use in the future of my career.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions for Finance and Operations Director

Questions
1. What is the team behind R&R matrix?
2. How often the meetings are held?
3. How are the current roles and responsibilities defined?
4. How do you measure your teams SLA's and execution times?
5. Have you noticed double work / dublication of effort? If you have, how?
6. What have you done to prevent it?
7. How are changes delivered and informed to the company?
8. On how good of a level accountability is currently?
9. Where have you noticed lack of accountability?
10. What are the concerns as the company grows regarding the current matrix?
11. What are your ideas for the future?
12. Strenghts of the current R&R matrix?
13. Weaknesses and biggest challenges of the current state?
14. Risks of the current R&R matrix?
15. Is there any roles missing from the matrix?

Appendix 2: Interview Questions for Marketing Director**Questions**

1. How are the current roles and responsibilities defined?
2. How do you measure your teams SLA's and execution times?
3. Have you noticed double work / duplication of effort? If you have, how?
4. What have you done to prevent it?
5. How are changes delivered and informed to the company?
6. On how good of a level accountability is currently?
7. Where have you noticed lack of accountability?
8. What are the concerns as the company grows regarding the current matrix?
9. What are your ideas for the future?
10. Strengths of the current R&R matrix?
11. Weaknesses and biggest challenges of the current state?
12. Risks of the current R&R matrix?
13. Is there any roles missing from the matrix?

Appendix 3: Interview Questions for General Manager**Questions**

1. How much Global policies are involved in the development of the matrix?
2. Is this matrix used also Globally?
3. Is there any roles missing from the matrix?
4. What process charts the company has?
5. How are SLA's and KPI's specified in roles where they are not clear?
6. What are the strenghts of the current model?
7. What are the weaknesses of the current model?
8. Do you see any risks or challenges regarding the current model?
9. How do you see the future of the matrix?
10. Do you see any improvement for overall accountability in the company?

Appendix 4: Interview Questions for Account Manager and Retail Representative

Questions
1. How are tasks and responsibilities specified in your role?
2. On what level do you feel accountability is in your role?
3. What methods do you use to figure out something that you do not know?
4. How does information flow in your team?
5. Have you noticed any double work? If you have, where?
6. What are the strenghts of the current operating model?
7. How do you see that the R&R matrix is usable?
8. What are your hopes for the future?

Appendix 5: Interview Questions for Regional Managers

Questions
1. How are the tasks and responsibilities explained for Account Manager?
2. How are tasks, responsibilities and accountability specified in your role?
3. How do you see accountability in your role?
4. How would you improve accountability of an Account Manager?
5. What methods are mainly used for communication?
6. Has anyone from your team brought up tasks and responsibilities?
7. Have you noticed any double work in your role or Account Manager's role?
8. What are the best strenghts of the current R&R matrix?
9. What are the weaknesses of the current model?
10. What improvements need to be done for the matrix to be useful?
11. What do you feel is the most important change in the near future?