Improving business advantage by nurturing B players through emotional intelligence

Authors: Vilma Lorena Parada Sierra  
Pham Minh Duc

Tutor: Dr. Pr. Philippe Daudi

Program: Leadership and Management in International Context

Subject: International Business Administration

Level and semester: Master Level Spring 2009

Baltic Business School
IMPROVING BUSINESS ADVANTAGE BY NURTURING B PLAYERS THROUGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Authors: Pham Minh Duc and Vilma Lorena Parada

Director of the research: Dr. Pr. Philippe Daudi

Programme: Master’s program in Leadership and Management in International Context

Date: May 14th 2009

Baltic Business School – University of Kalmar, Sweden
Abstract

Nurturing talent inside organizations through the use of Emotional Intelligence could strengthen businesses competitive advantage. The use of Emotional Intelligence as a tool to create closer liaisons among staff members could provide the connection that employers need to breed their employees, particularly, their B players. Our objective is to study the processes that are built between top managers and B players within the virtual space inside organizations and the viability to elevate their performance through the use of Emotional Intelligence when creating work relationships among them.

The study was performed by a cluster of interviews to top managers, practitioners and researchers involved with our object of study and by a series of surveys completed by employees. The main results were connected to verbal language and multicomunicative activities as management of meaning from a leader, intercultural differences, general prevention towards work relationship building, influence from physical space of offices, personal space and personal satisfaction, post modernity in the leadership style, advantages of using Emotional Intelligence, positive effects that interrelations have over businesses general activities and the viability to reinforce business competitive advantage by empowering their human resources.

After the termination of this study, we could conclude that communication channels, culture context and local values and beliefs are the main aspects that influence and limit the creation of processes among our both actors and their subsequent success. Furthermore, to create work relationship inside organizations indirectly build the defensive strategy that firms need against competitors and this reinforces their business competitive advantage.
Acknowledgements

Many issues have influenced the designing and writing processes of the thesis and with the assistance of different people, we managed better to face encountered barriers.

We thank Professor Philippe Daudi for his significant and constructive comments and contribution during the whole thesis process. We highly appreciate Mr. Mikael Lundgren for the unconditional assistance of reading and giving valuable feedbacks for our work.

Finally, we want to thank our respective interviewees who without them we could not have been able to complete our research study. Special thanks to Ms. Agneta Bladh – Director of University of Kalmar, Prof. Björn Bjerke – Visitor teacher at University of Kalmar, Prof. Richard Koehler – Gotland University, Prof. Konstantin Lampou – Malardalen University, Mr. Anders Wikman – InDevelop AB (Sweden), Mr. Jose Parada – Punto de Servicios S.A (Colombia), Ms. Maricah Nuutinen – SpitecOy (Finland), Ms. Stacy Apelt – Trade Secret Saloons (United States), Mr. Jimmy Guiracha and Mr. Mike Abbe – Top Street Wear (Sweden) and Mr. Agnes Andersson–former consultant (Sweden).

We would also like to take this chance to send our thanks to our family and friends, who have been encouraging and supporting us during the whole project.

Vilma Lorena Parada and Duc M. Pham
# TABLE OF CONTENT

Chapter 1: Introduction........................................................................................................................................... 1  
1.1 Background.................................................................................................................................................. 1  
1.2 Two main actors........................................................................................................................................... 4  
1.3 Research Purpose ....................................................................................................................................... 6  
1.4 Thesis structure........................................................................................................................................... 8  

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework..................................................................................................................... 10  
2.1 Space ........................................................................................................................................................ 11  
2.1.1 Virtual Space........................................................................................................................................... 11  
2.1.2 Physical Space....................................................................................................................................... 12  
2.1.3 Space and its limitation........................................................................................................................ 12  
2.2 Processes that happen within the Space...................................................................................................... 13  
2.2.1 Relationship building............................................................................................................................ 14  
2.2.2 Communication .................................................................................................................................... 14  
2.3 Sense giving and sense making................................................................................................................... 18  
2.3.1 Management of meaning....................................................................................................................... 19  
2.3.2 Leadership as Multi-communicative activities...................................................................................... 20  
2.4 Leadership.................................................................................................................................................. 21  
2.4.1 Modern leadership................................................................................................................................. 21  
2.4.2 Postmodern Leadership......................................................................................................................... 23  
2.5 Emotional Intelligence (EI)....................................................................................................................... 25  
2.5.1 Maslow basic human needs pyramid................................................................................................... 27  
2.5.2 Herzberg factors.................................................................................................................................... 28  
2.6 Business competitive advantage................................................................................................................ 30
2.6.1 Interrelationships among business units as means of strengthen competitive advantage...........32
2.6.2 Defensive strategy as a way to gain competitive advantage......................................................38
2.6.3 Mentoring through relationships aiming for a better competitive advantage.........................39

Chapter 3: Methodology and Method........................................................................................................43

3.1 Methodology........................................................................................................................................43
3.2 Method ................................................................................................................................................48
3.1.1 Research Model............................................................................................................................48
3.2.1 Interview to Managers..................................................................................................................52
3.2.2 Case study: Survey for employee’s ..............................................................................................53
3.3 Data Findings......................................................................................................................................55

Chapter 4: Result and Discussion.............................................................................................................97

Chapter 5: Conclusions .............................................................................................................................110

Works cited..............................................................................................................................................114

List of index...............................................................................................................................................116
Chapter 1: Introduction

As an introduction to our thesis research we will give a general background of the space where our object of study makes sense. Afterwards, we will introduce our subject of study and its actors together with the arguments that leaded us to select them as of high importance when leading and managing organizations. Finally, we will present the problem that inspired us to raise our two research questions, the purpose of this study and by the end of this chapter we will present our thesis structure.

1.1 Background

Corporate space where top managers and employees interact could be separated into two layers: physical and virtual space. Physical space refers to the infrastructure of a firm; office facilities, equipment and tangible locations where the economic and social objective of the entity is developed by involved actors (staff members). This type of space can be easily seen, perceived and touched by any person. In other words, it is composed by all the tangible goods that are part and belong to the firm. The second type of space refers to the intangible activities and goods that belong to the organization and that are created during a daily interaction basis between staff members.

The meaning of virtual usually evokes a computational scenario in people’s mind, it “describes something that can be done or seen using a computer and therefore without going anywhere or talking to anyone “(definition of virtual taken from Cambridge dictionary). Nevertheless, in this research study we are using this concept to address the environment where relations, actions, activities, motions and processes going on in real life between firm’s staff members inside the physical space of organizations. Virtual space is a layer of physical space conceived as the environment where activities and processes among employees and Top managers happen. Those processes are created and perceived by them through their sonic, olfactory, kinetic, tactile and thermal senses. These activities shape any organization culture, create informal and untold rules, define behaviours and due to their nature, they are not placed in a tangible type of space. They have always existed in a basis of interaction between people, and this interactions, are intangible.

Virtual space would not exist with the absence of people, neither with the absence of physical space. It is formed by them and then people are shaped with the type of environment or space they are implicated in. It is like in music, Hegarty (cited by Dorsey p.42) said “Sound and space are inherently
linked, sound for us is what disturbs air, and that is not going to happen in the absence of space, but sound also structures space. Space is not fixed but permanently forming and reforming with sound as its constituent parts and this occurs through human intervention and perception. Following on from that, the acoustical event is also a social one - it is not just the interaction of human subjects with an object world; it is also interactivity as a society" and one could say that, the same situation happens for companies’ staff members (employees and Top managers) where sound is as people and space is as company’s virtual space, thereafter, virtual space inside the firm is the environment where interactivity of staff members happen and from this perspective, employees create virtual space and it shapes the organization as a whole.

Virtual space is socially created; there is no social environment beyond this space. In other words, virtual space is the result of employee’s and Top manager’s socialization.

Socialization happens when activities come to pass between employees and Top managers. Such activities can be addressed as work relationships, employee’s recognition, communication, motivation and all type of actions taken from any of both sides (Top managers or employees) that fulfil personal integrity and get them closer to each other in a working scenario and here is where we address our object of study. It is the processes and activities that create work relationships between Top managers and Employees inside firm’s space. Furthermore, we want to focus in the relationships between Top managers and B type of employees.

In order to exemplify what has been just said, we present a story from the book called Primal Leadership by Daniel Goleman, Richard E. Boyatzis, and Annie McKee. It is an example of how a leader can influence others by shorten distance between them, not in a physical way by sitting next to them but in “virtual” access through interaction activities and communication. Moreover, the “virtual space” can be accessed also by empathy and feeling and that is how emotional intelligence takes place.

One example can be of use to illustrate what we just said. Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2004) wrote in their preface: “Take, for example, the horrific catastrophe in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001 – which occurred in the final days of writing this book. That calamity underscores the essential role of emotional leadership, particularly in moments of
human tragedy and crisis. And it bring home the point that resonance goes beyond positivity, to cover the range of emotions. Consider Mark Loehr, top manager of Sound View Technology, a technology brokerage in Connecticut. A handful of friends, colleagues, and family members of people there were lost in tragedy. Loehr’s first response was to invite all employees to come to the office the next day - not to work, but to share their feelings and talk over what to do. Over the following days Loehr was there as people wept together, and he urged people talk about what they were going through. Every night at 9:45 he sent out an e-mail to the entire company about the personal side of the ongoing events. Loehr went a step further, encouraging and guiding a discussion of how to find meaning in the chaos through an action they could all participate in to help out. Rather than just making a group donation, they decided to donate their company’s proceeds from one day of trading to those victimized by the tragedy. On an average day, that might be more than half a million dollars; the most they had made in a day was around $1 million. But as they spread the word of what they wanted to do to their clients, it inspired an amazing response: they raised more than $6 million that day.

To continue the healing process, Loehr also asked employees to compile a “memory book” to record their thoughts, fears, and hopes, which could be shared with future generations. There was an outpouring of e-mails with poems, moving stories, reflections people speaking from their hearts.

In such a grave crisis, all eyes turn to the leader for emotional guidance. Because the leader’s way of seeing things has special weight, leaders manage meaning for a group, offering a way to interpret or make sense of, and so react emotionally to, a giving situation. Mark Loehr courageously performed one of the most crucial emotional tasks of leadership: He helped himself and his people find meaning and sense, even in the face of chaos and madness. To do so, he first attuned to and expressed the shared emotional reality so that the direction he eventually articulated resonated at the gut level, putting into words what everyone was feeling in their hearts.” Goleman D, Boyatzis R and McKee A. (2004)

In normal process, working flow might let people forget about emotions. They tend to deal with certain situations in workplace. The role of leader in some way remains stable. When a problem occurs or crisis happen, the followers look to the leader as the guidance for their activities and
behaviours. This is when the emotions from the followers expressed and control their minds. In order to lead in this situation, a manager needs emotional intelligence to know how to deal with people’s mind. It is not only proved in the story above but also in the current financial crisis when employees are facing with sacking and decreasing in their earning. The awareness of crisis emotion can help the manager reduce the risks might occur.

This is a significant example of how emotional intelligence can be applied to be able to approach people. By creating the connection with employees through meetings and open discussion with him, Mark Loehr could understand and sympathize with people so that he can guide them to the direction he or she wants. And then the distance between the boss and his employees did not exist anymore. People’s feeling is close to each other not by sitting next one to the other but by sharing and communicating. The “virtual space” here in this story was managed successfully by Mark Loehr.

1.2 Two main actors

Staff members of a firm can be identified in two main groups. First are managerial positions like Top managers and general managers or directors. The second are regular employees. According to DeLong (2008), the second group can be subdivided into another three different groups. The first group is the A players. They are employees who have outstanding performance exceeding the basic demands of their tasks and who are usually interacting more often with their managers due to their constant pro activeness and inputs to the organization. The second group is the B Players. They are staff members who achieve their tasks independently and usually do not exceed their job position expectations. Same as the A players, they know what their job is about and do fill expectations but are not concerned or driven by being outstanding or accomplishing more than the necessary. They could be satisfied with their position and their job tasks and contrary to the A players, they do not look for new challenges, they are employees who look for stability and achievement of their basic tasks. The third group of employees is the C Players. They demand more attention from managers. Different reasons could drive them not to accomplish their basic job tasks, therefore they need
manager's supervision and support so that their basic everyday job demands are satisfactorily accomplished.

One can say that according to the previous concept, managers interact more frequently with A and C players due to their performance inside the firm. B players usually do not demand further attention from managers since they are characterized to be independent in their duties. “A players constitute only 20% of the professional staff and C players another 10%. Therefore, B players make up the remaining 70% - a large group we call the “solid citizens.” Even at top-tier firms, B players are the heart and soul of the organization. If they are mediocre, the firm will be mediocre; if they are high performers, the firm will follow suit” (Delong, Gabarro and Lees, 2008, p.118). From this perspective, one could say that B player’s represent the biggest group of an organization staff members and according to what they are, the firm will be. Due to their importance, their talent could be elevated or empowered in order to elevate indirectly the company performance at a higher level, and this can be done by increasing interaction between them (B players) and top managers affecting consequently the firm’s competences.

Our research would focus on work relationships from Top managers to B players since they “are the "heart and soul" of any company. B players are loyal. They are the ones who do their work without fanfare or fuss.” DeLong cited by Lagace, 2003. Due to current financial crisis where mergers, partnerships and downsizing activities take place, knowledge transfer and retention are key issues to manage when firms have to decide the employees they want to keep and those who would have to leave. B players “… are the keepers of institutional memory during hard times such as a merger or downsizing” (Lagace, 2003) it can be seen that besides being an opportunity to elevate unused talent, they are highly valuable support for a firm in hard times. In fact, one could say that the more involved they are in organizational activities, the more feasible sustainability for the organization could be achieved on the long run. “Midlevel performers thrive when they know they’ve got something to work toward — … In fact, 52 percent of respondents who qualify for incentive programs at their companies — which typically reward the top 10 percent of workers — feel they have only somewhat or no chance of winning an award. This is far from motivating… Your B-players have a significant effect on your bottom line,” said Rodger Stotz, vice president and managing consultant for Maritz Incentives (provider of reward and recognition programs) who
added afterwards "You'll always have a top five percent, but those rewards don't move the middle." (Galea C. 2005) and for us, the middle B players are the ones who move every organization.

Relating our research object to international context, we believe that it does not matter the nationality where a person comes from, basic human behaviour for us has a general pattern where people look to fulfil basic safety human needs and focusing at a work scenario, this characteristics allow the three types of employees to be identified.

Finally, considering the fact that B players are more than half of any organization staff members, they are the change and support engine for any firm. In times of turbulence, B players are back up for companies, fact that in an aggressive economical world where current needs of companies are to move abroad and to remain competitive this type of employees might be a positive and stable support during transitions.

1.3 Research Purpose

We have identified that unused B player's talent is a problem. Since they are employees who accomplish their basic job demands without exceeding their job expectations, we assume that there is still more from which the organization could be benefited if their full potential would be used for the benefit of the firm operations. B players can have solutions or innovations. Their nature of having remained for a time in their same position and have experience combined with knowledge of their job activities provide them with authority and real expertise to generate ideas for improvement.

Due to the nature of their behaviour, A players are currently looking for new challenges and have no fear to change positions in their professional career. They come and leave organizations as soon as they get a better and more challenging proposition; B players look for stability in their work and personal familiar lives instead. This nature characterized them to look for seldom attention from Top managers and have infrequent job change. This situation makes them gain deeper knowledge about the firm, various internal processes and history of the firm's moves when facing relevant events. When transition times come, they (B players) are the ones who give support to the young and inexperienced employees being of valuable hold up in times of crisis. Their invaluably support
the organization by staying in their positions having no desire for changing and reaching new positions. Due to this, we want them to be on top managers side bringing support to him or her.

Our first research question is: how to address possible ways to reduce the space among B players and Top managers? This type of space relates to the virtual environment we have introduced in the first part of this chapter and we assume that space could be reduced by increasing activities between both actors.

1. Our second research question is: how to improve performance of B players by generating more activities between them and Top managers through the use of Emotional Intelligence? This could enable sense making process of employees when it comes to how identified and familiar they feel at the firm they belong to and how motivated the feel to improve their job performance.

Work relations between managers and employees are created using the physical space as a medium where they interact, communicate and create dialogues. This physical space is the context where they perform, exchange thoughts and communicate within each other. Without physical space, as to say organization’s building, office rooms, technological and technical facilities, there would hardly be a place where both employees and Top managers could create any work relationships. Physical space enables the building of better relations and better environment (virtual space). A good virtual space might elevate employee’s performance and here is where our research objective makes sense. We would like to study relationships that are built between top managers and B players within the virtual space inside organizational physical space, and if possible, raise new research questions regarding the elevation of performance through the use of emotional intelligence when creating liaisons among both actors.
1.4 Thesis structure

Our thesis research will be developed in 5 different chapters. The next graph shows the thesis outline structure:

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 3: METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4: RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Chapter 5: CONCLUSIONS
1.5 Limitations of the thesis

Our study is limited to Top managers of firms and B players. The unit of measurement for Top managers would be a cluster of interviews. The restriction to choose them is to have at least 5 people under their responsibility. For the case of employees, we will restrict it to a case study made upon a series of surveys. We will identify B players profile out of answered surveys and focus in study their answers. We will measure their willingness to create or build better work relationships.

The concept of Space (both in physical and virtual space) in organization is a new concept. Although organizational space is linked with organizations in our study, we were limited to access such place and approached it through related theories and interviews to practitioners. Moreover, understanding Space (especially Virtual Space) is limited to the theory presented in this study. Even though we try to explain the concept of virtual space throughout the research, we are still aware that it’s meaning and concept is complex.

We want to present the study as simple as possible in order to approach all readers. Our discussion and conclusions in chapters 4 and 5 will be created from the consultant point of view, writing to practitioners, researchers and consultants who are involved in business context.
Chapter 2: Theoretical framework:

In this section we will describe the contexts we are using for the thesis. The Contexts Map shows 6 areas on which we are interested. First is the object of study itself (processes) then the areas on which our object of study makes sense and those are space, sensegiving and sensemaking, Leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Business Advantage. The theories therefore remain with respected contexts and they are also being able to make sense inside them (contexts). The study will focus on Processes which occur within the Space and they are happen in work relationship building, and communication. The Space takes place plays as a frame or an environment where processes happen. However, the others contexts (sensegiving and sensemaking, leadership, emotional intelligence and competitive advantage) will be discussed to support, elaborate, and make sense of the focused processes and context of space. The study will go deeper in the centre of the map and the respective frameworks will be discussed in the following part.

![Context Map](Source: Own)
2.1 Space

Space is the first context where processes take place. We have identified two layers inside space overall: virtual space and physical space.

2.1.1 Virtual Space

This type of space, as it was mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, can be identified in the atmosphere or environment that is created from interaction between Top managers and employees. Many aspects would characterize the type of virtual space that is created inside an organization. People personal values, organizational culture, corporate values, mission, and vision are some of the issues that shape the type of environment of a particular organization.

Virtual space might have limitations. Visibility among staff members, personal accessibility, interpersonal communication, opportunities to express ideas, thoughts and to be noticed are some of the limitations for this space. Furthermore, physical space is also a limitation for virtual space. The first type of space being the root of the existence for the second type of space can limit how spontaneous, clear, diffuse, easy achievable and possible the environment (virtual space) would be.

One could say that environment is created after socialization of people. Organizational environment would be thereafter the result of staff members' interaction. Hidden structures of socialization are also limitations for this virtual space. Basic principles of respect, identity, personal drivers, emotional stage on which people are in their lives are the kind of limitations for creation and recreation of virtual space.

One could say that virtual, is a postmodern way of looking and understanding corporate space in present times.
2.1.2 Physical Space

Physical could be the rational way to look at space. Organizational space has been usually described as the physical facilities existing inside the property area that belongs to a firm, all that can be measured and used to develop companies’ activities to produce a certain type of goods and thereafter get revenues from them.

Monetary benefits are not the only outcome that companies get from using organizational space. Other outcomes can be expected from it, one of them could be the positive influence that space has over people’s attitude. People make sense of any place where we are and generate personal reactions or feelings depending on how much influence it (space) has over them and also depending on their current emotional stage.

Everything raises emotions, and physical corporate space can be the generator of employee’s emotions inside firms. Atmosphere inside a physical location could be an important aspect when thinking about space. We have two basic assumptions. One is how visible and accessible office equipment is to employees and also how visible people are to their co-workers inside the company. From this reasoning, one could say that space affect people’s reactions and feelings, people create organizational atmosphere and atmosphere re creates organizational space having thereafter, effect over people.

2.1.3 Space and its limitation

Considering space as a permanently open and accessible area that anyone can access, one could say that it is a place with no limitations or restrictions rather than physical ones, which are, private property type (when it is about physical space); nevertheless lack of space is an aspect to consider when limiting it. One can say that its human basic need to have a minimum length of space in order to develop any activity and interact with other people. It is something that varies from one person to another depending on personal and physical integrity. By personal needs we mean the necessity to have a place where one feels comfortable and secure for developing any activity; with physical needs we mean the minimum requirements that a place has to have for one to fit in it, to say, size, height,
width, how soft, how hard, how colourful, how warm or how cold it is. These conditions can limit or promote any process inside particular areas.

Personal space is another important aspect that could limit processes, and in this case, it would be the virtual type of space. People’s individuality and need to think and reason by themselves is something that is more or less needed according to individual’s character. This would on the one hand, allow the existence of a bigger environment permitting more processes happening within individual virtual space or, in the other hand, reduce it to a smaller space where less processes can be created depending on personal allowance to others to access and approach it.

2.2 Processes that happen within the Space

Interaction within the space will be considered as all the activities that occur between the two main actors in the organizational environment. These activities include work relationship building where connections and contacts take place. This context allows us to see how physical/virtual space can be studied and how through relationship building, communication channels or different communication styles the interaction activities inside space could be increased.

Interaction is one of the main aspects in processes context. It refers the interaction motions within the firm. These activities require the interaction from both sides where they have the opportunities to interact with each other. Based on the organizational environment, interaction activities could be a regular ceremony, company vacations or even regular annual meetings.

Physical space is tangible therefore can be measured; virtual space cannot be calculated by numbers because it is intangible. The use of other aspects is necessary to discuss this concept. Therefore, the purpose of the discussion in this context is to reduce ‘virtual space’ by actions or processes occurring within it. We expect to use this context to determine the interaction between two main actors and to see how it can influence work relationships having as result the measurement of distance in virtual space through openness or limitation of work relationships.
2.2.1 Relationship building

The relationship plays an important role in this study since we take into account that it is the way to decrease or increase the distance between top managers and B Players inside the firm. Relationship basically relates to Emotional Intelligence where the social minds must be used to control and create an effective relation with people. Besides social relationship, work and personal relationship will be studied to find out how it affects to work performance.

Culture will also be considered in this context part since it could affect the relationship building in terms of power distance and norms and values. Since our study actors are in different positions issues like relations of a manager and employee, the authority or power and respect are issues that would be discussed in order to understand if they could encourage or prevent them from relationship building. Moreover, the diversity of cultures has been spreading in firms all around the world and multi-culture or cross-culture companies need to deal with the variety of behaviours. In order to manage it successfully, a manager needs to understand the differences in cultures.

2.2.2 Communication

Communication is another aspect that we will study in our thesis research within process context. It refers to the communication channels and communication style. Since the virtual space is unable to be measured by numbers, we assume communication to be the way to shorten the distance between the two main actors. E-mail, phone call, verbal/ non-verbal communication are considered as the channels. Communication is considered as the medium to connect Top managers and B Players. Therefore it plays an important role to link the two actors in relationship building. The following part will introduce the aspects related to communication.

2.2.2.1 Geert Hofstede’s power distance dimension

Power distance refers to authority position within a firm. It identifies the space between managerial role and employees through the power of the manager. The power distance could be low or high
depending very much on the culture where it is. It is interesting for us to consider this aspect in a multi-cultural organization. In this research study, power distance will help us to find how a manager can manage the power together with relationship building at his or her employees.

Geert Hofstede introduced the five-dimensional model which includes: Power distance, Uncertainty avoidance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Masculinity vs. femininity, Long vs. short term orientation. We will focus mostly in Power distance because it helps to determine the relationship between top managers and employees.

Power distance is defined by Hofstede as “the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders. Power and inequality, of course, are extremely fundamental facts of any society and anybody with some international experience will be aware that ‘all societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others’” (Hofstede, 1986)

This is related very much to cultural aspect where the power and authority of a manager can be seen in different ways. Hofstede develops an index which can show the low and high power distance from many cultures and countries. In some cultures the possibility to reduce power distance can be seen as decrease of power within organizations or a lost of respect from their employees.

High Power distance can prevent relationship between top managers and employees. On the one hand, many cultures where power distance is high, employees are not allowed or are afraid to contribute their ideas or opinions to their managers. On the other hand, cultures with low power distance have not a big gap when it comes to behaviour between manager and employee having thereafter equal relations.
2.2.2.2 Intercultural communication

The other aspect in communication is intercultural communication. Together with power distance, intercultural communication can help us to study the diversity in environment which is the trend that is becoming more and more popular in firms. In this research, this aspect can help us to determine the limitation of communication in cross-culture organizations. It can prevent the understanding between top manager and employees if they are different in cultures. In this study we will refer to Low and High context communication within intercultural communication. The term ‘Low and High context culture/communication’ was first stated by Edward Hall, an anthropologist, in his book named Beyond Culture. E. Hall took communication into account as the fundamental principle about culture, his idea about low and high context is based on direct or in-direct meaning of the messages. Low and high context culture/communication refers the meaning of the message which is delivered in this context. In low context culture, the message comes with direct meaning. On the other hand, messages in high context culture comes with in-direct meaning which require the listener to interpret hidden meaning through the tone, face or how words are used.

The increasing of global diversity not only at work but in normal life also demands a deep understanding about cultures. Communication is a medium to connect people. Therefore, top managers need to understand the clear meaning of a message would require acknowledge of how low- or high-context culture is and where the person comes from in order to deliver significances effectively. In the following paragraphs we will provide a general explanation of these terms and highlight their relevance with our object of study.

**Low-context culture/communication**

Hall first stated it as "The mass of information is vested in the explicit code (message)" Low context culture can be explained in the context of business management in intercultural communication context by many aspects. First of all, the relationship is limited within the organization. Staff members cover information around the company and they do not want to share the personal life and vice versa. In business environment, goals are set and followed strictly. Goals are usually based on measurable progresses and tasks will be divided to achieve the desired final result.
Messages are exchanged through verbal communication or word, instead of nonverbal communication. It helps the messages to go directly and clearly to the receivers. Arguments are encouraged and disagreement is decentralized. However, conflicts in work do not affect personal relations, while people in this culture separate their work and private life.

Learning occurs by following explicit directions and explanations from others. In low context communication, organizational structure is not centralized; responsibilities and roles are divided not only for high positions but also for every employee inside the organisation.

**High-context culture/communication**

According to Hall, high context culture is "Most of the information is either in the physical context or initialized in the person." Differently from low context culture, communication in high context involves hidden meaning besides verbal content. Moreover, relationship is very important in this community, both in personal and working life. There is no line between so that it can easily affect each other.

Since the content of messages is usually hidden, one must be inside the culture to have ability to understand its whole meaning. On the other hand, people from low context culture find it difficult to see the main point of a sentence in high context communication. Therefore, there is a big gap for an ‘outsider’ to adapt with the society.

The messages that are transferred between top managers and B players are most likely to have a hidden meaning behind them and managers should be aware of it. The misinterpretation in this communication results with the misunderstanding between each other.

Non-verbal communication like voice tone, facial expression, gestures or eye movement is highly used in this culture. Finally, argument is avoided in organizations. Consequently, disagreement is personalized because of the term ‘face’ in public. Conflicts from work can relate to personal life or vice versa.
In contrast, conversations between two businesspersons from a low-context culture will be direct and structured, specific. Shared background is not assumed. The person from the low-context culture will place a much higher value on the words spoken than on the non-verbal aspect of communications.

Organizational communication

Since the research study is working with two main actors in organizational environment, it is necessary to consider the organizational communication where they interact. It is easy to see that in complex organizations, the demand for a better medium to connect people is increasing. Communication can be used as a tool for B players and top managers to connect to each other. In that case, it plays a very essential role in an organization.

In organizational communication, communication flow is divided into 3 types: upward, downward and horizontal communication. Theses flows are defined basis for on the positions within an organization. The higher position uses downward message to communicate with the lower level and in return the lower position uses upward communication. There are driven factors that affect to downward and upward communication flows that are used mostly by employees and managers. On the one hand people tend to use upward communication in the way that listener wants to hear even it might be in conflict with his or her own ideas. On the other hand, downward message can be understood as an order from top managers.

The other aspect in organizational communication is informal and formal communication. Since language takes place in any kind of communication, informal and formal communication should also be determined in how it can affect work relationships within organizations.

2.3 Sense giving and sense making

Sense giving and sense making context is an essential area for our study in order to be able to explain and make sense of the Space and the processes that take place inside it. In this study, sense
giving and sense making will be seen under the perspective of a leader and his or her followers’. This area shows the role of a leader and the importance of how he or she can manage the activities towards the followers through his or her vision. Also, failure in these activities could affect to the outcome or the performance of the group in general.

Sense giving and sense making perspective will be discussed respectively in two categories which are leadership: the management of meaning and Leadership as ‘Multi-communicative’ activities.

2.3.1 Management of meaning

Smircich and Gareth Morgan talked about leadership on the sense giving and sense making perspective. They show the role of leader through interaction and creation of work relationship with the followers from which he or she can attract and guide them successfully.

According to “Leadership: The Management of Meaning” by Smircich, L & Morgan, G (1982), leaders are required to succeed in attempting frames and defining the realities of others. This activity is essential to identify the situation of a top manager within the organization which can be used to build the same understanding for B players.

Leaders also need to invent images and meanings to focus new attention to guide an organization. This is the process of building story and making sense of it - an important way to lead successfully. It requires a strategic sense to be defined, an image to follow and identify people who are involved.

The last activity should be considered to gain success. It is the appeal of the leader and response from the followers. It is a necessary activity to attract B players’ attention and motivate them. Additionally, it could be a chance to analyze their reaction and observe the effort of leadership.

All these activities above require deep interaction of top managers with employees in their workplace. The role of the effective leadership is also considered to be as of high importance for
work relationship building and communication. The authors use (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) to confirm that ‘leadership, like other social phenomena, is socially constructed through interaction’. Top manager’s leadership style is constructed through interaction with B players.

2.3.2 Leadership as Multi-communicative activities

The role of a leader involves many activities including communication. It is one of the most important tasks required from a leader in order to be able to interact with people and also to make sense of the necessary. Therefore, he or she must use as much mediums as possible to connect himself or herself with the followers to interact. The substance carrier here could be speaking, embodying, performing or using symbols.

Speaking is a formal and direct communication for everyone. As a leader, giving a speech is not only to show the direction but also to motivate people and help them to share a common sense. It is also the way to build up a story which is very necessary for the leader to connect people and lead them to the same direction.

Embodying is another way to express the communication between the leader and others. It is how a leader exemplify abstract in a bodily form. Together with speaking, embodying could enhance the message which is needed to be delivered.

The third way to communicate with others is through performing. This is an intangible way but very essential. Performing shows the effort and outcomes of what expected to be fulfil. The last communicative activity is considered as properties for the leader. In this way, the leader uses symbols, such as logos, structures and objects to deliver the meaning of his/ her ideas. It is used silently but makes sense to the situation which is appropriate. Properties help the leader to show what is visible but create the meaning from the people by their own experience and interpretation.
These activities have proved that leadership involves many of multi-communicative ways that are tools for top managers to succeed in achieving and creating meaning for B players.

2.4 Leadership

Leadership as main role of Top managers in their organizations is shaped according to the context needs. Leadership is what the circumstances demand and itself shapes circumstances. Modern leadership style is an impersonal way to lead organizations. It is explained as the reason of existence for postmodern leadership style and this last one is the type of leadership that we want to focus in our research due to its more personal and human orientation.

2.4.1 Modern leadership

Leadership is an activity that normally takes place when looking for the achievement of particular goals inside any organization having both, leader and followers.

The concept of modern is designed and made using the most recent ideas and methods, (Cambridge dictionary definition). One can say that modernity comes from times of industrialization. It is a socio economic notion of modernized industries. And referring this to modern leadership and relationship among Top managers and Employees, it could be a utilitarian way of looking at relations among them. Utilitarianism main idea is that moral worth of an action is solely determined by its final contribution to the general utility. One can say that leadership coming from industrialization times up to date has been driven by reason and by the utility that any type of action or activity emanating internally and externally from organizations would have among the general revenue for its own. Times of utilitarianism where people where conceived only as a resource to get better outcome and as a medium to make better income. In other words, it would not matter whether it is good or it is bad, it is about making utility no matter how. “Utility is opposed to pleasure” Mill (1863 pp 12). In this context, the importance of society was placed on an inferior level compared to the importance of
making money. From this perspective, one could affirm that it is more about use society to achieve whatever the firm looks for.

“It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, uncostliness etc., of the former – that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature” Mill (1863 pp 27) ...“there is nothing in the utilitarian theory inconsistent with the fact that there are other things which interest us in persons besides the rightness or wrongness of their actions... utilitarians are quite aware that there are other desirable possessions and qualities besides virtue, and are perfectly willing to allow to all of them their full worth” Mill (1863 pp 32)

One can say that leadership solely focuses in the achievement of goals therefore measurement of results could be the main preoccupation of modern leadership. Modern leadership could be conceived as means of no allowance to emotions and feelings to happen or to arise. Mill referred to utilitarian actions “I grant that they are, notwithstanding, of opinion, that in the long run the best proof of a good character is good actions; and absolutely refuse to consider any mental disposition as good, of which the predominant tendency is to produce bad conduct” Mill (1863 pp 33) He reinforced afterwards, “as a matter of fact, we may affirm that among utilitarians as among adherents of other systems, there is every imaginable degree of rigidity and of laxity in the application of their standard: some are even puritanically rigorous, while others are as indulgent as can possibly be desired by sinner or by sentimentalist.” Mill (1863 pp 33)

New ways of thinking arose against utilitarianism along the way till nowadays. Carl Marx is one of the examples of reaction against this wave and could be addressed as a postmodern response to that modernity that Mill stood up for. Marx argued that people’s nature is alienated under capitalism and that human nature is dynamic, therefore the concept of a single utility for all humans is one side dimensional and not useful. Relating this to leadership, postmodern leadership style is a more philosophical view of life and people and aims to include people instead of alienating them. This is strongly related to one of our research questions, we want to improve the performance of B players with a leadership style that is oriented to use Emotional Intelligence as a tool when creating processes with top managers and B players.
2.4.2 Postmodern Leadership

Postmodern type of leadership arose as a reaction to modern leadership. One could say that, it is a reaction going against reason. This type of leadership is more committed to human issues and according to our research object, which is to nurture B players through emotional intelligence, it is a topic that is committed to employee’s issues and that is why our research topic makes sense in this context.

Due to its nature, postmodern leadership is not only rational and therefore not always measurable. Daudi cited Crespi in his article when mentioning that “scientific - materialist perspective corresponds to what has been hitherto conceived of as a strong mode of thinking and the spiritual on a weak mode of thinking”. Analyzing this, one has got in the one hand that people think and analyze situations from a rational and objective point of view. On the other hand since we, people, are beings who think and are driven by feelings and emotions at mostly everything that surrounds us, one can say that it is not accurate to assure that spiritual is a weak mode of thinking but instead hardly to prove and to be accessed by people who want to confirm whether those feelings are real, true or simply not existent. Nevertheless, the issue here could be how we as social persons have the ability to manage and control emotions not letting them take over one self avoiding to become “spiritual on a weak mode of thinking” as Crespi stated.

Redirecting this into our research concept of space, relationship building in a virtual scenario might appear to be weak since it cannot be seen, touched, proved or rationalized; instead, interactions that happen in a more materialistic-rational physical scenario as to say training, production of goods, meetings, sales and many other organizational activities are stronger and more important than the personal relationship building in the virtual space.

One could say that post modern leadership seems to arise as an answer to the modern leadership style that drives most organizations nowadays. Baudrillard was cited by Daudi on his paper when saying “Have our amplified models of reality produced a hyper reality?” It seems that current leadership style is bringing so many different realities and meanings to followers that they get saturated from them and look for something more meaningful, reliable and something to feel identified with. “The overproduction of meaning created by this variety often leaves us disoriented
and empty” Daudi (1993) said. Top managers can rather bring one familiar type of discourse to employees allowing them to have a better chance to make sense of the organizational context. Postmodern leadership style could bring confidence to B players through conveying them the opportunity to make sense of their organizational actuality without any exaggeration of reality.

Derrida was quoted by Daudi when mentioning that “when exploring a discourse one has to explore that from which it emanates, in other words the meaningful frames, institutional structures, pedagogical and rhetorical norms and possibilities of law and authority from which discourse is inseparable”. In fact, one can say that a postmodern top manager should analyze the reason of existence of his or her leadership style by exploring the context on which he or she is interacting and that is the type of organization, rules that shape it and even the informal culture between employees, thus, by investigating those aspects that he or she is able to deliver in a discourse that makes sense to him or herself and thereafter to his or her audience. Daudi continues saying on his article “we are dealing with terrorism, because the indefinite variety of “generative textuality” created by discourses is so overwhelming that our chances as individuals to make sense of our context are minimal”. This might confirm the fact that one single and meaningful discourse is needed and can be highly valued from B players point of view. Also, if it (discourse) can be heard and accepted it must be channelled through the rough instances and stay within them from where it arose: meaningful frames, institutional structures, pedagogical, rhetorical and informal norms of the organization.

There is no compulsory need to have a post modern type of leadership inside an organization. People belonging to a firm have the possibility to accept or reject any explanation (discourse) but it will always remain arbitrary, leaving them with no other chance than accept even when they do disagree. In this sense, one can say that in order to avoid any resistance and future negative effects over B player’s performance, top manager could approach to his or her employees in a way that gives sense to them by creating strong liaisons with the staff members. Thus, avoiding exaggeration of reality but providing one that they feel identified and secure about would be a right way to provide discourse “as a means to increase control and efficiency” (Daudi 1993).

Subjective stimulates the objective (Daudi 1993). Subjective might be addressed as the type of activities that cannot be rationally measured but emotionally oriented. Those activities could be the building of relationships that can stimulate the real performance of employees. In other words, that
can elevate the competitiveness of B players inside the organization. And such competitiveness is naturally objective and measurable.

To finalize, Daudi mentioned in his paper that “...it would seem that we are learning one thing: not to allow ourselves to fall back into the discursive trap and to yield to its blinding fascination”. In an organizational environment, discursive messages from top managers might not be a trap as long as they are created upon a true basis where they mean what they say to their B players and keep making sense inside the organization during its creation, explanation and remaking of the discourse over time.

2.5 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

In this context, our object of study will be analyzed in how Emotional Intelligence can influence the relationship. Top managers as an active actor should know how to use Emotional Intelligence as a tool to attract people’s mind and also to create and manage a successful relation. Emotional Intelligence relates to the feelings and way of thinking of people. These aspects have a big influence in people’ mind, especially they affect their decision making.

Emotional Intelligence plays an important role in driving people minds. Emotional Intelligence takes place in a large part of organizations nowadays when people recognize that Intelligence Quotient is not the only way to achieve success. In this research study, we mostly base on Emotional Intelligence to help Top managers use to influence and motivate their B Players to create a better performance and make innovations happen inside the organization.

B Players are seen as in-motivated employees due to reasons of no recognition, they have no ambitious for further development nor success and remain stable in their positions. Therefore, to be able to attract them, top managers must understand their needs and even their thought. Relationship building can help top managers getting closer to them.
Emotions must be a significant function to drive B players where the top managers can understand their minds and apply the appropriate way to approach them in order to be able to create desired work relationships. It is considered as the key tool for top managers to guide the organization where they can share the same frame of reference with their employees.

Emotional Intelligence and Working with Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman shows the important role of Emotional Intelligence in normal life beside Intelligence Quotient (IQ). As a physiologist, Daniel Goleman deals with all types of situations and explains them clearly by providing examples. He also states the essential of emotion to be able to manage not only oneself but also one’s relationship with others.

A successful person in emotional intelligence must have the social intelligence, this factor creates the ability to talk, communicate with others in the way that they feel comfortable and satisfy. Social intelligence can also help a person know how to deal with situations and from which can motivate or influence others in the way they want. Therefore, to be able to manage the social relationship which is defined as multitude of interactions between two or more people, ones must learn and understand how to use social intelligence. Social Intelligence is defined as “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, to act wisely in human relations” (Thorndike, E. L., 1920).

There are 4 abilities from Hatch and Gardner who identify the most important components of interpersonal intelligence which are: organizing groups, negotiating solutions, personal connection and social analysis. In term of interpersonal relations, the two abilities personal connection and social analysis are considered as essential ways to be successful. The successful relationship between top managers and B players in this study require the ability to use these two abilities.

Moreover, Goleman introduces relationship handling as a part of Emotional Intelligence. It requires two other emotional skills which are self-management and empathy. He stated “being able to manage emotions in someone else is the core of the art of handling relationships”
To be able to understand the needs and motivation factors which affect people's behaviour, we will introduce 2 models of human needs from Maslow and Herzberg factors for motivation. These models can help top managers to influence their employees through their minds and emotions.

2.5.1 Maslow basic human needs pyramid

Maslow's theory deals with human needs which affect to their behaviour. Since people's minds are limited with these needs in the theory, their emotions can also be affected by them. This theory regards very much on personality and motivation. Therefore, these basic needs relate to Emotional Intelligence. This research will study Maslow in how it can involve in the interactions between top managers and B players and also in their work relationship building. Moreover, to be able to fulfil these needs is a way to motivate B Players in work performance.

According to Abraham Maslow, people are influenced and depended on 5 basic levels of needs. These are physiological needs (breathing, food, water...), safety needs (security of body, of employment, of family, of health, of property...), love or belonging needs (friendship, family, sexual intimacy), esteem needs (self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others) and self-actualization needs (morality, creativity, spontaneity).

People tend to fulfil their needs starting from physiological needs to self-actualization needs. They require the lower level to be satisfied in order to be able to demand for higher needs. The lowest level - physiological - is compared with animal instincts where human has the same needs. Therefore, the hierarchy in some ways can show how to motivate people from their demands by giving what they need. Maslow's theory can be applied in organizational environment as a tool to understand and to drive people.

Since people's minds are limited with these needs in the theory, their emotions can also be affected by them. This theory regards very much on personality and motivation.
2.5.2 Herzberg factors

Frederick Herzberg provides a research which relates more or less to Maslow's theory in the motivation aspect. His research basically rooted in organizational environment where he focused on 2 groups of factors that motivate people in work which are Motivators and Hygiene (or maintenance) factors.

---

Motivators can be seen as the positive factors which bring satisfaction in work. It is where the motivation and productivity from B players can be raised. They are listed as growth, advancement, responsibility, work itself, recognition and achievement.

Hygiene or maintenance factors are considered as negative factors which can bring dissatisfaction for employees. Although hygiene factors are fulfilled, it doesn’t make employees be more motivated but just reduce the dissatisfaction from them. Hygiene factors include starting from low importance till high importance the following: security, status, relationship with subordinates and personal life. Next is relationship with peers, salary, work conditions, relationship with supervisor, supervision, and the last one is company policy & administration.

Figure 2.3: Herzberg's factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction²

² Source: Herzberg F, 1993, The motivation to work
Herzberg’s factor is considered as an important tool together with Maslow’s theory to be able to influence B Players. These factors help us to identify their situation and also know how to motivate them by fulfil their needs.

2.6 Business competitive advantage

The last context where our object of study makes sense is in business competitive advantage. With the use of Emotional Intelligence as a tool to create activities and processes among Top managers and B players, we want to reinforce the already built competitive advantage of the firm, and furthermore, bring ideas to create or raise barriers for a defensive competitive strategy as a way to strengthen competitive advantage.

Competitive advantage constitutes offering unique benefits to the buyer that justifies a premium price. Competitive advantage is at heart of any corporate strategy Porter (1985). A generic competitive strategy is a firm’s relative position within its industry. The position in the industry determines a firm’s profitability inside average. There are three types of competitive advantage that firms can posses: low cost, differentiation and focus strategy. “This last one can be divided into cost advantage - cost focus - and differentiation - differentiation focus - in a narrow segment”. (Porter 1985). Cost focus is the permanent search of a cost advantage from any firm in its industry segment. Differentiation focus is the struggling for a differentiation of the firm from its target customers. “The target segment must either have buyers with unusual needs or else the production and delivery system that best serves the target segment must differ from that of other industry segments. Cost focus exploits differences in cost behaviour in some segments, while differentiation focus exploits the special needs of buyers in certain segments... such differences imply that customers are poorly served by broadly-targeted competitors who serve them at the same time as they serve others. The focuser can achieve competitive advantage by dedicating itself to the segments exclusively and
deliver a quality type of service or good”. (Porter 1985). Delivering a superior type of good and service to customer’s demands more than the adequate technology equipment and appropriate infrastructure, it does demand to have a good and qualified support from employees who are willing to provide their skills to for the achievement of this goal. Acknowledge whether an employee is willing or not to give his or her best at the company and guide him/ her to the achievement of this goals are, at some extent, Top managers responsibility. And this could be empowered or elevated through the type of relation they both have.

Relations are something immeasurable, something that for many does not represent any income for the organization. In this scenario, the opportunity for cost focus may be present in just meeting the needs of a segment inside the organization and no more. To be more specific, the opportunity for firms when empowering their B Players (keeping cost focus) is that of nurture B players whom due to their nature of being reliable staff, knowledgeable, stable and independent, could make a dedicated follow up to any type of customer in the value chain of the organization providing it the opportunity to have long lasting interrelations with them, furthermore with suppliers, partners and associates. “Differentiation is usually costly... a firm has to choose the type of competitive advantage it intends to preserve in the long run” (Porter 1985 pp. 19).

Innovation as a competitive advantage is the ability that a firm has to be low cost and differentiated. This would assure the firm to be the only one with that new innovation. Nevertheless, once competitors introduce one innovation, the firm is again in the position of having to make tradeoffs. This could probably mean that if low cost and innovation are sides that other firms can achieve as well, “then differentiation to reach a real competitive advantage should go a bit further and reach it from the inside of the organization to give it a stronger root for the growth of any competitive advantage that the firm would like to create over competitors” Porter (1985). And one could say that if technology is not the advantage, efficiency when producing goods and services (cost based) is neither, then, it would be more likely to be a human capital advantage that the firm would have to care about and put effort to make stronger. And here we make stress over the need to have a good quality of relationship between Top managers and employees.

Generic strategy specifies the fundamental approach to competitive advantage that a firm is pursuing. It provides the context for the actions to be taken in each functional area of the
organization. Human resources context in the organization can be shaped and structured in a way that they (staff members) would be supporting the general competitive strategy of the firm that the Top manager looks forward to achieve. “Build, hold, and harvest are the results of a generic strategy, or recognition of the inability to achieve any generic strategy and hence the need of the harvest” Porter (1985). The task of the Top manager towards generic strategy is to create it, build it with an effective delivery of the message, to keep it alive inside the organization and strength it as the time passes in order to achieve the corporate strategy.

In order to cope with corporate strategy, firms have had the need to decentralize their portfolio management and this means that it is responsibility of each department of business unit manager to lead and deliver the right strategy to his or her team and guide them to the achievement of the corporate strategy (besides their own department goals). In this context, synergy is the key to put all business units together working in a same language and looking for the same ambition.

Corporate strategy is built and held by generic strategies. Interrelationships as main characteristics of generic strategies exist inside and outside the organization. They could be the main concern for the creation of a corporate strategy since they can be used to reinforce and elevate the firm’s competitive advantage. Therefore there is a need for creation of interrelations among business units, furthermore, a need to improve them. And this can be achieved by creating and improving relationships between Top managers and B players inside the organization.

2.6.1 Interrelationships among business units as means of strengthen competitive advantage

Interrelationships between business units are tangible and intangible. On the one hand tangible relationships are all those opportunities that they (business units) have to share activities within each other in the value chain. On the other hand, intangible relationships engage the transference of management and know-how between detached value chains. This last concept leads to competitive advantage through the transference of generic skills or know-how about how to manage a particular type of activity from one business unit to another. This would reinforce processes and lower costs
related to organizational activities or even more, by making the organization more unique and out of weight of any cost related to transferring know-how.

Transference of know-how is subjective and the benefits of doing so often are hard for top managers to understand when compared to tangible interrelationships. Nevertheless, intangible interrelations lead to a business competitive advantage when the improvement in costs or differentiation in the business unit that is receiving the know-how exceeds the costs of transferring it; it is also possible when the receiving unit can enhance differentiation. Transferring know-how involves some cost, whether they are the time of skilled personnel or the risk that proprietary information would escape out. Transferred know-how would demand costs as well when adapting the area or business unit circumstances to the new required context. Thus, “this cost must be weighted against the potential benefits to determine whether an intangible interrelationship will create competitive advantage” Porter (1985)

Interrelations might sound simple and seem common inside every organizational environment, nevertheless “Truly important intangible interrelationships are much less common than an initial search for them might imply... Many firms have fallen into the trap of identifying intangible interrelationships that are illusory or do not matter for competitive advantage” Porter M (1985, page 352). Apparently, it seems that intangible interrelationships are forced and mean more of a rationalization of diversification moves undertaken for other reasons rather than strengthening the organization skills and competitive advantage in depth. Know-how transfer happens through out the interexchange between managers and other personnel in the affected business units. Both have to be involved and equally interested in following a process that will afterwards bring them with an improvement of their activities and processes. This practice does not take place without active efforts from both actors. By doing so, “transferring intangible relationships require a sustained commitment and the existence of formal mechanisms through which the required transference of skills will take place” Porter (1985 pp 353) A conductive and structured organizational set can greatly reduce the cost of transferring know-how.

The need to consider interrelationships as important aspect for any company strategy can be explained with three reasons, two positive sides and one negative found at Michael Porter’s book Competitive Advantage, Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance that will be listed as follows:
1. The misreading of strategic contributions that business units have to the firm. Misunderstanding their capabilities and skills would lead to a general misunderstanding of the general business performance. By understanding how they perform will allow a more feasible way to approach those units of the business.

2. Interrelationships are not only inside the organizational business units but as well at the outside of the firm. Misreading the position that the firm has with its key competitors would limit the organization to formulate future moves against them.

3. Not everything in the creation of interrelationships is positive. There is a pitfall for these liaisons. When it comes to portfolio management, decisions to strength and build business unit cannot be made independently. According to the type of interrelation they would have to be made in group and this might delay the process and at some extent, make the final target diffuse.

Some risks can be faced when pursuing interrelationships. The process of building interrelations can open widely each business unit structure until the point of sharing most of their know-how leaving them in a stage with little net strategic gain from their own operations would be possible. This is harmful or inappropriate for competition with another business unit or competitor in the industry. “There must be clear potential net benefits of sharing or transfer of know-how for the related business units in order for an interrelationship to be strategically desirable”. Porter (1985)

Focusing intangible interrelationships in our research study, they could be a great advantage to firms due to their capability of strengthening the company internal infrastructure and make it more stable when facing challengers; nevertheless, those interrelationships can also be illusory. There are many aspects that are not relevant or necessary when creating liaisons between people. Interrelationships among employees and Top managers should be specially analyzed before creating activities that will promote the establishment of a post relation preventing failures during the subsequent process and discovering afterward that there was no need to create that type of activity or relation with some employees.

One can say that many organizations do not put effort in building interrelationships. The reason for this can be pointed at the fact that they demand investment and might represent no return on the investment. One of the reasons that support the importance of interrelations inside organizations is
the achievement of synergy of performance from staff members, and this could be a good reason for Top managers to start viewing interrelations as a beneficial economical effort on the long run. It is a process that might not happen in the short term. It is a continuous process that goes all the way from approaching employees, identifying their needs, creating activities to fulfil such needs and motivating them to have a generalized open attitude to create interrelations with their managers and also with their co-workers. And once this is done, it will be necessary to continue the cycle assuring sustainability and continuity in preparing the scenario for synergy to happen.

Tangible relationships are the ones that share activities in the value chain without having to merge and share any type of profit responsibility with other business units; Intangible relationships in contrast look for a closer interaction between business units which will allow them to share their know-how and gather both knowledge and experience to support the firm economical activity.

During the process of implementation of intangible relations, some impediments might arise and Top managers should be aware of those. First, benefits can be asymmetric. Pay off from intangible relationships would not have the same payback for one unit of business than to another. Benefits are the reason for intangible relationships to be created but they do not assure the same kind of reimbursement for all involved areas. Secondly, Top managers can face a loss of control when business units gain autonomy. Interrelationships empower people to have autonomy over their responsibilities and this is a way to have less control over their operations due to their independence. Thirdly, the inability when facing a situation that requires to fire a business unit that has poor performance. Intangible interrelations are meant to create stronger liaisons among Top managers and employees within those business units and any situation that does not match with a good performance and that demands of a rational way of treating unexpected results, that particular demand might erode the already achieved interrelation. This could be called a fail interrelationship. The fourth and last dilemma that a top manager can find when creating interrelationships is that one where conflict of priorities in shared activities would be visible. It is natural that some managers would not be able to compromise their own plans when building interrelationships with other business units.

Interrelationships usually do not happen as a result of normal interaction between business units. They have to be promoted by giving incentives to people, situation that might be harmful for
interrelationships. Two reasons explain this. First, “the lack of credit for contributors to other units, incentive system usually measure only a business unit performance and fail to value its contribution to sister units. Managers should measure a business unit’s total contribution to firm performance. Secondly, the measurement biases for revenues, costs or assets. Investing in assets or making acquisitions is capitalized, while the cost of pursuing a relationship must be expensed” Porter (1985)

Some of the difficulties that a top manager can face when willing to create relationships with his employees are:

1. The firm is highly decentralized with many small business units or areas in the organization
2. The firm has a strong background of autonomy
3. The firm was built through the acquisition of independent companies who have transferred them their corporate values already
4. The firm has made no effort to create corporate liaisons
5. Firm has no history of interrelationships, or on the contrary has made efforts with bad experience in attempting to pursue them
6. Employees are living different organizational circumstances
7. Those circumstances can raise problems of communication and probably make employees perceive Top managers as external to the firm
8. Management of situations are different
9. Geographic separation: employees geographically separated can have difficulties to follow Top managers orders, cope with instructions and it reduces the possibilities to interchange ideas to work out problems.

Intangible interrelations are difficult to measure. They do not have a particular way to proof if they are effectively and positively affecting the organization activities or not. Firms are solely based on rational objectives, quantifiable criteria like growth and profitability. Interrelationships are the introduction of subjectivity into organizational performance measurement and in some firms, subjectivity is considered undesirable. Interrelations can make authority and responsibility in business seems diffuse and with less respect or commitment than it should have. “Top management may fear that business unit managers will use interrelationships as excuses to justify poor performance” Porter (1985). Furthermore, interrelationships can be misinterpreted. Some might
look at them as unequal or unfair when it comes to getting closer and more familiar to one business unit (or employee) inside the organization than to another. This is the reason why in our research context, Top managers should not forget that it is important to approach to their B players because they are great part of the organization strength but their A and C players are employees who play a big role in the organization too, and without their existence, B players would not be noticed, neither exist. Therefore, equilibrium in the relationship at A B and C employees is necessary at the time top manager is creating activities and processes with them. Equity in creating interrelationships is defined to treat every employee the same avoiding any subjectivity when making decisions. Particularly in susceptible areas such as incentives and knowledge transfer. Equity here can also be defined as that all employees must agree on creating and holding those interrelationships.

Even though interrelations are perceived as subjective, that does not limit them to be as effective as objective ones are. The key differentiation factor here is the perception that employees have of managers and Top managers: fairness in his/her actions and decisions. Corporate strong values and identity are prerequisites to support Top managers actions at interrelationships. A top manager has to discourse and promote the core values of the organization, these “are vital links in reducing cynicism toward committees, resolving conflicts, and so on” Porter (1985).

Firms can create their own mechanism to achieve relationships and specially when it is about Top managers and managers who want to empower their staff members, they could start by creating management development programs that facilitate interrelationships between managers, get to know their individual functions, facilitate the environment for mutual understanding and encourage a more personal relationship between them. After this, activities such as promotion within each business unit and training on the type of interrelationship that the organization wants to create among employees and Top managers so they can understand the strategy logic of its existence. “Achieving interrelationships is a function of instituting an array of horizontal practices” Porter (1985) Top management reinforce this by sensing simple and clear messages to his/her employees about the importance of creating interrelations and how it affects internal business culture, its effects over every business unit/department and at the same time over the organization overall and over its position regarding customers and competitors.
Horizontal strategy is a concept that might eliminate divisional boundaries between business units and allow synergy to happen. “It is a coordinated set of goals and policies across distinct but interrelated business units. It does not replace or eliminate the need for separate business units. Rather horizontal strategy provides for explicit coordination among business units that makes corporate or group strategy more than the sum of individual business unit strategies” Porter (1985). It is a model of group on which corporate strategy is based to gain competitive advantage. It is the link among the body of the organization and the essence for corporate strategy. Therefore the need of having and facilitating interrelationships that works in partnership with a decentralized corporate organizational structure.

Our aim to increase activities for the subsequent creation of interrelationships aims to reinforce decentralization. It aims to gather top manager and employees (B players) positions closer who due to decentralization have got further from each other and by this let Top managers empower its employees to give their best performance becoming the organization independent engine that at the same time will strength the companies' internal composition and reinforce its competitive advantage.

2.6.2 Defensive strategy as a way to gain competitive advantage

“Defensive strategy aims to lower the probability of attack from challengers (new entrants into the industry and established competitors seeking to reposition themselves) to divert attacks to less threatening avenues, or lessen their intensity” Porter (1985) Interrelationships would not increase the company competitive advantage but would make it stronger and more resistant when facing challengers.

“Defensive strategy rests on influencing competitor’s decision-making processes in order to make an attack on a firm’s position less desirable from the challenger’s perspective” Porter (1985) This is done by reducing the stimulus of a competitor to challenge the firm which could be influenced by actions from employees of the organization. They are the ones who are in constant contact with entities along the value chain: customers, suppliers, buyers, partners and subsidiaries. Each of those actors influences the industry where the company interacts. They create the conditions that make the
company more or less suitable or attractive to attacks from challengers. By having closer relationships with the employees and guiding them to raise or low the attention of actors along the value chain a top manager would not have fully control over competitor but one could say that he or she could influence in a way their (competitors) decision making process, and this is part of the defensive strategy that will reinforce the organization competitive advantage.

One way to gain defensive strategy is by raising structural barriers. This can be done by creating activities among B players and Top managers, influencing their actions, empowering their performance and strengthen in this way internal corporate structure. This could represent an attractive outcome for the organization when it comes to costs. Firms can reduce expenses when enhancing differentiation by harnessing interrelationships with actors of the value chain that competitors cannot match.

A firm is continuously sending signals and same as it happens to employees in organizational level, it happens to firms in industry level. They make sense of everything. “The ideal of defensive tactic is usually deterrence – preventing a challenger from initiating a move in the first place or deflecting it to become less threatening” Porter (1985) and this can be achieved by influencing employees to prevent competitors from initiate any attack. The success of such intentions can be assured by the type of relationships that Top managers and their staff members have with each other and the subsequent commitment and respect that each side has to the job task.

2.6.3 Mentoring through relationships aiming for a better competitive advantage

“Today’s professional service firms are so busy making money that they’ve lost the art of making talent” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008) this is the phrase with which the authors start their article and which is followed afterwards by a number of reasons that managers and furthermore, organizations as a whole should consider to keep empowering their talents inside the organization. Along the following paragraphs the most relevant ideas from their writing will be reviewed.
Many associates of firms repeat themselves that their partners do not invest time in helping them grow and develop. And partners on the other side wonder why they should invest energy and money in associates that would probably leave the firm at some time and others might be already burned out from trying to help their associates and get positive results “once I no longer knew those associated we were making partners, I quit trying to create a climate of inclusion” a partner told his feelings to DeLong, Gabarro and Lees in their article.

Firms nowadays are becoming more corporatized due to their fast growth in size and complexity. And this situation is leading professionals to think and conceive themselves cogs in a wheel. The same situation can happen inside corporate scenario. Employees might feel they are not getting any help to grow and develop from their employers or Top managers and also some Top managers and directives of organizations might be thinking that there is no need to invest in their employees since they would leave at some stage for a better paid job or, in the contrary, they might have done it several times and failure during the process that there is no motivation anymore to keep doing so.

Nowadays professionals inside a firm need mentoring customized to their personal needs and motivations, especially when learning opportunities inside the organization are limited same as resources. Due to current financial crisis, motivating and mentoring employees can be a good opportunity to empower employees without having the need to use a high amount of economical resources and on the contrary using intangible resources such as time and by tiding relations inside the corporate scenario. Furthermore, the crisis is rising fear and uncertainty on people and that would surely affect their performance and decision to stay or not in a particular firm. Due to this, intangible resources could be in this scenario useful and appropriate as well.

Competition in local industry is fierce and in order to survive partners are being asked to guide projects across many countries and with many functions simultaneously. Professionals at these particular companies might have never worked before under such circumstances and moving out from local market means that current competitive advantage might not be enough and it would be necessary to have another type of competitive advantage that can be taken along with those professionals or employees/representatives when moving within and outside local industry. Therefore, the need to keep employees close to managerial positions is a strong argument that might
to assure the effective transference of capabilities, knowledge and business advantage when they (employees) are asked to face challengers in representation of the organization interests.

Mentoring is not common nowadays as it was before. “The evidence of discontent in PSFs (Professional Service Firms) is both anecdotal and statistical. Every one we spoke with over age 40 could name a mentor in his or her professional life, but younger people often could not” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008). Moreover, will to create spaces for a better relationship building have been a topic apparently left aside due to the need to have a better productivity, better incomes and return on the investment, “not only do I work out of a pool of associates with no real supervisor, but after all those months not one partner initiated something as small as a lunch. I know I’m responsible for my career, but the partners I see are obsessed with themselves and with hitting their numbers” one young investment banker reflected at DeLong, Gabarro and Lees article (2008).

“Competitive advantage depends less on the scale and scope of your services than on the abilities and networks of your firm’s professionals” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008). Relating this to our object of study, relationships between B Players (on average 70% of any company staff) and Top managers, it can be said that the competitive advantage for any organization would highly rely on the type of relationships that are hold within staff members at all levels and to make sure it is an advantage and a good competitive one, Top managers can do it by getting closer to their employees and building better work relationships.

“Young professionals are still looking for mentors who can give them advice, encouragement and space to grow.” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees. Mentoring is personal, for highly independent personalities (B players profile) “they won’t tolerate packaged mentorship; instead they want concrete, hands-on feedback from a senior professional who takes a personal interest in their careers” and one could say that a more personal (postmodern) type of leadership is needed instead of a rational (modern) type of leadership when it comes to mentor employees.

Employees “notice who is assigned to whom, who gets the sexy projects, and who seems to be advancing... Extra attention must be doled out judiciously, and not with the aim of manipulating people” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008) Finding out what type of job a person wants to do, what
skills he/she wants to develop and where her/his passions lie on is a task that should not be left only to human resources. It has to be sincerely done by Top managers too. Employees make sense of everything and if a TOP MANAGER wants them to make the right sense of his/her ideals, then he/she would have to act in accordance to the firm values by matching them rightly.

“In today’s PSFs, with their limited resources, associated can no longer just expect to be assigned a mentor; they also have to learn how to attract one... Co-mentoring encourages young professionals to take some responsibility for their own careers. Reciprocal mentoring is not only advantageous to their careers, but it also builds up fundamental team skills among professionals, many of whom are not natural team players”. DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008). The idea here is to highlight the necessity of employees will to follow and support activities and processes that Top managers are proposing at them and participate actively in order to attract their attention, in other words, to deserve the empowerment job from Top managers.

“A wise leader told the group that only by supporting one another could they be competitive” “...being rewarded economically as a group” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008) and this is a postmodern way of looking at organizations activities nowadays.
Chapter 3: Methodology and Method

3.1 Methodology

Our methodology bases mostly on interpretation of literature for our subsequent study. As first step we need to identify the research problem; second we raise the research questions and finally we identify the method to collect desired data. We created a Process Model as guidance throughout the research phase.

Process Model

Our research process starts from the research question where we need to identify problem and relate it to the appropriate areas. This process requires a pre-understanding of the topic together with a preliminary research of necessary grounded theories. The second step in the process is to collect data. To be able to do this, we need to develop methods to gain information and define the targets. We created research forms in the way that they allow us to collect the necessary data to answer the research questions and that will be analyzed later. As an extra option we are allowing ourselves to revise the research questions and collected data making sure that they make sense. In the case that any of the questions or forms that we created do not make sense, we will return to the first step to be able to have a clear definition of the topic.

The third phase is summarizing and analyzing data. After collecting data, it will be categorized and analyzed according to assumptions that have created for our object of study within the contexts where it makes sense (refer to chapter 2: Theoretical framework). In this phase, an option of collect more data might occur if the gained one do not meet the demands of our research or provide unnecessary information. The last phase is to discuss and argue for the result of data analysis. It will be studied based on the assumptions in regards to the theoretical framework. As an extra option in this phase is the need to re-analyze data. In that case, we would go back to the previous step of summarize and analyze data.
The analysis of data will be based on the assumptions that we created from grounded theories and findings that are related to those assumptions from empirical research. We presented theories were in the previous chapter which we created from the Context Map (Figure 2.1) as the framework to make sense of the object of study. The empirical data will be discussed with the method as matter of what, why and how they are related. These two elements will be merged together to have a broad view from both theoretical and practical data.

In order to collect the relevant data for theories, we created assumptions for both interviews and surveys to ground our discussion. These assumptions are based on the relation between contexts and how they make sense with each other. Therefore, these assumptions will be the framework for empirical data collection. The following tables will show the assumptions for interview and survey.

**Interview assumptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Interaction happens through communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Verbal language as a way to create closeness between the two actors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Processes and Interaction | 3. Intercultural and its effects over relationship  
4. General prevention towards relationship building  
5. General openness towards relationship building  
6. Managers have only constant contact with the employees under their responsibility  
7. Managers are aware of employees will to collaborate  
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Space                    | 8. Virtual space is the intangible area where processes happen  
9. The more openness of a virtual space, the more processes could happen  
10. The more openness of a virtual space, the less processes could happen  
11. Physical space is the condition of existence for virtual space  
12. Physical space allows relations to be built  
13. Physical space blocks relations to be built  
14. Personal space is a limitation for Space  
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Sense giving & Sense making | 15. The relation between CEOs and Employees would help to attract followers  
16. The management of meaning that a leader has would successfully involve people into the desired organizational process  
17. The management of meaning that a leader has would fail when involving |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. Multi-communicative activities in leadership would support the leader duties.</td>
<td>20. Modern type of leadership. 21. Activities between CEOs and B players are result based relationships. 22. Postmodern type of leadership. 23. Activities between CEOs and B players are based on a personal perspective. 24. Verbal communication is related to a postmodern leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Multi-communicative leadership activities can limit the role of a leader.</td>
<td>25. Influence over relationships. 26. Filling employees personal satisfaction aspect has a positive effect over their performance. 27. By ignoring employees personal satisfaction aspects would have a negative effect over their performance. 28. Advantage of know how to use Emotional Intelligence as a tool for leading an organization. 29. Disadvantage of ignoring emotional intelligence when leading an organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Internal performance in a firm will affect its business competitive advantage.</td>
<td>31. Interrelations inside the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reinforce the business competitive advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Lack of interrelations inside the organization make the company weak in front of its challengers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Empowerment of human resources are a strength for the business competitive advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Relying on human resources make the firm's competitive advantage weak when facing competitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.2: Interview assumptions table (Source: own)

Survey assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current work relationship processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Frequency of communication with CEO when there is a mid-manager in between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Frequency of formal organizational meetings from CEOs to employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Necessity of employees to have formal meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reasons that drive employees to communicate with CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation that employees have from relationship between CEO and them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Employees willingness to have a better communication with CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Employees’ opinion how to create a better communicative contact with CEO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Importance for employees to have contacts with CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Personal drivers for employees to have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further details for data collection process will be discussed in Method with research model.

3.2 Method

The research Model will help us by guiding the step to step process for gaining necessary data. We have created two research empirical instruments to obtain knowledge from the targeted actors. A cluster of interviews are the first research method of our study and case study done through the use of surveys is the second one.

3.1.1 Research Model
The research model is made to be able to help us determine the method for collecting data. Since the focus of the study is the Space between Top managers and B Players, we use different methods to approach different actors. Interview is made for top managers, researchers/professors and consultants; survey is made to reach B Players. From which we can gain from both actors’ perspective. Literature is used to have the pre-understanding of the study and support for theoretical framework.

The mainly used method is interview which is targeted to the top managers (as an actor) together with researchers and practitioners. The focuses of interview study are the Space and the Activities inside it. An interview form is made to be able to construct the content of the interview and to gain the necessary information of one of the actors. Face-to-face, phone and Skype interview are considered to be used.

The process for interview starts with creation of the form which needs to be adapted according to the targeted interviewee. Interviews will be conducted in 3 ways depending on the situations. They are face-to-face, phone call or Skype. All will be recorded for further use. Recorded interviews will be transformed to words from which can be processed and analyzed.

Additionally, surveys are made to focus on B players (the second important actor). The information from this side would validate or elaborate the interview content. Surveys will be sent during the same period and to as many as possible. The survey form will be constructed in the way that it could identify B Players from the others and it will be processed later. Then it can be sent to any employee to collect data. Paper-based, E-mail and web-based survey are considered to be used.

Survey is made according to interested areas and to provide to all employees. We expect to conduct survey together with interview in the same company which could help us to clearly identify the actual space inside it. Surveys after filled in will be collected and categorized. In this step, we need to classify B Players from the others and only that version might be used. Finally, the data will be processed and analyzed.
To develop our research model, we have created both interviews and surveys to deliver to practitioners, researchers/professors and consultants who have experience with the concepts of space, top managers, B players, processes inside organizations, sensemaking and sensegiving and postmodern leadership style; for the case of emotional intelligence and competitive advantage we used literature to create the assumptions and links to answer the question of how to improve the business competitive advantage with the use of emotional intelligence. In the following matrix this can be observed.

![Figure 3.3: Targets Matrix (Source: Own)](image)

In a general way we want first to provide our targets with a pre understanding of both research object and actors inside the contexts where they make sense. After that we would launch interviews and surveys to them according to the case. Their opinions about our problem research and understanding of our objective of study will allow us to have a better link from our theoretical framework to the grounding of our assumptions and research questions.

The targets profiles for data collection are the following:

**Researchers/Professors**
People under this profile are the ones who have already made investigations about the notion of space, work relationship building and sense making sense giving in leadership and rhetoric context. We want to get their understanding of our object of study as well as their perception and definition of it.
We want to ground our theory with them who have already talked about it and in some cases, who have already written about our topics. They can provide us with another or a similar interpretation of our research issue which will help us to get a variety of points of view.

Practitioners
Are the people who are currently performing as the actors (top manager and B players) at whom we target our object of study. They are the ones who have passed through situations that we are assuming in our research purpose and will allow us to corroborate our basic assumptions or raise new research questions.

The way to approach Top managers would be through interviews where we would like to gain their notion of space and how they perceive work relationships inside the organization. For the case of B players, we will deliver surveys to find their willingness to create a better work relationship.

Consultants
People under this profile are the ones who have already had experience performing as Top managers or who have been able to work with teams and differentiate B Players during their working life so that they have a concept of them. Due to their experience, they can provide us with a descriptive knowledge of experience about space, work relationship and the importance of empowering B type of employees in any organization.

Literature

Literature is our main resource to understand, analyze and write assumptions about relationship building inside organizations, sense giving, sense making, post modern leadership, emotional intelligence and competitive advantage.
3.2.1 Interview to Managers

We created one interview for Top managers and Managers in firms in order to continue with our research plan. The interview has been divided in two parts, one has questions for the context of space and the second one is oriented to get data from the context of relationship between top managers and employees. (Refer to Index No 1)

With the first part we want to gain Top managers opinion and concept of space. How they conceive and understand the organization internal space and its importance to him/her. How accessible they are to the employees, how visible they are and what their thoughts are about personal space.

With the second context/part of the interview we want to understand the way that Top managers conceive work relationship created from them to employee’s side and how they construct and promote them. We want to know if relations are limited to a formal context or are allowed to happen in a more informal one. In this second part of the interview we return to the concept of space as a way to corroborate and reinforce what his/her thoughts were in the first part of the interview regarding an open space office but focusing at relationships.

The last questions of the interview are created to get to know the ways they (Top managers) communicate to their employees and how they (employees) communicate their opinions and ideas back to the head of the company.

The following table resumes the profile of the persons we interviewed and talked with. The audio files can be accessed in the DVD we are delivering together with this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name of Organization</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Staff in charge of</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anders Wikman</td>
<td>Practitioner</td>
<td>InDevelop</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Face to Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikael Lundgren</td>
<td>Professor/Researcher</td>
<td>Baltic Business School</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>Face to Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Björn Bjerke</td>
<td>Professor/Researcher</td>
<td>Baltic Business School</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>Face to Face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.2 Case study: Survey for employee’s

In order to have a better understanding and to compare our both actors inside organizations, we created a survey to collect data from employees belonging to any firms at any size and when possible, to those who are under the interviewed top manager’s and manager’s responsibility. (Refer to index No 2). CEOs mentioned in survey form are considered as Top Managers, and B Players represents for 70% employees.

The main objective is to measure their willingness to create and/or improve work relationship building processes with their particular manager and top manager’s.

The survey is divided into 3 different sections. First is the Personal Information one from which we will be able to create a general profile from our surveyed contributors. Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 are meant to allow the surveyed to get relaxed by answering familiar type of questions. Number 5 is oriented to identify the B players – One of the main actors in our research.

The second section is Relationship with Authority. Here we would like to understand how relationship is conceived and generated between staff members and managerial positions. Question 6 has been created to identify the position of the surveyed person inside the organizational structure.
Number 7 aims to underline the frequency of contact from top manager to employees; the use of the space they have and how do they (Top managers) involve employees during that process. Question 8 on the other hand will help us to identify the relevancy of relationship building with Top managers from the employee side. Question number 9 would allow us to acknowledge the possible drivers of employees for the creation of relationship with Top managers.

Finally the third section is Perception of Authority. This would provide us the chance to understand the significance that relationship between employees and top manager has for employees. Question 10 would provide us their level of willingness to create relationship with their Top managers. Number 11 would provide us with their selection of how to create space for work relationship building. Question number 12 would let us know how important communicative contact with TOP MANAGER is for employees. Question No 13 would allow us to have an insight into employee’s emotional drivers to create the mentioned relationship and would allow us to face our statements regarding the importance of empowering B players.
3.3 Data Findings

In this part we will present the information collected from interviews and surveys. Data from interviews has been placed in the following comparison table. Data from surveys will be presented with statistic data for quantifiable variables.

Interviews and Talks Inventory

The following is the comparison table on which we will face our assumptions and findings. The first column contains the assumptions regarding each context where our object of study makes sense. The second column contains the findings related to the same contexts gained from talks and interviews with Mikael Lundgren (M.L.), Björn Bjerke (B.B.), Richard Koehler (R.K.), Mike Abbe (M.A.), Jimmy Guiracha (J.G.), José Parada (J.P.), Stacy Apelt (S.A.), Maricah Nuutinen (M.N.), Konstantin Lampou (K.L.), Agne Andersson (A.A.), Anders Wikman (A.W.) and Agneta Bladh (A.B.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35. Interaction happens through communication</td>
<td>• In our country you cannot behave like bossy then you are not boss very long. We don’t have the bossy style (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Verbal language as a way to create closeness between the two actors</td>
<td>• The first thing you learn in Vietnamese context that no one lose face in public. If you are looking into American picture, I think they are cursing each other all the time. It doesn’t happen here (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Intercultural and its effects over relationship</td>
<td>• I do (like to be visible to my employees) I think that is good to have close contact with people I am working with (S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The most frequent contact is with the technique area because of the profile and because it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>General impediment towards relationship building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>General openness towards relationship building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Managers have only constant contact with the employees under their responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Managers are aware of employees will to collaborate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- is the core of our business and there is the major interaction for on-time solutions (J.P.)
  - If it is a big organization you have to rely on middle level manager (A.W.)
  - The most basic one which are periodically established meetings and in case of unexpected situation we have the option to make or call for a meeting in order to attend to that particular situation. (J.P.)
  - We have annual talk with everyone in small group. We called it development talk where they can exchange what they have gone and expressed how they perceived the boss and vice versa. (A.W.)
  - In our office the most important room is the coffee room. Because there everyone speak business, but they do it when they are having coffee. And they can have all information; it is openness for information. (A.W.)
  - It is between people and how they interact. So relation means a lot. You can always have the open attitude to read the organization. (A.W.)
  - Every morning I check with everyone saying good morning. (A.W.)
  - The head of department in charge of that and as a manager I should never go into the department. That was the responsibility of the head. (A.W.)
  - I think it is also important that those who work in the level of pension know that they could always come to me as the hospital director if there were something. But first I
would tell them please take it up the head of your department if he/she doesn’t listen to you then you can come to me and we could take the discussion together (A.W.)

- I wouldn’t give any advice; you have your expert on private health care working with you. You should ask him and you should discuss about it then my role is to discuss with him. (A.A.)

- I was once on TV when I was sitting and I was given questions and I had to prepare (A.A.)

- At the same time you might think that they could be a little bit afraid. I think they felt I was easy to come and discuss but I don’t know. But of course they had the possibility when I sitting down, I tried to sit down with different people so they can say I would like to come to your office and discuss. (A.A.)

- But those come must know that you can approach me but I might say I’m sorry but I don’t have the time at present but please come back later, also ask if something urgent (A.B.)

- It is important to me to have interaction at broader scale inside the university but never to go behind the pointed leaders because it is very important that I trust them (A.B.)

- I try to write now and then the webpage (A.B.)

- I would say that probably more communication between myself and open locations there
is the people who I am directly supervising, so I am in touch with them and, just to make
sure that everything is basically up to speed and all. (S.A.)

- Sometimes, that is why I have the manager of this company who is doing this job, give
them what they need to do, this is not my position actually, I am the owner but I have
managers running the company (J.G.)

- If they (employees) are good in that point (their responsibilities), I don’t think you need a
lot of time to stay with them (J.G.)

- And then some employees do not know what to do today and then you have to talk to
them all the time and keep them. We have different employees here. Some of them are
good, they have big responsibilities for the company and you don’t need to tell them so
many things. But some of them you need to all the time explain and give them the
instructions of how to do today and then you have to see what they deliver for your
company. What they did today. Every employee has a different position, now we say
example, we need to do a photo, take the picture, and upload the file and all things. How
far it takes, how long? Is he ready or not. You have to control it. (J.G.)

- Yes, I have it more (interaction) with the people who need more time. The ones I have to
talk to them and then. But still even people who have a better, who can do the job by
themselves we have a good report, we have to join it, they have to make me questions
about is this good, all the time before we finish some work (J.G.)

- Telephone sometimes and emails. They are less than talking because I am always here and available all the time and its better talking (J.G.)
- That is what am telling you, am the owner, but I am not the one who manages all the system. I am doing the behind. There is one layer, mine, the one who is talking what is going on, you are under cover you are not doing a good job. (J.G.)
- You have 15 employees, how do you talk to all of them, you have to talk to your manager and then he would report you what has to been done what is good or not. (J.G.)
- Sometimes they do, bust mostly they go to their managers (J.G.)
- The meantime you talk to one person and you talk to 10 persons. So you better talk to one person instead of talking to the 15 persons, so he is doing work for you, and he is going to talk to his under 10 employees, I do not have to do that all the time. I think it is unnecessary and takes too much work for me to talk to many employees all the time (J.G.)
- That is what I am saying all the time we have meeting and they come when they have ideas, they sometimes employees are much better than me, sometimes they give you better ideas you are who make decisions they give you ideas you take decisions to do it or not. (J.G.)
- I am the same person outside and inside with my worker. So the same Jimmy the owner,
he is the same person, we never behave I mean kind of to show off that we are the boss or something like that and not what you think, he can just be there and as long as everybody respects his work and his position so the respect would be between us (M.A.)

• I always try to be always around and have communication with my workers. (M.A.)
• Well I am always visible, I am still open so they can contact me anytime so I can get phone calls from cleaners or I can get phone calls from creative authors there or I can get from whatever at the store, everyone can call me anytime, I give them the opportunity because if I don’t give them the opportunity they would all come fail and they will come, because if they don’t even call you anything can go wrong (M.A.)
• It doesn’t matter whether people where is from or what he believes I mean religion, and this country has a lot of respect for political and religion so it is a kind of distance and for sure we have to respect people which country they are, what culture they are, which colour they like I am really careful about that (M.A.)
• The difficulties are language. That is the main problem They (employees) lose more than what they have to get (M.A.)
• The use of power varies according to authority, culture and nationality (what society it is and what part of the world is that where people are displaying power). It is very important not to forget that fundamental values and beliefs influence behaviour. People certainly act
the same but think differently (B.B.)

- Hierarchy should involve flexibility. (B.B.)
- I think it is the same; we don’t talk to them too much. We are just working (J.G.)
- Closeness from CEO’s to their staff members can have two sides effect over employee’s emotions. On the one hand its positive since it can encourage and empower them to have a better performance and therefore, get better achievements in their duties; on the other hand, it might have negative consequences since (due to the culture) people might feel fear or could get stressed from having their superiors closer and knowing they are being observed. (R.K.)
- Constant communication can always get a close relationship between both parties (R.K.)
- One has to take into consideration both: corporate and national culture context where the hierarchical structure is based to study and analyse the side effects that a closer relationship would have. (R.K.)
- It makes it lot more easier because it lowers the gap between the manager and employee and also and we can interact lot easier (M.N.)
- I think I communicate coequally with all my employees. Of course if we have some special project going on, I may have to communicate more with some employee more than with the others. (M.N.)
Nobody wants a business relationship to be very close because there are a lot of complications (M.N.)

so every culture has its own rules, how close you come to this person, and having that in mind you try to come closer in order to understand (K.L.)

So in organizations that are multicultural, you have also different kind of distances between, and then you have to respect and having this as a limit. (K.L.)

I don’t know if you know about this, but the ideology of the Swedish system if you are a teacher and you are coming to a club of students the ideology here is to help the weak students to catch the level of the other. (K.L.)

Actually they have at least one time a week (meeting). And when I am not here sometimes then the manager does it (J.G.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSUMPTIONS/ VARIABLES</th>
<th>COLLECTED DATA FROM PRACTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Virtual space is the intangible area where processes happen</td>
<td>Personal space is not necessary inside organizational context. It might end up in something that invades the company. The company must have some general alignments that define the working areas (J.P.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The more openness of a virtual space, the more processes could happen</td>
<td>Personal space blocks relationship building because invades company environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The more openness of a virtual space, the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTEXT OF SPACE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Physical space is the condition of existence for virtual space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Physical space allows relations to be built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Physical space blocks relations to be built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Personal space is a limitation for Space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I think that the open space promotes the scenario to have a more open and easy going relationship between the people that work in that area (J.P.)
- I think that that space (open) promotes that there will be a better interaction. (J.P.)
- I think that an open space office has both (advantages and disadvantages) The greatest disadvantage is the lack of privacy, where there are things that need to be handled with high prudence and it would be hard to manage them in an open space because everyone would acknowledge it and the information from conversations would be accessible to everyone (J.P.)
- Open space offices can interfere with the regular work process of other co-workers (J.P.)
- Advantages from open space offices are that there will be a major interaction and that there will be a major efficiency in the processes because we are all almost there and it will reduce the waste of time of being alienated from the different processes. (J.P.)
- Open space offices allow more visibility from managers to employees (J.P.)
- I think that the advantages are that you can actually have like a much closer work relationship with people, unfortunately the disadvantages are that this contact of getting to know people with personal life would be to get to know a little bit too much. If you know somebody a little bit too personally sometimes that can be a little bit more difficult for to have to calm down about certain things that specially if they have special things
going on in their personal life, so that can be very difficult, to distinguish personal and work, absolutely. (S.A.)

- In pretty much of what I do, the only people who have their personal space are the hair stylist that works for me. And they have, their personal inner saloon station. And I think that is good that they have, they can kind of personalize it, to me whatever it makes them happy and keep them going. And also they have their own responsibilities to keep those areas, clean and under control. (S.A.)

- The office landscape is to cut office cost but of course also in a way to create openness (A.W.)

**Context of Sensegiving and Sensemaking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. The relation between CEO’s and Employees would help to attract followers</td>
<td>So I consider to create relations, confidence is extremely important. (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The management of meaning that a leader has would successfully involve people into the desired organizational process</td>
<td>For me quality is number one, and must be quality and if we take it back in the way of leadership is to encourage that and to encourage in our context is to forego with the good example (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The management of meaning that a leader has would fail when involving people into</td>
<td>To get respect in this type of organization you have to have technical skills for yourself. (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My attitude was tried to work in the way that people respect you and what you do could</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the desired organizational process
18. Multi-communicative activities in leadership would support the leader duties
19. Multi-communicative leadership activities can limit the role of a leader

be questioned. In the way that you act as responsible person which I see it very important (A.W.)

• The most frequent communication channel is the verbal one, which is diary and dynamic. The formal one is electronic mails. And the other one that is used less as the time passes is the written one on which we have memorandums, communications, information and documents related to the computers (J.P.)

• We have a very open door of policy as far as communication goes between management and employees. There are many different tools. We use mainly emails, we use voice mail, we have just general day to day interaction at locations as well. I think that communication is just strong between employees and myself and my upper management is very open to communicate to each other (S.A.)

• Talk mostly. We have meetings and then talk to them (J.G.)

• I still have the control that is very important for us, to have control on the work (when talking about there is constant communication between managers employees) (M.A.)

• Sensegiving is not just about talking but also about taking actions, the image, performance and the use of symbols. (M.L.)

• Languaging is of highly importance for any manager when talking to his staff members and guiding them to do certain activities. Language is taken for granted. (B.B.)
• Face to face communication is more personal, nevertheless posters, videos and having an open attitude to respond employees when they approach the manager are important to build relationship (B.B.)
• Managers should also practice what they preach. Trust their subordinates and have a clear understanding of the meaning of power and authority. Power is the capacity to influence people and authority is the right of ask to do things. (B.B.)
• I’m a manager and my most important job is to guide my subordinates with my leadership behaviour and being with them and working in the same space as them, I can interact with them. (M.N.)
• From my side it is very good if you work together with your employees you become closer to them and then you learn how they work and how they act, and you can see in the future what can they deliver to your company, if you work you don’t see your employees you never know how they work (J.G.)
• I like to observe how they (employees) do things. To watch what they are doing to correct things they are not doing that nice (S.A.)
• They are celebrating in Christmas, normally with a small party. (A.W.)
• I like to have verbal talk and you can also have time to meet. (M.N.)
• Sometimes, we eat out and go occasionally but we take all workers together to eat together
to make the relationship like better and to know each other and to get the workers more obeying and who comes to say just welcome he can uses his own mentality and all feelings in the work (M.A.)

- Every morning I check with everyone saying good morning. (A.W.)
- CEOs/ managers should also involve everyone in meetings. Managers should consider how much time they spend in meetings and also how to extent and delegate the communicative responsibility to others. (B.B.)
- Sensemaking for B players would be to make sense of themselves, understand their importance, behaviour and differences. Managers are responsible to define their (employees) reality. They see things as the leader wants them to see and understand. (M.L.)

### CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP STYLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/ Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. Modern type of leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Activities between CEOs and B players are result based relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Post modern type of leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Activities between CEOs and B players are based on a personal perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I try to be with all. Now I do focus more in the online stores. It is bigger and more things are going when comparing it to the store where there is nothing special. But as soon as we realize that there is something not right, something wrong that we get from the customer we try to be on the place. I always try to be around and have communication with my workers. Daily, by phone, email, even I call them myself. I call everybody. I call even the cleaner I call him asking how is he doing. I call everybody. Even the store, I call</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbal communication is related to a postmodern leadership. I talk to all of them so I can show them that I am there, am around cause with this, they feel kind of safe, even on asking it is good that he called because I understand somebody gives me back up you know that is something where I've been working before I understand, I need kind of back up if I didn't talk to him kind of 2 or 3, 4 days even they are standing alone people listen, they need some kind of like kids, even if they are 40, 60 years old, you have to show them that you are there, some people don't even need and they can do things as usual you know but I mean, 90 to 95% even the social rule in Sweden is to have communication with your workers daily so they can feel comfortable on the work, cause anything can go wrong so they cannot take a decision, you have to be daily there around and show them. I am here around, don't worry, we having something going on, I can help you out, you can make quick decisions, and you can find a solution. They need kind of this safe, but everyone knows what they are doing. They have a daily communication phone call, face or meeting quickly asking whatever is going on, whatever it would be working by the way I have stores and what they are doing today what they need to delivery if I am not here I do it by email or by phone (M.A.)

## CONTEXT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

68
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25. Influence over relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. Filling employees personal satisfaction aspect has a positive effect over their performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. By ignoring employees personal satisfaction aspects would have a negative effect over their performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Advantage of know how to use Emotional Intelligence as a tool for leading an organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Disadvantage of ignoring emotional intelligence when leading an organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I always believe the best in people, I think they are not cheating, I think they are doing hard work. If they don’t you have to take action. (A.W.)
- And if you are friendly with people in decent way, you know everything. (A.W.)
- Give credits in public, if you are not contented, do that behind closed door. (A.W.)
- So even if they are asked to say something because you are annoyed, think of the effect. (A.W.)
- But in this type of organization where my experience is then everyone in individual has to be observed, they have to be noticed and they have been given encouragement. And if they don’t perform well you have to take serious discussion. (A.W.)
- I do recruitment and I try to judge how this person is going to work here. I don’t put them in fifteen people and to say they are recruited or not. I do it myself and I go back and say I have found this person and would you like to have a chance. Think by yourself sitting with 15 people and say what have you done, it’s very annoying. (A.W.)
- You need friends ‘upstairs’. If it is small company – board of directors, chairman of the board. Keep them informed, everything comes up even it is a little bit disgraceful, embarrassed and never try to hide it and be honest and don’t try to cheat. (A.W.)
- But if somebody fired from their position, I think it’s good for people to have wall here. (A.B.)
• I think it is necessary for people to meet me alone, not to show everybody that here I am meeting director. I might take in consideration that you might not want everybody to know you are here. It’s not about me but about people visiting me here. (A.B.)

• People need to be noticed and feel valued. Managers should not alienate them, alienation is a concept firstly mentioned by Karl Marx. (M.L.)

• CEOs should talk about what they want B players to see and this involves having the right languaging and care about the message they are delivering. Everything raises emotions and language has a lot to do with them (emotions). (B.B.)

• One example is the current financial crisis; it is a situation that can raise different feelings from employees towards their job position. Firing people and uncertainty are situations that will surely raise emotions. Boss reads employees and so do they. (B.B.)

• Using Emotional Intelligence in an organisational environment might contribute not only to speaking and participative willingness from employees but also to their basic needs. (R.K.)

• Of course the personality of employee effects. I have one employee who is very talkative and he wants to interact more than the others. I believe that it’s important to me to listen and communicate with him, because for him it’s very important to share his thoughts. If I wouldn’t notice this need, it could effect on his work motivation. (M.N.)
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I have to find to understand how this person is working, thinking and I have to motivate this personal and in order to understand this things you have to go close to this person, you cannot give an order (K.L.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I have to motivate you so you have to start the searching, doing the whole questions this is the role of the teacher or the leader of the, or the manager of an organization as mine (K.L.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I talk to all of them so I can show them that I am there am around cause with this they feel kind of safe, even on asking it is good that he called because I understand somebody gives me back up that is something where I’ve been working before I understand, I need kind of back up if I didn’t talk to him kind of 2 or 3 4 days even they are standing alone people listen, they need some kind of are like kids, even if they are 40 60 years old, you have to show them that you are there, some people don’t even need and they can do things as usual but I mean, 90 to 95% even the social rule in Sweden is to have a communication with your workers daily so they can feel comfortable on the work, cause anything can go wrong so they cannot take a decision so you have to be daily there around and show them. I am here around don’t worry we having something going on, I can help you out, you can make quick decisions, you can find a solution (M.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Managers should give credit to their work. (M.L.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Because some people are by themselves, they don’t want to be in the same way, want to be better all the time, and that people we can give them better payment, care about them more and even better position and more opportunities and people would love that of course. This is you give, this is what you get (M.A.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30. Internal performance in a firm will affect its business competitive advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Interrelations inside the organization reinforce the business competitive advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Lack of interrelations inside the organization make the company weak in front of its challengers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Empowerment of human resources are a strength for the business competitive advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Relying HHRR make the firm’s competitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• To build up your company, you have to know how your employees are doing for your company. This is for me very important to know exactly. You don’t know exactly but you know how they work. If they are lazy or if they check their e-mail all the time, you know, do something for your company. (J.G.)

• Big companies their workers, when the owner is there they become like more active, like when the cat is not home, the rats are very happy (J.G.)

• B players can have solutions and innovations (M.L.)

• On the other way to lose memory completely that is disaster. So I want to have some sort of confirmative with the values, experience of the company. (A.W.)
advantage weak when facing competitors

## CONTEXT OF PROCESSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42. Interaction happens through communication</td>
<td>• In our country you cannot behave like bossy then you are not boss very long. We don’t have the bossy style (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Verbal language as a way to create closeness between the two actors</td>
<td>• The first thing you learn in Vietnamese context that no one lose face in public. If you are looking into American picture, I think they are cursing each other all the time. It doesn’t happen here (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Intercultural and its effects over relationship</td>
<td>• I do (like to be visible to my employees) I think that is good to have close contact with people I am working with (S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. General impediment towards relationship building</td>
<td>• The most frequent contact is with the technique area because of the profile and because it is the core of our business and there is the major interaction for on-time solutions (J.P.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. General openness towards relationship building</td>
<td>• If it is a big organization you have to rely on middle level manager (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Yes, the most basic one which are periodically established meetings and in case of unexpected situation we have the option to make or call for a meeting in order to attend to that particular situation. (J.P.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We have annual talk with everyone in small group. We called it development talk where they can exchange what they have gone and expressed how they perceived the boss and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Managers have only constant contact with the employees under their responsibility</td>
<td>48. Managers are aware of employees will to collaborate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vice versa. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In our office the most important room is the coffee room. Because there everyone speak business, but they do it when they are having coffee. And they can have all information; it is openness for information. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It is between people and how they interact. So relation means a lot. You can always have the open attitude to read the organization. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Every morning I check with everyone saying good morning. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The head of department in charge of that and as a manager I should never go into the department. That was the responsibility of the head. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I think it is also important that those who work in the level of pension know that they could always come to me as the hospital director if there were something. But first I would tell them please take it up the head of your department if he/she doesn’t listen to you then you can come to me and we could take the discussion together (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I wouldn’t give any advice; you have your expert on private health care working with you. You should ask him and you should discuss about it then my role is to discuss with him. (A.A.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I was once on TV when I was sitting and I was given questions and I had to prepare (A.A.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• At the same time you might think that they could be a little bit afraid. I think they felt I was easy to come and discuss but I don’t know. But of course they had the possibility when I sitting down, I tried to sit down with different people so they can say I would like to come to your office and discuss. (A.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• But those come must know that you can approach me but I might say I’m sorry but I don’t have the time at present but please come back later but can also ask if something urgent (A.B.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It is important to me to have interaction at broader scale inside the university but never to go behind the pointed leaders because it is very important that I trust them (A.B.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I try to write now and then the webpage (A.B.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I would say that probably more communication between myself and open locations there is the people who I am directly supervising, so I am in touch with them and you know, just to make sure that everything is basically up to speed and all.(S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sometimes, that is why I told you I have the manager of this company who is doing this job you know, give them what they need to do, you know, this is not my position actually, I told you that I am the owner but I have you know managers running the company (J.G.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If they (employees) are good in that point (their responsibilities), I don’t think you need a lot of time to stay with them (J.G.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• And then some employees do not know what to do today and then you have to talk to them all the time and keep them you know. We have different employees here, you know. Some of them are good, they have big responsibilities for the company and you don’t need to tell them so many things you know. But some of them you need to all the time explain and give them you know the instructions of how to do today and then you have to see what they deliver for your company. What they did today. You know, every employee has a different position you know, okay now we say example, now we need to do a photo, you know, take the picture, upload the file and all this things. How far it takes, how long? Is he ready or not. You have to you know control it. (J.G.)

• Yes, I have it more (interaction) with the people who need more time. The ones I have to talk to hem and then you know. But still even people who have a better, you know, who can do the job by themselves you know we have a good report, we have to join it, they have to make me questions about is this good, you know all the time before we finish some work (J.G.)

• Telephone sometimes and emails. They are less than talking because I am always here and available all the time and its better talking (J.G.)

• That is what am telling you, am the owner, but I am not the one who manages all the system. I am doing the behind. There is one layer, mine, the one who is talking what is
going on, you are under cover you are not doing a good job. (J.G.)

- This is you know, you have 15 employees, how do you talk to all of them, you have to talk to your manager and then he would report you what has to been done what is good or not. (J.G.)

- Sometimes they do, but mostly they go to their managers (J.G.)

- The meantime you talk to one person and you talk to 10 persons. So you better talk to one person instead of talking to the 15 persons, so he is doing work for you, and he is going to talk to his under 10 employees, I do not have to do that all the time. I think it is unnecessary and takes too much work for me to talk to many employees all the time (J.G.)

- You know that is what I am saying all the time we have meeting and they come when they have ideas, they sometimes employees are much better than me, sometimes they give you better ideas you are who make decisions they give you ideas you take decisions to do it or not. (J.G.)

- I am the same person outside and inside with my worker. So the same Jimmy the owner, he is the same person, we never behave I mean kind of to show off that we are the boss or something like that and not what you think, he can just be there and as long as everybody respects his work and his position so the respect would be between us (M.A.)

- I always try to be always around and have communication with my workers. (M.A.)
• Well am always visible, I am still open so they can contact me anytime so I can get phone calls from cleaners or I can get phone calls from creative authors there or I can get from whatever at the store, everyone can call me anytime, I give them the opportunity because if I don’t give them the opportunity they would all come fail and they will come you know, because if they don’t even call you anything can go wrong (M.A.)

• It doesn’t matter whether people where is from or what he believes I mean religion, and this country has a lot of respect for political and religion so it is a kind of distance and for sure we have to respect people which country they are, what culture they are, which colour they like I am really careful about that (M.A.)

• The difficulties are language. That is the main problem They (employees) lose more than what they have to get (M.A.)

• The use of power varies according to authority, culture and nationality (what society it is and what part of the world is that where people are displaying power). It is very important not to forget that fundamental values and beliefs influence behaviour. People certainly act the same but think differently (B.B.)

• Hierarchy should involve flexibility. (B.B.)

• I think it is the same, we don’t talk to them too much. We are just working (J.G.)

• Closeness from Top managers to their staff members can have two sides effect over
employee’s emotions. On the one hand its positive since it can encourage and empower them to have a better performance and therefore, get better achievements in their duties; on the other hand, it might have negative consequences since (due to the culture) people might feel fear or could get stressed from having their superiors closer and knowing they are being observed. (R.K.)

- Constant communication can always get a close relationship between both parties (R.K.)
- One has to take into consideration both: corporate and national culture context where the hierarchical structure is based to study and analyse the side effects that a closer relationship would have. (R.K.)
- It makes it lot more easier because it lowers the gap between the manager and employee and also and we can interact lot easier (M.N.)
- I think I communicate coequally with all my employees. Of course if we have some special project going on, I may have to communicate more with some employee more than with the others. (M.N.)
- Nobody wants a business relationship to be very close because there are a lot of complications (M.N.)
- so every culture has its own rules, how close you come to this person okay, and having that in mind you try to come closer in order to understand (K.L.)
• so in organizations that are multicultural, you have also different kind of distances between, and then you have to respect and having this as a limit. (K.L.)
• I don't know if you know about this, but the ideology of the Swedish system if you are a teacher and you are coming to a club of students the ideology here is to help the weak students to catch the level of the other. (K.L.)
• Actually they have at least one time a week (meeting). And when I am not here sometimes then the manager does it (J.G.)

### CONTEXT OF SPACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 35. Virtual space is the intangible area where processes happen | • Personal space is not necessary inside organizational context. It might end up in something that invades the company. The company must have some general alignments that define the working areas (J.P.)
| 36. The more openness of a virtual space, the more processes could happen | • Personal space blocks relationship building because invades company environment.
| 37. The more openness of a virtual space, the less processes could happen | • I think that the open space promotes the scenario to have a more open and easy going relationship between the people that work in that area (J.P.)
| 38. Physical space is the condition of existence for virtual space | • I think that that space (open) promotes that there will be a better interaction. (J.P.)
| 39. Physical space allows relations to be built | • I think that an open space office has both (advantages and disadvantages) The greatest
Physical space blocks relations to be built

Personal space is a limitation for Space disadvantage is the lack of privacy, where there are things that need to be handled with high prudence and it would be hard to manage them in an open space because everyone would acknowledge it and the information from conversations would be accessible to everyone (J.P.)

- Open space offices can interfere with the regular work process of other co-workers (J.P.)
- Advantages from open space offices are that there will be a major interaction and that there will be a major efficiency in the processes because we are all almost there and it will reduce the waste of time of being alienated from the different processes. (J.P.)
- Open space offices allow more visibility from managers to employees (J.P.)
- I think that the advantages are that you can actually have like a much closer work relationship with people, unfortunately the disadvantages are that this contact of getting to know people with personal life would be to get to know a little bit too much. And you know, somebody, if you know somebody a little bit too personally sometimes that can be you know a little bit more difficult for you know to have to calm down about certain things that specially you know if they have special things going on in their personal life, so that can be very difficult, to distinguish personal and work, absolutely. (S.A.)
- In pretty much of what I do, the only people who have their personal space are the hair stylish that work for me. And they have you know, their personal inner saloon station.
And I think that that is you know is good that they have that, they can kind of personalize it, you know to me whatever it makes them happy and keep them going. And also they have their own responsibilities to keep those areas you know, clean and under control. (S.A.)

- The office landscape is to cut office cost but of course also in a way to create openness (A.W.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42. The relation between Top managers and Employees would help to attract followers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. The management of meaning that a leader has would successfully involve people into the desired organizational process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. The management of meaning that a leader has would fail when involving people into the desired organizational process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Multicommunicative activities in leadership would support the leader duties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• So I consider to create relations, confidence is extremely important. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For me quality is number one, and must be quality and if we take it back in the way of leadership is to encourage that and to encourage in our context is to forego with the good example (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To get respect in this type of organization you have to have technical skills for yourself. (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• My attitude was try to work in the way that people respect you and what you do could be questioned. In the way that you act as responsible person which I see it very important (A.W.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The most frequent communication channel is the verbal one, which is diary and dynamic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
46. Multicommunicative leadership activities can limit the role of a leader

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The formal one is electronic mails. And the other one that is used less as the time passes is the written one on which we have memorandums, communications, information and documents related to the computers (J.P.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We have a very open door of policy as far as communication goes between management and employees. There are many different tools. We use mainly emails, we use voice mail, we have just general you know day to day interaction at locations as well. I think that communication is just strong between employees and myself and my upper management is very open to communicate to each other (S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Talk mostly. We have meetings and then talk to them (J.G.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I still have the control that is very important for us, to have control on the work (when talking about there is constant communication between managers employees) (M.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sensegiving is not just about talking but also about taking actions, the image, performance and the use of symbols. (M.L.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Languating is of highly importance for any manager when talking to his staff members and guiding them to do certain activities. Language is taken for granted. (B.B.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Face to face communication is more personal, nevertheless posters, videos and having an open attitude to respond employees when they approach the manager are important to build relationship (B.B.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Managers should also practice what they preach. Trust their subordinates and have a clear understanding of the meaning of power and authority. Power is the capacity to influence people and authority is the right of ask to do things. (B.B.)

• I’m a manager and my most important job is to guide my subordinates with my leadership behaviour and being with them and working in the same space as them, I can interact with them. (M.N.)

• From my side it is very good if you work together with your employees you become more closer to them and then you learn how they work and how they act, and you can see in the future what can they deliver to your company, you know, if you work you don’t see your employees you never know how they work (J.G.)

• I like to observe how they (employees) do things. To watch what they are doing to correct things they are not doing that nice (S.A.)

• They are celebrating in Christmas, normally with a small party. (A.W.)

• I like to have verbal talk and you can also have time to meet. (M.N.)

• Sometimes, we eat out and go occasionally but we take all workers together to eat together to make the relationship like better and to know each other and to get the workers more obeying and who comes to say just welcome he can uses his own mentality and all feelings in the work (M.A.)
- Every morning I check with everyone saying good morning. (A.W.)
- Top managers/managers should also involve everyone in meetings. Managers should consider how much time they spend in meetings and also how to extent and delegate the communicative responsibility to others. (B.B.)
- Sensemaking for B players would be to make sense of themselves, understand their importance, behaviour and differences. Managers are responsible to define their (employees) reality. They see things as the leader wants them to see and understand. (M.L.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context of Leadership Style</th>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47. Modern type of leadership</td>
<td>Collected data from practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Activities between Top managers and B players are result based relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Post modern type of leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Activities between Top managers and B players are based on a personal perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Verbal communication is related to a postmodern leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. I try to be with all. Now I do focus more in the online stores. It is bigger and more things are going when comparing it to the store where there is nothing special. But as soon as we realize that there is something not right, something wrong that we get from the customer we try to be on the place. I always try to be around and have communication with my workers. Daily, by phone, email, even I call them myself. Yeah I call everybody. I call even the cleaner I call him asking how is he doing. I call everybody. Even the store, I call everybody. I talk to all of them so I can show them that I am there am around cause with this they feel kind of safe, even on asking it is good that he called because I understand somebody gives me back up you know that is something where I've been working before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I understand, I need kind of back up if I didn't talk to him kind of 2 or 3 4 days even they are standing alone people listen, they need some kind of are like kids, even if they are 40 60 years old, you have to show them that you are there, some people don’t even need and they can do things as usual you know but I mean, 90 to 95% even the social rule in Sweden is to have a communication with your workers daily so they can feel comfortable on the work, cause anything can go wrong so they cannot take a decision so you have to be daily there around and show them Oh yeah ma here around don’t worry we having something going on, I can help you out, you can make quick decisions, you can find a solution. They need kind of this safe, but everyone knows what they are doing. They have a daily communication phone call, face or meeting quickly asking whatever is going on what’s the rule, I need to deliver or every day whatever it would be working by the way I have stores and what they are doing today what they need to delivery if I am not here I do it by email or by phone (M.A.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>52. Influence over relationships</strong></td>
<td>• I always believe the best in people, I think they are not cheating, I think they are doing hard work. If they don’t you have to take action. (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>53. Filling employees personal satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>• And if you are friendly with people in decent way, you know everything. (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
aspect has a positive effect over their performance

54. By ignoring employees personal satisfaction aspects would have a negative effect over their performance

55. Advantage of know how to use Emotional Intelligence as a tool for leading an organization

56. Disadvantage of ignoring emotional intelligence when leading an organization

- Give credits in public, if you are not contented, do that behind closed door. (A.W.)
- So even if they are asked to say something because you are annoyed, think of the effect. (A.W.)
- But in this type of organization where my experience is then everyone in individual has to be observed, they have to be noticed and they have been given encouragement. And if they don’t perform well you have to take serious discussion. (A.W.)
- I do recruitment and I try to judge how this person is going to work here. I don’t put them in fifteen people and to say they are recruited or not. I do it myself and I go back and say I have found this person and would you like to have a chance. Think by yourself sitting with 15 people and say what have you done, it’s very annoying. (A.W.)
- You need friends ‘upstairs’. If it is small company – board of directors, chairman of the board. Keep them informed, everything comes up even it is a little bit disgraceful, embarrassed and never try to hide it and be honest and don’t try to cheat. (A.W.)
- But if somebody fired from their position, I think it’s good for people to have wall here. (A.B.)
- I think it is necessary for people to meet me alone, not to show everybody that here I am meeting director. I might take in consideration that you might not want everybody to know you are here. It’s not about me but about people visiting me here. (A.B.)
• People need to be noticed and feel valued. Managers should not alienate them, alienation is a concept firstly mentioned by Karl Marx. (M.L.)
• Top managers should talk about what they want B players to see and this involves having the right languaging and care about the message they are delivering. Everything raises emotions and language has a lot to do with them (emotions). (B.B.)
• One example is the current financial crisis; it is a situation that can raise different feelings from employees towards their job position. Firing people and uncertainty are situations that will surely raise emotions. Boss reads employees and so do they. (B.B.)
• Using Emotional Intelligence in an organisational environment might contribute not only to speaking and participative willingness from employees but also to their basic needs. (R.K.)
• Of course the personality of employee effects. I have one employee who is very talkative and he wants to interact more than the others. I believe that it’s important to me to listen and communicate with him, because for him it’s very important to share his thoughts. If I wouldn’t notice this need, it could effect on his work motivation. (M.N.)
• I have to find to understand how this person is working, thinking and I have to motivate this personal and in order to understand this things you have to go close to this person, you cannot give an order (K.L.)
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have to motivate you so you have to start the searching, doing the whole questions this is the role of the teacher or the leader of the, or the manager of an organization as mine (K.L.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I talk to all of them so I can show them that I am there am around cause with this they feel kind of safe, even on asking it is good that he called because I understand somebody gives me back up you know that is something where I've been working before I understand, I need kind of back up if I didn't talk to him kind of 2 or 3 4 days even they are standing alone people listen, they need some kind of are like kids, even if they are 40 60 years old, you have to show them that you are there, some people don’t even need and they can do things as usual you know but I mean, 90 to 95% even the social rule in Sweden is to have a communication with your workers daily so they can feel comfortable on the work, cause anything can go wrong so they cannot take a decision so you have to be daily there around and show them Oh yeah ma here around don’t worry we having something going on, I can help you out, you can make quick decisions, you can find a solution (M.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managers should give credit to their work. (M.L.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because some people are by themselves, they don’t want to be in the same way, want to be better all the time, and that people we can give them better payment, care about them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
more and even better position and more opportunities and people would love that of course. This is you give, this is what you get (M.A.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions/Variables</th>
<th>Collected data from practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57. Internal performance in a firm will affect its business competitive advantage</td>
<td>• To build up your company, you have to know how your employees are doing for your company. This is for me very important to know exactly. You don’t know exactly but you know how they work. If they are lazy or if they check their e-mail all the time, you know, do something for your company. (J.G.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Interrelations inside the organization reinforce the business competitive advantage</td>
<td>• So you know is talking about what to expect. You know big companies their workers, when the owner is there they become like more active, like when the cat is not home, the rats are very happy (J.G.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Lack of interrelations inside the organization make the company weak in front of its challengers</td>
<td>• B players can have solutions and innovations (M.L.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Empowerment of human resources are a strength for the business competitive advantage</td>
<td>• On the other way to lose memory completely that is disaster. So I want to have some sort of confirmative with the values, experience of the company. (A.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Relying on human resources make the firm’s competitive advantage weak when facing competitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Surveys statistical findings

The following are the statistic grouping of variables that measure employee’s willingness to create work relationships with their top manager (we used the term of CEO for Top managers in the surveys questionnaire).

We delivered 15 surveys to employees in random organizations. The answers are attached in the index of this thesis work and the results will be presented in the following charts.

1. Frequency of communication with CEO when there is a mid-manager in between

![Frequency of communication between employees and CEO when there is a mid-manager in between](image)

Figure 3.5: Frequency of communication between employees and CEO when there is a mid-manager in between. (Source: Own)

The 20% of interviewed employees sometimes communicate with their CEO when there is a mid-manager in the hierarchical position. 30% communicate often and very often with their CEO.

2. Frequency of formal organizational meetings from CEO to employees.
Formal organizational meetings have a monthly frequency for the 22% of the surveyed employees. The 78% left do not have formal meetings.

3. Necessity of employees to have formal meetings.

More than 80% of employees find the need to have formal meetings with their CEO.

4. Reasons that drive employees to communicate with the CEO
30% of employees communicate with their CEO because of job requirements. 10% because they are being asked to do so and 50% because need advise from their CEO. The 10% left did not answer to this question.

5. Employees willingness to have a better communication with CEO

100% of surveyed employees have the will to have a better communication with their CEO.
6. Employees’ opinion how to create a better communicative contact with CEO

![Diagram](image.png)

**Figure 3.10:** Employees’ opinion about how to create a better communicative contact with CEO. (Source: Own)

22% of surveyed employees think that a better communicative contact with their CEO can be achieved by having regular business meetings, 51% think that regular informal meetings would create better communicative contact with them, 18% think that CEO should have more time available and 10% think that CEO offices should be more easily accessible to them.

7. Importance for employees to have contacts with CEO
55% of the employees think that it is very important to have contact with their CEO. 30% find it important and less than 10% find it not important at all.

1. **Personal drivers for employees to have contact with their CEO**
Figure 3.12: Personal drivers for employees to have communicative contact with their CEO (Source: Own)

40% of employees consider that their main driver to communicate with their CEO is because their personal ideas will be considered. 18% would do it because in that way they will confirm their effort is valued. 12% would do it for career development, 12% to get direct approval from head, same as to get instructions from first hand and 1% has other personal drivers.
Chapter 4: Result and Discussion

1. Preliminary to discussion

In this chapter we will use collected data together with theories from theoretical framework to discuss and relate them in order to be able to answer the two research questions we raised from the beginning. The discussion will be based on the assumptions that are created from literature and findings from data that matched those assumptions. We will use them to analyze the reality of B Players and its relationship with Top managers; furthermore, we want to identify the processes that happen between them. Later on in this discussion, we will use the data to answer the two research questions which are: first, how to reduce the distance between top managers and B players by acknowledge the impediment at relationships, the attitude to create relationship from top managers’ and the aspects to decrease distance between B Players and the top managers; second, how to improve B Player’s performance through emotional intelligence and turn it into business competitive advantage.

The information which we will introduce below does not represent any general statement but the individual opinions from the interviewee’s role. This study discusses with all respective respect to culture and ethnic matters related to the topic.

2. Question 1: How to reduce space among B players and top managers

   Reality and Impediment from top managers

Inspired by the research from Prof. DeLong and following his concept of B Players which are identified inside the company, we found that the classifications of players are also recognized in many other forms of organization such as students in a class and members of a group. Most of the interviewees at the position of top managers agreed that they can easily acknowledge the A players who are outstanding and C players who are problematic, but not B Players. In this way, B Players are actually 'hidden' from top manager's view. However, the necessity of realizing B Players from top managers is essential. In order to do that, a manager should at least understand the role of B Players in his/ her firm. As it was said by Mikael Lundgren from a researcher's point of view: “Sense making
for B players would be to make sense of themselves, to understand their importance, their behaviour and their differences. In practical work, B Players are also known as the knowledgeable person about the firm and in many cases, they are the live dictionary. This is confirmed by top managers for the value of what they have. Anders Wikman said: “On the other way, to lose memory completely that is disaster. So I want to have some sort of confirmative with the values, experience of the company”. These values make sense of B Players’ role in an organization.

As Stated above, the roles of two main actors which are top managers and B Players are individually and separately as showed in figure 3.7 - frequency of formal meeting as a communication way, formal organizational meetings have a monthly frequency only for the 22% of the surveyed employees. The 78% left do not have formal meetings. In order to answer the first question, we need to identify the problems that prevent these two actors from connecting each other within the space. In this research, we found that the physical space blocks the processes between two main actors for many reasons. One of those is about others interfering said Jose Parada: “Open space offices can interfere with the regular work process of other co-workers”. Furthermore, the idea of an open space office also is criticized by Jose Parada that: “I think that an open space office has both (advantages and disadvantages) The greatest disadvantage is the lack of privacy, where there are things that need to be handled with high prudence and it would be hard to manage them in an open space because everyone would acknowledge it and the information from conversations would be accessible to everyone”. Relate to privacy, the concept of personal space is also raised to indentify the limitation of personal space at work. Jose Parada also pointed out that: “Personal space is not necessary inside organizational context. It might end up in something that invades the company. The company must have some general alignments that define the working areas”.

The general impediments towards relationship building between the top manager and B Players are seen from managerial position. Most of the interviewees agree that the relationship should not be too close, otherwise it could affect the work. Stacy Apelt’s opinion is: “I think that the advantages are that you can actually have like a much closer work relationship with people, unfortunately the disadvantages are that this contact of getting to know people with personal life would be to get to know a little bit too much. And you know, somebody, if you know somebody a little bit too personally sometimes that can be you know a little bit more difficult for you know to have to calm down about certain things that specially you know if they have special things going on in their personal life, so that can be very difficult, to distinguish personal and work, absolutely”. It is also agreed by
other interviewee that: “Nobody wants a business relationship to be very close because there are a lot of complications”.

The impediments of the space and relationship are shown above with reasons from top managers’ point of view. It is clear to see that, there is no intention from the managerial position to create processes between them and B Players in workplace. Moreover, there are also the limitations in culture aspect, organization hierarchy and expertise work.

The globalization demands a diversity working environment where people need to cope with culture aspect. The power distance which is defined above once again confirmed by Professor Björn Bjerke: “The use of power varies according to authority, culture and nationality (what society it is and what part of the world is that where people are displaying power). It is very important not to forget that fundamental values and beliefs influence behaviour. People certainly act the same but think differently”. Low and high context culture can also affect to the communication between top managers and B Players. In Swedish culture for example, said by Anders Wikman: “In our country you cannot behave like bossy then you are not bossy very long. We don’t have the bossy style”. However, the culture is something that needs to be kept in mind when people behave: “The first thing you learn in Vietnamese context that no one loses face in public. If you are looking into American picture, I think they are cursing each other all the time. It doesn’t happen here (Sweden)” Anders Wikman said.

Most of interviewees are aware of culture issues where they think that they could change organization behaviour. From the researcher’s perspective, Richard Koehler said: “One has to take into consideration both: corporate and national culture context where the hierarchical structure is based to study and analyze the side effects that a closer relationship would have. Professor Konstantin agreed with the situation when he said: “so every culture has its own rules, how close you come to this person okay, and having that in mind you try to come closer in order to understand” and “so in organizations that are multicultural, you have also different kind of distances between, and then you have to respect and having this as a limit” he added.

By acknowledging culture differences, one can understand that it impedes the communication between top managers and B Players, and also the processes that might happen in between. Therefore, in order to help top manager approaching B Players, they must create the closeness which affects both negative and positive to their behaviours. It is stated by Richard Koehler: “Closeness from Top managers to their staff members can have two sides effect over employee’s emotions. On the one hand its positive since it can encourage and empower them to have a better performance and therefore, get better
achievements in their duties; on the other hand, it might have negative consequences since (due to the culture) people might feel fear or could get stressed from having their superiors closer and knowing they are being observed”.

The other aspect in impediment of relationship building between top managers and B Players is the organization hierarchy. The two main actors are limited by the mid-manager’s role inside an organization. All interviewees have the same opinion in how employees or B Players should connect to them through the mid-manager position. Their arguments are mostly like: “The head of department in charge of that and as a manager I should never go into the department. That was the responsibility of the head” Agne Anders or “Sometimes, that is why I told you I have the manager of this company who is doing this job, give them what they need to do, you know, this is not my position actually, I told you that I am the owner but I have managers running the company” Jimmy Guiracha. Furthermore, it is also about the role of a mid-manager/supervisor and how they are trusted from the top managers. Agneta Bladh argues that: “It is important to me to have interaction at broader scale inside the university but never to go behind the pointed leaders because it is very important that I trust them”.

This information has identified the existence of distance space between top managers and B Players. The distance exists through the impediments of processes happening between two actors. This information also confirms the research problem which was raised from the beginning where B Players are unrecognized and they are limited in connection with top managers inside the organization. In order to reduce these impediments, firstly we want to find the attitude to create the relationship building, and secondly how to reduce the distance by providing open space and processes within the organization.

General openness towards relationship building from Top managers

In this part, we will discuss the attitude of interviewees as the role of top managers in creating the relationship with their employees or B Players. It is basic to see if it is possible to create relationship between the two actors. In general, the positive attitude has come from all interviewees. Regarding to open space office, the advantage is described by Jose Parada: “I think that that space (open) promotes that there will be a better interaction. This opinion is also agreed by Stacy Apelt: “I do like to be visible to my employees) I think that is good to have close contact with people I am working with”
Moreover, the openness is not only by physical space described by office but also through the willingness of the top managers to be approached by their employees or B Players. Agne Andersson said: “I think it is also important that those who work in the level of pension k now that they could always come to me as the hospital director if there were something. But first I would tell them please take it up the head of your department if he/ she doesn’t listen to you then you can come to me and we could take the discussion together”. This openness is also shared by Mike Abbe: “Well am always visible, I am still open so they can contact me anytime so I can get phones from cleaners or I can get phones from creative authors there or I can get from whatever at the store, everyone can call me anytime, I give them the opportunity because if I don’t give them the opportunity they would all come fail and they will come you know, because if they don’t even call you anything can go wrong”. The communication channel an environment here is the medium to help top managers create processes with their employees. From the other side, employees showed that 55% of the employees think that it is very important to have contact with their Top Managers. 30% find it important and only less than 10% find it not important at all.. This attitude shows the willingness from managerial position to create relationship processes with their employees in order to have better understanding and fluently in work.

**How to reduce the distance between Top managers and B Players**

This part discusses the solutions to reduce the distance space between the two main actors as top manager and B Players. In order to do that, a manager must understand the role of B Players and their contribution in the firm. It is as Mikael Lundgren said: “B players can have solutions and innovations”. Moreover, it requires an open mind to have the willingness to be approached, and to create the relationship with B Players. A suggestion from Björn Bjerke is: “Top managers should talk about what they want B players to see and this involves having the right language and care about the message they are delivering. Everything raises emotions and language has a lot to do with them (emotions)”. However, in this research study, we found 3 ways provided by the interviewees that could reduce the distance between the two actors. They are verbal language as communication channel, the openness of virtual space and the openness of physical space.

Physical space is an easy and simple way to allow relations to be built. It is not only that “open space offices allow more visibility from managers to employees” Jose Parada but it can also create the closeness
between the manager and B Players. He also stated the advantage of physical space as: “A dvantages from open space offices is that there will be a major interaction and that there will be a major efficiency in the processes because we are all almost there and it will reduce the waste of time of being alienated from the different processes”. As the role of a manager, it is necessary to understand the B Players in their behaviour and increase the opportunity for processes to happen. Therefore, Agne Andersson thinks that: “At the same time you might think that they could be a little bit afraid. I think they felt I was easy to come and discuss but I don’t know. But of course they had the possibility when I sitting down, I tried to sit down with different people so they can say I would like to come to your office and discuss”. Finally, the company structure is the other way to consider in a hierarchy organization while it needs more flexibility, said by Björn Bjerke: “Hierarchy should involve flexibility”.

The openness of virtual space refers to the processes happening between manager and B Players. The more open this space is, the more processes can be created. As a manager, Jose Parada understands the benefit that an open space can bring to the relationship building. He said: “I think that the open space promotes the scenario to have a more open and easy going relationship between the people that work in that area”. It is not only about the space but also about the attitude of a manager to show his/her willingness as Jimmy Guiracha: “From my side it is very good if you work together with your employees you become closer to them and then you learn how they work and how they act, and you can see in the future what can they deliver to your company”.

Finally, using verbal language as a communication channel can create the closeness between the top manager and B Players. It is the opportunity that they can interact to each other through verbal communication. Meeting is one of the ways to let the process happen. Jose Parada stated: “The most basic one which are periodically established meetings and in case of unexpected situations we have to option to make or call for a meeting in order to attend to that particular situation”. However, verbal communication requires language which is needed to differ the formal and informal way. The awareness of language in use is said by Mike Abbe: “The difficulties are language. That is the main problem they (employees) lose more than what they have to get”.

The research has gone through the B Players’ situation inside the firm and also the impediments that limit the relationship between them and top managers. These impediments are shown as the closeness of the space, the role of mid-manager/supervisor and culture aspects. However, the study
showed the willingness of top managers to create relationship with B Players and their openness to be approached by them. As a result, the solutions in openness of the space, verbal language as communication are the ways to reduce to distance between the top managers and B Players.

3. Question 2: How to improve performance of B players through Emotional Intelligence

One of the main reasons that drove us to think about B players was the opportunity that firms might gain if they uncover and potentially use their (B players) capabilities. Being a great percentage of company’s staff (assumed to be 70% of general personnel inside any organization) any influence that a manager creates over their B players would subsequently have an effect over the general performance of the organization (a general 70%). A manager should first set up the result or changes he wants to have at the organization, after this he or she should positively start influencing to his or her B players by approaching them, having more frequent communication and by using emotional intelligence as a tool he or she might be sharper, touch people’s needs and work towards their personal fulfilment. One should consider that one of the requirements that allow this situation to happen is that managers have to mean what they say as well as feel identified with what they do. In other words, they should make sense of their position as leaders inside the organization and give sense of their reality to their followers and tell them where they wants them to go. People are able to identify the meaning behind things and meaning emanating from manager has to be honest and truly meant.

In order to answer our second question, we will present a general discussion of the findings from interviews and talks in regards to the contexts of interaction, sensegiving and sensemaking, leadership, emotional intelligence and competitive advantage by interrelating them into three main ideas.

Interaction: sensemaking and sensegiving through communication

Assumptions under the interaction context are 1. Interaction happens through communication and 2. Top managers have a general openness towards relationship building. After interviewing and having talk to our targets, we have found that processes effectively happen between both actors through any communication channel. Verbal, face to face communication or telephone calls, written,
physical posters or adds inside the organization and electronically, e-mails or online blogs were the findings. Permanent visibility over employees is highly important for Top managers. That allows them to have a closer relation with their employees and at the same time, let them supervise the work they have to do. In regards to the second assumption, we found that some of them do have a general openness at creating work relationships with their employees but do not find any use at having a closer work relationship with all of their staff members. Even if managers are open to receive any employee, they do prefer them to follow the hierarchical structure when any issue arises. Mid managers are placed in those positions to be able to handle any particular situation. In small organizations, interaction is easier and more meaningful. In bigger organizations, interaction among every staff member and their Top managers become harder since physical distance barriers exist; nevertheless, we found that other mediums to have permanent contact with the employees are electronically resources, sending email and feeding online blogs where Top managers can exchange their thoughts and get in touch with their employees with no need to be face to face. Agne Andersson added in the interview when talking about how to be visible to the staff under his responsibility even if it was hard to have personal contact with each of them “I was once on TV, I was sitting and I was given questions and I had to prepare” This is another way to approach employees. Another interesting finding was the regular meetings with all staff members. This provides a space for staff members to dedicate time and interact with each other. “Yes, the most basic one which are periodically established meetings and in case of a unexpected situation we have the option to make or call for a meeting in order to attend to that particular situation” words by Jose Parada, one of our interviewed targets; additionally, Anders Wikman, another interviewed top manager mentioned “We have annual talk with everyone in small group. We called it development talk where they can exchange what they have done and expressed how they perceive the boss and vice versa”.

Relating interaction through communication to sensemaking and sensegiving context, 3 main assumptions are subject of discussion: 1. The relation between Top managers and Employees would help to attract followers 2. The management of meaning that a leader has would successfully involve people into the desired organizational process 3. Multi-communicative activities in leadership would support or limit the leader duties. We found that a leader first has to have confidence on himself or herself in order to create good relations with his or her employees. This would facilitate a high quality relationship. Agne Andersson mentioned “To get respect in this type of organization you have to have technical skills for yourself.” In regards to our assumption number two, Stacy Apelt
said “We have a very open door of policy as far as communication goes between management and employees. There are many different tools. We use mainly emails, we use voice mail, we have just general, day to day interaction at locations as well. I think that communication is just strong between employees and myself and my upper management is very open to communicate to each other” in this context the management of meaning from her as a top manager making sense of her position and giving the same sense to her employees is the way that assures involvement of people into organizational processes. “Sensegiving is not just about talking but also about taking actions, the image, performance and the use of symbols” Mikael Lundgren told us in the conversation we had. Björn Bjerke reinforced this when saying “Face to face communication is more personal, nevertheless posters, videos and having an open attitude to respond employees when they approach the manager are important to build relationship”.

“Managers should also practice what they preach. Trust their subordinates and have a clear understanding of the meaning of power and authority. Power is the capacity to influence people and authority is the right of ask to do things” Björn Bjerke added this. And connecting this to the assumption number 2, in practice is achievable. Stacy Apelt confirmed this “I like to observe how they (employees) do things. To watch what they are doing to correct things they are not doing that nice”.

Furthermore, multi communicative activities could be identified inside organizations where our interviewed managers perform. Anders Wikman said “They (employees) are celebrating in Christmas, normally with a small party”, Mike Abbe also said “Sometimes, we eat out and go occasionally but we take all workers together to eat together to make the relationship like better and to know each other and to get the workers more obeying and who comes to say just welcome he can uses his own mentality and all feelings in the work”. Leadership and management of meaning are not reduced only to work-based activities but are also open to other type of activities that communicate the interest from managers to create closer relations with their employees.

Relation based interactions between employers and employees are assumed to be a post modern type of leadership. It does not mean that organizations would lack of measurable and objective goals but in addition to that it means that they would achieve them by using more human contact and interaction between Top managers and Employees under their responsibility. Every activity that happens between Top managers and Employees are created upon personal perspective, this means,
upon individual feelings and emotions at any type of processes and this is the prelude to our next idea under this discussion chapter.

**Use of Emotional Intelligence: the main source of postmodern leadership**

Modern type of leadership has driven people to communicate in a more distant way. This means to use any medium to transfer communication never mind the distance or the lack of personal contact. Under our assumptions, verbal communication is related to a postmodern leadership since it’s oriented to a personal approach to people without any intermediation.

Mike Abbe mentioned in the interview “I try to be with all... I always try to be around and have communication with my workers. Daily, by phone, email, even I call them myself. I call everybody. I call even the cleaner. I call him asking how he is doing. Even in the store, I call everybody. I talk to all of them so I can show them that I am there, that I am around because with this they feel kind of safe. A social rule in Sweden is to have a communication with your workers daily so they can feel comfortable on the work, cause anything can go wrong and you have to be daily there around and show them I can help you out, you can make quick decisions, you can find a solution. They need kind of this safe”. And this closeness, as he said, brings security and a feeling of trust and reliability to employees.

Relating leadership to Emotional Intelligence (EI) we created the following assumptions 1. EI has influence over relationships 2. It is a tool to fill employee’s personal satisfaction and has a positive effect over their performance and 3. The real advantages of know how to use Emotional Intelligence as a tool for leading an organization are achievable. Findings in regards to them are: First, Mikael Lundgren said “people need to be noticed and feel valued, managers should not alienate them” and it is certainly true. In regards to this, Richard Koehler said “Using Emotional Intelligence in an organisational environment might contribute not only to speaking and participative willingness from employees but also to their basic needs” In practice, Anders Wikman said “And if you are friendly with people in decent way, you know everything”.

One way to fill recognition (being one of basic human needs) could be by “give credits in public, if you are not contented, do that behind closed door” Anders Wikman said in the interview. Discreteness when handling special situations is highly important to give respect to employees and have their respect back. “But if somebody is fired from their position, I think it’s good for people to
have wall here, Agneta Bladh added when referring to closed space office and its benefits at people’s privacy. She added afterwards “I think it is necessary for people to meet me alone, not to show everybody that here I am meeting director. I might take in consideration that you might not want everybody to know you are here. It’s not about me but about people visiting me here”. Maricah Nuutinen, top manager in Finland added to this “Of course the personality of employee affects. I have one employee who is very talkative and he wants to interact more than the others. I believe that it’s important to me to listen and communicate with him, because for him it’s very important to share his thoughts. If I wouldn’t notice this need, it could effect on his work motivation”. To fill employee’s personal satisfaction has real effects over their performance. One can do these activities by having employees closer and by having the sensibility to identify what their needs are.

Certainty and uncertainty are factors that bring security or insecurity to employees and this has to be clarified from Top managers to them. Björn Bjerke said “Top managers should talk about what they want B players to see and this involves having the right languaging and care about the message they are delivering. Everything raises emotions and language has a lot to do with them... One example is the current financial crisis; it is a situation that can raise different feelings from employees towards their job position. Firing people and uncertainty are situations that will surely raise emotions. Boss reads employees and so do they”. One of the uses of Emotional Intelligence is to understand people’s feelings and emotions inside the organization. Top managers could have the opportunity to do so, approach employees and guide them through the accomplishment of what the organization demands. Professor Konstantin said “I have to find to understand how this person is working, thinking and I have to motivate this personal and in order to understand these things you have to go close to this person, you cannot give an order” and that is the real use of Emotional Intelligence in for a postmodern leadership style.

Gaining competitive advantage through the use of Emotional Intelligence
Here we want to connect the use of emotional intelligence to tide work relationships between Top managers and B players and use them to strengthen any organization competitive advantage making it more endurable.

The first assumption that we created for this context is that internal performance in a firm will affect its business competitive advantage: interrelations or lack of them inside the organization would
reinforce the business competitive advantage or make them weaker in front of its challengers. The second one is empowerment of human resources are a strength for the business competitive advantage and third is relying on human resources make the firm’s competitive advantage weak when facing competitors. As it was presented on the theoretical part of this thesis, companies can reinforce their competitive advantage by strengthening work relations internally and gain with time a defensive position against their competitors. Jimmy Guiracha said “To build up your company, you have to know how your employees are doing for your company. This is for me, very important to know exactly. If they are lazy or if they check their e-mail all the time, you know, do something for your company”. Constant follow up from Top managers at employees to assure the right performance implies to have a closer relation between them in order to be visible to each other and correct when it is needed.

Trust is the way that Top managers use to let their employees perform by themselves once they know that they can do by themselves and will cope with their demanded tasks. Nevertheless, relying completely in human resources, meaning, letting them alone all time could be a mistake. Jimmy Guiracha said “You know in big companies, their workers are like when the owner is there they become like more active, but like when the cat is not home, the rats are very happy” and no harm will be done at any of both sides if a constant control and visibility over employees is kept.

“B players can have potential solutions and innovations for the organization” said Mikael Lundgren. The empowerment that a manager gives to them would be the tool to take out that knowledge that will surely give ideas and opportunities to the organization to improve internally and gain a better position when facing industry. It is very important to keep B players inside organizations. They are the permanent helpers inside companies, have great knowledge and just as it was stated before: they will be of great help when times of crisis come. Anders Wikman added “On the other way, to lose memory completely that is disaster. So I want to have some sort of continuance with the values, experience of the company” and this is directly linked to B players, the loyal and experienced staff members of the organization.

Emotional Intelligence is the key factor to use when communicating and approaching employees. The way manager talks to employees, recognize them, notice them and communicate the value their
work has inside the organization is certainly a way to motivate them to have more feeling of belonging at the company and when this happens, their performance can always be better.
Chapter 5: Conclusions

The study has gone through the 2 research questions which are how to reduce the distance between top managers and B Players and how to improve performance of B players through emotional intelligence. During the research, we have gained valuable data to support and enforce our study.

How to reduce the space between B players and Top managers?
The first question has been discussed through the processes that happen within the space between the top managers and B Players. We have considered the aspects of intercultural context, communication, sensegiving and sensemaking and leadership in managerial positions. Those aspects and empirical data supports us to identify the research problem which is that of B Players are hidden and unused talents inside firms. Moreover, we can also locate the impediments that limit the relationship building between the two main actors. Those impediments are not the border to separate the two actors but they showed the awareness and limits of top managers when they want to create a relation. However, interviewees expressed their positive attitude to open processes with B Players which can create the work relationship. It is the key point as a root to help two actors to be closer. As a result for the first research question, we answered it by providing solutions that might create processes happening between top managers and B Players through the openness of space (both in physical and virtual) and using verbal as the main communication channel and as it could be appreciated in the surveys results, employees have 100% willingness to create better work relationships with their Top managers.

This research does not want to ignore the role of mid-manager in the organization structure but we would like to create more processes happening between top managers and B Players together with them (mid-managers). These processes might only happen in flat organization where hierarchy system does not exist. Furthermore, open spaces can create more visibility and interaction between two actors. Communication channel is the element that shortens distances. It is the medium to deliver message between top managers and B players.

The solution for B Players can help top manager strengthening company workforce. As it is discussed above, the implementation of flat organization, open space and verbal communication
provides a model that supports top managers to empower B Players. This solution can be applied in medium-sized firm where the company structure and hierarchy is not complex.

The role of B Players inside the firm needs to be acknowledged by the top managers. From which they can focus and use the appropriate way to approach them. Therefore we came up with the second research question that will help top managers to strengthen the workforce and create better performance from B Players.

How to use Emotional Intelligence looking for an improvement of B players’ performance?

The job to recognize people’s performance and to see what kind of work they want to do, where their passions lie, what skills they want to develop is something that managers should not leave to human resources. Mentoring is personal; therefore Top managers should do it directly to their B players. We want to emphasize that extra attention must be given out judiciously, without the aim of manipulating people.

One of the aspects to manage successfully in leadership is trust. Some interviewees highly emphasized the value of trust with their employees. It is a motivation factor for employees when they feel being confident and responsible for themselves. The principle of creating inter-relations inside organizations work upon this principle from both sides, respecting the limits and contexts where they: B players - (employees) and Top managers are interacting and coping with the minimum expected. This would be on the one hand a situation where people would have a good relation, good treatment but no desire or commitment to the task or job. On the other hand it can also raise the emotion of being trusted and then people tend to exceed the demanded to prove their abilities. However, relying completely in employees for the work is a disaster when the manager cannot supervise or follow with what they have done. Trust can bring two negative aspects. If a person does not perform well or doing his job in a wrong direction then the work will be corrupted. If a person complete its task and remain being trusted for everything he or she has done with no further instruction or demand, he or she becomes a B Player. Therefore, in order to create a better performance, manager should have trust in their employees and not forget about have a follow up with the work as a basic role of supervisor.
Finally, why to reinforce business competitive advantage by strengthening work relations internally?
With our thesis research work we do not want to say that companies can build a competitive advantage against their challengers or competitors but we want to give the message that firms can reinforce their already achieved competitive advantage or reinforce their internal structure by improving their work relations with their staff members (particularly B players). This will provide them with a solid and durable defence against any attack from competitors, which, in other words, is defensive strategy as a way to gain competitive advantage. “The importance of an intangible interrelationship for competition can only be truly understood by identifying specific ways in which know-how can be transferred so as to make a difference. The mere hope that one business unit might learn something useful from another is frequently a hope not realized” (Porter 1985 pp 352).

Putting effort to create work relationships inside the organization should not turn aside leaders from their main target which is cope with the entity social and economic objective: to trade services and goods with high quality standards. And this is a prerequisite to have a suitable scenario for Top managers to nurture B players through emotional intelligence. The creation of a clear view for the future of the organization combined with equity inside the organization such as that every type of employee (A, B and C) would get benefited from those interrelationships. By achieving this, there will be no limitations for autonomy and respect from employees towards the organization, Top managers neither to the quality of their performance.

One possible situation when empowering B players is that Top managers might feel they should not invest in employees any longer because they would leave the firm at some time anyway; nevertheless investing energy and resources to increase activities that highlight their performance and give them proper recognition inside the organization will have another type of return over the investment which is to have stability in the internal operations of the organization in the long term. Alienation of employees by ignoring them might have a strong effect in lowering work productivity of approximately 70% of firm’s staff if they are not recognized in the long run. "One of the things we find is that if you ignore [B players] long enough, they begin to see themselves as low performers," Martha Lagace cited DeLong 2003. Co-mentoring is an indirect task that B players do. Since they play the role of indirect managers due to their experience and stability inside organizations, they are co-mentors as well as take responsibility for their own and others careers. “Reciprocal mentoring is
not only advantageous to their careers, but it also builds up fundamental team skills among professionals, many of whom are not natural team players” DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008)

Finally, one has to take into consideration both: corporate and national culture context where the hierarchical structure is based to analyze and identify the side effects that a closer relationship would have and how far it can go. Thus, by getting closer to employees, increasing verbal communicative activities and influencing their performance with Emotional Intelligence would help the organization to get a better defensive position against competitor’s attacks, and this in other words, is to strengthen the firm’s overall competitive advantage.

This research study only focused on B Players as an in-active actor within the firm. It might seem to limit the capabilities of A and C Players and their contribution to the company. We recommend keeping a permanent study with emotional intelligence for A, C players as well as the one for B players is being carried. A Players can be studied in how to manage and fulfil their demands and satisfy their ambitious to keep the talents inside the firm. C Players can be addressed through motivation and solvable tasks. However a deep study with the concept of Space in organization environment could also bring the opportunity to discover another angle inside a firm. Furthermore, we do not bring a particular or specific model of dialogue or behaviour for both actors in our thesis research. Since we are oriented to a global management we want to raise new research questions or interest from managers regarding multicultural needs.
Works cited


Dorsey P, 2009, 'Strata and sound: the Adhan as an urban operating procedure', Holy Urbanism, MONU magazine, Netherlands, No 10, pp. 42


Goleman D, 1995, 'Emotional Intelligence and Working with Emotional Intelligence', Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, Britain


Herzberg F, 1993, 'The motivation to work', Transaction, New Brunswick, New Jersey

Hofstede G, Geert Hofstede’s Homepage, 'A summary of my ideas about national cultural differences, Geert Hofstede, viewed 12th April, <http://stuwwww.uvt.nl/~csmeets/PAGE3.HTM>


List of index

Number 1: Format for Interview to Managers ........................................................................................ 1
Number 2: Format for Survey to Employees .......................................................................................... 3
Number 3: Typed talk with Mikael Lundgren ....................................................................................... 6
Number 4: Typed talk with Björn Bjerke ................................................................................................. 8
Number 5: Typed talk with Richard Koehler .......................................................................................... 10
Number 6: Typed interview with Jimmy Guiracha ................................................................................. 12
Number 7: Typed interview with Mike Abbe ........................................................................................ 20
Number 8: Typed interview with Jose Parada ....................................................................................... 25
Number 9: Typed interview with Stacy Apelt ....................................................................................... 31
Number 10: Typed interview with Maricah Nuutinen ........................................................................... 35
Number 11: Typed interview with Agneta Bladh ............................................................................... 39
Number 12: Typed interview with Agne Andersson .............................................................................. 46
Number 13: Typed interview with Anders Wikman .............................................................................. 51
Number 14: Typed interview with Konstantin Lampou ....................................................................... 61
Number 15: Surveys .............................................................................................................................. Error! Bookmark not defined.
Number 1:

Interview to Managers for the Master Thesis research in Leadership and Management in International Context
Baltic Business School – University of Kalmar Sweden

Name:
Company name:
Type of organisation: Private ( ) Public ( ) NGO ( )
Number of employees under your responsibility:

First context: Space

Corporate space could be defined as an empty area where top managers and employees interact, delimited by the organizational environment and infrastructural facilities of the firm.

1. What meaning does the notion of space evoke in your mind regarding your company/organization? And how would you describe it?
2. Are the sizes of offices important? How important?
3. Is the space distance between offices important?
There are two types of offices that we have identified inside an organizational environment. One is the open space office which allows employees and Top managers to have a permanent visibility to the outside and inside of it; the other is a more private type of office which restricts both sides visibility.
4. With these two pre definitions, how would you describe your office facilities?
5. If it is an open space one, do you like to be visible to your employees? Why?
6. Do you like to have visibility over your employees? Why?
7. In the case it is a more private type of space, how would you feel working in an open space office?
8. Would you like to be visible to your employees? Why?
9. Would you like to have visibility over your employees? Why?
10. What is your opinion about personal space?
11. How necessary it is for you and for your employees?

Second context: Relationship between TOP MANAGER and employees

The next part of the interview is oriented to identify the type of relations that exist between employees and managers inside the organisation. Every type of interaction between them could be addressed as relationship building processes.

12. Are there relationship building processes inside the organizational space?
13. When yes, how are they created and manifested?
14. Coming back to the concept of open space office, does it appeal to have disadvantages/ advantages for relationship building processes? Why?
15. Does it appeal to facilitate/ block relationship building processes to you? Why?
16. With whose employees do you keep communication activities happening more often? Why?
17. What sort of communication channels do you use to deliver information to your employees?
18. Finally, do employees present their opinions/ ideas, and how?

Thanks a lot for your time and answers.

Interview prepared by Pham Minh Duc and Vilma Lorena Parada
Number 2:

Survey to employees for the Master Thesis research in
Leadership and Management in International Context
Baltic Business School – University of Kalmar Sweden

The following survey aims to collect important data from employees for our thesis research. Our focus is the relationship that exists and can be improved between Top managers and employees. Your opinion regarding this topic will be of high importance for our research study.

We appreciate your help and invite you to fill out the following questions:

Personal Information

1. Please fill in your age:
   18 – 30  31 – 45  45 – 60
   Over 60

2. Gender:  Male    Female

3. Type of organization:
   Private    Public    NGOs    Others

4. For how long have you been working at this firm?
   1 – 5 Years ______  10 – 20 Years ______
   5 – 10 Years ______ More than 20 Years______
5. According to your current experience, which of the following options suits to your working style?: You can tick as many as needed

- Risk Oriented
- Fulfil the demanded tasks
- Challenge seeker
- Exceed demanded tasks
- Like to help co-workers
- Work independently

Relationship with authority

6. Do you need to report to a higher managerial position other than your direct manager/ supervisor?

Yes   No

6a. When yes, how often is that? When no, go to question No 10

- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

7. How often do you have company meetings with the TOP MANAGER?

- Once a month
- Once a quarter
- Once a year
- Never

8. Do you think it is a necessary activity?

Yes   No

9. You come to and/ or communicate with the TOP MANAGER because:

- My job requires constant contact with him/ her
- I am asked to come
- I like to do it when I need advise
- I don’t have/ need to
- Others...


[4]
Perception of relationship with authority

10. Would you be willing to have a better/more frequent communication contact with the TOP MANAGER of the company?

Yes   No

11. Which of the following ideas would provide spaces on which a better communicative contact with the TOP MANAGER can be created?

- Regularly business meetings
- Regularly informal meetings
- More time availability from the TOP MANAGER to get to know each other
- Have easily accessible offices
- Other: .................................................................

12. How important it is for you to have communicative contact with the TOP MANAGER of the company?

No important   Important   Very important

13. Please tick the reasons for the importance you just selected?

- Career development
- Confirm that my effort is valued
- Personal ideas would be taken into consideration and/or action
- Get direct approval
- Receive instructions from first hand
- Others ...........................................................................................

Thanks a lot for your answers and time
Number 3:

**TALK WITH MIKAEL LUNDGREN**

**Method:** Face to face talk

**Personal background**

Mikael Lundgren is assistant professor at the University of Kalmar, Sweden. He has education in marketing, Master of Science from University of Kalmar major in international management and a PhD in Business Administration from Gothenburg University, major in organization theory and strategy. His main research interests are organization theory, leadership, strategy and business ethics.

Mikael has been working at the University of Kalmar since 1996 as a PhD-student and as a teacher of students in all levels. He works also with a number of companies and public organizations in Sweden

**Talk data**

We start the conversation by introducing our thesis object of study, the two main actors and the corporate environment where they make sense. After these, Mikael Lundgren starts by giving us his understanding of the topic and recommendations for our further research. Those comments will be presented in bullet points in the following lines:

- You should decide whether you will focus in Top managers or in Top managers. Both are situated in different hierarchy level of the company and according to it you will find the need of making a TOP MANAGER approaching to his/her employees or not.
- Sensemaking would be the scenario where a TOP MANAGER should understand how B players behave, their context, how and why they can contribute to the organization and also from being open to B players ideas and understand them correctly.
- People need to be noticed and feel valued. Managers should not alienate them.
• Managers should give credit to their (B players) work.

• Sensegiving is not just about talking but also about taking actions, the image, performance and the use of symbols in the leader performance.

• B players can have solutions and innovations.

• Sensemaking for B players would be to make sense of themselves. To understand their own importance, behaviour and differences within employees. Managers are responsible to define their (employees) reality. They see things as the leader wants them to see and understand.
Number 4:

**TALK WITH BJÖRN BJERKE**

**Method:** Face to face talk

**Personal background**

Björn Bjerke is professor of entrepreneurship and small business at Stockholm University since 1990. He is visiting professor of entrepreneurship at Högskolan i Kalmar since 2007. He has more than 30 years of academic experience.

**Interview data**

We start the conversation by introducing the concept of space where our thesis object of study makes sense. After this, he starts by giving us the ideas that come to his mind in relation to our research study. We will present them in bullet points along the following lines:

- Instead of calling it virtual space, I would rather name it mental space, brain sensitivity to external influences
- Regarding Sensegiving context, I see it as language and languaging in the leader performance, those are of high importance for any manager when talking to his staff members and guiding them to do certain activities. Language is taken for granted. Top managers should talk about what they want B players to see and this involves having the right languaging and care about the message they are delivering. Everything raises emotions and language has a lot to do with them (emotions).
- One example is the current financial crisis; it is a situation that can raise different feelings from employees towards their job position. Firing people and uncertainty are situations that will surely raise emotions. Boss reads employees and so do they.
- Face to face communication is more personal; nevertheless posters, videos and having an open attitude to respond to employees when they approach the manager are important to build relationship.
• Managers should also practice what they preach. Trust their subordinates and have a clear understanding of the meaning of power and authority. Power is the capacity to influence people and authority is the right of ask to do things.
• The use of power varies according to authority, culture and nationality (what society it is and what part of the world is that where people are displaying power). It is very important not to forget that fundamental values and beliefs influence behaviour. People certainly act the same but think differently.
• Employee’s identity and familiarity with organizational symbols are very important. Thus, having symbols representing leaders are important to create identity from employees at leaders.
• Top managers/Managers should also involve everyone in meetings. Managers should consider how much time they spend in meetings and also how they extend and delegate the communicative responsibility to others.
• Hierarchy should involve flexibility. Hierarchy does not mean to block communication and interaction.
Number 5:

TALK WITH RICHARD KOEHLER

Method: Face to face

Personal background

Richard Koehler is the program director and lecturer at the Baltic Sea Management Academy, University of Gotland. He comes from United States of America and has wide experience in teaching across United States of America, Mexico, Finland and Sweden. As to his business background, he has great experience in regards to management, trade and project management at organizations across United States, Malaysia, Norway and Latin America.

Interview data

We start the talk by introducing our thesis purpose in order to let him have a pre-understanding of our research object and the contexts where it makes sense. Afterwards we start by asking his thoughts about our two main actors: B players and Top managers.

These are his answers:

- When you talk about B players, it is not about a wasted potential of human capital but a not being used potential.
- Closeness from Top managers to their staff members can have two sides effect over employee’s emotions. On the one hand its positive since it can encourage and empower them to have a better performance and therefore, get better achievements in their duties; on the other hand, it might have negative consequences since (due to the culture) people might feel fear or could get stressed from having their superiors closer and knowing they are being observed.
- Constant communication can always get a close relationship between both parties.
• One has to take into consideration both: corporate and national culture context where the hierarchical structure is based to study and analyse the side effects that a closer relationship would have.

• There is not a perfect model of dialogue that can build relations and/or improve communication processes. It all depends on the cultural context.

• Using Emotional Intelligence in an organisational environment might contribute not only to speaking and participative willingness from employees but also to their basic human needs.
INTERVIEW WITH JIMMY GUIRACHA

Method: Face to face interview

Jimmy Guiracha is the owner and TOP MANAGER of Top Street Wear in Stockholm, Sweden. He was born in Thailand.

Company background

The company name is Tops Street Wear and has been in the Swedish market for more than 15 years. The company is dedicated to cloth and accessories trading. The firm operations are developed through physical store shops and online store.

They firm have 15 employees across the departments of warehousing, e-business and shop assistance.

Interview data

S: Student    I: Interviewee

S: Good morning, we would like you to please introduce yourself, your company name and the activities you do in general.

I: My name is Jimmy Guiracha, our company name is Top Street Wear and we are doing internet business and store business, for clothing, hip hop clothing.

S: Ok, how many people are in the company?

I: Our Company is based on about 15 employees

S: Is this the area where you work?
I: Yes, this is the area where we work. We have the offices here and then we have the warehouse downstairs and we do have a store, a shop in the town.

S: Do you have the office here or you are chairman of this place?

I: No, I am working here; I am sitting here, but am going sometimes down to the warehouse or to the store.

S: Do you have your office together with your employees or do you have your own office?

I: I am sitting working with them.

S: Okay. Corporate space where top managers and employees interact could be defined as an empty area that is usually composed by the employees, the infrastructure, the office artefacts, managers and people. When we talk about space in this sense, what does it evoke in your mind? What do you think about space?

I: It is the place I am here.

S: Okay, and if you relate it to your company environment, what type of space do you think you have between you and your employees?

I: For me, I have a good space with my employees. We are doing a good job together; we work by team and most my employees are handling by themselves. They know what to do.

S: You don't need to give them instructions every day.

I: Sometimes. I have the manager of this company who is doing this job, he gives them what they need to do. I am the owner but I have managers running the company.

S: Okay, now that you said that you work together with your employees, why is that? Is it important to you that you are close to them? Or, why do you work close to them?

I: You know, from my side it is very good if you work together with your employees. You become closer to them and then you learn how they work and how they act, and you can see in the future what they can deliver to your company, you know, if you work and you don't see your employees you never know how they work.
S: Why do you think it is necessary to know about that?

I: To build up your company, you have to know how your employees are doing for your company. This is for me, very important to know exactly. You don’t know exactly but you know how they work. If they are lazy or if they check their email all the time, you know, to do something for your company. So you know, it is talking about what to expect. You know in big companies their workers are like when the owner is there they become like more active, but when the cat is not home, the rats are very happy.

S: Okay. Now that you say that, do you have open space offices in your company? Open space like accessible/visible everyone with everyone?

I: This company just built up, the offices are like this. I am doing all the store business, not the internet business and then it is very difficult for me to explain everything about offices and workers. Normally I am working in the shops you know, like I have one shop and bring my stuff, put it in the shop and sell it. And after that we see if it is possible that many people ask about, do you have a website? you have customers coming to the shop asking it so many times, and just two years ago I started open up the website company, I mean the website.

S: Is it like a virtual store online?

I: Yes, the beginning from the store. We have the store that I told you that has been there for more than 15 years, and the store, you know in the past 5 years the internet has become more popular.

S: Yeah that is true. How do you see the virtual store on the internet? Do you see it easy to control and manage?

I: Yes that is what I am trying to do know. To compare they are totally different stores. With the store and internet is totally different. Store is much easier you know

S: In the virtual store, how do you control, who is in the administration? are the ones who control the store different people?
I: Yes of course. But you know, everybody is working under me, you know in the store I have one store chief, and then what is going on we discuss with her and then we give the instructions of how to do for the store and when I come here I have sometimes meetings with my employees.

S: Alright, this is then you have a chief in the store and she is the one who handles it and under her there are some other employees

I: Yeah we have four sellers

S: And do you talk to them?

I: Yeah sometimes I say hello and these things

S: And do you know well about them?

I: Well we know about them but you know not very deep

S: Not as close as people working here

I: I think it is the same; we don’t talk to them too much. We are just working

S: Okay, it is more in a working life

I: Yeah

S: Okay, now that you approach to your employees. What do you think about the importance of personal space between you and your employees? How important it is to have a personal space inside the firm for each part?

I: You mean people who are working here? Well I think for me it is okay, they are doing good

S: Okay, but here for example, you are working close, you are walking around and seeing how they work how the perform and all, do you think that it is important for them to have a personal space just to leave them working by themselves, or do you think that working inside the company environment it is not really important?

I: These are two things you know and depend on employees. How they work, how their responsibility is, if they are good in that point I don’t think you need a lot of time to stay with them. And then some employees do not know what to do today and then you have to talk to
them all the time and keep them. We have different employees here. Some of them are good, they have big responsibilities for the company and you don’t need to tell them so many things. But some of them you need to all the time explain and give them the instructions of how to do today and then you have to see what they deliver for your company. What did they do today? You know, every employee has a different position you know, okay now we say example, now we need to do a photo, you know, take the picture, upload the file and all this things. How far it takes, how long? Is he ready or not? You have to control it.

S: This is an interesting part you say about the people who work very well its more individually than when they do not they need more instruction

I: Yeah we have that, and in our company I can see it that we have it.

S: Okay, so this means you have a more close relationship, defining it in some way, to the employees who you are working with, who you have to pull actually, to push to ask them to work better.

I: Yes

S: So it means that you have closer relationships (if you are talking more often to them) to the type of employees who need more help and that it is a closer relationship than the one you have with your employees who are independent.

I: This is not the point. About have a close relationship with them. This is just work, this is talking about work

S: Yes, work relationship, that’s the definition, more interaction

I: Yes, I have it more with the people who need more time. The ones I have to talk to hem. But still even people who have can do the job by themselves we have a good report, we have to join it, they have to make me questions about if this is good, you know all the time before we finish some work

S: Okay, now that we get here, would you think that, when you pay more attention to the employees who need more help would you agree, disagree or what is your opinion if you think that if you pay more attention to the ones who
are doing well, would you think that if you encourage them a little bit more they would give their best, even more than what they give? What are your thoughts?

I: Oh well, this is difficult to answer by the way. But you know, people are different, this is the point, people are different, some are good and some slowly but that what you asking me I don’t know if giving them better would make them give better. We have like 10 workers and its not the same thing. People working are different. Some are very good some are you know.

S: And do you see that you need different ways to approach them or do you need to act the same way to communicate with them

I: Yeah, sometimes we need to be the same way to communicate with them.

S: What type of communication channels do you use to communicate and deliver information to your staff members? Which type of communication channels do you use?

I: Talk mostly. We have meetings and then talk to them

S: And how often do you have meetings in the company?

I: Actually every day.

S: With all employees?

I: No maybe just one person who is the manager.

S: Okay how about the meeting with all employees

I: Actually they have one at least one time a week. And when I am not here sometimes the manager does it.

S: Alright, and do you use other communication channels? For example email or telephone?

I: Telephone sometimes and emails. They are less than talking because I am always here and available all the time and its better talking. But that is what am telling you, am the owner, but I
am not the one who manages all the system. I am doing the behind. There is one layer, mine, the one who is talking what is going on, you are under cover you are not doing a good job.

S: Do you think that you would understand the company more if you talk to the employees than to the manager?

I: This is you know, you have 15 employees, how do you talk to all of them? you have to talk to your manager and then he would report you what has to been done what is good or not.

S: So you put all the trust on him

I: Yes, most of the time. My way of doing is that I talk to the manager.

S: Is it possible to the other employees to come to you and just say something about their ideas?

I: Sometimes they do, bust mostly they go to their managers

S: Can you tell me why you think that it is better to talk with the manager rather than to the employees?

I: The time you talk to one person and you talk to 10 persons. So you better talk to one person instead of talking to the 15 persons, so he is doing work for you, and he is going to talk to his under 10 employees, I do not have to do that all the time. I think it is unnecessary and takes too much work for me to talk to many employees all the time

S: Are the employees allowed to give their opinions and ideas?

I: Yes of course they are.

S: How do they give their opinions and ideas?

We have meetings and they come when they have ideas, sometimes employees are much better than me, sometimes they give you better ideas you are who makes decisions, they give you ideas you take decisions to do it or not.

S: How about the time outside meetings, is it possible for them to come and just talk to you to contribute their ideas?
I: Yes for sure, they can do and come to me and you know, sometimes come to the manager, and sometimes you know if they don’t go the manager they come to me also.

If you are very interested to asking how the process you should interview the manager how they process and how they do.

S: Yes, that would be very good

I: Yes you can interview Mike, he can give you more you know, explain. Sometimes they go and invite employees for dinner

S: Yeah, and how about you? Do you go?

I: Sometimes I am going but sometimes I am busy. They do understand that I have kids to take care

S: Alright, but do you have employees and even managers who are friends with you even in your private life?

I: Yeah, we have, the manager. But not much, I am not going out you know, and this is the point, After work I go home to stay with my kids and I travel a lot so we have to travel to import.

Okay, there he is coming.

The manager arrives to the office where we are and we start interviewing him (Index No 7)
INTERVIEW WITH MIKE ABBE

Method: Face to face

Mike Abbe is the general manager of Top Street Wear. He has worked in clothes business for more than 15 years. Business relationship with the company started 10 years ago and he has been the manager of the organization for 4 years up to date. He comes from Kings Saudi Arabia and has established himself in Sweden.

Company background

The company name is Tops Street Wear and has been in the Swedish market for more than 15 years. The company is dedicated to cloth and accessories trading. The firm operations are developed through physical store shops and online store.

They firm have 15 employees across the departments of warehousing, e-business and shop assistance.

Interview data

S: Student I: Interviewee

S: We start by introducing ourselves, our master program and our thesis research object (the relations between Top managers/managers and employees inside organizational space) A fter these, he starts by telling us what our thesis research object evokes to his mind:

I: That is an easy question and has an easy answer. I am the same person outside and inside with my workers. So the same Jimmy the owner, he is the same person, we never behave kind of to show off that we are the boss or something like that, he can just be there and as long as everybody respects his work and his position so the respect would be between us. As long as we
see the person like is not doing the way we want, we would have to show off our position. And I have to use what I have the opportunity to use. But normally we don’t have any communication like outside friendly, because we are not doing that. Sometimes we eat out and go occasionally, but we take all workers together to eat together to make the relationship like better and to know each other and to get the workers more obeying, just to say welcome and where he can use his own mentality and all feelings in work. We try to get close as the boss. As long as he is doing his work that is how we see if he is doing his work. If he’s coming late, not serious, not taking care about what he has to do then we would have to be sorry, to show why I am here. As long as he gives respect himself we will respect that.

S: So, if I get it rightly, you usually behave like in a very informal way to your employees

I: Yes

S: When it comes to be more pay more attention to special cases, to people who are not giving their minimum then you have to start being more in a more formal way to make them accomplish their tasks

I: Yes, that way is right

S: How many people do you talk about, responsibility over?

I: You mean my workers?

S: Yes, how many people are you taking care about? Approximately

I: I am taking care about the whole company. I mean the whole store and here. We are 15

S: Okay, with whom do you keep contact more oftenly? Is it with all at the same time?

I: I try to be with all. Now I do focus more in the online stores. It is bigger and more things are going when comparing it to the store where there is nothing special. But as soon as we realize that there is something not right, something wrong that we get from the customer we try to be on the place. I always try to be around and have communication with my workers. Daily, by phone, email, even I call them myself. Yeah I call everybody. I call even the cleaner I call him asking how is he doing. I call everybody. Even the store, I call everybody. I talk to all of them so
I can show them that I am there am around cause with this they feel kind of safe, even on asking if it is good that I called because I understand somebody gives me back up, you know that is something where I’ve been working before. I understand I need kind of back up and if I didn’t talk to him kind of 2 or 3 4 days even they are standing alone people listen, they are like kids, even if they are 40 or 60 years old, you have to show them that you are there, some people don’t even need it and they can do things as usual you know but I mean, 90 to 95%, even the social rule in Sweden is to have a communication with your workers daily so they can feel comfortable on the work, cause anything can go wrong so they cannot take a decision, so you have to be daily there around and show them Oh yeah I am here around don’t worry we having something going on, I can help you out, you can make quick decisions, you can find a solution. They need kind of this safe, but everyone knows what they are doing. They have a daily communication phone call, face or meeting quickly asking whatever is going on, what’s the rule, what I need to deliver or whatever it would be working. By the way, I have stores and what they are doing today what they need to delivery if I am not here I do it by email or by phone

S: Okay, this is from your side to them. How can they approach you, or how do they usually approach you?

I: Well I am always visible; I am still open so they can contact me anytime. I can get phones from cleaners or I can get phones from creative authors there (he appoints to the office next to us where the creative designers are) or I can get from whoever at the store. Everyone can call me anytime; I give them the opportunity because if I don’t give them the opportunity they would all fail and because if they don’t even call you anything can go wrong. Which is like not making a decision or they can make the wrong decision. What I do not like that. It is better that I gotta be there. Phone or email, they can talk to me whatever, so I think they are doing all good. They contact me all the time so I get to know what is happening in this company.

S: Do you think that it will disturb you to take a lot of time and a lot of work?

I: No, never. In the contrary, I would be happy with that. Yeah, because I still have the control that is very important for us, to have control on the work

S: Because you say that it’s like 15 people calling you all the time, doesn’t it disturb you?
I: No they are not calling like yeah, 15 people I understand but they know why they are calling for. If somebody calls me like for bullshit questions I know how to answer him. It should be like serious questions. So as we have been working a lot, everybody knows the rules we are talking about so everybody knows what we are doing, to see the things or not they still got to call. I don’t wanna be like take all their decisions. Because it can be small mistake or it can be big mistakes but we all are just aware that this mistake can happen. We have got Jimmy around as well. Whenever I am travelling he can take decisions or sometimes some of the situations I still go with this decision so we call him and he appreciates it, we have a co decision together. It is not difficult, it is okay.

S: May I ask, are you a multicultural company? Have you had people from different nationalities?

I: Yeah we have

S: Do you find any difficulties to work with multicultural environment?

I: No, definitely not. That is the best way. What’s the good thing here is that when you have people from one country you lose some other things, which are different ideas. We have different people here. Simon is from South Lebanon and he has Arab mentality and he was born here. So he comes with a two ways attitude of doing business which is like, if I have only one Swedish it is never gonna be enough so I have now one guy with two mentalities, two minds, so we understand the ways of thinking and he can think in a Swedish way too. We have Thomas, he is Swedish so sometimes when we make meetings Thomas comes also with the Swedish way and he gives me a good argument so we can agree with him and maybe if I can agree with him and maybe if we need to change it, we change the way to a Swedish way. Now we have Alt, he is from Thailand and he has other ways outside me, Simon and Thomas and sometimes it really works because we have different solutions. He is using the Thailand mentality, how to find the solution for small stuff that we are losing or that we say, no I can’t work this, so he is really good, he is working for the company and I believe that, we believe in union you are part of the company

S: One of the problems within the multicultural companies is how you can communicate with the others and I would say that one of the important things is the personal privacy, because different cultures have different personal privacy. For example, you can talk about something that could make them feel bad and that is the personal space.
Do you see that there is something here in this situation where you need to change your communication style for each of them? To approach to them?

I: Of course and I understand what you are saying now, Alt for example, who is Thai and I know how the way Thai talk together to the work, I use to be chill. It doesn’t matter; people don’t have to be the same system. I want to be the same way to everybody, because usually I understand there are different discussions different people, some of the people are like a low country or they behave kind of nice and you can push them more. I like here all of them- It doesn’t matter where people are from of what they believe I mean religion. And this country has a lot of respect for political and religion. So it is a kind of distance and for sure we have to respect people whichever country they are, what culture they are, which colour they like. I am really careful about that because Swedish has more confidence to deliver his ideas at work while the others have difficulties to deliver them, language, behaviour and attitude. The difficulties are language. Because I know many people from many countries who work at a company and they have difficulties in communication, strong work within Swedish company. They lose more than what they have to get. You know, about the day, about the time, more pressure they have which Swedish can get better and comfortable. And that in case it is important for the owner of the company to get respect and try to understand. We don’t want to look to adapt, you have to look what you can deliver from your side and that is for me on the week and the month, how long you have to continue in this way. Because some people are by themselves, they don’t want to be in the same way, want to be better all the time, and that people we can give them better payment, care about them more and even better position and more opportunities. And people would love that of course. This is what you give, this is what you get.

S: Okay, that is the interview. Thanks a lot for your time and answers.

I: No problem.
Number 8

INTERVIEW WITH JOSE PARADA

Method: Telephone interview

Personal background

Jose Parada is the manager of Punto de Servicios S.A. He has more than 30 years experience in computer business. He has got education along his professional life in general business management, finance and leadership. He comes from Colombia.

Company background

Punto de Servicios S.A. is a firm dedicated to maintenance services for personal computing systems. The firm counts with 30 employees and has been operating for more than 16 years in the technology service industry in Colombia.

Interview data

S: Student    I: Interviewee

S: Good morning. My name is Lorena Parada and I am student at the University of Kalmar at the Baltic Business School of the Master in Leadership and Management in International Context. Duc, my thesis partner and I will make an interview to you regarding our thesis research.

We would like you firstly to introduce yourself and the firm background. What type of organization it is, how many employees are under your responsibility and also about your professional background.

First we can start with your name, the company name and its activities.

I: Alright, my name is Jose Bernardo Parada Aguilar, I am an Electronic Engineer, I work at Punto de Servicios S.A. which is a company dedicated to the delivery of maintenance services to personal computers. I am the general manager and we have 20 years experience in the market as Service Centre for different computer brands. The company count with 30 staff members in the different working areas at the moment.
S: Is it a public, private or non lucrative type of organization?

I: This is a private organization. Here in Colombia we have public, private and non lucrative organizations.

S: For how long have you been a manager?

I: Since 1992. I was the creator of the company and since then the firm has been operating. Since then I have had the general direction.

S: Okay, now, the interview is divided in two contexts. The first one is a context that we call organizational space and the other one is related to the relationships that exist between the Manager and the Employees of a firm. To start with the first context, I am going to give you a general introduction of the topic, and then I will start making you questions about it so you can give me your opinion and what concept have you got from space.

I: Ok, sure

S: Corporate space can be defined as an empty area where managers and employees interact in between. This corporate space is delimited by the organizational environment and by the corporate infrastructure. Now, what meaning does the notion of space evoke to your mind? What ideas come to your mind or to your thoughts when I mention this meaning of space?

I: Related to the company context?

S: Yes

I: I associate it at this moment with the coverage that the company can have with its services. The space we cover with our services.

S: Ok, could you please elaborate a bit more to what space you referring to?

I: I mean, if we associate space with a determined coverage area, I would say that there is a set of all the companies that exist in a region or in a country and that set of companies cover a determined area or space that could be physical territorial or a space related to services or products, that is the coverage that that determined organization is having. In this case, Punto de
Servicios has a coverage that goes to 2 or 3 cities regarding territory and has service coverage to small size companies in terms of personal computing services.

S: Ok, under your opinion, is the space or distance that exists internally in the organization between the working offices important?

I: Yes, it is very important. I think that the flatter and also if there is an association of physical space, the organization that is flat, in the sense that everything is in a same dimension, it will have a better coverage, control and a better management.

S: Okay, are important the sizes of the offices?

I: Yes

S: How important

I: In our case, it is basically related to the employee comfortability, that he/ she has an adequate area where can place its work and personal tools and that it would not cause him/ her any kind of stress by being reduced to a space where he/ she spends great part of daily time.

S: Okay, do you like to be visible to your employees?

I: I do not understand

S: Do you like the fact that your employees can see you daily, I mean, that they have visual contact with you?

I: Yes a lot. I believe it is one of the most important things that we have in this moment: Contact and interaction between employees and manager.

S: Alright, do you like to have visibility over your employees?

I: Totally, yes

S: Okay, what do you think about an open space office? I mean, that there is completely visibility from the inside to the outside and the other way around?
I: I think it is very good from the directive point of view, nevertheless would be necessary to think in an place where the different areas where telephone conversations or other type of activities that are developed in the particular areas would not interfere with it, because into an open space, the greatest difficulty is the interference that the conversation from one person could affect to another because he/she talks lower, louder or because he/she laughs or because there is any situation that might disturb the others.

S: Ok, could you please describe the space in your organizational environment? How are the offices, are they open or close space?

I: They are mixed. We have the administrative, commercial and technical area. Technical area is a completely open space where technicians are repairing computers and there is full visibility of the working areas. Commercial area is an open area in a second floor and the administrative area is a closed space. They are particular offices.

S: Okay. What is your opinion about the concept of Personal Space?

I: Personal space is the area where an individual performs its duties for the company. There he has his son’s picture, his girlfriend’s picture, his personal elements such as family, his note book and his desk organized in the way he feels comfortable.

S: Okay that is the definition you have of personal space and I would also like to know what opinion have you got over it. How necessary it is for you and your employees.

I: No, it is not necessary. It is a situation that might end up in something that invades the company. I mean, if every employee brings its own personal elements and adequate its working area according to his/her criteria we will have conflicts and difficulties. I think that the company must have some general alignments that define the working areas and what is and not permitted inside them, in the way that the employee adjust to such alignments and don’t personalise to extreme those working areas.

S: Ok perfect. Now we will continue with the second context. This context is related to the relation that exists between managers and employees. The following part is oriented to identify the type of relations that exist between both parties. Every type of interaction between managers and employees can be defined as a relationship building
process. In this order of ideas, are there processes or activities inside your company that allow the creation of relationships?

I: Yes, the most basic one which are periodically established meetings and in case of unexpected situations we have the option to make or call for a meeting in order to attend that particular situation.

S: Okay, do you perceive that an open space office provides the necessary tools for the building of relationships and interaction between employees and the manager?

I: I think yes. I have no experience and cannot give an opinion over it but I think that the open space promote the scenario to have a more open and easy going relationship between the people that work in that area, say manager, director or employees who work there. I think that that space promotes that there will be a better interaction.

S: Okay. Under your opinion, does it appeal to you that an open office has advantages or disadvantages?

I: I think it has both. The greatest disadvantage is the lack of privacy, where there are things that have to be handled with high prudence and it would be difficult to manage them in an open area because everyone would acknowledge it and the information from conversations would be accessible to everyone.

Advantages, as we talked before, it is that there will be a major interaction and that there will be a major efficiency in the processes because we all are almost right there and it can help to reduce the waste of time or being alienated from the different processes.

S: Okay, with whose employees do you keep most frequent contact?

I: The most frequent contact is with the technique area because of the profile and because it is the core of our business and there is the major interaction for cases of equipment failures, decision making over a particular reparations and to solve any inquiry to a customer who demands an immediate solution. So this is a business on which the dynamic is really important and on-time solutions are created at all the time.

S: Okay, what type of communication channels do you use to deliver information to your employees?
I: The most frequent is the verbal one, which is diary and dynamic. The formal one is electronic mails. And the other one which has been used less as the time passes is the written one on which we have memorandums, communications, information and documents related to the computers. The most frequent that we use now is the verbal with dairy instructions and electronic email.

S: Okay, finally, do the employees of your firm communicate their opinions and ideas?

I: Yes, with some shyness. I mean, the level of people and their work load make us be a bit apart from generating new ideas and provide in that sense. There are some people who bring ideas to improve the processes and who give solutions to a particular case that we have under discussion.

S: For the case of those employees who do give their ideas and opinions, how do they do? What mediums do they use to deliver those ideas?

I: Normally over the same processes, it means, if they are doing any kind of internal procedure they elaborate the modification/input, present it verbally to their director or directly at me and at that same moment the approbation of such input is given. Afterwards in a meeting with the whole group, that normally takes place on Mondays, that event is socialized, I inform everyone that the idea of one employee we have decided to modify determined process, or even some suggestions from customers make us modify processes or adopt some type of action that would fix failures or improve procedures.

S: Ok, perfect. Here we are finishing the interview. Thanks a lot for your time and answers.

I: Ok my pleasure.
INTERVIEW WITH STACY APELT

Method: Telephone interview

Personal background

Stacy Apelt is the supervisor for Trade Secret Salons. Her profession is cosmetologist and has had several different trainings pertaining to the beauty industry as well as management and legal training through the company. Her duties include overseeing operations of ten salon locations in New York and New Jersey being in charge of controlling payrolls, ensuring stores appearances are up to standard, driving sales, merchandising, recruiting, training, etc. She has been in this position for 3 years and has 90 employees under her responsibility.

Company background

Trade Secret Salons is a division of premier salons. The company is under beauty care business area and has operations across the United States.

Interview data

S: Good afternoon, my name is Lorena, my friend Duc and I we are making a research about the relationships that exist between managers and employees inside any organization. To start with, we would like you to introduce yourself with your company name and also how many employees have you got under your responsibility.

I: Okay, my name is Stacy Apelt, I work for Trade Secret Salons and I have around 90 employees under me

S: Okay, so to start this interview I will explain to you the first context on which our research object makes sense. The relationships they take place in the corporate space, this space could be defined as an empty area where top managers and employees interact. The same corporate space is delimited by the organizational environment and the infrastructure facilities of the firm. When I talk about corporate space, what meaning dies this notion evoke in your mind regarding your company or your organization
I: Corporate space could be really any means that you have to communicate your person, could be the actual building itself or anything that is related to corporate office or you know say in my situation I have different locations so it could be any of those things.

S: Okay, how would you describe those specific locations you are talking about?

I: The main corporate office is pretty much you know all the background where work is done. That is where everyone has their own responsibilities and making the thing work out for cool. The corporate office is pretty where all the people are working on that sort of things and where the people who are actually working in the locations are the people who are kind of you know, the seeds of the company.

S: Would you think that the sizes of the offices are important?

I: Yes, I believe that at some extent the sizes of the offices are important. Because the ensure that you can find your work area and you know things can get done.

S: We have identified two types of offices inside any organizational environment. One is the open space office which allows employees and Top managers to have a permanent visibility to the outside and the inside of this office. And the other type is a more private type of office which restricts both sides visibility. With these two predefinitions of offices, how would you describe your offices. Are they open space or are they more private space?

I: The ones that I work involved directly would be the more open office space. Where we have people actually coming in and out

S: Okay, and do you like to be visible to your employees there?

I: Am I visible to my employees?, yes absolutely

S: And do you like that fact?

I: I do. I think that it is good to have close contact with people whom I am working with

S: And do you like to have visibility over your employees?

I: Absolutely.
S: Okay, why is that?

I: I like to observe you know how they do things, I think that is good to watch what they are doing in order to correct things they are not doing that nice. That’s pretty much the main reason, To see how others are acting with other people that are working with as well.

S: Okay, now we will move to another type of concept, and it is the personal space. And I would like to know what your opinion is about personal space in organizational environment.

I: Pretty much in what I do the only people who have their personal space would be the hairs stylist that work for me and they have you know their own personal like inner saloon station. And I think that that is, you know is good that they have that, they can kind of personalize it, you know to me whatever it makes them happy and keep going to sort of say, am also they have their own responsibilities to keep those areas you know clean and under control, organized.

S: How necessary do you think it is for you and for your employees to have personal space inside the organization?

I: I think that every person in my location would probably like to have their own personal space but it’s just not really feasible where I am.

S: Now we will move to the second part of the interview and the last one. This is a context called the relationship between Top managers and Employees. This part of the interview is oriented to identify the type of relations that exist between employees and managers inside the organization. Every type of interaction between both of them could be addressed or named relationship building processes. So are there relationship building processes inside your organizational space?

I: We actually, in my company we have a very open door of policy as far as communication goes between management and employees. There are different communication tools, we use mainly emails, we use voice mail, we have just general you know day to day interaction at locations as well. I think that communication is just strong between employees and myself and my upper management is very open to communicate to each other.

S: Relating this to the concept of open space office we talked previously. Does it appeal to you to have disadvantages or advantages for relationship building processes?
I: I think that the advantages are that you can actually have like a much closer work relationship with people, unfortunately the disadvantages are that this contact of getting to know people with personal life would be to get to know a little bit too much. And you know, somebody, if you know somebody a little bit too personally sometimes that can be you know a little bit more difficult for you to calm down about certain things that specially you know if they have special things going on in their personal life, so that can be very difficult, to distinguish personal and work, absolutely.

S: Alright and does it appeal to facilitate or block relationship building processes to you, having this open space offices?

I: I think its anything. Its probably the open space is better than having you know close office.

S: Ok with whose employees do you keep communication activities happening more often?

I: I guess I am in constant communication with both people in office and also in my location, I would say that probably more communication between myself and open locations there is the people who I am directly supervising, so I am in touch with them and you know, just to make sure that everything is basically up to speed and all.

S: Ok, what sort of communication channels do you use to deliver information to them?

I: Generally with them is usually you know phone calls or personal

S: Finally, do employees present their opinion or ideas to you and how do they do that

I: Yes they do. They do it very open as communication goes. And a lot of them is verbal some of them just go through emails or voice mails and that sort of things but most of it just goes for communication between one person to another

S: Okay that is all about the interview. Thanks a lot for your answers and time.

I: Okay no problem.
INTERVIEW WITH MARIKA NUUTINEN

Method: Written interview

Personal background

Marika Nuutinen is the Administration Manager of Spitec Oy Company in Finland. Her responsibility is to take care of Human Resources, Marketing, preliminary accounting, account ledgers (purchase and sale) and administration. Her profession is major in leadership and marketing.

Company background

Spitec Oy Company was founded in 2000 in private sector. The company is doing business in importing, retailing and fixing material and technique mostly in B2B business. Spitec Oy has 4 branches and they are all in Finland. They have 15 employees working for them.

Interview data

S: Student I: Interviewee

S: Corporate space where top managers and employees interact could be defined as an empty area usually bounded between employees and managers and delimited by the organizational environment and infrastructural facilities of the firm. What meaning does the notion of space evoke in your mind?

I: Open space, open office.

S: How would you relate it to your company environment?

I: We have open office so we are all working in the same area. Our company has four shops (Helsinki, Tampere, Turku and Seinäjoki) and we don’t separate managers and employees. We work together.
S: Is the space distance between offices important?

I: It depends on a company. But I believe in open work environment and open offices. In my opinion closed offices makes a gap between the managers and employees. If your work demands a private office, than you should have one but we don’t have that kind of need. Some people believe that managers should have their own office and that private offices are seen as a part of their authority. So no, I don’t see that space distance between offices is important.

S: Are the sizes of offices important? How important?

I: No, it’s not important. My duty is to guide my subordinates at their work and I want to be close to them. If I would have my own office I think it should not be too big because it makes the gap between me and my subordinates too big.

S: Do you like to be visible to your employees?

I: Yes, definitely. I’m a manager and my most important job is to guide my subordinates with my leadership behaviour and being with them and working in the same space as them, I can interact with them.

S: What do you think about an open space office?

I: As I have said, open offices are good

S: What is your opinion about personal space?

I: Personal space is very important and everybody should respect that. But the meaning of “personal space” varies in different countries, cultures, companies and even business fields you work in.

I see two personal spaces which I have to notice in our company

- your own working area
the area around you where ever you are. You have to be able to read people and read between the lines what they consider as their personal space.

S: How necessary it is for you and for your employees?

I: In our company, personal space is quite small, which suits us, because we are so close community. But we respect each others personal space. If our company would be bigger I think that the need of personal space would be more important than it is right now. Personal space is necessary but because we are so close community, we don’t guard it like a hawk.

S: The next part of the interview is oriented to identify the type of relations that exist between employees and managers inside the organisation. Every type of interaction between them could be addressed as relationship building processes. Are there relationship building processes inside the organisational space?

I: No

S: How do you perceive an open space office?

I: Open space where people work together so no private offices or work booths. In a open space office the managers and employees work in a same area.

S: Does it appeal to have disadvantages/ advantages to you?

I: It’s definitely advantage.

S: Does it appeal to facilitate/ block relationship building processes to you? Why?

I: It makes it lot more easier because it lowers the gap between the manager and employee and also and we can interact lot easier.

S: With whose employees do you keep communication activities happening more often? Why?
I: I’m not sure if I understand this question right but I assume that you mean if I tend to communicate with certain employees more often and why so?

I think I communicate coequally with all my employees. Of course if we have some special project going on, I may have to communicate more with some employee more than with the others. Of course the personality of employee effects. I have one employee who is very talkative and he wants to interact more than the others. I believe that it’s important to me to listen and communicate with him, because for him it’s very important to share his thoughts. If I wouldn’t notice this need, it could effect on his work motivation.

The personality of employee also determines the communication channel I use.

S: What sort of communication channels do you use to deliver information to your employees?

I: face to face conversations (MOST IMPORTANT!)
   a. meetings
   b. phone calls
   c. e-mails / text messages

S: Finally, do employees communicate their opinions/ ideas?

I: Yes, we encourage them to do so

S: And how do they communicate their opinions/ ideas?

I: They tell their opinions face to face or even for example via e-mail.

Thanks a lot for your time and answers.
INTERVIEW WITH AGNETA BLADH

Method: Face-to-face

Personal background
Agneta Bladh is the director of University of Kalmar. She has been working at the university for 5 years. She worked in the Swedish Ministry of Education and Science as Secretary. Agneta was head of National Agency for Higher Education in Stockholm. Her major is political scientist from Stockholm University.

Company background
University of Kalmar Sweden is one of the public education organizations in Sweden. It was established in 1977 and has 9500 students in various departments and study training. The school has approximately 800 employees.

Interview data
S: Student I: Interviewee

S: What is the meaning that the notion of space evokes in your mind?

I: On paper, I should interact with three Deans and five heads of the departments and some other heads of administration and so on mostly, and sometimes with other people. So in that case you say I burden the space for me. If you are a teacher of a department and would like to address me, first I’d say go to your head of department. And if you don’t want to perhaps I would like to invite you to have words with the head of department. It is my obligation not to go behind the head of department as I appointed him/her in that case. It is important to me to have interaction at broader scale inside the university but never to go behind the pointed leaders because it is very important that I trust them. I have a lot of people here who works in the administration who not formerly are just beneath me but that how the people have certain tasks like the human resource department, head of department, or the economic department and inside the administration that are important for me sometimes to listen. But the formal head of the administration always
knows the best so it is nothing against her as it was last week or him as it is this week. So it is very open and transparent, so they know. So open and transparent is the space that I try to have.

S: Is space distance between the offices important to you?

I: No, I don’t think so. Some kind of distance you will always have when you have a section like this but I don’t think it is not so distant as it in many countries. Sweden is special. But for instance, when I give a speech somewhere, I would like people to introduce me so know who I am but otherwise I am quite informal though, I know the positions very well. So if you are foreigners in my country, you might think that we are very informal though we know that the different the section, and what are the possibilities that you see inside each section.

S: Is the size of the office important to you?

I: No. The rooms are always important but when I arrived here some years ago, we were sort of very old buildings nearby and people here thought that I would move there with my office, the small beautiful old building. But we made it a conference building so all people having a little conference can meet there. If I had put myself and my office there, I have been very isolated from the rest. So I made up my mind not to change.

S: Do you see the difficulties as the leader of a large organization?

I: Yes. I don’t like the very distant buildings of my university so I just now have my last effected rector because I am here for a year then I will retire from this office, which is to make the University of Kalmar the sample in those buildings close to the harbour and close to the railway station. I don’t know if I will succeed with that expiration, but could be true in 2020. But I hope to have some kind of decision before this year ends; we have just started this talk with Management County here in Kalmar who has the power of making plan. I am not so happy with the buildings though it is very nice.

S: How can you describe the office as open or private space?
I: I do for most of the employees to prefer the open one, with windows and corridors. But I don’t think it is suitable for me to have a room like that. Because here people could come and talk on very difficult subjects, and I don’t know if you are familiar with the expression – give notice to. But if somebody fired from their position, I think it’s good for people to have wall here. When you have a position like I have, it wouldn’t be open to everybody, I don’t think so. Though I have colleagues not at the university but national authority so that very open but when they have that kind of talks to their employees they come to another office with close wall. So I prefer to have it private but I like to have back door open when I work here alone and can have a look through the secretary room in here if they want to. So that’s the way to show that sometimes I am open to talk even if they don’t have appointment with me.

S: How can you describe the disadvantage and advantage of a close office?

I: Difficulties for person like me is that you can me too much identified with centre administration and I’m the rector of all university. And if I have too close connection with people here, I’m one of them not one of the head of department. I think it is not necessary for me to close with people next door. I have to be close with others as well. To me it’s the university departments where the teachers and students and that’s the most important to me. But I can’t sit there of course.

S: Do you like to have the visibility over your employees?

I: Yes, of course I’d like that but the head of organization you are always claimed that you are not visible enough. But I tried to say to the heads of departments. Please invite me to your large scale meeting with your employees and I’ll be there if possible.

S: Why do you think it is necessary to visible to your employees?

I: They have to know what kind of person I am. I try to write now and then the webpage. I was reminded that there were 3 weeks ago I had my last texts. I wrote some works yesterday evening. Now it has a new one.
S: The webpage here do you mean the personal blog?

I: Yes

S: So you share your personal blog with your employees?

I: Well, it’s not really a space for dialogue; it’s mostly the place where I say a lot of things that come across. And just now the one I wrote yesterday is about complex situation and temperature is high now.

S: Does your blog have the function for the readers to give their feedback?

I: They might give comments or feedbacks but mostly they don’t and I don’t mind at all.

S: I would say it is a very good way of communication channel for you and your employees. So how do you feel when working in an open space?

I: Not at this position, because I think it is necessary for people to meet me alone, not to show everybody that here I am meeting director. I might take in consideration that you might not want everybody to know you are here. It’s not about me but about people visiting me here.

S: What is your opinion about your personal space?

I: The space of me here is professional; my private space is somewhere else.

S: Now we can move to the relationship between the top manager and the employees. Is there is relationship building process inside the organization here?

I: I start by saying that of course there is between me and the heads of departments, and the Deans, administration, library and so on but it is now and then happen even with some of the researchers. Because when they are searching for external funding and they need support from
the rector. So I have to be involved then I have close connections to some of them. But it depends on the rules, the natural scenes that demand me to be involved.

S: How is the relationship created?

I: It could be taken by me or by some of the researchers, it depends. If I want to stimulate the researchers to apply for external funding, I perhaps say something for special meeting, I could been invited by the dean of department or I told him that it is important for me to come to your department and say something. And we have an open meeting.

S: Do you think it is necessary to build a relationship with your employees?

I: Yes, but it is not possible to have relationship with 800 people.

S: We can go back to the concept of open space; Does it appear to have advantage/disadvantage for relationship building process? And why? For example you have a close office and do you think that it could prevent your relationship?

I: No I don’t think so because most people don’t pass this corridor. No, not for me but for other people sitting in context where they have of colleagues, I think it’s good that it’s more open, and that kind of room can invite so they could talk between colleagues. But not for me in my position

S: With the concept of B Players, would you be approach them in order to elaborate their performance?

I: Yes, I could. But I think it’s better if the next level of their position or the head of department do that. It’s their responsibility. I recently have some kind of effort to that direction because the head of administration decided to move to another university, we’ve just got 8 months left. So we need a person for that position for just a few months so I decided to talk to the head of division and others. In that case you can say I lifted or have a careful look in some of them even if they were B Players but I’m not sure they are. But I talked to everybody, they were 7 – 8 people and after some consideration I chose 3 of them, 1 to be the successor and 2 others to support that
one. In that case you can say that I look up not outside but inside the organization but I’m not sure those people are B Players actually.

S: Have you noticed them in some way?

I: Yes, I have.

S: Do you see the different between A, B and C Players?
I: Yes but not the C Players. But they didn’t before have the position to be out-spoken person and when you lift them up into new position, they have a possibility to be a new player – A players perhaps.

S: With whom do you have communication activities more often?

I: The heads of departments and Deans, the pro-rector as well. Also the head of administration, I talk to them every week.

S: What sort of communication channels do you use to deliver information to your employees?

I: It depends, sometimes I want information from them, but it’s also important what is going on? What is the problem now? For instance I’ve just had a little chat with new administration director here and tell him what my impression from the meeting was with the State Secretary of Swedish Ministry of Education and Science took place last Friday. So I wanted to inform him about that.

S: Refer to the communication channels, what kind of communication channels do you often use?

I: Oral like this or email, very often by email.

S: Do the employees communicate their opinion or idea to you?

I: Yes, sometimes we do.
S: How can they do that?

I: I ask them go through their head of department. Sometimes they go directly to me but mostly channel through the head of department.

S: Do you think it is better to go straight to you?

I: It is better to go through head of department. So I also want to know the head of department’s opinion about that. But I might stimulate people if I just meet them at lunch here. But I don’t think they come directly to me.

S: What do you think about using your image as the role of manager to affect employee’s performance?

I: I want to stimulate people to do their best, which is important to me. You can do that by telling people if they are really good that I appreciate what they do. They might be even better if you say something positive.

Thanks for your time and answers
INTERVIEW WITH AGNE ANDERSSON

Method: Face-to-face

Personal background
Agne Andersson is working as an individual consultant. He has more than 30 years experience within the health sector, covering most aspects of planning, management, monitoring, evaluation, programme, project management and administration. He used to be the director for Health Services in one of Sweden’s provinces and Managing Hospital Director. The management experience from developing countries is as Senior Programme Co-ordinator at the Ministry of Health in Nairobi for the Swedish Health Support to Kenya and as Chief Adviser in Hanoi for the Vietnam-Sweden Health Co-operation.

Agne Andersson’s profession is in political science and further studies in business administration.

Company background
He is retired but performs as consultant nowadays.

Interview data
S: Student    I: Interviewee

S: We would like you to tell us a little bit about your personal background and your professional experience.

I: I was a teacher in statistic to University of Uppsala. I was an internal consultant and administration within an organization in Linkoping. After that I went back and just by chance working for county council, working in health services. And at the beginning, to certain extent, I worked also with other social affairs. I started to work as research secretary; it means you have to work with all administration and how to organize health services. The head of the department that I came was the director of health services. I think we were about 15 - 20 employees at that time. It was not well organized since 20 people report directly to the director of health services. The department is re-organized and divided into 3 sections which I was the head of one of these sections.
S: What did you think was the problem between the hospital management and the politician? Why didn’t you understand each other?

I: Well, what I would think is the most important thing when you do planning but also change organization is information. The politician did not work all the time with health services; it’s just a part of what they do so we knew better about this. Or in the other way you can say they might know but they didn’t want to express that they understood it. They had to fight for their hospital.

S: Can you tell me how long have you been in management position?

I: When I became the head of section, we were around 10 people at that time. I was responsible for the section. That was the first time when I was a manager. After sometimes I was the deputy director of health services. I came to Tanzania for 2 years that was not a management position. When I came back, I started to work as hospital director. I was also head of the doctors who were head of departments, occupational therapy, nurses, and personnel. That was direct management function where they were reporting to me. And of course I could not intervene in departments. The head of department in charge of that and as a manager I should never go into the department. That was the responsibility of the head. The head and I could have discussion and I could have opinion about his department not in medical affair, because I’m not a medical person. I don’t know anything about patient and how should they be treated. There are also many other things that the head of department should take into consideration. Perhaps you would be interested in that position in effect on those down to lower level in the department. Perhaps indirect it had an effect because I think people always look upon how a person is acting as a hospital director. And the attitude how you act, what person you are I think had an interfere with people working in organization. My attitude was try to work in the way that people respect you and what you do could be questioned. In the way that you act as responsible person which I see it very important, and the hospital where I came from the district was a very good district and we had extremely good co-operation between different kinds of staffs. I think it is also important that those who work in the level of pension know that they could always come to me as the hospital director if there were something. But first I would tell them please take it up the head of your department if he/ she doesn’t listen to you then you can come
to me and we could take the discussion together. We had regular meeting 4 - 5 times a year at least. We also had meeting with all heads of surgery department, internal medicine, long term care, x-ray vibration.

Criticize is what you need to stand if you are in managerial position, I think there is no manager who is not been criticized. If he/she did not act properly in the way he/she should have done.

I came to Vietnam as a chief advisor; I was in charge of InDevelop activities in Vietnam. At that time we had 38 Vietnamese staffs and about 20 foreign employees. Most of them are from Sweden but also Italy, England, Australia. We had about 20 - 25 short term consultant coming each year. Chief advisor early called director of health before I came but then SIDA didn’t want to have the title of Director. When I came there most people report directly to the post I had but I made a new organization because there was also a deputy chief advisor. I changed the part of deputy chief advisor who was in charge of the economic part and the camp. I was mainly working with health projects. I came to one of project meeting and one of the staff asked me to give advice about the project. I said no, I wouldn’t give any advice; you have your expert on private health care working with you. You should ask him and you should discuss about it then my role is to discuss with him. If he is uncertain about thing to do, I might have some idea even I’m not an expert in that but maybe in management perspective. That is also how I see management should be done, not go in over the head then his authority will decrease which is not good. Because they were working with him every day, I came out there maybe 3-4 times per year. Even my higher level does the same when he asked people to talk to me. I think it is very important management manner.

Quite early when I was there, I made a paper on how we should work and act in different situation if we didn’t agree. For example if you are a long term advisor in the project and you feel there is a problem, the first thing you should do is to take up and discuss with the head of project, if they don’t agree the long term manager have all possibility to come to me and discuss. And he/she has to convince me, if they don’t success, they have to go back. If I have the same opinion, the first thing that I or he/she must discuss with the head of project to see if it’s possible. If it’s not possible, the next step is to discuss with others.

I was short term consultant in Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Lebanon and Russia.
S: Something I would like to ask you particular. How do you perceive these types of space when you work with people?

I: I was different when I was at centre here as health director, what I and we did was in general. Those in the centre level decided about certain things, but it might not happen at the level of activities. But in many cases, those sitting there do not know what is happen here. Some of the idea and decision taken here might not be as good perhaps when you come to operational level, they have to change a little what was given in general directing. Of course we also met these people work in operational level, only now and then. I was sometimes out in seminar meeting with operational level and met some of the people. I was once on TV when I was sitting and I was given questions and I had to prepare but that out in television. I wouldn’t say all departments but I think it should have all kind of staff and it might have effect. It was also in some seminars, different kind of courses.

When I was hospital director, I don’t remember exactly but around 1200 people and I was fairly close, I was sitting at the hospital, going around in the hospital, eating in the dining room there where I could sit down and eat with many people. And I think it was easier to have direct responsibility. I had an annual report which everyone could read and it had not been done before. I think it is important for people overall news what is happening and to understand the whole system. All people do not want to know about it, they think I will do my duty and I don’t care about others, but quite many people are curious and I think it’s good if they are interested and try to understand.

S: You mention about going around, meeting people in lunch. How do you conceive the relationship between you and them going on?

I: Difficult to say, I might say it was easy but that’s my feeling. At the same time you might think that they could be a little bit afraid. I think they felt I was easy to come and discuss but I don’t know. But of course they had the possibility when I sitting down, I tried to sit down with different people so they can say I would like to come to your office and discuss.

S: Do you think it is important in general point of view that employees can have access to managers?
I: Not in any time, in some case you might be engaged in something. But those come must know that you can approach me but I might say I’m sorry but I don’t have the time at present but please come back later but can also ask if something urgent.

Thanks for your answers and time.
Interview with Anders Wikman

Method: Face-to-face

Personal background
Anders Wikman is currently Senior Consultant in InDevelop Consultancy Company which is a subsidiary in Hifab Gruppen AB. He used to be the President of InDevelop Uppsala AB and acting TOP MANAGER for Hifab International. His major profession is in Health Sector. Anders Wikman has experience in both private and public organization. He has been working in various countries beside Sweden such as Tanzania and Vietnam.

Company background
InDevelop-IPM is a consulting company with more than 20 years of experience from development cooperation worldwide. There are 15 full time staff and about 35 consultants on short and long term assignments in more than 20 countries worldwide. The head office is in Stockholm, Sweden. It also has offices in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam Name. The company expertise is in health development, human rights, peace and security, result based management and good governance.

Interview data
S: Student  I: Interviewee

S: We focus our thesis on organizational environment where the relationship building between the top managers and employees. We want to see how they interact with each other and from there the top managers can motivate the employees and to see how they work and to make it more effective in the work. We hope you can share with us your knowledge and experience about this issue.

I: One thing I think it differs depending on the type of company. Some company is a spare part, more mechanize per action. My experience is from consultancy organization and large public organization and I have not been in production like making cars or so. And it’s mainly in knowledge based technical skill. I’ve been in consultant for almost my life. Also interrupted with work in government organization, you can have my CV later on so you can see what I have done.
That has meant that for your consultancy like here in Swedish context, it has been in health sector all the time. It is a little bit if you are let’s say research institute funded by the government or if you are in the organization which work about the same thing as market condition.

To my understanding and I’m quite convince of that, what you are talking about to create good relation is important everywhere. But it is even more important when you are working in the competitive market where the budget is just gets what you might earn and might cost. The budget when your are working in the public organization means you are giving the money. But here, the budget is something we hope to earn through our different assignments. I would like to spell that out because that is very often known – probably misunderstood by people – they think that consultant can’t go with knives but they don’t know about competitiveness and the difficulty to get money not only for the salary but also for the environment, IT, liability insurance, pensions. I mean what come into the pocket of the consultancy not that very much. I think that is the distinction which is important that I see where is this type of leadership going to be applied. That’s what I would like to say very important.

If I can just go back to what you are asking about, that’s my favorite thing since I started this. I have no education at all, no training – I have not attended in any training course in my whole life. I have learned by the wind and listening and the most important thing is to understand how people work. In our country you cannot behave like bossy then you are not boss very long. We don’t have the bossy style you perhaps know that then you are completely dead. It might be different if you are the head of Volvo then you can be more bossy. But in this type of medium size 15, 20, 30, 40... people in small organization that does not work. So I consider to create relations, confidence is extremely important. I always believe the best in people, I think they are not cheating, I think they are doing hard work. If they don’t you have to take action. Some bosses think that everyone is going to cheat them and have a very different attitude. You have to be very honest; one has to be very understanding. But you must also require people doing their work otherwise no money – no funny.

So it means that it’s the matter of neutral trust. Keep people informed but all in the same base. These organizations are very flat. Normally as a director here I had to perform a lot of technical duties because it is so small you know so we cannot have one just doing budget and writing about company and business planning etc. Here depends very much to have a work force which can work in a very independent way. They are skillful in writing, in foreign language. They can also
conduct business in good way, doing the tender or calculation for office or all the courses in program.

It is extremely important in this type of organization mainly in where we are working is that if someone is asking you to do something do it properly with high quality. For me quality is number one, and must be quality and if we take it back in the way of leadership is to encourage that and to encourage in our context is to forego with the good example. You can’t ask people doing something and do something opposite with them. It doesn’t work. Low profile, decent habit, be polite to people, be observed to people, everyone is important - the clerk, the messenger, the director, the technical staff. That is also very Swedish. If you start to make fast with the finance or administrative section in medium size company then you’re also dead, nothing happen. And if you are friendly with people in decent way, you know everything. You have to be a little bit smarter than the books. So that’s why I don’t believe very much in management books. I believe in looking into the situation as it is. Try to find out how to get the organization to work for your and what you shall do or you can do to your board of directors according to your role as TOP MANAGER or managing director.

Give credits in public, if you are not contented, do that behind closed door. The first thing you learn in Vietnamese context that no one lose face in public. If you are looking into American picture, I think they are cursing each other all the time. It doesn’t happen here. Once one who would be given that type of treatment will remember it until they die. So even if they are asked to say something because you are annoyed, think of the effect. If it is a big organization you have to rely on middle level manager. But in this type of organization where my experience is then everyone in individual has to be observed, they have to be noticed and they have be given encouragement. And if they don’t perform well you have to take serious discussion. We have annual talk with everyone in small group. We called it development talk where they can exchange what they have gone and expressed how they perceived the boss and vice versa. That normally takes place in small organization. My experience is when you have more than 5 people in an organization; you start to get different opinions which are not as streamlining as one should have. We can have different political views, habits, leisure etc. The most important thing that people is recognized as they are in the capacity they have, giving the encouragement and also to handle properly. If you wait too long is overdue and then it’s nothing to be done. Treat everyone in a decent attitude and decent way that is very important to me.
I do recruitment and I try to judge how this person is going to work here. I don’t put them in fifteen people and to say they are recruited or not. I do it myself and I go back and say I have found this person and would you like to have a chance. Think by yourself sitting with 15 people and say what have you done, it’s very annoying. Perhaps, you can’t show your real skill. But this is a little bit specific for this type of organization. I apply this also to my work also as the head of department in the centre health care department of Stockholm. We were in all health care cost calculation in Stockholm. That is about 7 billion Swedish kronor. We created the entire framework with all the calculation. And I applied the same thing there. There was another thing, I was relied on the big guy – the politician – the head of county. It was almost the same you had to do about the direction, you had to inform them and of course I was the minor post and they were above me. One has to think very much about how personality works. I’m not very formal, and I’ve learned also mainly in Vietnamese context and Asian context. In your country you are much more polite than we are here. I always expect people by hand, go around and say hello, in Swedish context is different. If one puts all these things together, it is little formal thing of management. You should never act bossy, try to create nice atmosphere, you can have humor but not too much. One should enjoy and have fun in work is one of the core values.

S: Do you think that as a manager and have fun with the employees can lose your respect or reputation from them?

I: No, I don’t. If you are in a little bit too much fun, then it might be misunderstood. You have to balance though. In our office the most important room is the coffee room. Because there everyone speak business, but they do it when they are having coffee. And they can have all information; it is openness for information. As manager you can disclose everything but you can disclose what is important and people obligated to be informed here. One couldn’t share everything, but major things should be shared. Ideas are free of charge. To get respect in this type of organization you have to have technical skills for yourself. I know some middle managers they don’t have a clue what they are doing. We don’t have that type of management because it will have no respect. And actually this type of respect is one of the key things to get organization to work properly. And trust, I would like to say trust. They must trust each other.

I have been in Marketing in 1968, and I have seen a numbers of companies coming and going. It mainly they could have had a wrong market approach, wrong mixed of skills but the number one thing that strong persons don’t go well together and greediness. It is extremely important to find
‘glue’ in the organization. Strong individual always ask for more favor, never say or blame anyone when they are leaving. Normally they are the most skillful. When people walking in this door and give their resignation I can always capture it before they open their mouth even by telephone, because they have a specific way of behavior. There are some bosses normally blame staff when they are leaving. There is only one thing you should do, say good luck and welcome back. In this type of market is so small, even in international context so you should not misbehave. Always think in advance in what you do. Think twice, never lose temper. I’ve been boss here for 3 times, it’s good to think what will come next. Always have horizon further on. They are important things also in the context of creating good work with relation.

And always remember one thing, you need friends ‘upstairs’. If it is small company – board of directors, chairman of the board. Keep them informed, everything comes up even it is a little bit disgraceful, embarrassed and never try to hide it and be honest and don’t try to cheat.

S: I like the idea of having friends ‘upstairs’, as a normal employee do you think it is necessary for them to have an ‘upstairs’ friend?

I: I think it was meant to being managing people you need with board of directors or the chairman. But most people in organization like this always have permission to inform or being informed which can be depression. You can’t make rules. That’s why I think it called management by exception. Sometimes you need to do things which are not planned – do ask. Another thing I have learned that you will never have a ‘No’ on a polite question. That means it’s better to ask one time more than one time less. Some personality never asks. They run their own business but then they normally crash after sometimes because they have no back up, they no friends who say if it is ok. It happens and that depend on the personality. My idea is to mix different kinds in work like man and women, young and old when it come to workforce of 15 – 20 people. But it still depends on what type of business you are in.

S: According to what you said about recruitment and people who want to leave, there might be other who wants to stay. In your opinion, which one do you prefer to recruit?

I: If there is no turnover, it’s a deadly point in this type of business. It’s good to have the organization memory but I would like to say – mixed. It depends on the task, for example finance
position can be very long but some technical staff in consultancy can be good to have fresh blood an idea. Bosses should never stay after 5 or 6 years. On the other way to lose memory completely that is disaster. So I want to have some sort of confirmative with the values, experience of the company. Key point here is the way to read organization and to create flexibility, good work condition that people enjoin their work. It must have been very technically high skill. When you do the business that you asked to do then you have to be concrete engagement.

S: Do you know who is the longest person working here and for how long?

I: About 4-5 years.

S: As a manager do you think it is waste of time and resources to recruit people who work for 4-5 years and leave the company?

I: Normally it’s quite ok. We don’t recruit them fresh so they are very skilful. You have to look in what type of business you are in because Consultancy Company is a very tough one to recruit. It also depends on the volume or the type of work. Beside the technical skill you also need the lifestyle of behaviour on of my early boss said that and I think it’s quite correct. What I have found out is that and I come into situation so many times as a consultant where the difficulty was? What was it? - Technical skill – no. It is between people and how they interact. So relation means a lot. You can always have the open attitude to read the organization. For example we had a tough time here we were owned by a big company before. We had information from the messenger for what’s happening because we are friends with him, we didn’t need it from the bosses but we knew everything.

Depending on your own personality, everyone is different. One should never try to be someone else, try to be you. So once again read the picture which might be very different from sector to sector, type of organization. Try to be a leader which is recognized, got respect, trusts etc. in the situation they work.

S: How can you be recognized within the organization?
I: Here you can never recognize the manager. It is flat organization. You don't have bossy style like American or England.

S: I like the idea of coffee room where people can come and talk to each other. How many times a day you go that room?

I: Once in the morning and once in the afternoon depend on if people have time. We have the title but we never speak about it.

S: In the office here do you have special place for manager or director?

I: No, all are the same; I even have a smaller room.

S: Do you think that people can approach you anytime when they want to?

A: Yes, they can come anytime.

S: Do you think the conception of open office influence relationship building between you and employees?

I: To some extend I think mainly the office landscape is to cut office cost but of course also in a way to create openness. Normally you have room like this where you can have a meeting or when you don't want to share other things. Accessibility in big organization for TOP MANAGER is difficult to find than they normally have a secretary. But here we don't have that.

S: Do you think the work can go more fluently when the employees can access to the manager?

I: One must understand what they should ask. They don't ask silly things. After sometimes you know where you are boundary.

S: Do you have any employee that is also your friend in personal life?
I: Some people here I can know better than others. We can also see each other at home, not with all but with some. But when it comes to relative like co-habitant or wife it is not allowed to work. Then you create inter-relation in work.

S: There is a conception that you should be aware when it comes to a relationship within a company is personal space.

I: No, I would never do that. That means you interfere personal. One has to keep business and personal life aside even if you are friends. I have an example here we are an extremely good friends but when we are in business talk business even we don’t have the same opinion. When we drop that got a lunch after work to get some fresh air and that is something else. In big organization they can meet and get married.

S: May I ask you how many people are working here now.

I: Here we have 18 as core consultants.

S: beside coffee activity, do you have any other activities like annually company meeting?

I: They are celebrating in Christmas, normally with a small party. We are now planning to sail out to one of the island in end of May. For example next Friday, there will be a small white tasting event when acting manager celebrates his serving for almost 1 year.

S: How about company meeting?

I: The board’s meeting do u mean?

S: When you talk about company issue or how the company performing, do you have any regular meeting? How does it work?
I: In my time we had every third months where I was an acting manager presenting on behalf of chairman of the board prepared agenda, formed all the duties. Responsible for finance was there, occupancy in different type of programs, staff matters, business idea, expanding plan.

S: Who was attending for the meeting?

I: Board members. But then every week they have annual meeting every Monday morning in 1-2 hours to go through everything. During my time, we went through what people are doing; giving setbacks, progress and we discussed neutral interest issues. As a consultant you have to consider the time though. Sometimes they are out travelling doing consultant, office is empty.

S: As a manager who do you usually communicate with and what are their positions?

I: When it comes to technical stuff it depends on the issue. There is no rule and it depends on request. Otherwise you discuss a lot both in request and regular time with financial department.

S: As you said it is like the work matter makes you to communicate with each other.

I: Normally we talk business.

S: In this space how can you communicate with each other like call or email?

I: We call the management by walking around.

S: What do mean by the management walking around?

I: Every morning I check with everyone saying good morning.

S: Do you want to check if everyone is in their office in time?

I: That is another issue. I'm good at observing without having any notes about it. Normally I prefer person in their offices at 7.30. Some come a little bit later or sit a little bit longer. So you
noted if it’s properly. But if it’s not you have to take action. But I don’t go around on Friday at 16.30 to see anyone has left or not. We never use time clock. If people are trusted with big progress and big money involved and I need to trust them for their own time shift. But if I find out if they are not performing well then you have to take action not in common place but with the person.

S: How many people belonged to your team?

I: When I was the head of Vietnam – Sweden health co-operation I had more than 30 employees only in Vietnam like Vietnamese staffs, international staffs, medical doctors, accountants, specialists, technicians. We were running a school, a shop, a camp. I was extremely careful when it came to Vietnamese employees, they would always participate when I was down in Vietnam, I always invited them for all things because and that was one of my key thing. Because they were not paid as well as they expected, they didn’t have any type of benefits. But they are equally to our business.

S: One of the last questions, what kind of communication channels does u use in the organization?

I: I can go directly to people but in office like this we can also use email. I’m not so fond of it but that’s how people do communicate with each other. We don’t have fixed telephone line here; everyone has its own cell. We phone each other when someone is abroad. Fax is only used when needed. Personally I like to have oral talk and you can also have time to meet. And now we have close door because we don’t want to disturb the others otherwise I never have my door closed.

S: How do you conceive the employees’ idea when they come to you contribute their opinions?

I: When they come to me for the advice, 99% percent my advice is the same as theirs. I can say I agree with you do like that. I extremely open to the advice. It is a neutral respect for their technical skill. Check and cross-check and consider the quality.

Thanks for your answer and time
Interview with Konstantin Lampou

Method: Face-to-face

Personal background

Mr. Konstantin Lampou is the Ph.D professor from University of Uppsala. His major background is in Marketing and he also interested in organizational issue as his main area of research.

University background

Uppsala University is the oldest university in the Nordic countries—founded in 1477. It offers about 50 bachelor programmes, 45 master programmes and close to 2,000 single-subject courses. The university has around 40,000 students for undergraduate and graduate programs.

Interview

S: Student    I: Interviewee

I: What is all about, the interview

S: We want to have an interview with researchers or with practitioners from the file where we are making our thesis and it is about Leadership and management (that’s our major degree) and our focus is the empowering B players in firms.

I: Empowering who?

S: B players in firms

I: B players? how do you define these B players?

S: You can see employees in every firm and there is a small definition for them, or classification, lets say it that way, and we have A, B and C players. The A are the outstanding people, the ones that usually exceed their expectations, their task expectations, the B players are the ones who are independent, they achieve their tasks and
they do not need any extra help, they are pretty independent, like people who just work for their task and they are doing pretty well

I: Okay, I understand that. We can start with the interview now.

Good afternoon, Duc and I will make an interview to you and we would like you to introduce a little bit of your professional experience.

I: My name is Konstantin Lampou, I am PhD professor in the University of Uppsala and my interested area is organizational issues. I have a background in marketing but my main area of research is organizational research and particularly leadership issues and from leadership the moral aspect of leadership. Moral leadership is my interest. I am trying to develop a project of developing managerial ideologies. I am working most of the as a teacher at all levels and now it is a part time.

S: Okay, after we have understood the general idea of B players, we would like to know how it is during your experience as in your professional background, have you noticed that there are A, B and C players.

I: Yes and I would like to say it like this. When I talk about the employers and the employees and so on, I am not partially going to talk about my colleagues in the department but most of the time I am going to use as example to my students at the doctoral level or ordinary students at lower levels. So I think that one can of course grade these people in the categories as you say, it is a very realistic way of doing that. If you really want to know what the purpose of the job is and what criteria you are going to use. We have some kind of literature, there are exams or either doctoral students have to write a dissertation and if they are general colleagues they have to do a specific job like publish some things or fulfil the obligations as teachers.

S: Alright, one part of our thesis is the stage where B players (this type of employees) interact with the Top managers in a firm. We can define this space into two different things, one is the physical space, the one we see now, the physical infrastructure of the firm, and we have another concept now, which is kind of virtual space or mental, personal space for people. To elaborate this more, the distance, lets say you are TOP MANAGER and I am an employee and the distance is between you and I and the relationship can be built between this space. We want to
know your opinion regarding this. Do you think that a better use or a better relationship building between a TOP MANAGER and B players can be done through making this space closer through interaction activities?

I: Yes because your definition of B players is that they do their job and nothing more than that and then they go home. That they are independent so and you mean that if they are going to come a little bit closer to the leadership position like all managerial positions and develop some kind of relations, if its going to help them to be more productive or something, is that what you want to say?

S: Yes exactly

I: Yeah, of course this applies very well to this thing, and you have to know that as a teacher or as a supervisor of dissertations, most of the jobs, when you do a job, you do not do a job when people do a job by themselves or are motivated by themselves, most of the difficulties of the jobs and that are consuming part of the job it is exactly what you say. How to persuade the people and probably not the B kind of people because in teaching situations you have both the A you have the B and the C and at least in Sweden you try to take the C that they will come at least to the B level. The A you let them go further. You just help them, you open the doors for them, you help them with some kind of very fast supervision, you don’t need to interfere with them. With the B of course it does play a role, absolutely if you play with differences they come closer to you. My personal view from the point of view of the manager is that I have to find to understand how this person is working, thinking and I have to motivate this person. In order to understand these things you have to go close to this person, you cannot give an order where don’t exist this kind of remedies or medicines like I give you an order and you work harder. I have to understand. Lets suppose that you are a B one, or it could be somebody else, I understand this B person, you are there, they are there, and I try to understand how this person thinks and then I try to see and the only way to do this is to come close. So I agree with you, I think that it is a very reasonable way, to break this distances, to make it closer, so you understand how persons are, how they think and then you try to indirectly influence, you cannot give orders, this is the problem, you cannot say hey now you have to do this because they might say “what are you expecting, I am doing this, what do you want from me?”
S: Okay, now that you get at this point, do you think that trying to get closer to these relationships would go against the personal space of people, for example, power distance?

I: I see that no body wants. First of all no body wants a business relationship to be very close because there are a lot of complications. First of all it’s not allowed to have this relationship, its not morally right. You cannot have people under you that you are supporting at the same way. You cannot break the difference between some and then keep the distance with others. First of all when I talk about this B people I see them as a group not as a specific individual because if you start coming close to a specific individual then it can be misunderstood and misinterpreted and it can damage the whole group, then they will say, what this person is trying to do? So you always keep of course kind of distance that it is dictated by the culture. Like for instance in Greek culture if I touch your hand it would not be a problem, they would not suspect that we have a kind of homosexual relationship, you understand what I mean? If you do it here, they would probably suspect that there is something wrong there, you understand? So every culture has its own rules. How close you come to this person and having that in mind you try to come closer in order to understand, but you don’t go very close, because then, you have to limit it, you say stop I cannot do anything because if I want to do that then it might be great danger. We have are the flat organizations, for instance now groups here, I do not need to have any power distance, I am not afraid of that because here we try to have flat organizations. We have seminars, we work at this level where the ideas play role. My model is probably applicable to these flat organizations, like modern organizations, not applicable to kind of high hierarchical organizations this is the kind of job I am doing. There I am not afraid, I do that, but we have this cultural stops you know, you don’t go further than that but this is dictated by culture, not by working situations.

S: That is pretty much, when we explained the concept of space and its separation of virtual and physical space it is a bit hard to make it understood by people, plus the difference between the A, B and C players, and it takes us time.

I: Well we can say some words about this virtual because I am not sure I understood this part. What about the virtual, what do you mean by virtual?
S: With virtual here we expect the interaction with the relationship building and the communication if possible. So by the increase that type of thing we can get the space the virtual space closer to between the TOP MANAGER and the employees.

I: Aha, so that’s what you call virtual. This virtual reality and so on

S: No, not the virtual networking.

I: Okay, then I understood quite well what you mean but I say to you that most of the people here they care but this has also to do with the ideology of the Swedish system. You see the ideology of the Swedish system, if you are a teacher and you are coming to a club of students the ideology here is to help the weak students to catch the level of the other, the middle and the better ones, and actually earlier in this country the back side of this story is that we were giving all our effort to the weak students and we were not taking care of the active and good students now. This is also politically ideologically better mind question that there are political parties discussing, the more to the left, the more to the weaker students, the more to the right, the more to the lead. This is a kind of mixture but the most important point is not hey told me you cannot give orders “read your books, write your dissertation, do this things” you cannot do that, you cannot even discuss it directly you have to go indirect you can go through motivation. I have to motivate you so you have to start the search, doing the whole questions this is the role of the teacher or the leader, or the manager of an organization. Now that it comes to the colleagues, I have been well in my role as a teacher I have been head of teachers in some courses so I have to work with the people and with how the paper looks under me. In reality we don’t use this kind of layer in Sweden; we are at the same level. I can say about this relationship with doctoral students and ordinary students where you clearly have this.

All the things I said to you can probably apply even to any kind of flat organizations because this is what we are talking about this is life. So the only thing that I take care and I am very careful is this culturally determined links how far you go, and this is very special because as I said to you, I don’t know how this is in Vietnam, I don’t know how this is in your country I suppose its closer to the Greek so I can touch your hand without any problem, you understand what I am trying to say. So I could do that, if you were one of my students, but I could never do that if you were a Swedish student because then they will say, what is he doing, you understand? so in organizations
that are multicultural, you have also different kind of distances in between, and then you have to respect and having this as a limit, then you have the ability to go closer to the people and you do get closer in an objective way. You have to go closer in order to understand that person but how close you go is determined by the culture and if its Swedish culture that has distance, this formality, you have to respect it, but still you have to in a general way try to come closer even if its Greek or if it is American or if its German or whatever. That is the issue.

Ok. Thanks for your answers and time
Number 15

Surveys are attached in the original printed version of this thesis.
The University of Kalmar

The University of Kalmar has more than 9000 students. We offer education and research in natural sciences, technology, the maritime field, social science, languages and humanities, teacher training, caring sciences and social service.

Our profile areas in research are: biomedicine/biotechnology, environmental sciences, marine ecology, automation, business administration and informatics, but we have research proceeding in most subject areas of the University.

Since 1999, the University of Kalmar has the right to accept students in postgraduate studies and to examine doctors within the subject area natural sciences.

Baltic Business School,
at the university of Kalmar
Visiting address: Kalmar Nyckel,
Gröndalsvägen 19
SE-391 82 Kalmar, Sweden

Tel: +46 (0)480 - 49 71 00
www.bbs.hik.se