



Leadership in Exceptional Times

A Case Study of Remote Leadership in a Vocational
College

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ABSTRACT

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A Case Study of Remote Leadership in a Vocational College

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Remote leadership was introduced rapidly during the spring of 2020 as Covid-19 turned most of the educational institutions into remotely operated learning and teaching institutions. The Covid-19 pandemic hit at a time when Finnish Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions had recently gone through an extensive reform. This study focuses on experiences of remote leadership in a Finnish vocational college. A case study was conducted in the fall of 2020. The year 2020 was a launching point for many organisations for testing their capabilities and experimenting with new practices of operating remotely.

The literary review presents how some of the most important qualities in remote leadership are trust and communication. The results of the case study comply with that. On top of communication, the staff would like to see even more presence and communality from the leaders. Communication is also needed to keep the goals and expected outcomes clear. In the staff's definitions a good remote leader is available, encouraging and trusting. The respondents work under many different leaders and supervisors and their experiences of remote leadership were discovered to cover a large spectrum.

The findings indicate that in remote leadership it is overall leadership that is expected by the staff. Leaders should focus on ways to make it more visible. Without communicating how matters are progressing, leadership can seem vague and distant. Availability combined with communication creates an atmosphere of trust. A good leader knows how to select the right tools to be able to create a communicative and a trusting working environment even remotely.

Key words: remote leadership, leadership, vocational education and training

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ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

DPL	Distributed pedagogical leadership
EDUFI	Finnish National Agency for Education
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
OAJ	Trade Union of Education in Finland
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
TREDU	Tampere Vocational College, Tredu
VET	Vocational Education and Training

1 INTRODUCTION

Remote leadership was introduced rapidly during the spring of 2020 as Covid-19 turned most of the educational institutions into remotely operated learning and teaching institutions. They needed to operate as normally as possible in a remote work environment. As a result, a new kind of leadership was needed. Students, teachers, administrative personnel, managers and leaders had to find ways to operate in a new setting of everything being done remotely.

This study focuses on remote leadership in a Finnish vocational college. The Covid-19 pandemic hit at a time when Finnish Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions had recently gone through a large reform. As one part of the reform they were preparing processes towards more online teaching. Teachers and students had been improving their skills in teaching and learning online. An interesting question is how middle management and leaders were prepared for remote leadership with teachers and students suddenly turning completely into remote work.

In today's globalised world many corporations have subsidiaries in every continent and teams consist of employees from different countries. Some teams never meet face to face and that is normal to them. Of course, this does not always happen without problems, but these organisations are built in a way that they are thoroughly designed to operate remotely. The year of 2020 was a launching point for many more organisations for testing their capabilities and experimenting with new practices of operating remotely.

The traditional setup in educational institutions is that students and teachers meet in classrooms, teachers meet other teachers and their principals and managers in the teachers' room, and the school secretary is in the office. Thus everything can be handled face-to-face. That may still be the case in smaller educational units. But even without pandemics, with mergers of educational institutions, especially as in the case of vocational colleges, administration is nowadays often far away from the classroom. Vocational colleges have in many cases become large regional units with wide geographic areas to cover.

This study discusses some aspects of leadership in vocational education in general and then focuses on remote leadership in vocational education. The timeline is 2020 and a few years prior to that as they have been years of extensive change in vocational education in Finland. There is also some discussion of the reform as it has changed the need for leadership in vocational education to focus more on results. And as the reform has already caused an important change in the working methods of the staff of vocational education, turning more towards remote operations has been another change too. In this study I will try to see it as some sort of continuum, how it all comes together in terms of leadership in general and remote leadership in particular.

There is not much prior research on remote leadership in education. It has become a more pressing topic due to the recent circumstances. I hope the subject will be discovered more as it increasingly becomes an everyday question of leadership. Perhaps it has not been seen as such an important matter even though educational leaders are further away from their staff even when there is not a pandemic to keep them apart. Still some trends of leadership have been studied in the field of educational leadership and in remote leadership and some of them are discussed in this study.

The main methods used in this study are a literary review and a case study. The purpose of the literary review is to give the reader a wider view into remote work and remote leadership. The case study is included to put the focus on remote leadership in a certain vocational college. It is to see how it all comes to practice and to hear the staff about how they have experienced remote leadership. Throughout the literary review, experiences and studies done elsewhere are discussed to find similarities and differences and what can be learned from them. The literary review also discusses the specifics of leadership matters in vocational education and training in Finland.

The case study was done in one of Finland's largest VET institutions, which operates regionally and has 14 campuses. The VET institution therefore has for some time already had the experience and a culture of remote management with many employees working in different campuses than their management. Even

though the topic of remote leadership became acute due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the case study examines the state of remote leadership through the fall of 2020, not only during the spring 2020 covid-19 emergency. The questions of remote leadership continue to be important as organisations including educational institutions have to find ways to operate in the new normal working environment. Remote work, hybrid work and hybrid teams mix, renew and change elements of face-to-face ways of operating. As the pandemic still was very much an issue, practises that in the spring of 2020 were thought to be temporary were still in use and evolving in the fall. The practises of remote leadership can potentially be a key factor in motivating staff through stressful and exceptional times.

Remote leadership has been the subject of prior studies, but not so much specifically in the field of education. This study also intends to discover if there are similarities that apply universally to working environments or if institutions have some very distinctive aspects as it comes to remote leadership. In the vocational college where this case study was done, there is and has been many leadership studies and development programs conducted already, so the subject of the study complies with prior work. This study intends to valuably supplement earlier research, to further improve organisational learning.

Some leaders may have felt that there was nothing very special about turning completely to remote leadership. After all, that was what they had been doing for a long time and they were used to not seeing their workers daily with operations going on regionally. But what changed was that the employees were now working remotely as well. Some employees were used to remote work to some extent, but they had always had the chance to go back to the workplace, see their colleagues, have spontaneous change of thoughts and ideas, have lunch with them etc. From the March of 2020 employees did not have the local support from colleagues, leaders were somewhere, managers elsewhere and they were alone without the familiar surroundings of the classroom. The leaders may have been very experienced remote leaders of in-house workers, but not in their new role as remote leaders of remote employees.

New hybrid working models where employees will be partly in-house and partly

working remotely will be built in the future. Remote operating environments will probably continue to be a valid part of how educational institutions will be led and operated. Therefore this is a good point in time to take a look at what has been learned from the year 2020 and how management should be planned from now on. As said the study focuses on the situation of autumn 2020.

There are probably many valid approaches to remote leadership in a vocational college. The approach chosen in the study was selected to support organisational learning in the organisation of the case study. After the initial sketching of the research topic there were talks with the organisation to find ways how this research could be as beneficial as possible for developing the organisation. So the rough topic was not created in co-operation but the more precise approach was. This research focuses then on the specific question of how remote leadership is experienced by the staff of a vocational college. Other aspects of remote leadership in educational settings require further research and development.

This thesis first takes a look at the concepts of remote work and remote leadership. Then the focus turns on research methodology. To get an idea of the operating environment around the case study there are sections about vocational education and leadership of vocational education in Finland. The case study is then presented with analysis of the results of the survey that was conducted in the case study institution. Towards the end there are development suggestions for remote leaders and managers. These suggestions were formed to respond to the needs that became visible in the results of the survey. The needs were then fitted with ideas given by managers and consultants experienced in remote leadership. In the final sections of the thesis there are conclusions, discussion and future research ideas.

2 REMOTE WORK AND REMOTE LEADERSHIP

2.1 The definition of remote work

Ulla Vilkmán, an expert and consultant in remote leadership has elaborated also on the concept of remote work. To clarify the definition, many people do their work outside of their workplace, but not all of it is considered remote work. The concept of remote work may include different forms of tasks performed remotely. However, remote work could be specified as work that could be done at the workplace. (Vilkmán, 2016) Remote work began to become more common in the beginning of the 21st century. In 2002 came the telework agreement and by 2006 almost all EU countries had implemented it. (Turning European social dialogue...2006)

Telework was the earlier term for what now is called remote work. Minna Helle (2004) has studied the framework of remote work as it was formulated in the 2002 agreement on telework. According to Helle, the points describing remote work in the agreement are as follow: telework is a form of organizing work (that is, not a separate form of employment) where information technology is used. Another key point in the agreement is that the work is done outside of the employer's premises but could be done at the workplace and it is done regularly (Helle 2004, 46–49).

Remote work was first introduced in California, mainly because of rising environmental consciousness in the 1970's. An important incentive to people switching to remote work has been to reduce the need to commute. Some other benefits of remote work are the flexibility of the work form and the opportunity to combine work, leisure and family life. For the employer, the benefits can also be the flexibility of the work and the wellbeing of employees. (Helle 2004, 16–17, 22).

More recent guidebooks on remote work such as the one by Grace Paul (2020) focus on the welfare of the employees linking it to successful remote work. Working remotely requires paying attention to the same matters as at the workplace and then more. These include IT skills, ergonomics and lightning. With these ba-

sics covered employees also need to find routines such as taking breaks, devising to-do lists, making schedules, replacing the physical activity perhaps missing when there is no commuting, keeping in touch with colleagues and knowing when it is time to finish the working day. These factors are important in helping maintain motivation. (Paul 2020, 34–35, 41)

2.2 Opportunities and challenges in remote work

Millions of people suddenly switched to remote work in the spring of 2020. Homes became workplaces and meetings were held using videoconference tools. Due to the pandemic, not much time was available to consider whether this was good or not, it just had to be done so. Below are presented some results of recent surveys that have been done about how people experience remote work. OwlLabs has focused on remote work in the United States while Buffer has taken a more global perspective.

OwlLabs did their survey in co-operation with Global Workplace Analytical in 2020 with over 2,000 respondents in the United States. During covid-19, 69% of the respondents reported working at home. 77% would prefer to work at home also after covid-19. Half of the respondents would not be willing to switch back to a job without remote working opportunities. As positive aspects of working remotely were mentioned by 79% the reduced risk of covid-19 contagion and 79% mentioned not needing to commute as a positive. 74% said that it would be good to have four core hours per day when colleagues would be available for each other and the rest of the working hours would follow their individual schedules. 79% of the respondents thought that video conferencing can be as efficient as face-to-face meetings. (State of Remote Work 2020).

The State of Remote Work 2020 survey conducted by Buffer and AngelList was more global with over 3500 respondents. The data were collected before the pandemic, in 2019. 57% of the respondents worked 100% remotely. 98% of the 3,500 respondents preferred to do at least some of their work hours remotely for the

rest of their careers. They regarded communication and co-operation as the biggest challenges and the biggest benefit was flexibility. With those respondents who had worked in teams which consisted of both remote and non-remote members the communication issue was of particular importance, and it was not seen as an ideal setup even with an optimised use of communication tools. The communication was just not the same for all in such hybrid teams, and this continues to be a challenge. (The State of Remote Work 2020)

There are many different ways people operate in different types of teams. There are also the employees whose work is already virtual and do not even have prior needs for in-house working. To support and improve the functionality of teams, good leadership and management seem to be of critical importance as it comes to hybrid models of remote and in-house work.

2.3 Remote leadership

Coming to remote leadership and to the term of remote leadership according to Vilkmán (2016), forms of work that are not done at the workplace include full-time or part-time remote work, mobile work, decentralised work, virtual work, or various combinations of these. And there is work that is independent from time and place. Remote leadership is defined as leadership of all these work forms (Vilkmán, 2016).

Kevin Eikenberry and Wayne Turmel present in their book of remote leadership (2018) leadership as action, as leading. They point out that leadership is not always bound to formal titles and positions of power. They also use the term *long-distance leader*. Eikenberry and Turmel draw a distinction between leadership and management. According to them good leadership has its “focus on people, vision, influence, direction, and development” (2018a, 5). In their definition remote leadership is leadership of people who work for the leader, but from a distance. Or in other words “A Long-Distance Leader is someone who leads from a physical location separate from at least some of the people he or she leads” (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, 23).

Eikenberry and Turmel present “19 Rules for Remarkable Remote Leadership”. To show some examples, their rule number 1 is: “*Think about leadership first, location second* “. Rule 2 is: “*Accept the fact that leading remotely requires you to lead differently.*” Rule 9: “*Communicate in the ways that works best with others rather than based on your personal preferences*”. In addition to their first-hand experiences with organisations, they have also conducted a survey on remote leadership (in 2017) with more than 225 managers, to better understand challenges remote leaders face and to be able to provide support for remote leaders (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, 10).

Turning into remote leadership can be a bigger challenge to some leaders than to others. Some leaders may have problems with technology as pointed out by Eikenberry and Turmel (2018a, 14). Sometimes there can be a gap between generations. However, there is no reason why the use of technology cannot be learned by leaders from different age groups. If the leader has operated before with his or her team or employees always in the same building the leader might have difficulties in adjusting to new communication strategies. And then to some it just comes more naturally if they have operated their whole careers in a remote, distant or hybrid working environment.

Eikenberry and Turmel have created a model for remote leadership which is visualised in the form of three different gears. These are Leadership & Management, Tools & Technology and Skill & Impact. It is to grasp the idea which aspects of leadership have changed after turning remote. This model is shown in Figure 1.

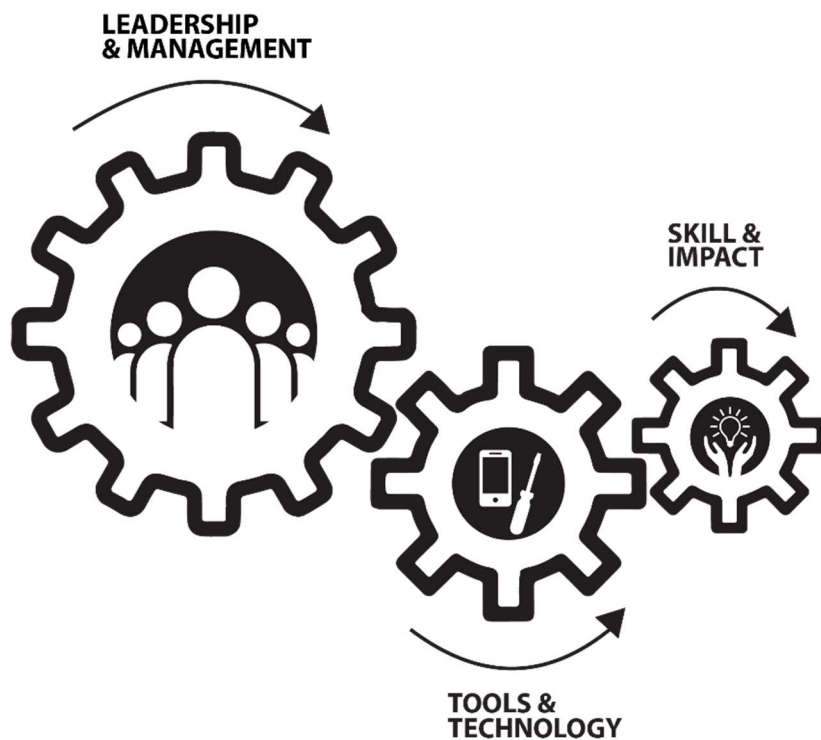


FIGURE 1. A model for remote leadership (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, Eikenberry 2018)

Leadership & Management is the biggest gear in the model. The reason for that is that even when done remotely, leadership is still leading. The basic virtues of people leading people are similar independent of the setting. Tools & Technology is there to put the focus on choosing and using the right tools for the job. Skill & Impact is a reminder that while new technology creates plenty of opportunities, one needs to know how to use it too. When the tools are not used properly it can undermine the leader’s effectiveness. And then again when technology is used properly it can help in other areas of leadership too. (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, 38–41)

To elaborate more on the leadership and management gear Eikenberry and Turmel have also developed “Three O Model of Leadership”, with the three O’s being *outcomes*, *others*, and *ourselves*. According to Eikenberry and Turmel, long distance leadership has its own specific challenges with each of these aspects. When it comes to outcomes, some challenges are the isolation of employees and the lack of environmental cues. As a result of isolation from their colleagues, people may start striving more towards their individual goals than towards the team’s

or organisation's goals. And when working remotely, the environmental cues of values and goals are not as visible as they would be in the organisation's working space. Therefore leaders need to make sure they clearly communicate values and larger goals on a regular basis, using various routes and a sufficient variety of tools. Specific attention to outcomes is also needed when people work in matrixed organisations with various superiors. (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, 47). The model is shown in Figure 2.

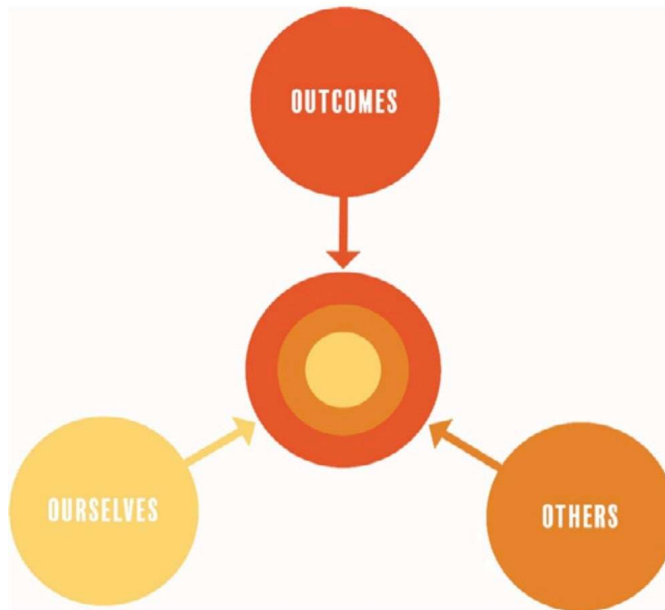


FIGURE 2. The Three O's Model of Leadership (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, 2018b)

With “Others”, the leader's focus is on the employees. Without others there would not be anyone to lead. The “Others” section consists of for example guiding, hiring, coaching, communicating and supporting. Doing it long-distance can be more difficult since the employees are out of sight and assumptions may more easily depart from the reality. A focus on the employees helps leaders create better working relationships and make employees more engaged. Here the leader builds trust and when leaders win, their team and every employee wins. (Eikenberry & Turmel 2018a, 49–51)

Eikenberry and Turmel focus on “ourselves” as the core of leadership as it creates the way of how the other two aspects, outcomes and others, work. Leaders need

to overcome their leadership issues and analyse their own expectations, beliefs, behaviour and try to improve their skills while still being themselves. In long-distance leadership the challenge lies in the assumptions one makes about their employees, remote work as a concept, and the degree of flexibility which can be expected from employees with different life situations. They also point out that it is important to act and not just to have good intentions of doing so. When working remotely, efforts that leaders make locally do not show as efficiently. (Eikenberry Turmel 2018a, 52–54)

2.4 Good qualities in remote leadership

Remote leadership requires good leadership skills. There are factors that need to be taken into consideration when not being around with one's employees and not having regular face-to-face communication. Vilkman (2016) has focused on six different factors that require special attention in remote leadership. She sees the following as cornerstones of good remote leadership:

1. Common ground rules
2. Constant dialogue
3. Communality
4. Trust
5. Openness
6. Appreciation

According to Vilkman, trust and appreciation are the most important factors which a good working environment is built on. It means trust from leaders to employees that they perform their tasks and trust from employees to leaders that they are there for the employees. An atmosphere of trust reduces the amount of control leaders consider to be necessary. Appreciation of co-workers enables good co-operation. It is best shown in ordinary daily operations as in giving an employee the opportunity to influence important matters or with showing empathy. (Vilkman 2016)

With employees not being in the same premises, some common ground rules shared by everyone are needed. Constant dialogue and interaction are part of

this as they lay the foundation of these rules. Rules should not be given solely in a top-down manner from the management. What needs to be discussed are matters such as when and how all the parties should be available, how information is shared and how to evaluate progress. Constant dialogue and interaction consist of sharing experiences, ideas, thoughts and emotions. Constant dialogue can be seen to combine each of the six cornerstones presented by Vilkmán (2016).

Openness and communality can be important factors in maintaining employees' motivation and commitment towards the organisation. These values are not necessarily always easy to cultivate. They are important factors which require again plenty of communication but when operating well, they can increase communication, trust and the ease of co-operation. (Vilkmán 2016).

2.5 Leadership style matters

There has been research on remote leadership, but not extensively. A few decades ago, when remote work became possible, this raised questions about remote leadership as well. While leadership and theories on leadership were earlier based primarily on face-to-face leadership, there is growing interest in how to do it remotely.

In an article by Kelloway et al. (2003) there is discussion about remote transformational leadership. As a simplified definition, transformational leadership can be described as follows: the employees have a strong connection with a charismatic leader, they strive towards a shared vision and work towards the advantage of the group. In studies on remote management, the transformational leadership style has been noted to have an influence. With transformational leadership having been found motivating in other circumstances, one goal of Kelloway et al. was to find out if it works well when using electronically mediated communication. According to Kelloway et al., transformational leadership succeeded in keeping remote workers motivated and had positive outcomes like it had face-to-face. (Kelloway et al. 2003, 163, 169)

In leadership it is not always about what is done, but about how it is done. Elisabeth Kelley and E. Kevin Kelloway (2012) have also studied transformational remote leadership. They focus on the concepts of perceived control, unplanned communication, regularly planned communication and prior knowledge of the leader. They created a model and tested it with remote and proximal workers. The findings suggest that context does matter when it comes to how one experiences leadership. If remote workers experience transformational leadership, it affects their job satisfaction and their commitment towards the organisation. (Kelley & Kelloway 2012, 437)

Kelley and Kelloway (2012) also point out that unplanned communication is quite rare with remote workers. When it comes to proximal workers, there is more communication via e-mail and telephone in addition to face-to-face communication. Kelley and Kelloway refer to prior research on communication where it has been found to be important to have frequent unplanned communication with remote workers. It has a strong tendency to make them feel important and valued. Regularly scheduled communication between leaders and remote workers was found to be equally important. When turning to remote work, if the employee has prior knowledge of the leader it enables trust and makes communication more effective. (Kelley and Kelloway 2012, 444–446)

Kelley and Kelloway (2012) make some recommendations. To create a good remote work environment with employees satisfied, motivated and achieving good results, managers should pay more attention to planned and unplanned communication. “The predictability and reliability of these interactions is what matters.” They point out that it will require effort from leaders, but it can be done. (Kelley and Kelloway 2012, 444–446)

Neufeld, Wan and Fang emphasise the importance of communication in remote leadership in an article of their study (2008). They even go so far as to conclude that without communication leadership can be irrelevant. Their study shows that leaders who have an effective communication style with employees exhibit strong performance as leaders. They point out that distance does not need to be a factor in the success or failure of communication. They suggest that when leaders and employees know each other well enough it makes communication easier. In such

cases distance does not make such a difference when assessing a leader's performance. (Neufeld, Wan & Fang 2008, 240–241)

2.6 Practical tips for remote leaders

For remote leaders there are good articles and guides also on the practical aspects. Here two of these are presented. Some practical tips for remote leaders by innovation strategist Peter Andrews (2004) are as follow: use interviews as tools to get to know your employees or your team better. Then make the interviews visible to others. Use different communication styles and technologies creatively. In addition to talking, use writing, charts, drawings, audio messages. Surprise your team members and spend money on them. (Andrews 2004) This can mean that at least in the team some time is spent for the team members to get familiarised with each other. Online meetings can easily turn into monologues, so different ways of facilitating meetings is necessary to improve motivation to participate. If there is money on the budget, even some small gift delivered to employees can bring the element of surprise and make the employees feel that they are appreciated and not forgotten.

CEO Coach Sabine Nawaz (2020) focuses on how leaders can support remote workers. These practises include:

- proactive communication with employees
- asking frequently how employees are doing
- having an “office hour” every day where one hour is dedicated to preventing problems (proactive communication and action) and solving them
- a conference call in which members of the team can join and when one employee has joined it, the meeting is locked for ten minutes for this employee's issue and others know to wait for their turn
- building good routines with staff -- can be anything from a joint coffee hour to morning check-ins in the preferred e-conferencing tool.
- setting boundaries between personal time and check-ups
- as a leader to be available for problems too, not just for solutions
- giving feedback and frequent performance guidance. (Nawaz 2020)

3 RESEARCH

3.1 Research methodology

The methods used in this study are a literary review and a case study. These methods were seen to be appropriate and also convenient in the circumstances of social distancing. The literary review was done to have sufficient background knowledge on the topic and to find experiences and studies on other sectors of working life. The literary review was done to have a theoretical framework for the research questions. A case study was conducted to have some practical and focused information on a certain educational institution.

Ojasalo, Moilanen and Ritalahti (2015) suggest a guideline for doing research-oriented development work (compared to scientific research or research based on everyday thinking). Here the focus is on solving practical issues and renewing practices in an organization. To support that development, information is gathered systematically and critically, many different methods are used and co-operation with different stakeholders is emphasized. In this way of development work the results and proceedings are continuously presented to stakeholders. (Ojasalo et al. 2015,18)

The literary review is included to gather background information on the subject and on the operating environment of vocational education. According to Ojasalo et al., it is important to study the specifics and peculiarities of the operating environment to find ideas for developing it. It is not enough to apply generic solutions of the field to a specific operating environment (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 29). The literary review uses the following as sources: research articles on educational leadership, remote leadership and vocational education, books on remote work and leadership and development work, and internet sites of organizations and surveys.

A case study is an appropriate approach when the aim is to study a specific organization and provide development ideas for it. It provides information in a real environment in real time. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 52). My goal is to help develop

remote leadership by taking a look at how the staff experience remote leadership in the institution of the case study and how they would like to see it perhaps changing in the future.

The research questions were formulated together with the organization of the case study. As the organization has several other development projects ongoing, the subject of the study was therefore chosen to comply with and supplement the other studies being done to benefit organisational learning. Developing organisations is important to maintain their efficiency and competitiveness and to keep the staff motivated (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 12).

The research questions in this study are:

- What should leaders take into consideration in their remote leadership when leading an educational institution?
- How does the staff see and experience remote leadership: what is good and what actions need to be taken in the future?

The literary review was useful especially for finding answers for the first research question. To answer the second research question, a questionnaire was devised for the staff of the organization of the case study.

3.2 Case study of remote leadership in Tampere Vocational College

TREDU

The case study focused on the second biggest VET provider in Finland, Tampere Vocational College TREDU. It has 14 campuses in the Pirkanmaa region, with approximately 17,000 students and 1,100 employees. TREDU was formed in 2013 as two educational institutions united, Pirkanmaa Educational Consortium and Tampere College. The City of Tampere is the official education provider. (What is TREDU, 2020)

Even before TREDU was established, both the colleges that were later merged had several campuses. At maximum, the distances between the campuses are as

much as over 100 kilometres. As a result, remote leadership has had a role for many years. A culture of remote leadership existed for some, but there have been teachers and administrative staff who have been accustomed to having their manager nearby, perhaps preferably working at the same corridor.

The subject of the case study is a familiar and interesting one for me personally. I took a position in the organization almost ten years ago, but I have been away for the past two years. During these two years, the organisation has developed and gone through organisational changes too. So even with the shared history, the organisation as it was at the time of the case study was to some extent different from my own experience. In addition to the organisation being familiar, it is also an object of interest since it is regional with many campuses with staff and management all over the region and therefore it needs focus on remote leadership. The organization also has now had the experience of turning into complete remote leadership as educational institutions switched to distant learning in the spring of 2020.

3.3 The questionnaire

The questionnaire for the case study was created using the *SurveyPal* survey platform. SurveyPal enables the creation of online surveys with ready-made templates (SurveyPal 2020). A questionnaire was then created to support the research questions. For the specific questions, the aspects of remote leadership that stood out in the literary review formed a background and also some prior questionnaires that had been done to the same focus group were elaborated on. After the first draft of the questionnaire had been made, it was presented to representatives of the organisation of the case study to check correct organisational terminology and to go through the substance of the questions.

The questionnaire was then sent to the staff of Tampere Vocational College via email. A cover letter (in Finnish Appendix 1 and in English Appendix 2) was included, explaining the purpose and focus of this study and the questionnaire. In the vocational college there are approximately 1,100 employees of whom 83 answered the questionnaire. The staff could reply to the survey anonymously.

Tredu consists of three campuses (campus as an organisational unit) which are divided into 14 campus areas and matrixes. For background information regarding the respondents, they were asked in which of these campuses or matrixes they work and if they were in a supervisor position. The questionnaire was open for answers for ten days and was closed as the autumn break began in the institution. The whole questionnaire is in Finnish and in English in Appendices 3 and 4.

3.4 Data analyses

The data received from the questionnaire were analysed mainly quantitatively. Some sections were also analyzed qualitatively to find main themes that rise from the answers. First, the answers of the questionnaire were gone through in total several times. Next the questionnaire was divided within sections of questions. To some extent there was repetition in the questionnaire, so there were themes that rose from the answers. Different methods to support data analysis were used for different questions to find an appropriate method for each type of question. Where useful, graphical presentations of the answers are used. The answers for one question are in the form of a word cloud (devised with Wordart). For the questions with more qualitative content, thematizing is used and some example answers are chosen to have the voice of the respondents. To come to results and findings, a combination of data analysis methods was applied.

For most of the analysis descriptive statistics was used. With graphical analyses a large amount of data can be shown in a simplified yet accurate form. Descriptive statistics enables showing the basics of the data that has been received through the study. (Trochim 2006). The graphical modes of presentation selected are mainly pie charts, columns and line charts. For such information that the questionnaire provides, only simple descriptive statistics are mainly presented. More detailed review would not be considered to bring more value to the research. As pointed by Grönroos (2003), sometimes the statistical significances are overproduced in statistics (2003, 19).

Also the analyses of the questions of a more qualitative nature was influenced by several analysis methods. Some of these are presented by Guest, MacQueen and Namey in their study *Applied Thematic Analysis* (2012). As it comes to the questionnaire of the case study of this thesis, the first step of the analysis was doing a broad overview of all the answers. After that some basic thematic identification was done. Then the answers were looked upon on what is relevant to research questions.

The questions and the answers were regrouped further into thematical sections and then also analyzed one by one. Themes and issues were sought from them. The findings are presented in the results section. To some of the questions the answers were such opposites that they are presented too. There were around 80 responses to most of the questions. The broad range of topics and issues mentioned in the answers made it at times challenging to put them under a manageable number of themes. Finally answers by the respondents considered to be especially relevant were given special attention. Some citations from the answers that were considered the most insightful were selected.

The analytic purpose was to explore the future wishes and the experiences of remote leadership. In the results part of this study this shows as listing more of the facts that could be of influence for the staff compared to the answers that everything is ok. As this study was made to support development work and not to create theory the answers were looked also with the intention of creating steps to development plan (Guest et al. 2012). So based on these steps, suggestions for organizational learning and development were put together.

4. LEADERSHIP AND THE FRAMEWORK OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN FINLAND

4.1 The reform, framework and structure of vocational education

In the Finnish vocational education system students can attain one of several levels of qualification: vocational upper secondary qualifications, further vocational qualifications and specialist vocational qualifications. More specifically, these levels included in total 164 different vocational qualifications as of 2020. Vocational education is provided for young people without upper secondary education and for adults who need extra training during or between their careers. Preparatory training for vocational education is also provided. (Qualification and studies in...2020)

VET in Finland is regulated and administered by the government, parliament, Finnish National Agency for Education and the Ministry of Education and Culture. They set the financial and regulatory frames in which vocational colleges operate. Parliament sets the legislation and annual budgets. The government decides on the structure of vocational qualifications and the broad framework for the development of VET. The Ministry of Education and Culture has a monitoring role and it also finances the educational system within the framework decided by the government. The National Agency of Education is responsible for preparing the national requirements of vocational qualifications. It has some other duties in the field also but altogether they are the policymakers of vocational education. (Administration and Finance 2020)

The Finnish VET system was reformed in 2018. Principles for how vocational educational institutions are funded were changed. In addition, a more demand-driven approach to the supply of workforce was created for the institutions. Learning environments were updated, making them more digital. More training outside the institutions, in workplaces was introduced to curriculums. Mergers of educational institutions were encouraged to attain benefits of scale. (Reform of Vocational Upper Secondary... 2020)

Before the reform, the funding of VET institutions was mainly based on the number of students. The reform increased the proportion of funding dependent on the performance and outcomes of each institution. Now funding is determined by four factors. The funding is mainly divided into (1) basic funding based mainly on the number of students (50%), (2) performance-based funding (35%) and (3) funding based on effectiveness (15%). On top of these there is also strategic funding that also comes from the appropriation of VET. Performance and efficiency are measured by how many students attain whole degrees or parts of degrees, the success rate of how they find jobs or continue with post-graduate studies, and what kind of feedback the students and working life give. (Ammatillisen koulutuksen rahoitusjärjestelmä, Administration and Finance, 2020)

Plenty of mergers between VET providers have been completed. In 2018 there were 181 vocational institutions in Finland, down by about a half from 2000. This took place while the number of students increased from 149,000 to 244,000. There were some changes during this 18-year period (especially in 2018) which affected how the number of students was compiled for statistics. This explains part of the large increase in student numbers but not all of it. A major change has been that the number of small and medium sized vocational institutions has decreased. In 2000 there were 262 VET institutions with under 500 students and in 2018 there were 106. Since 2018 the number of students has not changed significantly, but the way number of students were compiled for statistics changed during the year 2018. On average there were about 189,000 students throughout the year between years 2018-2020 (Koulutuksenjärjestäjä- ja oppilaitosverkosto 2020). In vocational education in 2000 the total expenses per student were 9,800 euros. By 2018 it had decreased to 7,300 €. (Both sums real terms, updated to the year 2018.) (Suomen virallinen tilasto 2018)

4.1.1 Goals of vocational education

The Finnish vocational education system is flexible as to how students can attain the skills required for degrees. The qualifications are the same for teenagers and for adults. Skills are learnt in the classroom, practical training at a workplace, through training agreements, apprenticeships or as a combination of these. Another goal is to create individual learning pathways where prior knowledge and skills are recognised and built upon. Each student has his or her personal development plan and they receive guidance and support in studying in various learning environments. (Qualifications and studies in...2020)

The trend to shift learning more to workplaces and other practical settings was encouraged in the reform of vocational education in 2018. The idea was to make sure that future workforce are capable professionals who are trained in the fields where they are needed. Vocational education is to renew itself as the society and working life around is changing. (Ammatillinen koulutus Suomessa, 2020)

According to an evaluation done by Korpi et al. for the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre in 2018, the competence-based approach is seen in a positive light by all stakeholders of the Finnish vocational education system. However, there are challenges in implementing it as the new financing system has forced spending cuts and closer co-operation with working life have created the need for new kinds of competence for teachers. Customer orientation and co-operation between education providers should be increased and to attain this, leadership is needed in doing so. (Korpi et al. 2018)

4.1.2 An outlook of VET internationally

Finnish vocational institutions increasingly have international connections. Most VET institutions have excellent exchange programs for their students. However, due to the pandemic, not so much international exchange activity has been ongoing lately. Benefits of exchange programs for students and personnel alike include new meaningful experiences and development ideas for their work. Therefore the international trends of VET are important. The organisation and role of

VET in education systems varies from country to country but there are similarities too.

In a recent report by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Education at a Glance" (2020), there is a special focus on vocational education. In the report there is interesting statistics. Some international trends can be seen, with Finland being in some respects different from many other OECD countries.

To get an international overview on students participating in vocational education, the infographic (Figure 4) "The Ins and Outs of Vocational Education and Training" (OECD 2020) shows which age groups participate in VET and what their sector of vocational education is. 61% of students over 25 and 37% of students between ages 15-19 prefer VET to general programs. The most popular study sector is the combination of engineering, manufacturing and construction with 33% of the students preferring it. Business, administration and law is the second most popular with 18%. 67% of vocational students enrol on the upper secondary level. Finances are also raised as an issue in the infographic as it costs 1500 USD more per student to provide vocational programmes than general programmes. As funding is becoming more dependent on the rate of students graduating it is interesting to see which factors motivate students to graduate. According to the infographic (OECD 2020) one key motivator is that vocational education provides access to tertiary education. (Education at a Glance 2020)

Infographic 1. The Ins and Outs of Vocational Education and Training

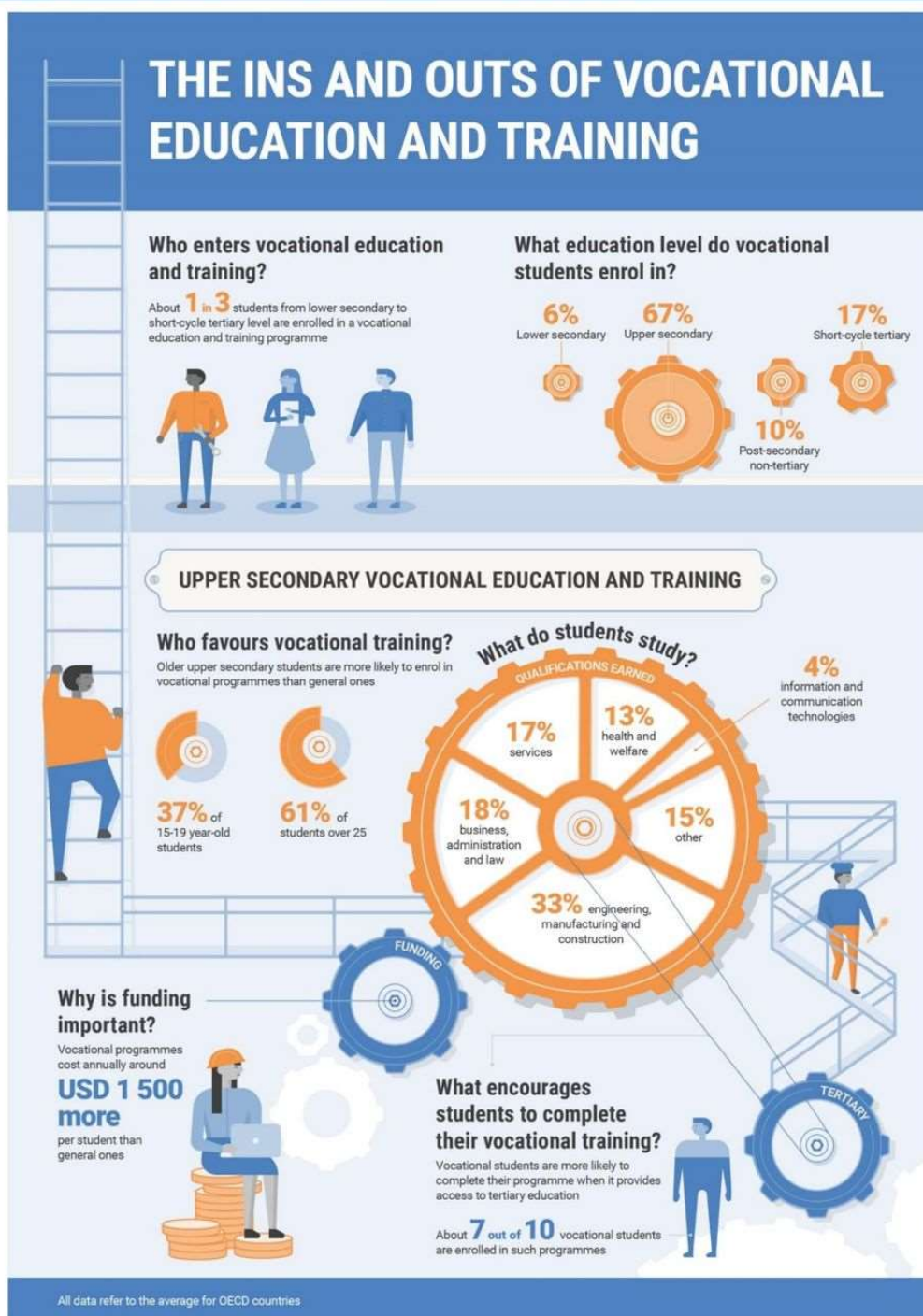


FIGURE 4. The Ins and Outs of Vocational Education and Training.

Concerning leadership and management, one piece of statistics is especially interesting. “Number of statutory working weeks, working days and total working

hours in public institutions during the reference year” in the OECD report shows the working hours of school heads. In Finland, the total working hours of school heads in upper secondary vocational education was 1,544 hours per year in 2019. The OECD average was 1,691 hours per year and the EU average 1,654 h/year. According to “Distribution of school heads aged 25--64 by educational attainment and level of education (2019)” in Finland every school head (100%) in upper secondary education has attained ISCED level 7 or 8 (master’s or doctoral level). (Education at a Glance 2020, 422 & 457)

4.2 Leadership in vocational education

Leadership in vocational education can be a multifaceted question and it has its specific points of interest. It is useful to look at remote leadership in the broader picture of leadership in vocational education in general. Management can be decentralized in many ways which can cause issues in leadership. Each VET institution has to some extent its own type of leadership system of divisions, units, campuses etc. Some trends in leadership in vocational education stand out. As some of the VET institutions have turned into limited companies there has been discussion on whether they should be led in ways private businesses are led.

Research on vocational education tends to focus very much on teachers, students, managers and leaders. Yet, there are dozens, sometimes even hundreds of administrative employees in each institution. They run essential day-to-day administration, for example student registration, financial management and human resources. And there are the staff running the buildings, preparing food, keeping campuses safe and clean, taking care of IT, running libraries, doing project management or international affairs. These professional groups are sometimes quite invisible in research on leadership of vocational education.

As there have been many mergers, organisational changes and reorganisations in VET institutions, also management systems have changed. This has meant for many leaders and managers new titles, responsibilities, staff, and processes. It tends to take some time the people involved to adapt. A state of temporary con-

fusion and disorganization cannot always be avoided. This is more likely to happen when people do not know who to ask about who is responsible. The leaders themselves can also be confused especially if the pace of change is rapid.

4.3 Organisation of VET and leadership

Finnish VET institutions have many types of organisational structures. Some of them operate under a municipality or town, some as consortiums in which two or more municipalities have stakes, some as foundations, others as limited companies and some as a combination of these. The organisational structure and size of the VET institution has an important effect on the choice of leadership system. As types of organisational systems vary, so do titles of leaders and management and the ways the leadership system is organised. The head of the organisation is the principal, who however may hold some other title, and the power and responsibilities of the principal can be delegated to other leaders of the institution as well. Sometimes the model is such that the leader of vocational education operates as the leader of the institution and heads of division or educational managers are the managers of teachers. (Johtaminen koulutus- ja kasvatusalalla, 2020)

As it comes to educational managers, pedagogical qualifications are required, but not necessarily training and experience in leadership. Surveys have shown that employees in the educational sector would like to see improvement in human resources management. Every second year the Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ) performs a survey of working conditions in teaching sector called Opetusalan työolobarometri. In the survey conducted in 2017 by Länsikallio, Kinnunen, & Ilves (2018) the numbers were not very flattering as it comes to vocational education. Within vocational education sector, 20% had experienced bullying or inappropriate behaviour from their managers and 14% from their leaders during the past 12 months. Only 12% thought that their managers treated all employees in an equal way very often. 5% agreed completely that for the development of operations and staff there was enough investment of time and resources. And only 1% thought that the flow of information between leaders and staff was excellent. Of those who responded to the whole survey, 146 were employed in

vocational education. (Länsikallio, Kinnunen & Ilves 2018, 13, 23 & 25) The numbers are worrying even though the relatively small number of respondents perhaps makes it not wise to draw extremely strong conclusions.

These trends continue to be relevant in the OAJ 2019 survey of working conditions in teaching sector done by Golnick and Ilves. In vocational education managers still get lower ratings for their leadership than leaders on other fields of education. Employees in vocational education do not feel their voice is heard enough as it comes to important matters concerning the institution. Only 47% of the respondents thought they receive enough information from their supervisors. Staff in vocational education felt less equally treated than staff in other fields of education. 18% thought that the flow of information between staff and leaders was functioning. Just 20% of employees in vocational colleges trusted the decision making of their leaders strongly or very strongly. One positive thing, however, stands out: compared to teachers in other fields, in vocational education teachers more often felt that they had the chance to use their knowledge and skills in their work in a meaningful way. (Golnick & Ilves n.d. 23–29)

As it comes to the leaders' point of view, a study on their experiences in vocational education was conducted by the Finnish National Agency of Education (EDUFI) in 2018, shortly after the reform of vocational education was implemented. The study includes articles by VET leaders on their experiences of leading the reform. One of the writers is the leader of Tredu, Outi Kallioinen. She describes her work as change management. In the future, she sees a stronger connection between vocational educational institutions and local communities, other stakeholders, and society at large. She also emphasises the importance of international networks (Reformi tavoitteista toiminnaksi 2018, 34).

In the conclusions section of this publication by EDUFI, Mika Tammilehto (Ministry of Education and Culture) and Anni Miettunen (EDUFI) emphasise role of the leader in creating the growth area where a new kind of vocational education can grow. They note how in the big picture of leading a VET institution is wide and has plenty of variety. They also emphasise how change management has become a vital part of the leadership in vocational education. Next to the framework

of VET, the leader also has a significant role in developing pedagogics. (Reformi tavoitteista toiminnaksi 2018, 35)

This is just to point out that there should probably be extra focus on leadership and management in vocational colleges. Studies also show that there is often a connection between how schools are led and learning outcomes of students. (Robinson & Gray, 2019) Good leadership benefits not only staff and the organisation, but the students also.

In the following sections of the thesis there is discussion of ways of developing leadership in vocational education. Some of them have been more extensively studied and some of those practices have been recently adopted by educational institutions. These practices have been selected here for their usefulness in providing support for remote leadership, especially in education.

4.3.1 Positive leadership

Sanna Wenström has studied leadership in vocational education for her PhD work and for her book about positive leadership. She describes how leadership in education can be developed using the concepts of positive leadership. Positive leadership is an approach where strengths of character and personality are seen as indicators of the ways they affect for example, how leadership is experienced in different situations. When using this approach, leaders find their own strengths and their employees' strengths and use them to develop their organisation. In the book Wenström also points out that positive leadership does not mean that the leader always has to be happy and in a good mood. It is more of a mindset of a leader who is aware of his or her strengths and values and acknowledges that there is room for improvement. (Wenström 2020) Aspects of positive leadership have been adopted by some educational institutions to support organisational development.

Enthusiasm is an important aspect of positive leadership, helping keep employees motivated. In her book Wenström presents the acronym PRIDE for positive leadership. It consists of positive practices, relationship enhancement, individual

attributes, dynamic leadership and emotional well-being. Wenström sees value in this approach supporting and motivating educational organisations in times of constant changes and even turmoil in education. (Wenström, 2020)

Teachers who are enthusiastic about their work are better adapted to leading in exceptional times. They can create a positive atmosphere and help employees overcome difficult situations. In an article by Wenström, Uusiautti and Määttä they write about this aspect of enthusiasm. They have studied the role of the teacher's immediate supervisor in supporting the teacher's enthusiasm. Especially in times of change this connection between teachers and their supervisors is important. One of their findings is that to support teacher's enthusiasm it is beneficial that leaders give teachers a role in outlining strategies. They also point that leaders, supervisors and teachers alike share responsibility in maintaining a good atmosphere in the organization. (Wenström et al.2019)

4.3.2 Transformational leadership

As ways have been presented how transformational leadership could be beneficial in remote educational leadership, there is a recent study also done with comparisons to the critiques of transformational leadership. It may not be the key on solving all leadership issues on educational institutions but aspects of it fit to the needs of remote leadership in educational institutions. There should be flexibility in styles of leadership made to fit to the times and needs of the present issues.

David Litz and Rida Blaik-Hourani (2020) discuss in which circumstances transformational leadership suits to educational organizations and in which it does not. Forming an interesting point of view, in the article they also discuss the way cultural aspects affect how leadership is experienced. They conclude that in education hybrid models of leadership work best. According to them, educational institutions are globally in a state of constant flux and there are needs to facilitate change with various forms of leadership.

Litz and Blaik-Hourani (2020) make an interesting comparison between transactional and transformational leadership, focusing on cultural aspects. The merits

of transformational leadership in education have been pointed out in many studies. A transformational leader uses his or her charisma to help create an environment of trust. The idea of transformational leadership has its origins in the 1970s. In the article by Litz and Blaik-Hourani are presented some key aspects of it by J. Burns (1978), which are that transformational leaders for example are good at motivating their staff for one, through communicating the value of expected outcomes. Thus employees are more likely to reach their potential. Their dedication to the organization is strengthened by encouragement. The types of transformational leaders by Burns are intellectuals, reformers, revolutionaries, and charismatic heroes (Litz and Blaik-Hourani 2020, 3).

In their article Litz and Blaik-Hourani (2020) also present the work of B. Bass and B. Avolio who studied transformational and transactional leadership in the 1990s. Bass and Avolio see these two types of leadership complementing each other. With transformational leadership change can be implemented and long-term goals achieved. Transactional leadership is needed in day-to-day operations of organizations (Litz and Blaik-Hourani 2020, 4)

Litz and Blaik-Hourani (2020) conclude that educational institutions should use hybrid or blended styles of leadership. Leaders should be able to switch between styles, taking the specific situation and cultural aspects into account. As Litz and Blaik-Hourani describe it: “....*educational leaders must remain open and authentic, define the intent of their goals, and then connect with others based on these goals.*” (Litz and Blaik-Hourani 2020, 23)

4.3.3 Distributed pedagogical leadership

Aini-Kristiina Jäppinen has done some extensive studies in Finnish vocational colleges using the framework of distributed pedagogical leadership (abbreviated DPL). Jäppinen focuses on how smooth transitions in students' learning pathways can be supported. According to her, the idea is that all stakeholders in vocational educational institution, including teachers, leaders, other staff and workplaces where students do training share the responsibility to guide students

through their studies in vocational colleges “...*through long-term and systematic pedagogical practises*”. (Jäppinen 2010)

In an article Jäppinen with Irmeli Maunonen-Eskelinen (2012) discuss the ideal of DPL and how the real life will challenge it, through tensions and even contradictions between stakeholders. These contradictions will then influence on how co-operation succeeds. Solving these contradictions is important. The framework of DPL puts students' needs in the centre stage in vocational education. Jäppinen and Maunonen-Eskelinen emphasise the importance of interaction and communication between the stakeholders. As Jäppinen and Maunonen-Eskelinen describe it, it is the ways the different stakeholders in school environment interact and communicate that have an influence. This can make the difference on how the organisation's pedagogical and other operations are run. (2012, 39–41)

4.3.4 Change management

With institutions facing changes in society and in the environment where they operate, change management is often needed. Change management can be the work of managers and of leaders. As vocational education institutions are publicly funded and publicly regulated, at the policy level at least, changes in society have a large effect on how VET institutions are organised. There have been so many changes in recent years that the organisations seem to be in a state of constant flux.

Elearns (2007) defines change management as finding ways to get from the point where we are to the point where we want to be. From the organisational point of view the roadmap to the future can be drawn more easily than from the individual's point of view. Sometimes it is not easy to convince employees about the need for the organization to change. They may prefer their working conditions to stay the same and this can create tension and resistance. The need for change can originate outside or inside the organisation. The results depend on the change managers skills of getting the employees to support change and to see how important it is. (Elearns 2007, 1–3)

4.3.5 Coaching as a form of leadership

Marjo-Riitta and Vesa Ristikangas (2013) define coaching as a form of leadership that is strongly based on communication. Coaching is becoming more common in educational institutions. The focus is on finding the employees' strengths through a learning process which consists of conversations and questions and interaction in general. To combine some of the definitions coaching is helping the coachee to achieve goals through interaction, the coach is there to help the individual to find his or her potential. (Ristikangas & Ristikangas 2013, 20–22).

Some core skills a leader using the coaching style needs are the ability of observation and analysis, listening, making questions, being humble and direct. These leadership skills facilitate good interaction and enable development. (Ristikangas & Ristikangas 2013, 26). For leaders, managers, and coaches there are different sets of tasks which in combination create a form of coaching leadership. The tasks of the coach include inspiring, listening, supporting, and strengthening the acts of taking responsibility and self-management. (Ristikangas & Ristikangas 2013, 39)

5 RESULTS -- Remote leadership in Tredu

5.1 Background information and managers' point of view

The results of the questionnaire "Remote leadership in Tredu" are presented in this section. Graphics is used in many instances as it comes to questions of quantitative nature while questions of qualitative nature are treated verbally. An email with a cover letter and a link to the questionnaire was sent to the whole staff of Tredu. Of approximately 1,100 staff members 83 replied to the questionnaire. The data were gathered in October 2020. Some respondents answered all the questions, others some of the questions. The purpose of the questionnaire was to get a grasp on how the staff overall experience remote leadership in Tredu. Thus the answers were analysed as a whole and not divided into smaller units by the role of each respondent in the organization. The results of the questionnaire as follow.

In the pie chart (Figure 5) can be seen that there were replies from all the campuses or matrixes of the organisation. Most of the staff, such as teachers and managers, work on the campuses while administrative staff work in the matrixes. Tredu mainly comprises of three campuses (which are divided into 14 campus areas) and matrixes of company and employer services, development and innovation and services.

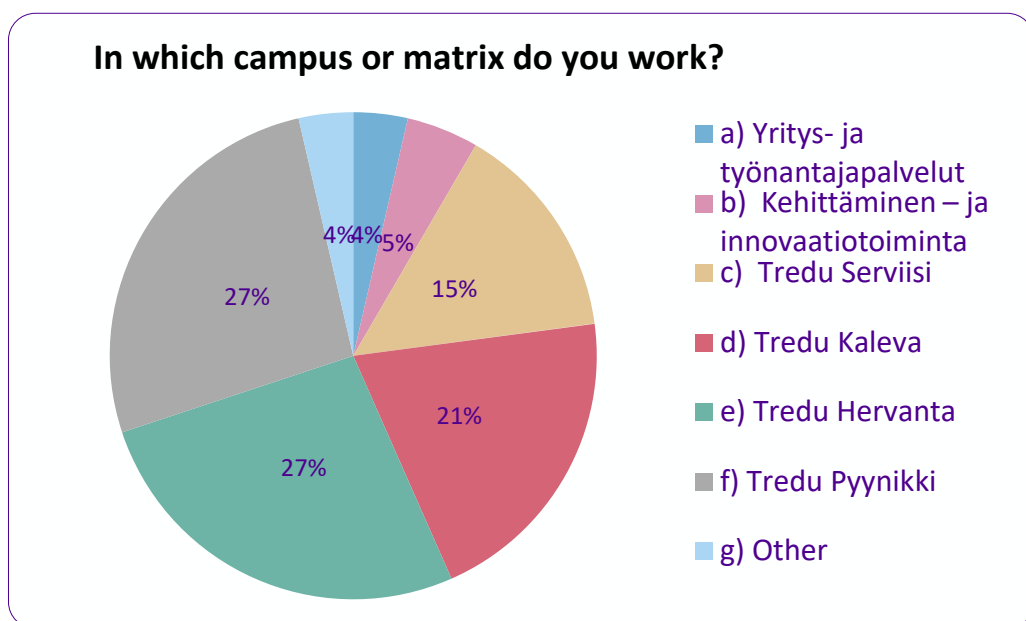


FIGURE 5. Pie chart. In which campus or matrix do you work?

Most of the employees that replied to the questionnaire were not in a supervisor position. As can be seen in Figure 6, 12% of the respondents were in a supervisor position. For the employees who answered *yes* to are you in supervisor position, there were two follow-up questions which the ones answering *no* did not see.

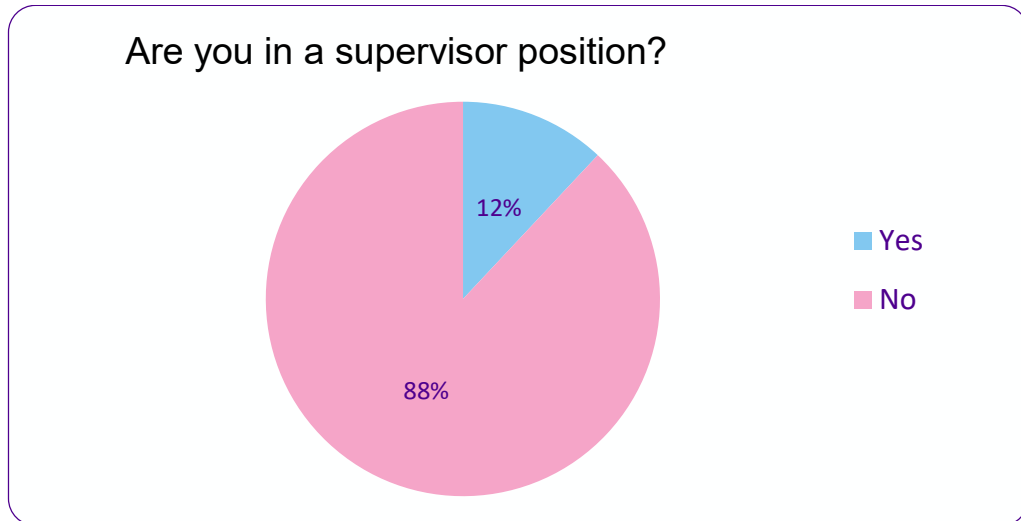


FIGURE 6. Pie chart. Are you in a supervisor position?

The follow-up questions were about how the supervisors experience remote leadership and how they think it is different from other ways of leadership. It turns out that most supervisors in Treda in 2020 had prior experience of remote work or of remote leadership and saw it as a natural continuum or as a dimension of normal leadership. Then again some saw as more challenging, socially distant in a negative way and had insecurities about how they were performing. Important factors in making remote leadership work were seen to be trust and communication. On a less abstract level, a reliably functioning internet access was mentioned as a building block of remote leadership.

As it comes to the question of how remote leadership differs from non-remote leadership, maintaining trust, support, communication and a secure working environment were seen to require special attention. Intensive, clear and regular communication is necessary, using many different tools. Employees need support in remote work and for the feeling of a secure working environment and trust between teams or colleagues is important. The importance of making sure eve-

rybody knows who is responsible for what was mentioned as well. Some respondents, however, felt that there were no major differences between remote and non-remote work.

As shown in Figure 7, most respondents met up with their supervisors at least weekly (39%), a considerable proportion (19%) even daily. Interestingly, 28% met up with their supervisors just once a month and 14% even more rarely. Variation in this respect was remarkable.

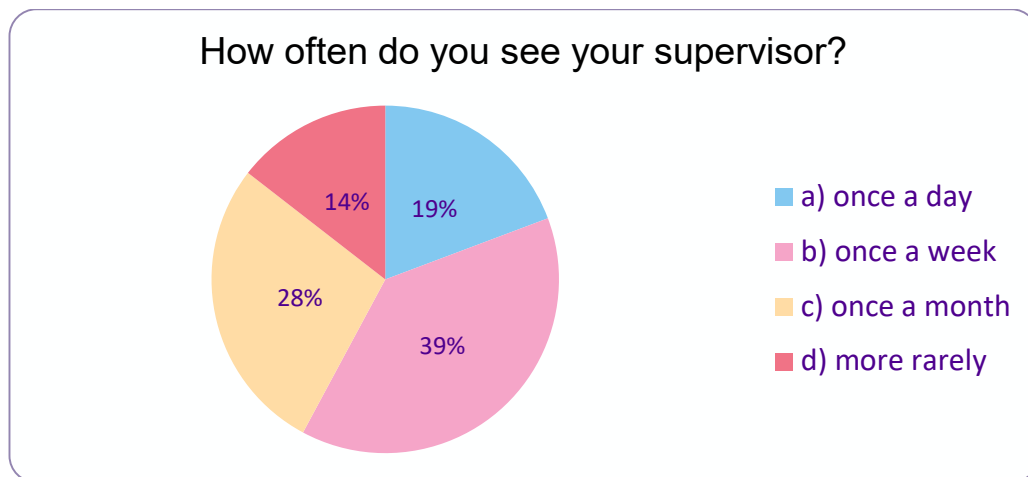


FIGURE 7. Pie chart. How often do you see your supervisor?

As shown in Figure 8, most respondents (55%) reported being in contact with their supervisor once a week while 1% were not in contact even once a month.

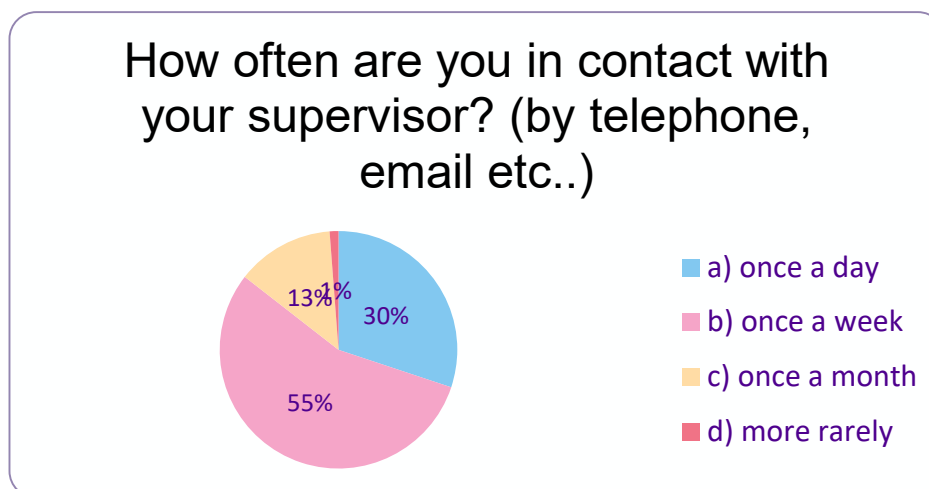


FIGURE 8. Pie chart. How often are you in contact with your supervisor?

As communication is raised in so many ways as an important factor, these questions were asked to find out how often on average employees actually communicate with their supervisors. It depends on the situation how much communication is ideal, but some attention should be paid at least to the ones that communicate more rarely than monthly with their supervisor.

5.2 Experience of remote leadership

The next question was “how do you experience remote leadership in Tredu at the moment?” Most respondents saw remote leadership in Tredu in a positive light. However, some employees thought leadership had a distant feel to it in a negative way. They expected more communication and a feel of presence despite physical distance. The various experiences can perhaps be summarized in a quote selected from one answer:

It depends on each supervisor's personal way of doing things. Working with some supervisors is flexible and smooth but with some it is fragmented and difficult. Some always keep their employees up-to-date with everything important, others don't even do the bare minimum.

Many respondents felt that remote work increased the need for support from supervisors to employees. However, some only heard from their supervisors when there were tasks assigned to them or there was negative feedback. Still most respondents were satisfied. New routines, such as short daily team meetings via Teams or another e-conferencing tool, had become a natural part of their work. Many answered that supervisors were available when needed.

5.3 Community and other concepts

In the spring of 2020 the staff of Tampere Growth, Innovation and Competitiveness Services (of which Tredu is part) were surveyed. 72% of the respondents mentioned community as the aspect they missed the most from pre-pandemic working life. In the survey of this thesis also there was a question about community. It was interesting to see how about six months of remote work between

the spring and autumn of 2020 had affected employees' perceptions of and attitudes to communality.

Respondents were asked both how leaders and how employees could support communality. According to the respondents, ways leaders could support communality included creating a feeling of presence despite distance, asking how their staff are doing, organising gatherings and especially relaxed and casual gatherings. With joint gathering it was said that when possible face-to-face, but Teams was also seen to be a good option. However, it was seen challenging to get everybody to participate actively and communicate openly at remote meetings. A good supervisor has ways to support inclusiveness.

When it comes to how the staff could support communality, some ideas mentioned by the respondents were as follows: being active, being a good co-worker, keeping in touch with colleagues and supervisors, participating in organised events, sharing knowledge, information and experiences. Quoting some answers, these are some ways respondents said they supported communality...

By being caring and easily approachable.

By acting in our team and in our working community in such a way that creates good spirit and combines.

By participating. By coming up with ideas. Actively taking responsibility myself. Even when remote I am present.

By giving positive feedback to co-workers, encourage them in difficult situations, organise networking events online etc. There are ways.

However, it should also be mentioned that some respondents did not see communality as a factor in their work at all, in other words they considered it to be irrelevant.

Next was asked grades for the importance of certain other concepts related to remote leadership that can be seen underneath.

How important do you consider these concepts to be in the relation of employee and supervisor (Evaluate in school grades):

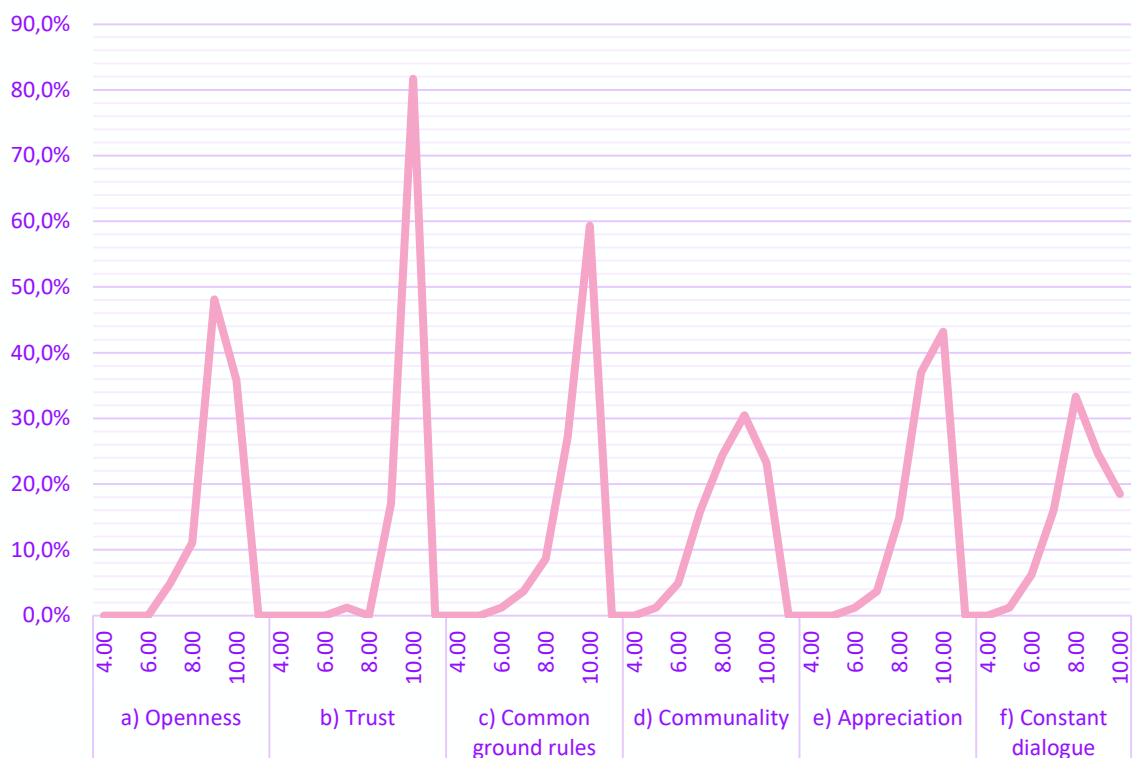


FIGURE 9. Line chart. How important do you consider these concepts to be in the working relationship between an employee and a supervisor?

The pillars of good remote leadership as outlined by Ulla Vilkmán (2016) were generally considered very important by the staff of Tredu too. The results are presented in Figure 9. The respondents were asked to grade the importance of each concept by Vilkmán on a scale from 4 to 10. Trust came in first (82% graded it with a 10). Common ground rules were ranked second (59% gave a 10).

For openness 9 was the most common grade (by 48% of the respondents). Communality was ranked fourth and constant dialogue fifth. The grade averages are shown in Figure 10.

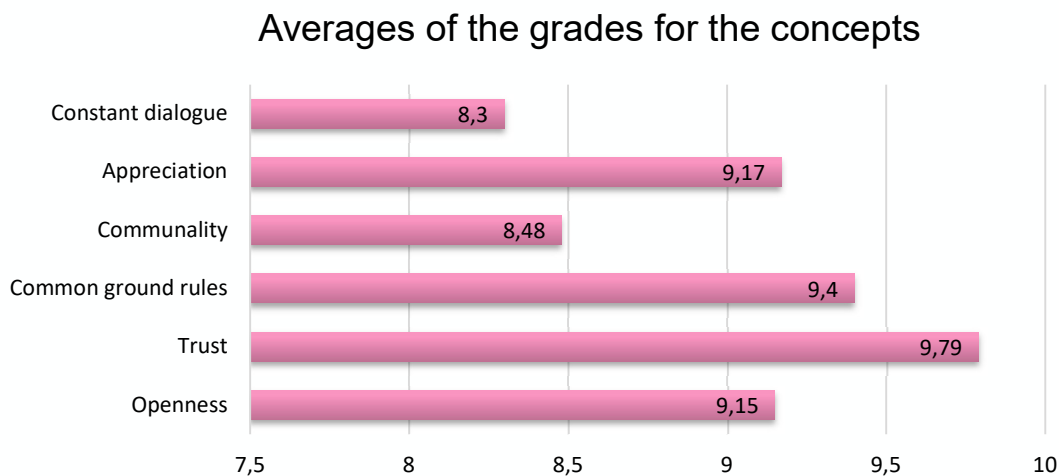


FIGURE 10. Averages of the grades for the concepts

It can be concluded that the respondents considered each concept important. The gap between the concept ranked first (trust, 9.8) and the last (constant dialogue, 8.3) was not very wide.

5.4 The present and future of remote leadership

Leaders have the task to support their staff to achieve their goals. As mentioned earlier, institutions of vocational education in Finland are funded increasingly based on performance, not just headcounts. Thus it was interesting to see how well employees at Tredu are aware of the performance targets of the units where they are employed. Raising awareness in this respect is one part of good leadership.

On average, the respondents graded their knowledge of the performance targets as a 7.6. Alarmingly, 6% graded it as a 4, the lowest possible grade. The most common grade (by 33% of the respondents) was an 8. This is shown in Figure 11.

Evaluate (in school grade 4-10) how well do you know the performance targets of the business unit where you are employed (Yritys- ja työnantajapalvelut, Kehittäminen – ja innovaatiotoiminta, Tredu Serviisi, Tredu Kaleva, Tredu Hervanta, Tredu Pyyrikki) ?

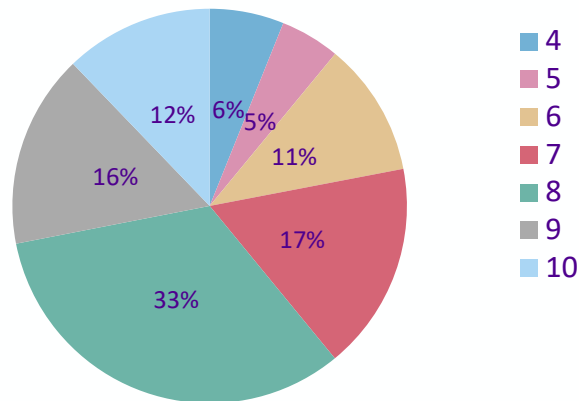


FIGURE 11. Pie chart. Please evaluate how well do you know the performance targets of the business unit where you are employed?

When the respondents were asked to evaluate how successful leaders have been in helping employees achieve the performance targets, especially when you think of remote leadership, here the grade average was 7.7 (shown in Figure 12). 8% thought leadership concerning performance targets was perfect or near perfect, grading it with a 10. The most common grade was 8, which is quite good. However, 40% of the respondents graded leadership in this area with a 7 or lower. More attention should be devoted to raising their awareness of the performance targets.

Evaluate (in school grade 4-10) how successful the leadership of accomplishing the performance targets has been, especially when you think of remote leadership?

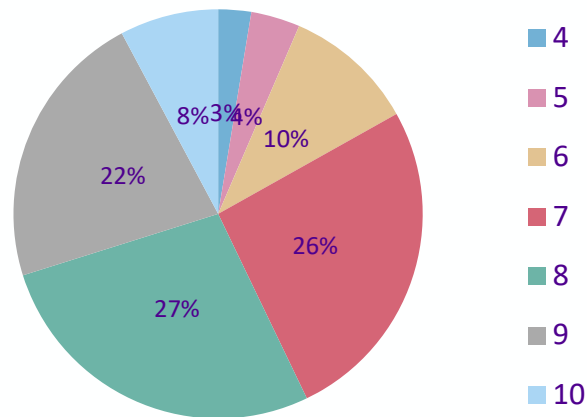


FIGURE 12. Please evaluate how successful leaders have been in helping employees achieve the performance targets, especially when you think of remote leadership?

For a more qualitative approach, the respondents of the survey were asked to describe a good remote leader using three words. The answers were then used to form a word cloud (Figure 13). Some respondents chose to answer with sentences, so these answers could not be included in the word cloud. Some quotes from those were as follows: “interested in his or her employees’ thoughts and well-being”, “have a genuine interest in the educational sector they lead”, “won’t hurry through meetings”, “makes interaction easy”.

In the word cloud the words that appeared most frequently in the answers use the largest font.



Figure 13. “How would you describe a good remote leader in three words?”

Sometimes it was difficult to determine whether words were completely synonymous or not. It was decided that if they were deemed to have even a slight difference in meaning, words were presented separately. A good example of this is *available*, *achievable*, and *approachable*. The respondents answered in Finnish and the answers were translated into English to form the word cloud. The original Finnish version can be seen in Appendix 5. The words that appeared most frequently in the answers were: *available*, *trusting* and *encouraging*. Some other characteristics of a good remote leader were *unbiased*, *present*, *clear*, *active*, *empathic*, *open-minded* and *supporting*. Many words were mentioned just once, and they appear the smallest in the word cloud.

As seen in Figure 14, the respondents were asked to express their general perception of remote leadership in Tredu, again using the Finnish school grades. Here the average was 7.8, slightly higher than that when asked about leadership towards achieving the performance targets. 6% gave a 10, but 8 was the most common grade. 8 can be considered quite good and this is in line with other surveys concerning leadership in Tredu.

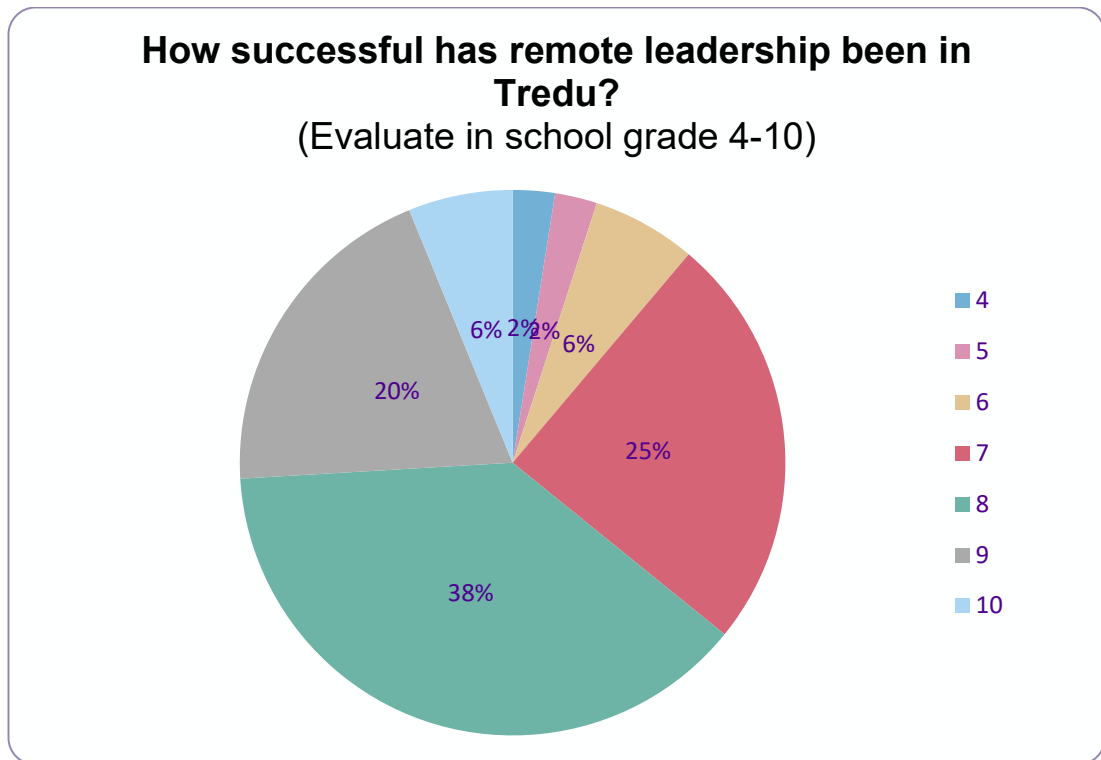


Figure 14. Pie chart. How successful has remote leadership been in Tredu?

Those respondents whose overall perception of remote leadership in Tredu resulted in them grading it lower than with an 8 were then asked to give suggestions for improving remote leadership.

Here are some quotes from the answers:

“I would like regular meetings and more exchange of thoughts between supervisors and employees.”

More time should be devoted to giving instructions to new employees. There should be more informal communication in the team and more time for new employees to get familiarised with their tasks.

There should be less rigid guidance and standards given from top to bottom in Tredu. Teaching in the classroom is not the same in different settings so remote teaching can't be like that either.

Interaction between employees and their nearest supervisors should be improved. Most of the time I am not able to reach my supervisor. He/she [the original in Finnish where the use of he/she is not gender specific] is usually a no-show case. Other things always seem to be more important than the matters and development of the team.

Feeling of presence is important also when using remote tools. Employees should be supported and appreciated. It would be wonderful if the supervisor asked during a distant teaching period how his/her team members are doing. Helps to accomplish joint goals.

Supervisors should act quickly and make the necessary changes today, not in a year or two.

I would like a relaxed atmosphere in the team, not so formal. More skillful use of information technology and better communication with the supervisor would be needed.

The answers showed the need for more empathic approach by leaders. There was need for availability, visibility and more communication and meetings.

As those were expectations from remote leadership at present, expectations from future remote leadership were also surveyed. There was plenty of variation in how employees saw leadership. Some felt everything had gone wonderfully. Some expressed the view that senior management was in their bubble, not aware of the needs of their employees. However, most of the answers landed somewhere between the extremes.

When it comes to the future of remote leadership in Tredu, some key qualities expected from supervisors were seen to be availability, constant (weekly) communication, trust and support, time, clear goals, clear instructions and guidance when needed. Also supervisors being active, present and genuinely interested in the team's matters was seen to be important. Many respondents thought that

their supervisors had been doing things very well and should just keep doing the same thing in the future.

From senior management, that is, on the Tredu level, the respondents expected encouragement, communication using different tools, situation reports, topical reports, inclusion, clear alignments and opportunities for personal development. Some respondents expressed a wish to see senior management getting more in touch with the grassroots operations and being more visible in everyday situations. A request was expressed to have leaders' info sessions for the whole staff. Also informing the staff of topical issues and of future issues was hoped for. One important role of senior management was also considered to be to ensure that the institution as a whole provided employees adequate building blocks to make their remote work successful. Senior management, in addition to near supervisors, was also seen to have an important role in promoting the staff's well-being at work.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Available, trusting and encouraging

As emphasized earlier, remote leadership in its core is leading, just the same as non-remote leadership. It requires action and attention. Remote leadership is a form of leadership that comes on top of or next to the framework in which the leader operates. Research literature presents different approaches to leadership in vocational education. These include coaching, transformational and positive leadership, change management and distributed pedagogical leadership. Employees may experience remote leadership differently from non-remote leadership. There can be higher expectations from leadership especially in exceptional times.

The results of the questionnaire show that many employees were satisfied with remote leadership in Tredu. Remote leadership has some challenges, but routines of remote leadership were being developed. The results of the survey show that employees appreciate regular communication with their supervisors and leaders. Both formal and casual communication are important in maintaining motivation and the feeling of communality. Employees also need communication to keep sight of their goals. Communication needs to be encouraging, welcoming participation instead of just a one-sided style featuring e-mails with to-do lists. Not everybody wants the same amount of attention from their supervisors. However, there tends to be times when extra attention is necessary, such as when an employee is starting on a new job, working remotely in the team.

Because trust, encouragement and availability were considered important qualities in remote leadership by most respondents of the survey, it was disconcerting to find that in some cases supervisors and employees communicated just once a month or even less frequently. The ideal communication style depends on the setting where leaders and supervisors communicate with employees. Is it with individual employees, with a team, people working on a joint project or people in networks where communication is centralised? Interestingly, when asked to rank

the relative importance of aspects of remote leadership, constant dialogue received the lowest ranking, but still got over 8 on average on the Finnish school grade scale.

Attention needs to be devoted to communicating what kind of outcomes are expected from employees. It was found that there needs to be more focus on clarifying performance targets in Tredu. Although most respondents of the survey felt they knew them well and had received good leadership in this respect, around 40% of the respondents graded their knowledge with a 7 or lower on the Finnish school grade scale. These employees need to be made more aware of the goals towards which they are expected to contribute. This cohort of 40% of respondents generally expected a more active role from their leaders and supervisors to clarify performance targets.

Respondents saw that they have an active role to play in maintaining and improving communality and their working environment. Both formal and casual interaction and inclusive sharing of ideas and experiences between supervisors and employees or between employees and other employees is something everybody can contribute to. Availability, trust and the ability to encourage are examples of the most important qualities in a good leader and also in a good co-worker, remotely or non-remotely.

Many of the findings of the survey of this study are roughly in line with research literature on similar topics. It is overall leadership that is expected from leaders. Leaders should focus on making leadership more visible and perhaps being more open on the issues they are working on. Even if leadership is good, without adequate communication it can seem vague and distant. Prior acquaintance of the leader and knowing how he or she prefers to operate eases communication. Therefore it is beneficial for leaders to get to know their employees well in a remote working environment too. This again also increases trust both ways and there may then be less need for control. It was found also both in research literature and in the case study that people need and wish for encouragement from the top leaders and senior management.

In a remote working environment, without organisational clues surrounding the employee, goals and expected outcomes can remain vague. In such cases it is especially important that the goals are clarified. This was also found in the case study: employees expect clear goals, guidance and instructions. With educational institutions in a state of constant flux, the leader's facilitation skills may need training to be able to adapt to these ever-changing situations. Supporting employees' enthusiasm at work is a key factor here. As presented in Eikenberry and Turmel's "Three O's Model of Leadership" (2018), the focus on *Others, Outcomes and Ourselves* can make a difference in how successful remote leadership is.

6.2 Five tips for remote leaders

In this section I merge the results of the survey of this study with the presented literary review into five practical tips for remote leaders. The tips aim to be useful for remote leaders and managers in general but there is particular focus on Tredu. The tips can be seen as a starting point, to be adapted to suit to the more specific needs of one's own team or organisation. The five tips gathered are mainly there to address the matters of availability, trust and encouragement which were seen as qualities of a good remote leader by the staff of Tredu. These 5 tips are in the portrait shown as Figure 15.

5 tips for remote leaders

★ **Make sure employees know when and where you are available.** It is of greatest importance to make it visible, calender should show clearly when there is time for employees. For example every morning from nine to ten.

The time needs to be predictable and regular.

This could also be a questions hour. A virtual hour once a week of which is in the leaders calender and employees know of this special hour dedicated to their issues, ideas and thoughts.

★ **Create a trusting environment**

Leaders should get to know their employees better and the employees their leaders. This could be done for example with making interviews. In these interviews employees prior working experience, know-how and perhaps some hobbies could be introduced. The interviews could then be made visible to team members, in intranet or other organisational system.

★ **Informal communication**

The questions of how are you doing? - should come to be a part of the routine when communicating with colleagues and/or other staff.

This is also to get to know people, having virtual coffeekbreaks can be a beginning

★ **Virtual presence**

Let employees know that you are still there for them. One can make videos from sending greetings to presenting the organisation's goals or reminding of them.

Especially in exceptional times the presence of the leader should be made known. Without communicating what is on the leader's table leadership might seem vague.

★ **Encouraging communication**

It matters how you do it. Try to be encouraging, supporting, motivating and trusting. It is of importance how one communicates, orders too, if wishes employees to stay motivated and satisfied in their work.

Figure 15. Five tips for remote leaders

7 ETHICS AND VALIDITY

7.1 My background as a researcher

I had been working in the organisation where the case study took place for about eight years before I left for a study leave. My employment there has been mainly in administrative positions in different sections of the organisation. At my work I have been involved with questions of leadership and management. Many of these tasks have involved working with large networks, inside and outside the organisation. Matters of remotely led teams, networks and organisations have been familiar to me for many years.

The nature of my positions in Tredu have given me the opportunity to become acquainted with a large number of people in the organisation -- colleagues, team members, project workers, managers, leaders and expert advisors. It cannot be ruled out that my roles in the organisation could have had some effect on how some respondents answered some questions in the questionnaire. However, because everybody had the option to fill out the questionnaire anonymously, I do not think that respondents' previous acquaintance of me had any notable effect on anybody's answers. This effect was probably further diminished by the fact that I had been away for two years before the survey was conducted.

I think being away from the organisation for two years prior to doing the study was a good thing as regards my temporary role as a researcher. This was a good time to do an organisational study. I was familiar with Tredu's operations, but not too familiar as during these two years the organisation had gone through many organisational changes. I think that when doing the study, I was sufficiently detached from the present daily operations, so I was able to forget my presumptions and take a more objective approach.

When first starting this study, leadership in networks was the most interesting theme to me. I am interested in how projects can be led more efficiently in educational networks, with many different stakeholders. These stakeholders include those who provide funding, employment experts, other educational institutions

and different professional groups within the organisation. The challenges have been evident throughout my career in Tredy especially in projects with wide networks, different stakeholders mostly having the same goal but sometimes very different motivations for example because of funding considerations.

When initially contemplating this study, it seemed to be about project management and leading networks. The covid-19 pandemic suddenly changed the circumstances and questions of remote leadership became more important than ever. Discussions with my teachers and fellow students convinced me that this was the right choice.

7.2 Study ethics

To conduct a fair and reliable study, I have done my best to maintain an objective approach. According to Byrne (2017), there can be unconscious biases. In that case the researcher fails to address his or her beliefs, values or background when conducting a study. Thus they can have an effect without the researcher knowing it (Byrne 2017). Byrne suggests ways on tackling the issue with one being that researcher should reflect on his or her beliefs and assumptions which may affect how the study is conducted and the results analysed. The possible effects of these should be made aware to others. (Byrne 2017)

To reinforce the ethics and openness of the study, the cover letter which accompanied the questionnaire informed the respondents why, where and by whom this study is conducted. An approval for the study was asked from the case organisation. One factor in ensuring that the study meets high ethical standards was to give the respondents the chance to stay anonymous. This hopefully eliminated the risk that respondents would feel that they should censor their views in any way.

7.3 Validity

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) without validity research is worthless. Factors which affect the validity of research include the comprehensiveness and scope of the data, number of participants or respondents and the degree of objectivity of the researcher. Cohen et al. think that 100% validity is not feasible, but validity can be enhanced through "...careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of the data." (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007, 133)

I think this study has a good level of validity for example thanks to a sufficient number of respondents to the questionnaire. In addition, those participants were from all sectors of the case organization and thus allow a sufficiently comprehensive study.

As to the question to which degree the results of this study can be generalized, in some respects yes and in other no. How individuals have experienced specific aspects of remote leadership should be generalized only with care. In Finland there are vocational colleges of very different sizes, focusing on different sectors of vocational education. Thus the challenges leaders face are to some degree different. But changes in the organization of vocational education and the sudden increase of remote operations caused by the pandemic affect institutions in similar ways.

7 DISCUSSION

During the pandemic employees of educational institutions have worked and are still working away from their leaders and from organisational clues that normally help the functioning of teams at the workplace. Communication and finding the right tools for it are key matters. Leaders should be open to conversations with employees about how leadership could be improved further. The availability of the leader and an atmosphere of trust help create situations where everybody feel free to express their views.

When it comes to communality, some aspects of it are easily lost when shifting to remote work. But it is not inevitable. Casual interaction can be preserved but it takes some thought and effort to succeed in that in remote circumstances. Finns are perhaps not famous for their small talk skills. But during a pandemic which causes emotional strain to many people, asking how they are doing and doing that out of genuine caring is probably even more important than in normal times.

It will be interesting to see in the future to what degree changes in the management and operations of institutions of vocational education will become permanent after initially being forced by the pandemic. It does not seem likely that everything will return to how it was before the pandemic. If some operations are performed remotely, will that affect financing? Will there be some shift from devoting resources from maintaining offices and school premises and buildings to online learning platforms? If there are such permanent changes, how well will each student's personal needs be taken into account? Some degree of remote learning may work very well for one student while another student may be better off if things return very closely to what they were before the pandemic. Communality is probably at least as important for students as it is for staff.

I hope this study can contribute to the staff of Tredu and other vocational educational institutions being heard on an equal basis, teachers and all other employees alike. Vocational colleges have a great mixture of employment positions and staff with a large variety of backgrounds inside and outside the educational sector. Especially within vocational colleges providing a wide selection of vocational

qualifications, it means that there at least as many professional backgrounds among the staff. This mixture of backgrounds and working cultures may sometimes cause tensions but more importantly, it provides opportunities. Because of the variety of professional backgrounds and many different generations among the staff, they may have also different expectations from their leaders. Thus it would be interesting to see future research on how the mixture of prior working cultures affects the ways leadership is experienced and what expectations it creates. Also it could be beneficial to find more ways to realising through leadership the opportunities made possible by this mixture of professions in vocational colleges.

The year of 2020 was a testing time worldwide in how educational institutions can operate remotely. In 2021 the exceptional circumstances stemming from the pandemic still continue. It will be interesting to see how much these exceptional times will influence on the ways educational institutions are led and to what degree hybrid work is here to stay.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Cover letter of the survey in Finnish

Terve!

Teen pro gradu -tutkielmaa osana TAMKIn Master of Business Administration, Educational Leadership -opintojeni. Tutkielman aiheena on etäjohtaminen. Osana gradua teen tapaustutkimuksen koskien Tredun etäjohtamista, tarkemmin sanoen kuinka Tredun henkilöstö kokee etäjohtamisen. Opintoni ovat englanniksi kuten pro gradu -työnikin tulee olemaan, mutta kysely on suomeksi.

Arvostaisin kovasti, jos käyttäisit tovin vastataksesi tähän kyselyyn. Tarkoituksena on luoda kuvaa Tredun etäjohtamisen tilasta ja kuinka etäjohtamista voi kehittää tulevaisuudessa. Tässä tutkimuksessa etäjohtaminen nähdään täysi- ja osa-aikaisen etätyön sekä liikkuvan, virtuaalisen, hajautetun ja ajasta ja paikasta riippumattoman työn johtamisena.

Taustatietona vastaajista kerätään sijoittuminen kampuksiin tai matriisiin, mutta muuten kyselyyn voi vastata anonymisti. Kysely on toteutettu Surveypal-kyselynä ja sen täyttämiseen kuluu noin kymmenen minuuttia. Vastauksia toivon koko henkilöstöltä, esimiehet mukaan lukien.

Kysely aukeaa linkistä:

<https://my.surveypal.com/Etajohtaminen-Tredussa> Kysely on avoinna 11.10.2020 saakka.

Jos sinulla herää jotain kysymyksiä kyselyyn tai tutkimukseen liittyen, toivon yhteydenottoa sähköpostitse.

Kiitos paljon jo etukäteen! Vastaukset auttavat yhteisen työmme kehittämisessä.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Tiina Huovila
tiina.huovila@tuni.fi

ohjaajani TAMK:ssa:
Osaamispäällikkö
Hanna Pihlajarinne
Liiketoiminta
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Appendix 2. Cover letter of the survey in English

Hello!

I am making a Pro Gradu – thesis as a part of my studies in TAMK`s Master of Business Administration, Educational Leadership. The subject of the thesis is remote leadership. As a part of the thesis I am making a case study concerning the remote leadership of Tampere vocational College, Tredu. And to be more specific , how the staff of Tredu experience the remote leadership. My studies are conducted in English and so will be the thesis, but the survey is in Finnish.

I would appreciate it a lot if you would use a moment to answer to this survey. The intention is to create some picture of the state of remote leadership of Tredu and how it could be developed in the future. In this research remote leadership is seen as leadership of partly- and total remote work, mobile, virtual or dispersed or work and work independent from time and place.

As background information, only the answerers positioning in the campuses or matrixes is gathered, but otherwise one can answer anonymously to the survey. The survey is done using Surveypal – tool and it takes about 10 minutes to fill. I hope to receive answers from the whole staff, including supervisors.

The survey will open from the link <https://my.surveypal.com/Etajohtaminen-Tredussa> . The survey is open until 11.10.2020

Taustatietona vastaajista kerätään sijoittuminen kampuksiin tai matriisiin, mutta muuten kyselyyn voi vastata anonymisti. Kysely on toteutettu Surveypal-kyselynä ja sen täyttämiseen kuluu noin kymmenen minuuttia. Vastauksia toivon koko henkilöstöltä, esimiehet mukaan lukien.

If you have any questions concerning this survey or research, I hope contacts by email.

Thank you already in advance! The answer will help to help our joint work.

With best regards

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Etäjohtaminen Tredussa

Tässä tutkimuksessa etäjohtaminen nähdään täysi- ja osa-aikaisen etätöiden sekä liikkuvan, virtuaalisen, hajautetun ja ajasta ja paikasta riippumattoman työn johtamisena.

Kiitos jo etukäteen vastauksistasi!

➤ **Millä kampuksella tai matriisilla olet töissä?**

- a) Yritys- ja työnantajapalvelut
- b) Kehittäminen – ja innovaatiotoiminta
- c) Tredu Serviisi
- d) Tredu Kaleva
- e) Tredu Hervanta
- f) Tredu Pyynikki
- g) Muu

➤ **Oletko esimiesasemassa? Kyllä/Ei**

Kysymykseen KYLLÄ vastanneet ohjataan seuraaviin avoimiin jatkokysymyksiin:

➤ **Miten johtajana itse koet etäjohtamisen?**

➤ **Miten etäjohtaminen eroaa muusta johtamisesta?**

➤ **Kuinka usein näet esimiestäsi?**

- a) kerran päivässä
- b) kerran viikossa
- c) kerran kuussa
- d) harvemmin

➤ **Kuinka usein olet yhteydessä esimieheesi (puhelimitse, sähköpostitse tms..?)**

- a) kerran päivässä
- b) kerran viikossa
- c) kerran kuussa
- d) harvemmin

2(3)

- **Millaisena koet etäjohtamisen Tredussa tällä hetkellä:** Avoin kysymys
- **Hyvä etäjohtaja on mielestäni (kuvaile kolmella sanalla):**
- **Keväällä 2020 Tampereen Elinvoiman ja kilpailukyvyn palvelualueen (EKI, johon Tredu myös kuuluu) henkilöstölle tehdyn kyselyn mukaan 72,4 % kaipasi eniten yhteisöllisyyttä ajasta ennen koronaviruspandemiaa (työn näkökulmasta).**
Yhteisöllisyyttä pidetään yleisestikin hyvin tärkeänä osana toimivaa etätyöympäristöä.
 - a) **Kuinka hyvän etäjohtajan tulisi yhteisöllisyyttä tukea?**
Avoin kysymys
 - b) **Kuinka voisit itse tukea yhteisöllisyyttä työympäristössäsi?**
Avoin kysymys
- **Mitä toivot tulevaisuudessa etäjohtamiselta Tredussa**
 - a) lähiesimieheltä?
 - b) Tredun ylimmältä johdolta (johtoryhmä)?
- **Hyvään etäjohtamiseen olennaisina liitettyjä ominaisuuksia on mm. alla luetellut käsitteet. Kuinka tärkeinä pidät seuraavia tekijöitä etäjohtajan ja alaisen suhteessa:** (arvioi kouluarvosanalla 4 - 10)
 - a) avoimuus
 - b) luottamus
 - c) yhteiset pelisäännöt
 - d) yhteisöllisyys
 - e) arvostus
 - f) jatkuva vuorovaikutus
- **Arvioi (kouluarvosanalla 4 - 10) miten hyvin tiedät oman tulosityksikösi (Yritys- ja työnantajapalvelut, Kehittäminen – ja innovaatiotoiminta, Tredu Serviisi, Tredu Kaleva, Tredu Hervanta, Tredu Pyy-nikki) tulostavoitteet?**
- **Arvioi (kouluarvosanalla 4 - 10) kuinka mielestäsi tulostavoitteiden saavuttamisen johtamisessa on onnistuttu, erityisesti kun mietit etäjohtamista?**

3(3)

- **Miten Tredussa on onnistuttu etäjohtamisessa** (arvioi kouluarvosanalla 4 -10)?

Jatkokysymys:

- **Jos annoit äsken arvosanaksi alle 8, mitä kehittäisit?** Avoin kysymys

Kiitos vastauksistasi!

Remote leadership in Tredu

In this study remote leadership is seen as leadership of total and part-time remote work and as the leadership of mobile, virtual, decentralized and work independent from time and place.

Thank you in advance for your answers!

➤ **In which campus of matrix do you work in?**

- a) Yritys- ja työnantajapalvelut
- b) Kehittäminen – ja innovaatiotoiminta
- c) Tredu Serviisi
- d) Tredu Kaleva
- e) Tredu Hervanta
- f) Tredu Pyynikki
- g) Other

➤ **Are you in supervisor position? Yes/No**

The ones answering Yes were automatically directed to the following questions:

- **As a leader, how do you experience remote leadership?**
- **How does remote leadership differ from other leadership?**

- **How often do you see your supervisor?**
 - a) once a day
 - b) once a week
 - c) once a month
 - d) more rarely

- **How often are you in contact with your supervisor? (by telephone, email etc..)**
 - a) once a day
 - b) once a week
 - c) once a month
 - d) more rarely

- **How do you experience remote leadership in Tredu at the moment?**
Open question
- **In my opinion a good remote leader is (describe with three words):**
- **In the spring of 2020 in a questionnaire for the staff of Tampere Growth, Innovation and Competitiveness Services (where Tredu is part of) 72,4 % missed communality most from the time before the coronavirus pandemic (from work´s viewpoint).**
Communality is considered commonly to be an important part of a functioning remote work environment.
 - a) **How do you feel a good remote leader should support communality?** Open question
 - b) **How could you support communality in your working environment?** Open question
- **What do hope for remote leadership in the future in Tredu**
 - a) from your supervisor?
 - b) from senior management of Tredu (board of directors)?
- **In good remote leadership, as essential concepts would be such as ones described underneath. How important do you consider these concepts to be in the relation of employee and supervisor: (evaluate in school grades 4-10)**
 - a) openness
 - b) trust
 - c) common ground rules
 - d) communality
 - e) appreciation
 - f) constant dialogue
- **Evaluate (in school grade 4-10) how well do you know the performance targets of the business unit where you are employed (Yritys- ja työntantajapalvelut, Kehittäminen – ja innovaatiotoiminta, Tredu Serviisi, Tredu Kaleva, Tredu Hervanta, Tredu Pyynikki) ?**

3(3)

- **Evaluate (in school grade 4-10) how successful the leadership of accomplishing the performance targets has been, especially when you think of remote leadership?**

- **How successful has remote leadership been in Tredu? (Evaluate (in school grade 4-10))**

Follow-up question:

- **If you just now gave as grade under 8, what would you develop?**
Open question

Thank you for your answers!

