Independent Degree Project

Internal Communication
- *A quantitative case study at Specma Seals AB*

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Denise Madsen

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Choosing the right communication strategy is essential for organizations in today’s business. Nowadays, all organizations are facing operational changes; therefore, internal communication is significant for all businesses. Internal communication focuses on information and knowledge sharing activities within organizations, which are led by leaders that have the responsibility to distribute information and knowledge to employees in the organization and across departments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between internal communication and its components and how it affects team performance.

METHOD: The research was a quantitative case study where 42 out of 70 employees at Specma Seals AB answered the questionnaire. The survey was sent out by email, using surveygizmo.com in April 2014. The response rate was 60%. A meeting with Specma Seals was arranged to conduct a deeper understanding of the company situation.

CONCLUSION: The conclusion of this study is that two of the hypotheses were supported and one rejected meaning that leadership and information and knowledge sharing has a positive relationship with team performance meanwhile cross-functionality didn’t.

Keywords

*Internal Communication, Leadership, Knowledge & Information Sharing, Cross-functionality, Team Performance*
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1 INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on internal communication and how leadership, information and knowledge sharing, and cross functionality affects team performance. The following chapter will present the background of the subject in order to create an understanding for the reader. This will be followed by a problem formulation, research purpose and research questions.

1.1 Background

Choosing the right communication strategy is essential for organizations in today’s business. The business environment becomes more technical and e-mails are the most common information channel (Stafford et al., 2010). According to Stafford et al. (2010) the most effective information channel today is face-to-face, which helps organizations to speed up the response time.

Organizational communication strategies are broadly divided into external and internal communication. Internal communication is defined as a collective effort of the organizations group members to gather information and data, and to achieve employee engagement for the organization (Welch, 2013; Kataria et al., 2013). It is a business function that can be viewed as one of three main business challenges for organizations (Tkalac Vercic et al., 2012). Internal communications show the engagement of management in the process of communicating to the workforce. Therefore, it is important for management to set a communication strategy for the company (Dolphin, 2005). This helps companies to make the right decisions and the right strategies within a given time frame and budget (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013).

Internal communication is the link between top management and employees with important information for the organization. According to Stafford et al. (2010), companies with a strong internal communication strategy reach higher customer satisfaction and retention based on employee satisfaction and performance. Stafford et al. (2010) explains that organizations with efficient internal communication are viewed as higher performing businesses for external stakeholders, and appear to be the more optimal choice when investing. Moreover, Dolphin (2005) explains how the management needs to harmonize the internal and external communication in order to reach positive communication.
In order to have an effective internal communication strategy, management needs to know that receiving too much information can result in an overload. There is no measurement of the right amount of information, however, the information received must be the accurate information (Stafford et al., 2012). Information can be gathered by external sources including competitors and customers or by internal sources that includes co-workers and team members (Carmeli et al., 2013).

Every member of an organization belongs to a team or group, by which internal communication helps to solve underlying problems within those groups (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013). Therefore employees should be; empowered, encouraged, trained, and supported to solve problems and to control quality (Fletcher, 1999). Employees that do not feel part of a team will lack motivation and drive. It’s a leader's responsibility to increase the individual's self-efficiency/motivation (ibid). A leader is significant in order to have efficient teamwork; they are the ones making the communication flow productively and delegate teamwork to avoid unnecessary conflicts (Agrawal, 2012; Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013). For team members to know their assignment and company goals, a manager must be an effective and efficient communicator (Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013). A leader is more than just the head of the team, e.g. he is the person handling the information flow between the internal and the external sources (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013).

1.2 Problem Discussion

For an organization to be successful three general factors are to be considered; internal communication, leadership and employee issues (such as team building and motivation) (Fletcher, 1999). Nowadays, all organizations are facing operational changes, therefore, internal communication, one of three factors, is essential for all businesses (Dolphin, 2005). It is an intangible asset that makes important functions within a company and forces organizations to concentrate on how to improve their own level of communication (Vercic et al., 2012; Ruck & Welch, 2012). One of the most important communication sources is knowledge. Transferring knowledge within the organization has been developed as a competitive advantage (Chen et al., 2013).

According to Dolphin (2005) employees are one of the most important assets of an organization. Being well informed within the organization helps employees to work more efficiently, which creates a positive attitude towards the company’s identity. Dolphin (2005) explains the importance of understanding and working with the
different departments in order to reach company goals and objectives (ibid). To be successful, efficient internal communication becomes an important factor (Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Ruck & Welch, 2012). Moreover, according to Tkalac Vervic et al. (2012), connected to the daily information flow that different departments should have with each other. If the information exchange is effectively used, companies will become more flexible and more alert in dynamic situations (Ford & Randolph, 1992). Without an internal communication channel, employees would rather spread rumours than defend the organization (Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Stafford et al., 2010). This puts pressure on management to understand the connection between communication behaviour, mental and emotional valuation of the team-member. Understanding this shows managers how employee’s experience is influencing team performance (Peters & Fletcher, 2004).

It is argued that internal communication focuses on information and knowledge sharing activities within organizations, which are led by leaders that have the responsibility to distribute information and knowledge to employees in the organization and across departments (Jimenez-Castillo & Sanchez-Perez, 2013). Therefore, in order to understand how effective the internal communication works within an organization, three components should be studied and evaluated, namely leadership, information and knowledge sharing, and cross functionality.

1.3 Research Problem

The research problem for this study is formulated as; How does internal communication affect team performance? This issue will later be addressed in chapter 3 with hypotheses.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between internal communication and its components and how it affects team performance.

1.5 Delimitation

The study focuses on a B2B (business-to-business) context with Specma Seals AB as the appointed target group. Find information about Specma Seals AB in Appendix A.
1.6 Outline of Thesis

This research consists of 7 chapters. The structure and content is as followed:

**Chapter one:** Discusses the importance of internal communication within organizations and its components. Here the research problem and purpose are stated.

**Chapter two:** Presents the theoretical framework for the research. The theories are about internal communication and team performance and can be found in existing literature.

**Chapter three:** Is based on chapter two and presents a hypothesis for the study, a conceptual framework and a proposed research model for the research.

**Chapter four:** Explains the methods used for the research and why they were chosen.

**Chapter five:** Illustrates the summary of the interview with the chosen case study company.

**Chapter six:** Presents the analysis of the survey and test if the hypothesis is supported or not. The chapter end with a discussion of the results from the analysis.

**Chapter seven:** Discusses the conclusion of the research, further research propositions and the limitations of the study.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter starts by explaining internal communication and continues to describe; leadership, information and knowledge sharing, and cross functionality as a part of internal communication. This chapter also describes team performance and an article summary.

2.1 Communication strategy

Effective communication is important for organizations in order to succeed with their business. For organizations to devote resources to communication, the management first needs to know the health and function of the existing structure. A communication strategy needs to be designed, implemented and evaluated constantly by the organization to be as effective as possible (Hargie et al., 2002). Hayes (2007) argues that managers need to have a clear idea about the communication objectives in order to see what is being achieved. Communication is about removing uncertainty when changes in an organization occur (Kitchen & Daly, 2002).

2.2 Internal Communication

Internal communication, also known as intra-organizational communication or employee communication, is defined as a collective effort of the organization’s group members to gather information/data and to achieve employee engagement as well as company performance for the organization (Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Tkalac Vercic, et al., 2012; Welch, 2013; Kataria et al., 2013). It is also said to be “the key to organisational excellence and effectiveness” (Kitchen & Daly, 2002, p. 50).

Internal communication includes all forms of communication within an organization and is the exchange of information between employees or members of an organization to create an understanding of the business (Tkalac Vercic et al., 2012). Internal communication can use different sources to communicate within the organization; it can be face-to-face, written, and/or online communication. It is important for companies to choose the right communication channel that fits the business strategy and business goal (Kataria et al., 2013). According to Kitchen & Daly (2002), it is even more significant, in today’s business market, to handle internal communication in a high priority matter compared to the past.
Internal communication has three different levels of effect for organization; it can be gossip talk, informal chat, and formal corporate communication that may include meetings (Welch, 2013). The purpose of internal communication is to design and re-design information from the organization and return company values and goals. It also helps organizations to coordinate daily activities and to reduce confusion as well as creating higher understanding for the task (Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Dolphin, 2005). Managers and leaders are responsible for the operation of internal communication (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013).

2.2.1 Leadership

Lorinkova et al. (2013) state that companies today are depending on collaborative teamwork to solve challenging assignments. This puts pressure on team leaders, who have the responsibility for reaching company goals. Fletcher (1999) states that leadership is one of three important factors for successful organizational outcomes. Leaders are responsible for the flow of communication, controlling the group and handling employee issues (Fletcher, 1999). Businesses today are more complex and leaders get less time to manage teams on a micro-level (Pearce et al., 1999). That is why it is important to understand the role of leadership and the impact it has on team performance (Lorinkova et al., 2013).

Leadership is the process of influencing others to pursue group goals (Tost et al., 2013). It includes handling both the internal and external information within an organization (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013). A leader is responsible for the communication flow, delegate work to avoid conflicts and to increase motivation (Ahearne et al., 2010; Agrawal, 2012; Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013).

According to Lorinkova et al. (2013) there are two main leadership approaches. (1) Empowerment (i.e. thought and ideas are shared within the group and they manage themselves with responsibility and result) (Fletcher, 1999; Pearce et al., 1999). (2) Directive leadership (i.e. subordinates get specific tasks and directions from the leader as well as feedback and supervision) (Martin et al., 2013). Both approaches are structured to increase the effectiveness of subordinate’s and improve the result of team performance (Lorinkova, 2013).
2.2.2 Information and Knowledge Sharing

Leaders play a critical role in information and knowledge sharing. Leaders within an organization are those that manage the information and knowledge and should create easy access for employees to share the information and knowledge by setting norms and establishing a working environment in teams. The purpose of setting norms and an environment is to have a behaviour that supports knowledge sharing in order to develop creativity and innovation for the organization (Carmeli et al., 2013). According to Carmeli et al. (2013) sharing ideas within an organization and teams is essential for developing creativity.

Knowledge sharing is defined as the transaction of knowledge from a person or group to another and is referred as a source that builds creativity and innovation for teams in order to create value for an organization (Carmeli et al., 2013). According to Gardner et al. (2012), knowledge is the most important asset that organizations can posses in a competitive environment.

The importance of knowledge sharing lies between members; within, across, and outside the organization in order to develop solutions and introductions to new products and services in the market. In contrast, organizations that do not share knowledge will decrease the experience and expertise to the market (Carmeli et al., 2013).

Organizations with an open communication that gives access to internal knowledge and market information have potential to create better solutions for the market. Information includes two sources: internal and external. Internal source include: the individuals’ own knowledge and expertise. An external source includes knowledge and expertise from other employees that can be in verbal or written form (Carmeli et al., 2013).

According to Pop and Dumitrascu (2013) there are different ways of information flow in teams. The two most important highways are “top-down” and “down-top”. Top-down is the information given from management to the employees to let members know what to do and what is expected from them. Down-top is the opposite; the information flows from the employees up to the management. This communication gives leaders the opportunity to know how employees are doing and thinking about their work that gives managers an overview of the operation and thereby helps them take decisions. It’s the manager’s responsibility to make the information flow and function work properly (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013).
One important tool used to help team member’s access information and knowledge is better social capital. Social capital refers to the importance of knowledge as one of the most critical resources for groups that helps improve team performance (Hettonen et al., 2013). Companies that use their own resources make for a more efficient and effective business and can decrease the waste of operations if they handle the information flow in the right way (Ford & Randolph, 1992).

The organization needs to combine internal and external social capital in order to increase effectiveness and performance. The internal social capital is the internal information from the organization and the external social capital is from competitors and customers. Knowledge as the most important asset needs to be absorbed in the right way in order to gain benefits for the organization. This means that individuals are analysing and processing information (Alejandro et al., 2011).

Alejandro et al. (2011) determines the importance of having an equal structure on the internal and external social capital in order to improve the knowledge transfer. The knowledge that is transferred to the organization will improve the work for members in a team and its team performance (ibid).

2.2.3 Cross-functionality

According to Fletcher (1999), the hierarchy structure (i.e. the differences between manager level and operational level) in organizations is decreasing, as well as lead times and cost. Therefore, managers should use all their organizational resources (e.g. employees) to contribute with ideas and knowledge, and to increase efficiency to both save money and time (Fletcher, 1999; Parry et al. 2010; Piercy et al., 2013). According to Park et al. (2009) more and more companies are implementing the cross-functional integration approach. It is said to be an important approach for successful teamwork (Ford & Randolph, 1992).

“Cross-functional integration refers to the collaboration and cooperation of employees from different functional areas” (Parry et al., 2010, p. 606). The organisational approach is a shared work environment that involves bringing people together from two or more, usually separated, organizational functional areas to undertake a task on either a temporary basis (i.e. a project team) or on a relatively permanent basis (i.e. a matrix organization) (Ford & Randolph, 1992; Bruns, 2013). In a structure of crossing departmental knowledge, every employee’s ideas and skills are used. The structure gives the privilege for employees to work across the organisation in
different projects. This participation gives the individual more responsibility and importance in the decision making process. This also evolves the skills and experience of the individual person when sharing his/her ideas, knowledge, and perspective with other members of the team (Ford & Randolph, 1992). Usually, individuals only have one functional skill, but Park et al. (2009) recommend that multi-knowledge individuals (i.e. the understanding for two different functions) are used in the cross-functional mixture to avoid misunderstanding and to improve the flow of information.

The cross-functional structure is a complex organizational form that is implemented to use the human resource in an organisation (Ford & Randolph, 1992). It increases the innovation process of complex technical problems as well as the knowledge expansion (Ford & Randolph, 1992; Bruns, 2013). To use the skills and knowledge from all departments in a company creates advanced abilities to easier solve complicated tasks, give faster responses and better results (Ford & Randolph, 1992; Bruns, 2013). To mix functional expertise also rise higher creativity and motivation, better client relationships, teamwork performance and faster decision making by the improved communication flow and responsibility delegation of management (Ford & Randolph, 1992).

2.3 Team Performance

Facing changes in a competitive environment, organizations have changed the traditional single-based approach to a team-based approach in order to develop and maintain high performance. In a more complex business environment teams with knowledge workers are preferred. Knowledge individuals are those that possess information about the organization and product rather than a physical goods (Gardner et al., 2012).

In order for teams to perform well, they must use all resources that are required for high performance. Performing well indicates how members share specialized knowledge and how members combine the knowledge input to a collaborative outcome (Gardner et al., 2012).

One way to improve team performance is the relational resources in which members are familiar with each other based on previous work. Relational resources develop a more accurate definition of what the team members need for information and how to precede with the project (Gardner et al., 2012).
According to Gardner et al. (2012) there is a relationship between the information and knowledge integration and team performance that is based on the structure of the team. Team members set the structure of teams and leaders should give special attention to the knowledge integration. In case of uncertainty, manager should set the team based on the relational resources rather than the knowledge capacity (ibid).

2.4 Literature Review

Table 1 describes the different articles used in the theoretical framework and what approach it is connected to. The summary is structured with the theory approach first, with alphabetic order from the authors. The summary also describes the major findings from each article and will serve as a base for chapter three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article (Year)</th>
<th>Theory Approach</th>
<th>Major Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hargie et al. (2002)</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Communication strategy needs to be designed, implemented and evaluated constantly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayes (2007)</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Manager needs to have a clear idea about the communication objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphin (2005)</td>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
<td>Internal communication is to design and re-design information from the organization to return company value and company goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kataria et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
<td>Internal communication is defined as a collective effort of the organizations group with different sources to communicate with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen &amp; Daly (2002)</td>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
<td>“Internal communication is the key to organisational excellence and effectiveness”. It is also a key factor for company performances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tkalac Vercic et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
<td>Internal communication includes all forms of communication within a organization and the exchange of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welch (2013)</td>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
<td>Internal communication helps to achieve employee engagement that helps organizations to be more effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrawal (2012)</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leaders are responsible for the communication flow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aherne et al. (2010)</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leaders motivate and help employees to avoid conflicts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lornikova et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leaders are responsible for the impact on teamwork performance. Explains the two leadership approaches, empowerment and directive leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearce et al. (1999)</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Discuss how the organization should lead the team with different leadership approach; empowerment leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tost et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leaders make subordinates reach their goals and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro et al. (2011)</td>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Information Sharing</td>
<td>The importance of absorbing knowledge. Individuals are analysing and processing information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmelli (2013)</td>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Information Sharing</td>
<td>Explains the purpose of setting norms that supports knowledge sharing in order to develop creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hettonen et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Information Sharing</td>
<td>Knowledge is one of the most critical resources for an organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruns (2013)</td>
<td>Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>Increases the innovation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park et al. (2009)</td>
<td>Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>Recommends multi-knowledge individuals in teams to improve flow of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parry et al. (2010)</td>
<td>Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>“Cross-functional integration refers to the collaboration and cooperation of employees from different functional areas” p. 606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piercy et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>Using all internal resources helps to increase efficiency within the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fletcher (1999)</td>
<td>Leadership, Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>Leaders are important for handling employee issues across different departments. Leadership increase positive organizational outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford &amp; Randolph (1992)</td>
<td>Information &amp; Knowledge, Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>The importance of using organizational resources by creating cross-functional teams to increase efficiency and decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Information &amp; Knowledge, Team Performance</td>
<td>Information &amp; knowledge is an important asset that helps to improve team performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop &amp; Dumitrascu (2013)</td>
<td>Internal Communication, Leadership, Information &amp; Knowledge</td>
<td>The different ways information &amp; knowledge can transfer through an organization and how leadership is important in the sense of communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 FRAME OF REFERENCES

This chapter evaluates the theoretical framework in previous chapters and state the base for the study. It summarizes findings from the theoretical framework and determines the motivation for the hypothesis of the research. The chapter will also present a conceptual framework and proposed research model for the reader.

3.1 State of the art

In order for organizations to stay competitive in the environment, organizations need to develop and maintain high performance. Over time, organizations have changed the single-based approach to a team-based approach (Schmitz, 2011; Gardner et al., 2012). Open communication within teams is crucial for team performance, affecting team productivity, cooperation, and innovation (Tost et al., 2013). Therefore, team performance will be the dependent variable in internal communication.

Based on table 1 in chapter two, the authors have identified the components within internal communication and the important factors of team performance. Despite the correlation between the components and team performance the authors determine that there is a lack of information regarding a specific business.

As stated in the previous leadership chapter by Lornikova et al. (2013) leadership has an important role in team performance. For leaders to take responsibility and guidance in a team is significant for a successful teamwork outcome (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013).

Team performance develops when leaders take control of the communication flow, divided responsibility, support members and include them in decision-making (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013; Lornikova et al. 2013).

Individuals who know their task and what’s expected from them are more able to contribute with the right information to the team and thereby be more efficient. To attain responsibility gives members confidence, which increases their participation in the group in which, they share their knowledge and skills. Members that contribute and receive feedback from the team will increase their feeling of belongingness, which results in higher motivation for the group to succeed, and this will consequently affect team performance (ibid). Therefore, the first hypothesis will be the following:

H1: There is a positive relationship between leadership and team performance.
In order for teams knowledge resources to overlap with team performance, Gardner et al. (2012) suggest that; team performance improves when team members possess the right quality and level of knowledge, the outcome improves when members are aware of the knowledge resources in the team and the distribution of knowledge resources within teams affect the ability to share and store information. Team members with a broad functional knowledge are motivated to share knowledge because they understand the value of the knowledge, however, members with deep specialized knowledge that differs from the other team member’s knowledge will lack of motivation. Studies show that teams sharing information and knowledge are more likely to improve team performance (ibid). Therefore, the authors’ second hypothesis will be following:

H2: *There is a positive relationship between information and knowledge sharing and team performance.*

All articles reviewed, in the area of cross-functionality, agree on that the approach is a success factor for teams if it is handled correctly. Cross-functionality involves the mix of different functions/departments in a team to use company resource to save time and money (Parry et al., 2010). It also increases innovation and productivity that will influence unit performance (Ford & Randolph, 1992; Bruns, 2013). Therefore, the third and last hypothesis for the study will be the following:

H3: *There is a positive relationship between cross-functionality and team performance.*

### 3.2 Conceptual Framework

The concepts from the theoretical framework in table 2 have been defined both conceptually and operationally. The conceptual definition explains the theoretical definition and the operational definition explains the authors’ interpretation of the concept and how it further will be used in this case study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
<td>Internal Communication is defined as the collective effort of the organization’s group members to gather information/data to achieve employee engagement for the organization and to create an understanding of the business. It includes all forms of communication within an organization. (Welch, 2013; Kataria et al., 2013; Tkalac Vercic et al., 2012).</td>
<td>In this research internal communication has been used to understand leadership, information &amp; knowledge sharing and cross-functionality activities within the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership is defined as the process of influencing others to pursue group goals. Responsible for the communication flow, delegate work to avoid conflicts and to increase motivation (Ahearne et al., 2010; Agrawal, 2012; Pop &amp; Dumitrascu, 2013; Tost et al., 2013).</td>
<td>Leadership is defined as the manager role that motivates and encourages team members to efficient team performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Information Sharing</td>
<td>Knowledge sharing is defined as the transaction of knowledge from a person or group to another and is referred as a source that builds creativity and innovation for teams in order to create value for an organization. Companies that use their own resources make for a more efficient and effective business and can decrease the waste of operations if they handle the information flow in the right way (Ford &amp; Randolph, 1992; Carmeli et al., 2013).</td>
<td>Information &amp; Knowledge sharing is defined as the amount of information and knowledge that is transferred within the organization that helps members to increase team performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>“Cross-functional integration refers to the collaboration and cooperation of employees from different functional areas” (Parry et al., 2010, p. 606). Multi-knowledge individuals are used in the cross-functional mixture to avoid misunderstanding and to improve the flow of information (Park et al., 2009).</td>
<td>Cross-functionality is defined as the mixture of different skills and knowledge in a group that increases efficiency and creativity for the members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Performance</td>
<td>In order for teams to perform well, they must use all resources that are required for high performance. Performing well indicates how members share specialized knowledge and how members combine the knowledge input to a collaborative outcome (Gardner et al., 2012).</td>
<td>Team performance is defined as the result of how well a organization uses all their resources to reach the best possible outcome for the company.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.1 Proposed Research Model

Figure 1 illustrates how the three different hypotheses have been connected with the theoretical concept.

FIGURE 1: Research Model
4 METHODOLOGY

Based on the research model including the hypothesis from previous chapter, a methodology chapter has been developed. This chapter explains the methodology used for collecting and analysing data in order to investigate the research question.

4.1 Research Approach

In order to develop a study, authors must decide upon a research approach. Methods such as inductive or deductive need to be chosen, as well as a quantitative or qualitative approach. These will be discussed further in the following sub chapters.

4.1.1 Inductive vs. Deductive Research

There are several issues to consider when choosing the research approach. The first issue for the authors is to identify the theory one is talking about. The second is to choose whether the data is to be collected to test or to build theories upon (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This study is a deductive research approach that explains how it is related to theoretical knowledge about the subject and how it creates a relationship with the research problem. The research problem needs to be translated into operational terms (see table 2) in relation to how data can be collected (ibid).

In contrast, the inductive research approach involves implications of the findings that are transferred back to the stock of theory. The purpose of inductive research is to build theories (Bryman & Bell, 2011), which the authors did not find relevant to do in this case study, hence a deductive approach was chosen.

4.1.2 Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

A quantitative research approach is explained as the most suitable for researchers to test the research problem that is structured with hypothesis (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005). This case study is outlined with three different hypotheses that will be tested and generalized by findings from the population, therefore, a quantitative approach will be chosen. According to Bryman & Bell (2011), a quantitative research approach is collections of data for the researchers to further understand the relationship between theory and the research problem. In the current study the purpose was to investigate the relationship between internal communication and its components. Also, how it affects
team performance, which will draw, generalized conclusions gathered from a quantitative approach.

The opposing qualitative approach is an approach that includes words rather than statistical numbers. The qualitative approach focuses on a deeper understanding, conducted with example focus groups and interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and will therefore be rejected by the authors.

4.2 Research Design

Research design is defined as a framework for conducting information that is required to solve the research problem. A research design is the foundation for conducting a project that includes three different types of designs, depending on the purpose of the research: exploratory, descriptive and causal (Malhotra, 2010). The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between internal communication and its components, as well as how it affects team performance. The investigation will be reflected on SpecmaSeals AB (see Appendix A) as a single case study design (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore, the authors developed the research to a case study design accordingly. The case study is build upon research problems including a hypothesis; therefore the authors have chosen a descriptive research design.

The objective of descriptive research design is to describe functions or characteristics of a target group (Oghazi 2014; Malhotra, 2010). A characteristic of descriptive research design includes specific hypotheses with needed defined information and a large representative population. The descriptive research is well structured and pre-planned. It collects information by different method forms such as surveys (ibid), which will be the method for the authors in order to solve the research problem.

Descriptive research can be divided by cross-sectional and longitudinal design. Cross-sectional design involves a one-time collection of information from a population (Malhotra, 2010). In this case study, the samples will be drawn from one sub-sample of respondents at one time, which indicates a single cross-sectional design. In contrast, multiple cross-sectional designs are when two or more samples of respondents are gathered at one time. Due to time and financial limitation of the study, the authors rejected the longitudinal design because it indicates samples from a population repeatedly on the same variable over time (ibid).
4.3 Data Sources

When gathering information for research there are two empirical alternatives. (1) Primary data; the gathering of relevant information for a specific purpose or study, done through interviews, surveys, experiments or observations. (2) Secondary data; using statistics or information made by someone else (Bell, 2005).

Secondary data was denied for this study. In order for the authors to find secondary data specific for the area of this research, it would be difficult and not current. Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) state that secondary data could give invalidity to the research. If, and only if, the previous study used the variables differently. To avoid that risk, the authors chose primary data collection to gain the correct and current information, both valid and relevant for the study. Through questionnaire, the authors could gain an understanding of how internal communication affects team performance.

4.4 Data Collection Method

There are different methods of collecting data within research (Malhotra, 2010). Choosing the right method requires the authors to determine: the purpose of the research, the research problem, the time and financial limitation (Ying, 2014). Preparing the data collection is essential for the research and can be a risk to the entire investigation (Ying, 2014). In this case study, a survey was developed in order to find relevant information, as well as a general meeting with Specma Seals AB to get more insight in the company situation. Survey method will be described in the next sub-chapter.

4.4.1 Survey Method

For this case study, a survey was conducted to reach out to all respondents at Specma Seals. Within a survey, various questions may be asked in several forms such as: verbal, written, or via computer capabilities (Malhotra, 2010; Oghazi et al. 2009). There are different ways of conducting a survey when doing a research; either questionnaire or structured interviews can be used. In order for the authors to reach out to a large amount of respondents, a questionnaire style was chosen. A questionnaire gives the authors the opportunity to send out questions to the population without psychically location (Mostaghel et al. 2012; Bryman & Bell, 2011).
According to Malhotra (2010), structured data collection uses a questionnaire that is prearranged by the authors. The questionnaire can be indirect or direct in accordance with respondents, depending on knowledge of the purpose. In this case study, a structure-direct styled survey was conducted with a cover letter (see Appendix B) explaining the purpose of the questionnaire (Hultman et al. 2008). One way of structuring the questions in a questionnaire is by fixed-alternative questions, which give the respondents the opportunity to select different predetermined answers. This structure is simple to handle and analyse for the authors, which gives the respondents limited answer alternatives (ibid).

There are four different way of administered a survey; phone, personal interview, mail, or electronic interviews (Oghazi 2013; Malhotra, 2010). In this case study the questionnaire was distributed by electronic interviews. In electronic interviews the respondents are asked to go to a Web location that are often linked from the mail (ibid). The questionnaire for this case study was made via surveygizmo.com, which made it possible for the authors to collect and analyze data through SPSS.

Before sending out the questionnaire, an address list of the population was developed. The mail sent out to the respondents included; a cover letter explaining the purpose, a direct link to surveygizmo.com and instructions for the questionnaire.

To give more insight to the research a meeting with Specma Seals AB was arranged. The purpose was to collect information, relevant to the questionnaire, to both support the result of the survey as well as getting a perspective of how Specma Seals AB works.

### 4.5 Population and Sampling

A population is the set of components that share the same characteristics, matching the research problem (Malhotra, 2010). There are, according to Malhotra (2010), two ways to obtain information from the population: census or a sample. A census is counting all the elements of a population that also requires a large budget in high population. However, if the population is small, census is preferable and eliminates errors. A sample refers to a subgroup of the population and is preferable in larger populations (ibid).

In this case study the population is concentrated with the employees of Specma Seal AB. Specma Seals AB has today 70 employees divided in different departments (L.
Due to the small population, a census was the enumeration and focused on the entire population.

In order for the authors to collect as much data as possible, they sent a reminder to all the respondents one week after the initial survey email was sent, four days before the appointed deadline.

### 4.5.1 Response rate

The survey for this study was sent out by e-mail to the population of Specma Seals, which included 70 employees. There was no reduction of the respondents since the authors recently updated the e-mail list. The questionnaire was available for the respondents from April 4th until April 15th 2014. In order to increase the number of respondents the authors sent out one reminder after six days. The total number of respondents was 42, which gives the authors a response rate of 60% (42/70-0.6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3: Response Rate</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Population</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Questionnaire</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Response</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.5.2 Non-response bias

In order to test the non-response bias, the authors made a comparison between early and late response. According to Malhotra (2010) and Bryman & Bell (2011), there are similarities between how late respondents and non-respondents tend to answer. There are small differences between early and late response, as well as non-response bias (ibid). In this questionnaire there wasn’t a significant difference between the early and late response that indicates how non-response bias is not a concern in this research, as illustrated in table 4.
TABLE 4: Non-response Bias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean (Early Respondents)</th>
<th>Mean (Late respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaderships</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>5.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Information Sharing</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Functionality</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Performance</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 Data collection instruments

Bryman and Bell (2005), recommend that the authors construct an operationalization table to clarify the concepts in the questionnaire, making it easier for the reader to understand the outline, meaning and foundation stone.

4.6.1 Operationalization and measurement of variables

The concepts used in the survey are based on the theories in chapter two. The concepts are: leadership (L), knowledge & information sharing (KI), cross-functionality (CF) and team performance (TP). The outline of table 5 (see next page) is as following: column one; the different concepts used, column two; the type of scale used in the questionnaire, column three; the items used, column four; where the items are adopted from, and last, column five; questioning the concept applied. Find the questionnaire in Appendix C.
### TABLE 5: Operationalization of concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Type of scale and construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Adopted From</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership (L)</strong></td>
<td>6 items, 7-point scale with (1) Strongly disagree and (7) Strongly agree</td>
<td>L1 Motivation, L2 Clear Goals, L3 Evaluation, L4 Schedule, L5 Encouragement, L6 Appreciation</td>
<td>Own (Validated by experts and pretested)</td>
<td>Questions 1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information &amp; Knowledge Sharing (IKS)</strong></td>
<td>6 items, 7-point scale with (1) Strongly disagree and (7) Strongly agree</td>
<td>IKS1 Access information, IKS2 Access knowledge, IKS3 Creativity, IKS4 Employee skills, IKS5 Asking for help, IKS6 Sharing information</td>
<td>Own (Validated by experts and pretested)</td>
<td>Questions 7-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-Functionality (CF)</strong></td>
<td>3 items, 7-point scale with (1) Strongly disagree and (7) Strongly agree</td>
<td>CF1 Regular contact, CF2 Creativity, CF3 Communication structure</td>
<td>Own (Validated by experts and pretested)</td>
<td>Questions 14-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team Performance (TP)</strong></td>
<td>4 items, 7-point scale with (1) Strongly disagree and (7) Strongly agree</td>
<td>TP1 Team work, TP2 Relationship, TP3 Daily contact, TP4 Clear goals</td>
<td>Own (Validated by experts and pretested)</td>
<td>Questions 17-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.6.2 Questionnaire design

According to Malhotra (2010), a questionnaire is a set of questions for obtaining information from the respondents. The objectives with a questionnaire are to; transform information to questions that makes it possible for the respondents to answer, motivate the respondents to get involved in the questionnaire, and to minimize response errors. Developing a questionnaire can be structured or unstructured. Unstructured questions are open-ended, which means that the respondents are able to answer with own words and often used in exploratory research that requires high interview skills. Structured questions on the other hand, give the respondents different predetermined alternatives to answer. Structured questions can be divided in various ways, for example yes or no.
questions or by scale. Scaling is a measurement tool that determines the respondent’s attitude towards a subject by numbers. The scale is divided with numbers where for example 1 can be strongly disagree and 7 as strongly agree. The respondents have different interval scale (e.g. 1-5, 1-7, or 1-9) where the respondents have to state their standing point (ibid).

The questionnaire is well prepared with a clear structure, which helps the respondents to answer the questions. The questionnaire starts with a cover letter explaining the purpose and instructions for the questionnaire (see Appendix B). The questionnaire is structured with a total of 22 questions where the first 19 are divided amongst the different research problems with scaling. The first 19 questions will have a numerical value from 1-7 where (1) represents “strongly disagree” and (7) represents “strongly agree”. The respondents will answer with one number, which will make it easy for the authors to code and analyse the answers. The last two questions will make sure that the respondents are suitable for the questionnaire and will determine the respondents current status at the organization. The authors will also leave space for comments at the end. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

4.6.3 Pretesting

To increase the validity of this research and eliminating questionnaire formulation mistakes, several academic professors within the area, reviewed the questionnaire before the dispatch. They pre-tested the outline of the survey, instructions, interpretation, as well as the questions order, substance and complexity factors (Malhotra, 2010). The questionnaire was also used for a pilot study carried out on three random respondents within the area of business. The study was executed to disambiguate the questions, to see that the respondents understood the formulation and instructions correctly. By doing this, the authors could adjust the mistakes before the dispatch and increase the validity of the research.

4.7 Data Analysis Method

When the survey was complete and collected, the data had to be analysed (Oghazi, 2009). The data analysis supports information that will help with the resolution to the research problem and is an important step in research. It’s significant to decide on the right method. One must also depend the choice of method on factors such as problem
definition, research design and the features of the collected survey information (Oghazi et al. 2012; Malhotra, 2003). The statistical technique, that has to be considered as well, is based on the relationship of the hypothesis as well as the measurement scale used in the study (Malhotra, 2003; Oghazi, 2009; Shah 2010). The methods used are stated in the subchapter below. The collected data, from the questionnaire, is for this research handled in SPSS (version 22).

4.7.1 Data examination and Descriptive statistics

The first step of handling the collected data was downloading the survey results directly from surveygizmo.com into the statistical analysis program, SPSS. The answers had to be converted and rearranged into numbers, which helped the authors more easily compare the variables and for the data to be correctly analysed in the program (Malhotra, 2003). This is called descriptive analysis and according to Creswell (2014), is described as the results through means (“the average score”), standard deviation (“SD: a measure of the dispersal or range of scores, calculated as the square root of the variance”), and range scores (“the distance between the highest and the lowest scores”) (Cohen et al. 2007, p. 504). In the descriptive data analysis the authors also processed missing data (e.g. no answers), outliers (e.g. a answers totally different from the remaining answers of that question) and normality (e.g. “the shape of the data distribution for an individual metric variable and its correspondence to the normal distribution” (Oghazi, 2009, p. 91)) (Malhotra, 2003; Oghazi, 2009; Malhotra, 2010).

To get a more correct outcome of the research and a corresponding representation of the result of the target population, the authors skimmed the results to find outliers with extreme values (Malhotra, 2010). The authors also had to recalculate some results due to missing answers on some items in the questionnaire. So the mean value from all answers of that precise question was calculated (Malhotra, 2003).

4.7.2 Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis is when there are calculations of the relationship between one dependent variable and of two or more independent variables. In order to measure the relationship, there is a formula that calculates the R-Squared (R2) in regression. R2 shows the relationship on a scale from -1 to 1, where 0 represents no relationship between the variables. If e.g. R2 equals 1 there is a positive relation
between the variables and the dependent variable will increase with accordance to the independent variable. The same trend occurs if the R2 equals -1 (Malhotra, 2010).

In order to test the hypothesis for the study a Beta value was determined from the multiple regression analysis. The Beta value explains if a hypothesis is supported or not by calculating how an increase in the independent variable will affect the dependent variable. Depending on how the hypothesis is stated (positive or negative) the Beta can determine the relation e.g. a positive hypothesis with a negative Beta value will be rejected. In a multiple regression analysis, statistical significance must be tested to show how valid the Beta value is (Malhotra, 2010; Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Malhotra (2010), there should be a significance of 95% that represent a value of 0.05 in order to trust the result.

In this study, the authors chose a multiple regression to interpret more knowledgeable information between the different variables.

4.8 Quality Criteria

There are two criteria to consider in order reaching high quality and rigour of research, reliability and validity. There is no precise definition of the two criteria, however, reliability explains how research using the same measurement can be repeated. Validity on the other hand, explains how the research is founded and how well the intended answer is answered (Oghazi et al. 2012; Malhotra, 2010). The following sub-chapters will explain three validity criteria’s and reliability for this case study.

4.8.1 Content Validity

In order to increase the validity of the research, the authors let academic professors, with expertise in the field of study, read through the survey. With the response from the academic professors, the authors could make improvements and adjustments to the questions. The authors also let “typical respondents” read through the questions to see if the instructions and formulation was understood. The three “typical respondents” who completed the pilot survey also had an expertise in the field.

4.8.2 Construct validity

Construct validity is defined as a measurement for researchers to test hypothesis and see the relevance of the concept (Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Cohen et al.
(2007), there are two significant techniques that should be addressed when discussing the construct validity. (1) Convergent, meaning “that different methods for researching the same construct should give a relatively high inter-correlation” and (2) discriminant, meaning, “that the construct in question is different from other potentially similar constructs” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 138).

One way to measure the construct validity within any given research is by the Pearson correlation test, which was used in this research with SPSS. Pearson correlation test measures the correlation between the concepts of the study. If the correlation is above 0.9 the variables measurements are almost the same in the study. However, if it is less than 0.9 the variables in the study will not measure the same things (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

4.8.3 Criterion validity

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), criterion validity is the correlation of the applied components within the study, containing the dispatched questionnaire. To get the criterion validity for this research, the authors had to statistically test the hypothesis by conducting a multiple regression analysis. The beta value that appears in the analysis will determine if the hypotheses of the study are supported or not.

4.8.4 Reliability

Reliability can, according to Cohen et al. (2007), be described as precision and accuracy. Meaning if the study were to be repeated, the result would be comparable to the previous results (Cohen et al. 2007; Yin, 2008). For a study to be reliable the result of the survey should, for every repeated implementation, get a similar outcome (Cohen et al. 2007). Oghazi (2009) discuss two types of reliability measures, (1) repeatability and (2) internal consistency. Repeatability is “consistency of the results when data is collected in the same way at another point in time” and internal consistency is the stability of the measurement of the questions used (Oghazi, 2009, p. 98). To test the repeatability, in order to give this research higher reliability, was rejected due to time constraints. Such a test would otherwise have been done through an additional data gathering (Cohen et al. 2007; Oghazi, 2009). To test the internal consistency, the authors calculated the average of the possible reliability coefficients. The calculation is called Cronbach’s Alpha and is carried out through a split-half technique (i.e. questions of the survey get unsystematically divided and compared) to get a comparable value
(see chapter 6.2) (Bryman & Bell, 2005; Cohen, 2007; Oghazi, 2009). The value should according to Malhotra (2003) be above 0.6 to give internal consistency to the research. The questions of the survey, for this research, are not supported by any previous items within the area or have been issued in another research, so a comparison of the results cannot be made to present stability to this research.

4.9 Chapter summary

Table 6 states the procedures used to conduct this study. Throughout the chapters the authors have explained each method academically as well as explained how the authors for this case study interpret it.

**TABLE 6: Research Methodology Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Methodology</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research approach</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research design</strong></td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data sources</strong></td>
<td>Primary Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data collection method</strong></td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data collection instrument</strong></td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data analysis method</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Regressions Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 CASE STUDY

In this chapter the authors explain the background of this case study with Specma Seals AB in focus. The chapter gives a fundamental explanation of how Specma Seals AB works with internal communication.

5.1 Case Study Interview

Today Specma Seals AB has around 70 employees working in different departments (outbound sales, inbound sales, PMT (pro-maintenance team), production, technical, economy, business control) all with a partial part of the organization. During the last years Specma Seals AB has changed their business strategy in order to increase customer portfolio with higher interaction between departments. In their previous process, Specma worked with single sales, where the customer did not have a specific contact person at Specma. This process also made it harder for the seller to fulfil all customer needs when discussing, e.g. technical issues in a negotiation. Specma Seals works with high complex product/solutions, making the technical point of view a critical area to discuss (L. Sjöberg, personal communication, 2014-01-27).

Today Specma Seals uses, as the authors would call, a “trinity” when interacting with a customer. The authors refer to “trinity” as three internal departments that include: outbound sales, inbound sales, and a technical representative. This process helps Specma Seals use as much skills as possible to meet the customers’ needs. The process is suppose to increase the interaction between departments with information and knowledge sharing with each other but lacks a good structure of internal communication (L. Sjöberg, personal communication, 2014-01-27).

The authors were given an assignment to investigate what things, internally, could affect team performance in this new sale strategy. There are no structured guidelines for how Specma should work with their internal communication channels. Due to the recent changes in Specma’s business strategy, Specma wants to know in what areas they can increase the internal communication channels that will lead to higher team performance. Efficient internal communication will help this new “trinity” to more easily find their new roles and working progress in teams, with the purpose to increase sales and customer satisfaction.
6 ANALYSIS & RESULT

This chapter explains the data gathered from the questionnaire in a quantitative case study. The data presented has been analysed in SPSS and will describe the data examination, Pearson correlation, Cronbach’s alpha, and multiple regression analysis in separate sub-chapters. The chapter will end with a discussion connected to the theoretical framework.

6.1 Cronbach’s Alpha

In order to test the reliability of the variables the Cronbach’s alpha test was used in SPSS. The results from Cronbach’s alpha indicate consistency and reliability with the three independent variables and the dependent variable; 0.874 (L), 0.698 (IKS), 0.693 (CF), and 0.689 (TP) (see table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7: Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Knowledge Sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross- Functionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 Pearson Correlation Analysis

To test the validity of the questions used, in this research, the authors created a Pearson correlation test. The correlation between the internal communication components all had a correlation below 0.9, which can be seen in table 8. The result of a low correlation shows that the four variables are measuring different factors, which gives a high construct validity.
**TABLE 8: Pearson Correlation Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Information &amp; Knowledge Sharing</th>
<th>Cross-functionality</th>
<th>Team Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information &amp; Knowledge Sharing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.530**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.530**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-Functionality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>.511</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team Performance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.528**</td>
<td>.629**</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

### 6.3 Descriptive Statistics

The questionnaire that was sent out to the respondents by surveygizmo.com contained 19 questions regarding internal communication. The questionnaire was sent out to 70 respondents that generated 42 respondents with a response rate of 60%. The questionnaire did not contain any respondents that were not suitable for the survey. However, the authors skimmed the respondents for missing data, which was recalculated with the mean value of the remaining answers of that question.

Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics for internal communication. The questionnaire contained a 7-point Likert scale with a minimum answer of 1 and a maximum answer of 7. The mean of the respondents of each individual question was calculated as well as the standard deviation, which can be seen in table 9.
TABLE 9: Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
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6.4 Multiple Regressions Analysis

This case study is stated with three hypotheses to test the relationship between internal communication and team performance. In order to test the hypothesis a multiple regression analysis was made. Table 10 illustrate the correlation between the different independent variables and the dependent variable and if the different hypotheses were supported or not.

TABLE 10: Multiple Regression Analysis

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Hypothesis test</th>
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<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>L \rightarrow TP</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.087*</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>IKS \rightarrow TP</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td>0.001**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>CF \rightarrow TP</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * P-value<0.01, ** P-value<0.1
The independent variable from the multiple regression analysis tested the adjusted R-square to see the correlation to the dependent variable (TP). According to Malhotra (2011), the adjusted R square can be from -1 to 1 where 0 indicates no correlation. The independent variables got an adjusted R square value of 0.474 that indicates a relation between the variables where 47% variance of the questions was related to the dependent variable (TP). In order to test if the values are valid or not and to see the statistical significance to the dependent variable, the p-value was measured for the independent variables, 0.087 (L), 0.001 (IKS), and 0.176 (CF).

In order for the authors to see if the hypothesis were supported or not, the Beta value was taken into account. The Beta value is reflected on the p-value to see how valid the values are. The Beta values for the independent variables are, 0.246 (L), 0.481 (IKS), and 0.164 (CF). All the hypotheses were stated positive with two positive Beta values, which indicated that hypotheses one and two were supported. Due to high statistical significance on the third hypotheses, 0.176 (CF), the hypothesis is rejected by the authors.

6.5 Result

Jimenez-Castillo and Sanchez-Perez (2013) argue that internal communication focuses on information and knowledge sharing activities within organizations, which are led by leaders that have the responsibility to distribute information and knowledge to employees in the organization and across departments.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between internal communication and its components and how it affects team performance. The authors will further describe, with the empirical data, how the components from internal communication affect team performance.

6.5.1 Leadership

The empirical data from the questionnaire show that there is a positive relationship between leadership and team performance. The responses from the questionnaire show that leaders within Specma Seals motivate and evaluate the daily activities. As stated in the theoretical framework, team performance develops when leaders take control of the communication flow, divide responsibility, support members
and include them in decision-making (Pop & Dumitrascu, 2013; Lornikova et al. 2013).

6.5.2 Information and Knowledge sharing

The empirical data from the questionnaire shows that there is a positive relationship between information and knowledge sharing and team performance. The data from the response shows that individuals share information and knowledge with each others and that sharing knowledge increases the creativity in teams. According to Gardner et al (2012), team members with a broad functional knowledge are motivated to share knowledge because they understand the value of the knowledge. Studies show that teams who share information and knowledge are more likely to improve team performance.

6.5.3 Cross-functionality

The examination of the data from cross-functionality shows that there is a reliability towards the question, however, there is high statistical significance between cross-functionality and team performance, therefore, this hypotheses will be rejected.
6.6 Chapter Summary

Based on the result of the data analysis, the authors can see that there is a correlation between the first two variables (hypotheses 1 & 2). The first two variables were supported while hypothesis 3 was rejected.

![Conceptual Model Diagram]

**FIGURE 2: Conceptual Model**

Based on the conceptual model (see figure 2) the authors can conclude that it is important for Specma Seals AB to understand and work towards increased efficiency in leadership and information & knowledge sharing in order to increase team performance. The empirical data also investigated how cross-functionality did not have a statistical significance to team performance and should therefore not be prioritised by Specma Seals.
7 CONCLUSION & IMPLICATION

This chapter will present the conclusion of this paper, including the answer to the research question and the major findings of this research. It will also discuss theoretical and managerial implications, propositions for future research as well as recommendation to Specma Seals AB and the study’s limitations.

7.1 Conclusion

It can be concluded that employees that have a good relation with each other increase team performance. Leaders are those who control the work in teams and are told to motivate and encourage employees with scheduled meetings in order to increase team performance. From the empirical data, it can also be concluded that information sharing creates higher creativity, and that helping others with own expertise will affect team performance positively.

The authors have interpreted the results from the analysis with the empirical findings for this case study in order to conclude what is best suited for Specma Seals regarding team performance.

7.1.1 Leadership

Seen from the result the authors can conclude that Specma Seals should focus on their leadership skills. In their trinity a specific leader should be pointed out to lead the team and motivate them with their daily activities. They should also set clear goals and instructions for the team, which will help the team to achieve common goals. One aspect of leadership at Specma Seals is that leaders do not appreciate the idea’s from co-workers, which needs to be improved.

7.1.2 Information and Knowledge Sharing

From the result the authors can also determine the importance of information & knowledge sharing. Due to this, the employees at Specma Seals answered with an average that they have access to all the information within the company as well as the different competences. Employees at Specma Seals all agrees that knowledge sharing creates higher creativity that will help to increase team performance, however, there are some exceptions in how employees are willing to ask others for help. The average score
of how employees feel about asking others for help show that there are positive relations between co-workers with a few respondents that feels uncomfortable asking for help. On the other hand almost all the respondents were willing to help others with their knowledge and expertise on request.

7.1.3 Cross-Functionality

When it comes to cross-functionality, Specma Seals show a neutral outcome in the matter. The authors can see that there is no direct communication channel within the company, which replicates the outcome that only some employees at Specma Seals have regular contact with other departments. The result does however show a minor difference regarding the creativity factor, where the employees state that their creativity is increased when they work together with other functional areas in the company. The authors draw the conclusion that the ones supporting the creativity factor are the ones that have the regular interaction with other departments.

7.1.4 Team Performance

Regarding team performance, employees at Specma Seals do have a good relationship with each other, even though not the majority thinks that working in a team helps their work performance. They do have daily contact within the team and work against common goals, which can be based on how leaders structure the teamwork.

7.1.5 Research Problem

The research problem for this research was; “Does internal communication affect team performance?” The authors can state that some parts of internal communication do affect team performance, to be specific the two components leadership and information & knowledge sharing has a positive effect on team performance. The third component, cross-functionality of internal communication does not affect team performance.

7.2 Implications

This subchapter will present two implication factors, the theoretical and the managerial perspective. The first section discusses the theoretical implications of the research, only giving a standpoint based on the theory meanwhile the second part, the managerial implication, will approach the practical matters concluded from the study.
7.2.1 Theoretical Implications

The result of this research is proven to correspond with the theories used in the thesis. Based on theory, leaders should control the flow of information and take responsibility for the distribution of tasks. This accusation matches the result of the data analysis based on leadership, which also points out the importance of motivating and appreciating ideas of the subordinates.

The empirical data showed that people must be aware of the different resources, such as knowledge and information, which other people possess. This claim has also been stated by theory. However, it is pointed out that there could be uncertainties about asking others for help.

References state that cross-functionality is an important component in internal communication when increasing team performance. Cross-functionality is used to save money and resources and to increase creativity, which will affect the entire organisation. The findings in this matter show that cross-functionality does not have a positive relation with Specma Seals’s team performance.

The authors state that Specma Seals incorporate leadership and, information and knowledge sharing activities. In a theoretical point of view, this gives stronger validity to both the used theories and this study.

7.2.2 Managerial Implications

This research has focused on Specma Seals AB and their need for understanding the important factors of internal communication. This managerial implication chapter is especially for the managers at Specma Seals but are explained in a general way so that all managers, within all organization, that need to increase team performances within their organization can take part of this study.

The results show that companies will get a positive outcome if they increase their knowledge and interest for internal communication. Two of its components; leadership and information & knowledge sharing are concluded to affect team performance successfully. However, the third component; cross-functionality does not support the same outcome. But should for that case, not be ignored. The detailed managerial implications for the three components are as followed;

First, companies should focus on the leaders and their leadership skill. Its important that leaders know how and why they are leaders as well as what the role
implicates. To increase leadership skills and notifications of the role, regular leadership training session should be implicated.

Secondly, put effort in increasing the flow of information & knowledge within the company. Companies should make sure that leaders know their role, to control the flow of information to the subordinates. The more information the employees have the more everyone knows what to do, how to do it and when to do it, as well as why to do it. To know the common goal of the company increases motivation and productivity. To ease the process and make sure everyone get the information & knowledge needed, companies should focus on implementing a suitable ERP system or similar. In this way everyone has a platform to find, share and increase information.

Third, even though cross-functionality didn’t had a relationship with team performance, it doesn’t mean that its not an important factor for managers to consider. Cross-functionality is still a positive component when it comes to creativity and innovation projects, for example, use cross-functionality to increase the creativity of company resources, to solve company problems or to rationalize brainstorming sessions.

### 7.3 Limitations

According to the authors, the main limitation for this study is that it is a case study, focusing on one company. Meaning that the conclusion of the result may not be applicable for other organization.

This research investigates how components within internal communication affect team performance in Specma Seals. In this research leadership, information & knowledge sharing, and cross-functionality were discussed to measure team performance, however, there are several other components that could be discussed to increase team performance. The explained variance or R2 that was discussed in previous chapter indicates that there are several other factors to utilize in increased team performance.

In order to increase the reliability of this research, there could be an increased number of respondents, where the research investigates more companies to compare with.

This research is a quantitative research where the investigation answers if the hypotheses are supported or not. Therefore, this research will not explain in-depth how
and why the hypothesis was rejected or supported, which could be done in a qualitative research.

7.4 Future Research

For further research, the authors recommend several factors that could be investigated. As mentioned in the limitation, there could be other components included that affect team performance. There could also, for future research, be investigated in-depth how and why internal communication affects team performance.

In this case study, Specma Seals is a B2B company that sells complex products and services to customers in the Scandinavian market. The authors recommend to further investigating how the existing team performance affects customer satisfaction for Specma Seals customers. There can also be different moderators that can have an impact on the outcome, such as years of working at the company and how different departments perceive the components. It could also be interesting to investigate how competitors or similar businesses work to increase their team performance and how the retention of their customers affects.

7.5 Reflections

The authors are satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, which showed that two hypotheses were supported. There has been several factors to consider when working with this research, such as time and financial limitations. The case company studied, Specma Seals AB, is located three hours from the authors base, which made it difficult to have physical contact with the organization on a regular basis. Due to time limitation on the survey, the authors could not wait for more respondents. However, the authors had great contact with Specma Seals and had monthly meetings that gave access to all information necessary for the research.

The authors used SPSS as a tool to analyse the data, which made it easy to draw conclusions. The authors also got help from scheduled tutoring sessions and seminar meetings as well as external individuals.
7.6 Concluding Remark

The importance of choosing a communication strategy has always been essential for organizations. There are several factors to consider for organizations with communication, there is internal and external communication. This academic study primarily focuses on internal communication.

Due to daily changes in the work environment, organizations needs to update and increase the daily work of their employees to insure total customer satisfaction as well as employee work efficiency. In regards to information & knowledge sharing and leadership, the overall effectiveness of internal communication is improved with an effective internal communications strategy. With our conductive research baring vital evidence that proves how leadership and information & knowledge sharing, as a part of internal communication, positively affect team performance, the authors conclude that this process is essential in today’s rapidly changing business environment.
REFERENCES


Oghazi, P. (2009), ”Supply Chain Management – An Empirical study of Swedish Manufacturing Firms’ Enterprise Systems Adoption, Supply Chain Integration, Competition Capability and Performance”. Luleå University, Luleå


APPENDIX A Organizational Facts

SPECMA SEALS AB

Specma Seals AB is an affiliated company to Latour Industries International AB. Latour Industries International AB exist of 9 business units that all specialises in the area of industry engineering and industrial trade. Latour Industries International AB is one of four active lines of businesses within the main concern, Investment AB Latour (Specma Seals AB, 2014-01-21). The total concern has a turnover of approximately 1.4 billion SEK (Annual Report, Investment AB Latour, 2012).

Specma Seals AB is a Scandinavian manufactory company that produce gaskets and seals for energy and processing industries and its subcontractors. The company was founded in 1978 in Gothenburg, Sweden, where the headquarter and manufactory is located today. Specma seals business idea is to work together with its customers with world leading sealing technology and to improve the customers business. Today Specma Seals offers high quality products and solutions with the customers in focus, in order to solve engineer and environmental-related problems. In order for Specma Seals to stay competitive and putting the customer in focus, Specma Seals is constantly training their staff with new techniques and to different environmental-related situations. The staff is trained within the own organization and is striving to minimize injuries in a dangerous working environment (Specma Seals AB, 2014-01-21).

Today Specma Seals is offering a broad range of separate sealing products and services to the market. Specma Seals also offers solutions that includes; customized products, documentation, services on the field, education, 24H duty call center, and technical consulting to the market (Specma Seals AB, 2014-01-21).

APPENDIX B Cover Letter

We are two undergraduate students from Linnaeus University in Växjö, Sweden. We are currently writing our bachelor thesis with SpecmaSeals AB. The purpose of the thesis is to investigate the relationship between internal communication and its components (Leadership, information & knowledge sharing, and cross-functionality) and how it affects team performance at SpecmaSeals AB. Your answers and participation are of great importance for this research.

The questionnaire contains 21 questions regarding how employees at SpecmaSeals AB work with internal communication when it comes to team performance. The questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes to fill out and is anonymous.

The link below will take you to the questionnaire:
www.surveygizmo.com

Thank you for your participation!

Gustaf Sjöberg & Denise Madsen

For further contact with us regarding the questionnaire and results, please feel free to contact us for more information by e-mail: Gustaf Sjöberg, gs222bv@student.lnu.se or Denise Madsen, dm222bt@student.lnu.se
APPENDIX C Questionnaire

Internal Communication Survey
Leadership Questions

1. My superior motivates my daily activities

   Strongly Disagree  Moderately Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Neutral  Slightly Agree  Moderately Agree  Strongly Agree

2. My superior sets clear goals and instructions for me

   Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

3. My superior frequently evaluates my activities

   Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

4. My superior has regular scheduled meetings with my team

   Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

5. My superior encourages me to transfer organizational information within the company

   Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

6. My superior does not appreciate my inputs of ideas

   Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree
7. I have access to information within the company

Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

8. I have access to knowledge within the company

Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

9. Knowledge sharing creates higher creativity

Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

10. I am aware of the different employee skills within Specma Seals AB

Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

11. I feel uncomfortable asking others for help

Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree

12. I will share the information that I have, if somebody in the company is in need of that

Strongly disagree  Moderately disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Moderately agree  Strongly agree
13. I have regular contact with the other departments

- Strongly disagree
- Moderately disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Moderately agree
- Strongly agree

14. I feel more creative when working together with different departments in the company

- Strongly disagree
- Moderately disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Moderately agree
- Strongly agree

15. There are no structured communication channels between the departments

- Strongly disagree
- Moderately disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Moderately agree
- Strongly agree
# Internal Communication Survey

## Team Performance Questions

16. **Working in a team increases my work performance**

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17. **I have a poor relationship with my team members**

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18. **I have daily contact with my team members**

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19. **Me and my team work towards clear and common goals**

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<th>Slightly disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
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</table>
20. Numbers of years working at SpecmaSeals AB

- 0 - 2
- 2 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 <

21. I am working within _______ at SpecmaSeals AB

- Outbound sales
- Production
- Inbound sales
- PMT
- Economy
- Technical
- Business control
- Other

22. Other comments

[Blank space for comments]