Digital Internal Communication
An investigation of digital communication tools used within three organizations and employees’ attitudes towards these tools.

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An investigation of communication tools used within three organizations and employees’ attitudes towards them

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Abstract

Background
An organization’s most critical and important stakeholder are the employees and it is argued that a well-informed employee is a productive employee. Previous research present that the advances into a digitized workplace creates new opportunities for organizations to manage its internal communication. Studies discuss intranet and e-mail and how these digital communication tools are changing the way internal information is communicated and transferred. Social media is another digital communication tool identified which organizations have implemented for their internal communication. The opportunity for interactions among the different levels in the organizational hierarchy is increased with the implementation of these digital communication tools. Although, studies show that information tend to get stuck when reaching middle managers and the information tend to get filtered before reaching operative workers. Studies also discuss the importance of traditional face-to-face communication and how it is used as a communication tool.
**Purpose**

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze digital communication tools. How they affect the communication flow throughout three levels in the organizational hierarchy. In order to understand the communication flow, employees’ attitudes towards the digital communication tools are studied; what they use and how they use them.

**Methodology and Method**

The thesis is a qualitative research with an interpretive philosophy, an exploratory purpose and an abductive approach. The empirical data for this study is collected through semi-structured interviews with employees from Swedavia, Port of Norrköping and Ovako.

**Conclusion**

One major finding of this study was that digital internal communication mostly acts as a complement to face-to-face communication. Digital communication tools have not been implemented to the degree that it fully excludes the personal contact. Employees’ attitude towards digital communication tools are highly dependent on their need of face-to-face communication and whether the situation is simple or complex. Although, the authors have found that digital communication tools which contribute to interactivity among the employees of an organization are shown to have the best effect on the communication flow. Digital communication tools such as social media are shown to contribute with interaction, with leads to a functional communication flow throughout the organizational hierarchy. However, intranet and e-mail did not contribute with interactivity to the same extent as social media.
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1. Introduction

This section will introduce the reader to the subject matter by presenting the background of this thesis. Further, the problem discussion will be narrowed down to the purpose and the research questions. Finally, delimitations of the thesis as well as definitions will be stated.

1.1 Background

The needs of finding new ways to communicate is driving a revolution in corporate organizations and has done for the past decade (Hammer & Champy, 1993). Nowadays, customer preferences are shifting from standardized products to products that have special features and are custom made. The product life cycle is becoming shorter which means that organizations have to adapt to this change by communicating with its primary stakeholder (Huang & Kleiner, 2005). Employees are seen as one of the most important and critical stakeholder for any organization since they can be the organizations’ strongest supporter or the worst critic if expectations are not met (Kang & Sung, 2017).

Two scopes are identified as organizational communication, the internal and external communication. External communication focus on communicating with consumers, community and external stakeholders. Internal communications is the communication prepared and established within the workforce of the organization (Sebastião, Zulato & Trindade, 2017), which is the focus of this thesis. According to Welch and Jackson (2007), internal communication is the strategic management collaboration between stakeholders in the entire organizational hierarchy. The internal communication can vary between informal and formal communication, where examples of chats between employees exist as well as formal corporate communication that is communicated from senior executives to all employees (Welch, 2015).

Traditionally, upward communication has been used more frequently as an internal communication system in organizations than downward communication. Downward communication flows from top managers to middle managers and then to operative workers, according to the organizational structure. Upward communication is generally feedback from operative workers to middle managers or top managers. It also includes feedback from middle managers to top managers. Although, even if this type of feedback is important and valuable, it also contains risks (Huang & Kleiner, 2005).
Despite the relevance of internal communication, the field is still understudied in the digital age (Welch, 2015). The advances into a digitized workplace creates new opportunities for organizations to manage and facilitate internal communication. Although, organizations face difficulties to choose between all the available digital communication tools (Lipiäinen, Karjaluoto & Nevalainen, 2014). Beirne and Cronack (2009) discuss digital communication tools, such as intranet and e-mail; how these are changing the traditional communication landscape. Despite the role of digital communication tools, findings show the importance of face-to-face communication and how it is used as an informal communication tool. On the contrary, digital communication tools are normally used as a formal communication tools within organizations (Lipiäinen et al., 2014).

1.2 Problem Discussion

One might argue that a digital workplace is no longer optional. It is essential for organizations to have a developed digitized internal communication system when communicating with employees. A well-informed employee is a productive employee (Cowan, 2014) and an effective internal communication system creates opportunities for employees. Employees can gain greater knowledge about the organization and the opportunity for interactions among the different levels in the organizational hierarchy is provided. When communicating within organizations, information tends to get stuck in the middle when being transferred along the organizational levels (Smith, 2005). By including digitalization at the workplace, organizations can reduce communication barriers, increase productivity and strengthen company culture (Rossi, 2016).

Internal communication is important when building a transparency between levels and departments in the organizational hierarchy. On the other hand, too much communication and constant updates are shown to have a negative effect on employees. By constantly being available and online, one is often interrupted. Furthermore, the quality of the communication decreases when employees constantly are expected to be available, since they tend to read and send things in a hurry and therefore miss out on important information (MacCormick, Dery & Kolb, 2012). In the process of communicating throughout the organizational levels, the transfer of information tends to get filtered before reaching operative workers. The reason why filtering
occurs is connected to the lack of engagement among middle managers and their further transmission of information (Smith, 2005).

Generalization is fundamental in the research process, since it deducts time when making new research observations and previous studies can be applied (Mayring, 2007). There is a misleading view of digital internal communication since other studies solely focuses on top managers and their opinions. A one sided perspective contributes to a lack of a generalized picture. The absence of the middle managers and the operative workers’ opinions and attitudes towards digitized internal communication creates a brief overview of the topic. By hearing top managers’ intentions and then follow up with how employees perceives it gives a more authentic and consistent study (Mishra, Boynton & Mishra, 2014).

Given this information on the importance of digitalization at the workplace, the authors are interested in investigating digital communication tools. The main focus is on intranet, e-mail and social media. The focus is on its effectiveness and how these tools affect the communication flow among the departments and different levels in the organizational hierarchy. Employees from three organizational levels are investigated from three organizations for the empirical study to answer the research questions and fulfil the purpose of this thesis. Furthermore, it is of interest for the authors to study how employees’ thoughts and attitudes are towards the tools used. The authors of this thesis find a gap in previous research where the focus solely was on top managers’ opinions and attitudes towards internal communication in a digitized workplace. Operative workers have not been previously studied in an larger extent within digitized internal communication. Therefore, for this thesis, top managers, middle managers and operative workers are studied. According to previous research, there is a lack of a generalized view of internal communication. The authors of this thesis decide to study three organizations since previous studies solely include one organization. This is done in order to get a generalized picture of the subject. The perspective of this thesis is from the employees’ point of view since the focus is on internal communication and its impact on employees.
1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this thesis is to analyze digital communication tools. How they affect the communication flow throughout three levels in the organizational hierarchy. In order to understand the communication flow, employees’ attitudes towards the digital communication tools are studied; what they use and how they use them.

1.4 Research Questions
(1) If and how the use of digital communication tools affect the communication flow throughout three levels in the organizational hierarchy and (2) employees’ attitudes towards digital communication tools.

1.5 Delimitations
The authors decide not to focus on a particular industry. Therefore, the chosen organizations are not connected by any specific sector, the focus is rather on how digital communication tools are looked upon within each organization. This is done in order to receive a generalized picture of how digital communication tools affect communication flow in organizational hierarchy. However, no other organizations are examined than the three stated in this thesis. When referring to stakeholders in internal communication there are more than just employees but for this thesis no other stakeholder than employees are studied.

1.6 Definitions

*Digital*
Digital is used as a synonym for “made with computers” (Fischer, 2011).

*Digitize*
The process of converting information, communication and assets into a digital form. When IT and business become connected through digital transformation (Luppicini, 2013)

*Internal communication*
Internal communication is the strategic management collaboration between stakeholders at all levels within organizations (Welch, 2015). In this thesis the authors focuses solely on the employees when referring to stakeholders.
Digital communication tools
When the term digital communication tools is mentioned in this thesis the authors mainly refers to e-mail and intranet since these two tools are most commonly used by organizations. Further on, the authors also investigate if and how social media is implemented as a digital communication tool.

Generalization
When researching one or a few observations and out of those facts forming a broader statement or concept. In other words, when findings of one study can be applied to other situations, making it to a general principle (Mayring, 2007).

Traditional communication tools
Within this thesis, the authors compare traditional communication tools to digital communication tools. However, since this thesis does not focus on traditional ways of communicating, there are no section for traditional communication tools. Traditional communication tools are corporate TV, wall posters and corporate magazines which are all one-to-many in terms of communication, these are not as common in organizations today (Lipiäinen et al., 2014).

Organizational hierarchy
Organizational hierarchy describes an organizational structure, also called a tall organization. There are many hierarchical levels where every entity except for one, is a subordinate to another entity (Dalton, Todor, Spendolini, Fielding & Porter, 1980).

Organizational levels
When the term organizational levels are mentioned in this thesis, the authors refer to the three identified positions within the organizational hierarchy: top managers, middle managers and operative workers.

Operative workers
In this thesis the workers who work close to the customers, in production, manufacturing or report to a supervisor are referred to as operative workers.

Middle Managers
Middle managers are defined as the employees operating in the layer between the operative workers and the top managers (Smith, 2005).

*Top Managers*
Top managers are defined as the role models or visual leaders of an organization whose decisions which in some way affect all part of the organization (Dabbish & Kraut, 2006).
2. Frame of Reference

In this section, the frame of reference is presented. It includes academic literature of internal communication, internal communication systems, digital internal communication and its tools. Three organizational levels are also presented. Finally, the last section explains a theoretical framework as a base for conducting this thesis’ empirical study.

2.1 Internal Communication

Internal communication is a frequently discussed topic and the phenomenon carries a long history, although it is considered as a developing topic with several descriptions (Smith, 2005). It is defined as the transaction and interaction among employees within an organization and is therefore a crucial part of all levels in an organization (Berger, 2008). The role of internal communication is illustrated by Quirke (2008) as the convey of sufficient information for employees in order for them to perform their work tasks. It is communication among the departments of an organization as well as communication from one level to another in the organizational hierarchy, such as communication from top managers to middle managers and to operative workers (Dolphin, 2005). Internal messages intend to communicate changes within the organization, inform employees and coordinate day-to-day activities (Welch & Jackson, 2007).

Internal communication is necessary for individuals to achieve goals, and it is a vital part of socialization, decision-making, problem-solving and change-management processes (Berger, 2008). Communicating a major change, such as a management change or restructuring, is challenging for organizations. Although, effective internal communication often leads to successful change. Organizations should prioritize to create an open dialogue climate between departments and organizational levels by its internal communication (Cowan, 2014). Board of directors formulate the content of the internal communication, such as the vision and goals of the organization (Smith, 2005). Internal communication functions as a motivational factor to increase employees’ dedication and overall work performance (Mumby, 2013). It contributes to a well performed organization since it helps to motivate, build trust and create an organizational culture (Berger, 2008).
2.1.1 Internal communication Systems

There are several different aspects of how internal communication function in practice. They are presented as one-way and two-way communication (Welch & Jackson, 2007). One-way communication is referred to as asymmetrical communication whereas two-way communication is described as symmetrical communication. One-way communication is illustrated as communication flowing in a top-down approach, designed to control employees’ behavior on top managers’ premises (Men, 2014). It is a one-way approach of sending messages, solely functioning to inform the receiver (Kalla, 2005). Another point of view is to look at one-way communication as downward or upward communication (Blumer, 2016).

The term downward communication clarifies that information communicated is directed from top managers to employees at other organizational levels (Blumer, 2016). The characterization of upward communication is that communication flow from operative workers, through middle managers to top managers. The operative workers provide top managers with feedback about current issues and problems. They also communicate information regarding their position in achieving the organizational goal (Tourish & Robson, 2006). Although, upward communication occurs far less frequently than downward communication (Blumer, 2016). Chandler and Munday (2016) explains that efficient upward communication helps to build trust and confidence among employees.

On the contrary, two-way communication aims to create a dialogue between the levels in an organization (Men, 2014). Some would argue that two-way communication is the most effective form since it results in action or decision making (Kalla, 2005). What structure and size an organization operate with affects how the internal communication is done in practice, for example if it is a flat or hierarchical organization. Information can be communicated face-to-face. Face-to-face communication have been repeatedly argued as a favorable communication strategy (Smith, 2005). Communicating face-to-face are referred to as a two-way and oral communication between two or more persons. All parties involved in the conversation are physically present (Kappas & Krämer, 2011).

2.2 Digital internal communication

Since the mid-1990s there is a shift towards the use of internet-related technologies within internal communication. There is a different approach than before in the way top managers
communicate with employees, which revolutionizes many organizations (Bussy, Ewing & Pitt, 2003). With the increasing use of technologies within internal communication, organizations’ knowledge of communication as a one-way and two-way communication process continues to grow further (Smith, 2005). As organizations adapt its internal communication to the digital communication tools, tremendous opportunities with employees emerges constantly. The digital internal communication facilitates two-way-messages, it allows feedback to be given and received (Lipiäinen et al., 2014).

Technology changes the way managers and employees communicate with each other in many work structures within organizations. The new shift towards the use of technologies within communication creates endless opportunities (Mackenzie, 2010). The devolvement of digitized communication tools brings up the debate of which tools that are most effective when reaching employees and make them feel involved in the organization’s strategies and vision (Men, 2014). Internal communication plays a vital role in informing the organization’s vision to all employees. Employees want to be involved in the process of achieving the organization's vision. Therefore, it is of great importance that organizations provide information of its vision on a regular basis. Organizations need to put strategy into the context of the vision and goals in order for employees to understand how their efforts contributes to organization performance (Sanchez, 2004).

2.2.1 Digital communication tools
Over the years, internal communication at the workplace has been developed into a more digital work environment. The internal communication tools that most organizations are focusing on are intranets and e-mail. Although, it is shown that different types of social media are becoming a more common tool for organizations to implement in its internal communication (Giesen, 2009).

2.2.1.1 Intranet
An intranet is a computer network which is accessible for employees within an organization. It is considered as an internal communication tool that supply employees with information regarding the organization, the intranet acts as a communication system among employees (Uysal, 2016). Intranets are discussed as an efficient two-way communication when providing employees with information regarding the organization (Giesen, 2009). It allows interaction
between employees due to the ability to create dialogues and comments. The design of intranet portals is fundamental for organizations since there is an increasing pressure on organizations to digitize and integrate its internal communication (Lipiäinen et al., 2014). Intranet emerged as a major method of communication between the organizational levels (Bussy et al., 2003). The intranet provides employees with announcements and information regarding the organization (Lipiäinen et al., 2014)

An intranet is argued to be efficient only when top managers empower employees at other organizational levels. Employees should be encouraged to take initiative and be more active in communicating information through the intranet (Stenmark, 2003). Intranet portals are a helping hand for employees since it allows them to receive updates, store material and newsletters from top managers (Lipiäinen et al., 2014). As mentioned, the design of the intranet is an important aspect when increasing the effectiveness of the internal communication, as well as creating a better coordination among employees. Otherwise, there is a risk that employees do not understand the full benefits of using the intranet (McNaughton, Quickenden, Matear & Gray, 1999).

According to Denton (2006), technology development such as intranet is essential for organizations as it helps employees at all organizational levels to easier get an understanding of the massive information communicated. An efficient intranet portal allows colleagues to communicate with each other regardless of location, it also include important information for employees when performing work tasks (Lipiäinen et al., 2014). Although, intranet and e-mail are considered to be a large contribution to information overload which affect employees negatively (Denton, 2006).

2.2.1.2 E-mail
E-mail is considered as one of the most commonly used digital communication tools of an organization. The main reason to this is due to the the ability to distribute information quick, easy and at a low cost. E-mail is a useful tool for organizations to use for quick updates and important announcements. By contrary, web sites or the intranet can store a larger amount of information that can be retrieved when needed (White, Vanc & Stafford, 2010). However, the debate of e-mail as a communication tool and its usefulness continues. It is argued that the ability of e-mail is to push information quick and easy can lead to information overload (Hewitt,
E-mail has many key advantages, it is an effective communication tool for exchange of information between employees (Soucek & Moser, 2010). It also simplifies communication in large and multinational organizations which has issues with time differences (Noonan, Richter, Durham & Pierce, 2017)

An over dependence on technology-used tools can have a negative impact on the face-to-face communication. There is a discussion of the negative impact e-mail has on the internal communication such as distancing employees from each other and the organization they work for (Gummesson, 2000). Gummesson (2000) argues that the reason for the alienation of employees and the organization is not a result of the lack of information but rather an overload of the wrong kind of communication. Written communication is not considered as the best way to transform a message or to motivate employees. It is also debated whether e-mail is the most suitable tool for getting the message throughout the whole organization in different situations (Lipiäinen et al., 2014).

According to Barrett and Davidson (2006), e-mail as a digital communication tool does not provide rich communication. Internal communication is considered to be more effective if there is a use of symmetrical communication since it opens up for dynamic feedback. However, it is indistinct whether e-mail is an asymmetrical or symmetrical communication tool. Some would argue that e-mail is definitely not a two-way communication tool, while others are of the belief that e-mail creates the opportunity for employees to provide upward feedback to top managers. This would mean that it could be considered a symmetrical communication tool. Given this, it is likely that e-mail can be considered both an asymmetrical and symmetrical communication tool, it depends on how it is used and for what purpose (Hewitt, 2006).

Researchers disagree on the negative effects e-mail can have on internal communication. Although, it is clearly agreed that e-mail is beneficial due to its ability to rapidly push large amount of information to a large amount of people. As a result, e-mail revolutionizes business communication (Hewitt, 2006). E-mail provides the opportunity to check and correct a message before sending it. In contrast to verbal communication, it allows the possibility to keep a record of conversations and comments (Lipiäinen et al., 2014). Despite its effectiveness, e-mails remain underused within organizations, especially for upward communication (Lee, Kozar & Larsen, 2005).
2.2.1.3 Social Media

There are numerous definitions of social media. Sweetser and Lariscy (2008) define social media as a set of technology tools that brings people together and encourage social networking and dialogic communication. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe social media as a group of internet-based applications that allow the exchange and creation of user generated content that new technology made possible. The most common and well-known forms of social media are social networks, blogs, media-sharing sites, microblogs, social bookmarking and selection sites (King & Lee, 2016).

Organizations use social networking sites for recruitment and branding. However, as the phenomenon social media increases in its popularity, organizations also start to implement it as a digital communication tool for their internal communication. A number of digital platforms have been created specifically for organizations to use (Verheyden, 2016). It is more common for organizations to upgrade their intranets to social intranets. Facebook pages at work help organizations to create their own social networks where only employees within each organization have access to the social network (Sharma & Bhatnagar, 2016).

Research argue that social media has the potential to change and revolutionize how organizations communicate. One reason to this is because social media is a popular communication tool outside of the workplace, which indicates that most employees are familiar with it. Furthermore, social media functions as a relationship developer and to establish communities, which is another advantage for organizations (King & Lee, 2016). In contrast to traditional communication tools, social media is open, fluid, interactive and dynamic (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015). Another advantage of this new digital communication tool is its accessibility. Social media can be accessed both through smart phones and by web-based devices (King & Lee, 2016). Social media has dialogical, relational, interactive and global functions which makes it possible for organizations to use two-way symmetrical communication in their daily activities (Verheyden, 2016).

A well implemented social network creates a dynamic social networking environment for employees since social media offers features such as blogs, tagging, discussion forums and instant messaging. These benefits allow employees to share ideas and engage in both organizational goals as well as in other departments within the organizations. Social media also opens up for the giving and receiving of feedback and support from both supervisors and
colleagues. Social media can also enhance employees to give valuable feedback on organizational policies (Sharma & Bhatnagar, 2016).

2.3 Communication flow

Cowan (2014) argue that a well-informed employee is a productive employee. When being included and involved in the organizational goal, employees get more engaged. An effective internal communication among employees at all levels in the organization enhance trust and employee commitment (Mishra et al., 2014). Internal communication has the potential to effectively transfer values of the organization onto all employees and involve them in organizational goals (Bindl & Parker, 2010). It is also of importance to know the roles within the organization, what expectations others have, and how the employees are affected by decisions and changes within the organization (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004). Cooperation among different organizational levels is fundamental to improve efficiency (Parayitam, White & Hough, 2002). In a study by Gray and Laidlaw (2002), the result shows that top managers and operative workers perceive that they receive sufficient information about the organization. On the contrary, middle managers believe they received too little information. They want information for information sake, even if it does not directly affect them (Gray and Laidlaw, 2002).

Most communication occurs downward, as messages are transferred through the organizational levels. The message is very comprehensive since operative workers need a greater amount of information to perform their daily activities. This occurs since top managers are more responsible for the overall plan. There is a reason why upward communication is not as common since it contains risks. One risk is that the upward communication can be incorrect since it may be misleading because employees generally tell management what they think they want to hear. However, accurate feedback to top managers keeps management informed about subordinates’ opinions and attitudes and can help the communication be even more effective. Another risk with upward feedback is that it consumes time and money, especially if top managers are to change or correct existing policies due to all feedback received (Huang & Kleiner, 2005).

2.3.1 Operative workers

Parayitam et al. (2002) define operative workers as the least considered employee as workers, more precisely, they are referred to as factory workers. They are located at the lowest level in
the organizational hierarchy. Cowan (2014) define operative workers as the main performers of an organization’s day-to-day activities. Those who perform operational work tasks are defined as the employees of the organization who perform basic work tasks related to an organization’s production and manufacturing (Mintzberg, 1983).

Operative workers are often the least considered group of employees, although they have a great impact on the organization’s success. Since they perform day-to-day activities, they need to have an up-to-date knowledge (Smith, 2005). In times of changes and a lot of uncertainty, employees will have many questions. With a great need of up-to-date knowledge, it is crucial that the operative workers are well informed about the organization and the industry the organization operate in (Cowan, 2014). Operative workers tend to lose trust, confidence and optimism when top managers mainly focus on supplying short task-oriented information. Studies shows that mutual respect of top or middle managers as well as operative workers have a core influence on job satisfaction (Albrecht, 2010).

2.3.2 Middle Managers
Smith (2005) defines middle managers as the employees operating in the layer between the operative workers and the top managers. In contrast to the operative workers, middle managers do not have a day-to-day contact with customers. Instead, they are often seen as an important factor to deliver sufficient information to other departments of an organization (Smith, 2005). Middle managers are said to use internal communication more frequently than top managers since middle managers are in contact with employees daily (Karanges, Johnston, Beatson & Lings, 2015). Smith (2005) discuss that information tend to stay at middle managers’ level without being transmitted further down the organization to operative workers. Therefore, it is fundamental that organizations spend time and effort on the internal communication instead of pushing information to middle managers (Karanges et al., 2015).

2.3.3 Top Managers
The role models or visual leaders of an organization is most often referred to as top managers or board of directors (Dabbish & Kraut, 2006). A top manager is a managing director of a department who makes decisions which in some way affects all parts of an organization (Smith, 2005). A study made by Dabbish and Kraut (2006) explain that information distributed directly from top managers to the employees increase the credibility of information transmitted. Employees at all organizational levels recognize that communication flowing from top
managers, through middle managers, reaching operative workers make the distribution of information uneven. For operative workers, the information from top managers is perceived as inconsistent and filtered as it flows through the different levels of the organization (White et al., 2010). Top managers’ contribution and involvement in the organization and in the communication flow lead to an effective internal communication. This would be impossible to achieve without the input and support from top managers. A top manager supporting the scope of the organization’s internal communication is shown to set standards for other leaders to follow (Smith, 2005).

2.4 Theoretical Framework
The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how a digitized internal communication affects the communication flow in the organizational hierarchy. Therefore, the authors have conducted a framework illustrating how digital communication tools affect the communication flow throughout the organizational levels. Figure 1 gives a visual picture of the theories underlying this thesis and acts as a guidance for the authors when conducting the empirical study (See Figure 1). Figure 1 illustrates the digital communication tools and the linkage of how communication flows through different levels in the organizational hierarchy.

![Figure 1. Digital communication flow in organizational hierarchy](image-url)
Organizations are nowadays implementing digital tools as internal communication tools (Bussy et al., 2003), in order to keep up with the technological change (Lipiäinen et al., 2014). The digital internal communication contributes to a better two-way communication with quick, easy communication and a greater understanding among all levels of the organization (Smith, 2005). Intranets are discussed as an efficient two-way communication when providing employees with information regarding the organization. E-mail is discussed as a quick and efficient two-way communication tool to use among employees in an organization (Giesen, 2009). Social media is an increasing phenomenon which increase two-way communication and the interaction among employees (Verheyden, 2016). As seen in figure 1, the authors draw the connection that all digital communication tools allow interaction among all organizational levels. Although, it is argued that an intranet is only efficient when top managers empower employees at other organizational levels (Stenmark, 2003). The authors find a great interest to further investigate if this is implemented similar in practice.

Employees from different organizational levels have different attitudes towards what information is communicated and how it is communicated (White et al., 2010). White et al. (2010) state that the information top managers transfer down the organizational hierarchy impact how well-informed employees are. The information transferred from middle managers are shown to greatly impact operative worker. Although, information tends to stay at the middle manager level (Karanges et al., 2015). Operative workers require a great amount of information to feel involved and motivated (Albrecht, 2010). The authors observe a gap in previous research, which excludes middle managers and operative workers from those studies. As seen in Figure 1, the communication flows differently with all digital communication tools. Due to this, the authors find the employees attitude towards these digital communication tools interesting to include in the study.
3. Methodology and method

This chapter presents the chosen research philosophy, followed by an explanation of the chosen research approach. Moreover, research purpose, research method and research strategy are presented. The process of collecting primary data is discussed, followed by presentations of the chosen organizations and the sampling of the study. Furthermore, the process of analyzing data is discussed and the chapter ends with a description of the credibility of research and its research ethics.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy holds important assumptions for the authors to consider, since it underpins the research strategy and the chosen method of the study. Which philosophy to adopt is important since it contributes with a significant understanding of the subject to investigate. Given this, the first step of the research process is to identifying the research philosophy (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Four different philosophies are identified by Saunders et al. (2015): pragmatism, interpretivism, realism and positivism. For this study, the authors interpret interpretivism to the research. The philosophy of interpretivism as a school of thought puts emphasis on the interpretation and understanding of the research when making the observation (Tomlinson, 2010).

Interpretivism is most commonly used when conducting research among people. It implies individuals to look at a scenario from more than one perspective, and not only rely on the study of facts (Saunders et al., 2015). Since the research of this study faces organizational behavior in form of digital internal communication and human resource in form of employees’ attitudes, interpretivism is a suitable philosophy to apply for this study. It is challenging to study human actions when placing the results of a research into its context. Therefore, interpretivism includes the consideration of why actions by humans actually are made and the circumstances connected to it (Tomlinson, 2010). Since this study aims to get an in-depth understanding of the experiences and attitudes of employees, the authors uses the interpretivism philosophy. This allows the study to be in-depth and investigating rather than narrow and controlled (Saunders et al., 2015).
3.2 Research Approach

It is useful to attach research approaches to the chosen research philosophy, in order to explain if any theories are made for the research (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Either the study is based on a deductive, inductive or abductive research approach. The chosen approach to attach to this study is an abductive approach. An abductive approach is a combination of a deductive and an inductive approach. Although, importance must be drawn to the fact that it is not a mixture of the two approaches, rather it combines the relevant attributes of both approaches (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

The authors of this thesis study a theoretical framework which is based on previous literature. The framework consists of studied topics which are linked together. The topics are investigated in the empirical study of how they function in practice. A deductive approach builds hypothesis from previous theories to further test by using the chosen research strategy. In the case of defining a theoretical framework that builds on previous literature, the deductive research approach is recommended to apply. Given this, certain attributes from the deductive approach are suitable for this study. Although, a deductive study tends to lack explanations of real situations which an inductive approach cover.

Given the research philosophy of this thesis being exploratory, some inductive approaches are important to consider for conducting the research strategies of this study. An inductive approach might be useful when a new topic is being researched due to little previous literature within the field. An inductive approach is preferable for cases where the study require a flexible structure and small samples to collect data. This combination of deductive as well as inductive approaches results in a suitable abductive approach (Saunders et al., 2015). Råholm (2010) explains the abductive research approach as allowing the authors to combine a focus of empirical findings and previous literature, which in turn recognizes patterns as well as giving an in-depth understanding of the subject.

3.3 Research Purpose

It is of great importance to consider the research purpose since it facilitates the process of answering the research questions. Given this, the direction towards the purpose of the thesis depends on the formulation of the research questions. The research purpose is classified as exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Saunders et al., 2015). For this study, the authors use
an exploratory study since the aim is to answer the research questions (1) if and how the use of
digital communication tools affect the communication flow throughout three levels in the
organizational hierarchy and (2) employees’ attitudes towards digital communication tools.
Given this, an exploratory study is useful to find new insights, ask questions and receive a
deeper understanding of the situation (Saunders et al., 2015). Operative workers’ attitudes
towards digital communication tools have not been thoroughly studied which is another reason
for choosing an exploratory study. The research findings may contribute to new insights within
the researched field which in turn can give support for further research (Saunders et al., 2015;

3.4 Research Method
There are two research methods for collecting primary data to the empirical study, qualitative
or quantitative method. In order to collect sufficient data for this study to answer the research
questions the authors use a qualitative research method. A qualitative research is referred to as
non-numeric data collection, such as interviews, observations, narratives and focus groups. The
sample size is rather small in a qualitative research compared to the quantitative research,
which is based on numeric and statistical data. A qualitative research aims to gain an in-depth
understanding of participants’ own experiences, perspectives and circumstances (Alvesson &
Sköldberg, 2009). Since this study is based on the philosophy of interpretivism, a qualitative
research design is most suitable for this study. Given that the aim of this thesis is to study
organizations’ communication flow and employees’ attitude towards digital communication
tools, the quantitative research method is suitable. It allows the authors of this thesis to obtain
real life experiences, perspectives and circumstances to answer the research questions of this
thesis.

3.5 Research Strategy
A well-coordinated research strategy acts as a guidance for the researchers in fulfilling the
purpose of the thesis and answering the research questions. When choosing the research
strategy, there are different techniques suitable for different types of research questions. The
different techniques are: case study, experiment, action research, survey, ethnography, archival
research and grounded theory (Saunders et al., 2015). Since this thesis is an exploratory
research, case study is a suitable technique for fulfilling the purpose and answering the
questions “how”, “what” and “why” of the subject in matter (Yin, 2014). Case studies are used
in form of interviews and are argued to be a suggested strategy for an in-depth investigation of a certain context (Saunders et al., 2015). The authors of this study focus on investigating the digital internal communication from the employees’ perspective, which allows the use of a case study to be well suitable to gather a deeper insight in the organizations’ situation (Saunders et al., 2015).

3.6 Data Collection

The collection of first-hand information for a specific occasion is called primary data. As this study is using a qualitative research method, one suggested collection of primary data is by constructing interviews. The interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Saunders et al., 2015). For this study, the authors use semi-structured interviews on employees from three different organizations: Swedavia, Ovako and Port of Norrköping. Semi-structured interviews are known as qualitative research interviews to get an in-depth insight in the investigated subject. It is argued as a suitable option for collecting qualitative data that emphasize an understanding of “what”, “how” as well as the “why” questions of the study. Semi-structured interviews are constructed by having a list of themes and key questions to cover during the interviews. The interviews are not standardized and allow the key questions to vary between different interviews. Semi-structured interviews encourage an open dialogue, which indicates that additional questions may arise since the conversations may flow differently (Saunders et al., 2015).

Since this study is an exploratory study of employees’ thoughts and opinions, semi-structured interviews are suitable to get a deeper insight of the investigated subject. The authors of this thesis construct key questions in advance, which are built on the research questions and the purpose of this thesis. The key questions are mainly based on the areas of the theoretical framework: digital internal communication, e-mail, intranet, social media, top manager, middle manager and operative worker. Further, key questions such as communication flow, vision and goals and feedback are conducted to create understanding of how the digital internal communications function throughout the organizational hierarchy. These key questions are gathered to obtain as relevant information as possible for answering the research questions of this thesis.
Appendix 1-4 illustrates the four different structures of the interview questions, depending on what organizational level the participant is operating in. Minor adjustments of the interview questions are made for the different organizational levels, due to their different knowledge within the field. This also affected the length of the interviews with the operative workers, which lasted much shorter than the others. Appendix 5 illustrates additional questions regarding the digital communication tools chosen to be investigated in this study. The authors of this thesis tailor the interviews depending on what kind of digital communication tools the participants use. Except from the additional questions, the key questions remain the same at all three organizations. This allows the interviewers to follow the same patterns during all interviews, which is an advantage for constructing the analysis and reaching the purpose of the thesis.

Interviews can be performed face-to-face, by telephone, through internet or through focus groups (Saunders et al., 2015). Considering that the organizations have employees throughout Sweden and also worldwide, the ability to interview all 13 participants face-to-face is limited. Given this, the interviews are held face-to-face or by telephone. To simplify the interviews and make it as understandable as possible, it is held in Swedish and English, depending on the native language of the participant. This excludes any language barriers and allows all participants to engage in a natural and open conversation without any misunderstandings.

3.7 About Swedavia
Swedavia is a relatively new company, founded in 2010 after taking over the ownership and operations of the airports which previously were run by the Swedish Civil Aviation Administration. Swedavia is a logistics company operating in the airport industry. With its approximately 3000 employees, they develop, run and own ten of Sweden’s airports. The role of Swedavia is to simplify travel, business and meetings by creating accessibility (Swedavia, 2017a). The internal goal for Swedavia is to become “one Swedavia” by uniting the employees (Swedavia, 2017b). Swedavia are currently improving their existing digital communication tools to ease the internal communication among the employees of the organization (Swedavia, personal communication, 22 Mars, 2018) The authors find Swedavia relevant since it is a national organization operating in Sweden which will help the authors in generalizing the field of digitized internal communication.
3.8 About Ovako

With a long history, Ovako is today one of the head leading organizations in Europe producing engineering steel. They were founded over 300 years ago in Hofors, Sweden. Ovako produce and sell quality assured and recycled engineering steel to customers mainly in the bearing, transport and manufacturing industries (Ovako, 2018a). With a total of nine production sites located in more than 30 countries, Ovako is a multinational organization spread worldwide (Ovako, 2018b). Ovako has over 2000 employees distributed at different geographical levels as well as different organizational levels. Due to this, Ovako has developed new digital communication tools to improve their internal communication. In 2017, a social media platform was implemented to create quick and easy communication. The aim was to complement previous internal communication systems and improve communication for shift workers and global sales (Ovako, telephone communication, 28 February, 2018). The choice of including Ovako in this study is due to the contribution of generalization by adding a multinational organization, which the authors believes will give a contribution to existing research within the field.

3.9 About Port of Norrköping

Port of Norrköping was founded in 1907. With one of Sweden’s most valuable logistics location, Port of Norrköping is an important gateway for maritime traffic (Port of Norrköping, 2018a). Out of the 55 ports in Sweden, Port of Norrköping is ranked as the 9th largest, based on the number of handled goods every year. It is a full service port, which means that it is equipped to handle all kinds of cargo (Port of Norrköping, 2018b). With over 150 employees distributed on several departments, all with different tasks, from top managers to the operative workers at the dock, the communication is a vital part for the organization’s survival and success (Port of Norrköping, 2018b). Therefore, a new intranet was developed three years ago with the aim to involve employees and simplify how communication is distributed. To investigate Port of Norrköping brings contribution to this study due to their local sized organization. The local operation of Port of Norrköping, compared to the other two organizations that operate nationwide and worldwide, will contribute to the generalization of the digital internal communication (Port of Norrköping, personal communication, 21 Mars, 2018).
3.10 Sampling
The interview sessions at Swedavia and Port of Norrköping are held in the end of March 2018, whilst the interview sessions with Ovako are held in the end of April 2018. In order to receive open and truthful answers, the participants are informed that they are completely anonymous. This is especially important in this case due to the sensitive subject of how employees interpret internal communication and how it functions in their organization. Referring to table 1, a table is conducted in order to differentiate the interviewed participants. The participants are divided by abbreviations, such as TM, MM and OW, which symbolizes top managers, middle managers and operative workers. The authors want to show that there is diversity in form of experience in the field, illustrating brackets of years between 0-5, 6-10 and 10<. However, all abbreviations and length of experience are carefully constructed under the same table to ensure anonymity of the participants. This is done to avoid the possibility for readers to link citations, opinions and values to certain individuals and which organization they belong to.

Table 1. Structure of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Organizational level</th>
<th>Length of work experience</th>
<th>Length of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TM1</td>
<td>Top Manager</td>
<td>10&lt;</td>
<td>00:45:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TM4</td>
<td>Top Manager</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:54:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TM12</td>
<td>Top Manager</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>00:52:46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM2</td>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:35:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM5</td>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:56:58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM6</td>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:45:51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM9</td>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:56:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM10</td>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:32:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OW3</td>
<td>Operative worker</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>00:14:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OW7</td>
<td>Operative worker</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>00:42:43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OW8</td>
<td>Operative worker</td>
<td>10&lt;</td>
<td>00:40:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OW11</td>
<td>Operative worker</td>
<td>10&lt;</td>
<td>00:30:38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When conducting interviews, it is important for researchers to decide upon which sampling method to use. Saunders et al. (2015) created a matrix that is of help to researchers when deciding what type of sampling to use. The authors are using non-probability sampling technique since it is the most suitable for this study since a qualitative research is conducted with an exploratory research purpose. A non-probability sampling technique is also preferable when conducting an in-depth study with a relatively small sample size, which is the case for this study. There are four categories of different sampling approaches to choose from within non probability: quota, snowball, purposive and convenience. The authors decided that the purposive sampling approach is the most suitable for this study since the sample size is rather small and it will allow the authors to make their own judgments.

The authors of this study interview 3-5 employees from each organization. The number of interviews at each organization differs in the absence of availability. The exact number of participants at each organization are not specified due to the anonymity of the participants. The authors are highly aware of the fact that the sampling process can be criticized for not interviewing the same amount of employees from each organization. However, due to previous mentioned arguments, the authors consider the chosen sample to provide insightful information for this study.

### 3.11 Description of analysis

The analysis of a qualitative research is referred as the most challenging section of conducting a study (Yin, 2014). Qualitative studies most commonly include real life experiences, which allows the collected data to include narratives. Narratives are defined as experiences and stories that contributes with meaning to the researcher. It is argued that researchers must take the participants’ integrity into account (Saunders et al., 2015). For this study, all participants are anonymous in order to reduce the participants’ possible feeling of being revealed or outing sensitive experiences. As a result, the analysis of this study has a narrative structure. This allows the analysis to base on stories told during the interviews and to generate a coherent story (Saunders et al., 2015).

According to Williamson (2002), the analysis of a research is a continuous process when collecting primary data. To start analyzing from an early stage in the process, it is possible to clearly see when the already collected data is sufficient for the study (Williamson, 2002). By
using this strategy, the authors of this thesis are flexible and open to further collect data from the three organizations if the data collected is not sufficient. It is important to analyze and transcribe the collected data as correct as possible, for the conclusion to be as reflective and meaningful as possible for the study (Yin, 2014). Given this, Saunders et al. (2015) suggests the analysis of qualitative data to be divided into different steps: preparing, summarizing, categorizing and structuring. These steps help the authors to get a deep understanding of the digital internal communication in the chosen organizations and recognize the most relevant findings.

The first step, preparation, highlights the importance to transcribe the collected data correctly (Saunders et al., 2015). At the interviews for this study, all three authors are present. One person is responsible of moderating the interview, whilst another assists with additional questions. The third person possess a secretary role of taking the most necessary notes as well as audio recording the interview. Saunders et al. (2015) argues that transcribing audio recorded materials include not only the transcription of what is said, but also the indication of how it is said. As the interviews are audio recorded, the notes function as a complement to the recorded material. They work as a backup if unexpected things were to happen, which is important for the authors to have the best possible chance to analyze the collected data as good as possible. All data collected, is divided among the authors to transcribe the material one by one. The authors later on circulate the interviews for each author to make their own transcription of the material, to create a triangulation. Supposing the authors share different experiences of the interviews, the triangulation is done in order to get the transcription as correctly as possible.

Secondly, it is argued that the transcribed material should be summarized. This process includes to condense the meaning of the great amount of data into fewer words. It is done at an early stage to ease the process of categorizing the collected data (Saunders et al., 2015). The authors decide to summarize all key points of the transcribed interviews to create a greater understanding of the collected material. The transcribed material is categorized according to the theoretical framework of the thesis and what is found during the interviews: vision and goals, e-mail, intranet, social media, communication flow and digital versus face-to-face communication.

To make sense of the empirical findings according to the previous theories, two summarized illustrations are presented in the end of the analysis. First, a revision of the previous theoretical
framework is presented. This revised framework illustrates the findings of the study correlated to the original theoretical framework (See figure 1). Secondly, a perceptual map of employees’ attitudes towards digital communication tools is presented. These two illustrations act as a summary of the analyzed material, which is studied by the authors several times to make sure it is made correctly. These help the authors of this thesis to answer the research questions and fulfil the purpose of the thesis.

3.12 Credibility of Research

Credibility and trustworthiness are two criteria when conducting a qualitative research. One of the challenges for researchers is to get the highest possible quality when collecting research. Qualitative research is criticized for being subjective and lack an applicable generalized picture of the phenomena studied (Cope, 2014). In order for qualitative researchers to implement trustworthiness to the case study approach, authors argue that some criteria need to be considered (McGloin, 2008). The four criteria to be considered are credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Cope, 2014).

Ensuring credibility is the most crucial part of trustworthiness, it refers to the presence of internal validity (Shenton, 2004) and also the truth value of the findings (McGloin, 2008). A qualitative research is considered credible when the description of participants’ experiences are recognized by individuals who share the same experience (Cope, 2014). Triangulation is a method to enhance credibility, it may involve the use of a wide range of participants (Shenton, 2004). In this study it reflects in the interviews of top managers, middle managers and operative workers who are within different age ranges and genders and they have different length of employment. Moreover, to fulfil the research questions, more than one worker at each position are interviewed. For the authors to be able to be free from misjudgment, it is important to record and note during the interviews to afterwards be able to have access to all information given (Saunders et al., 2015). The participants at each organization are of different prerequisites since the interviews at Swedavia and Port of Norrköping are held face-to-face and the interviews with the employees at Ovako are conducted through telephone calls.

Furthermore, dependability addresses the issue of reliability and according to McGloin (2008), findings of a study are considered dependable if the same research are repeated under the same circumstances, and the same results are obtained. Dependability is a measurement of trustworthiness, which is considered high when results of a study is consistent. One method to
overcome these issues of trustworthiness is to use semi-structured interviews, which is the strategy in this study. In-depth and detailed information about the research design and data collection are provided in this study in order to enable future researchers to repeat the work (Shenton, 2004).

Confirmability relates to the objective and neutral viewpoint by researchers when conducting the research. The reader must be ensured that the research findings are the results of the participants’ thoughts, feelings and experiences, rather than other influences such as characteristics and preferences of the researchers (Shenton, 2004). Researchers must demonstrate that the findings are presented from participants’ viewpoints and responses. When reporting qualitative research, the report can provide the reader with strong quotes from participants that highlights a specific researched field (Cope, 2014). The authors of this thesis aim to use quotes in order to strengthen the confirmability.

Transferability concerns the external validity and generalization of a study (Shenton, 2004). For the qualitative research to meet the criteria of transparency, researchers should provide enough information on the participants and provide the reader with the research background. However, this depends on the purpose of the study and may only be relevant if the intention is to contribute with generalization about the mattered subject (Cope, 2014). The interviews can help the findings reflect the reality and be put into a context. (Saunders et al., 2015). The authors argue that the result of this study can be transferable to other organizations, how digital internal communication is implemented. Including three organizational levels in the study also strengthen the applicability of the research since it contributes with different viewpoints to the findings.

3.13 Research Ethics
When conducting research, ethical issues need to be taken into consideration in order to make the research acceptable for all concerned. Every individual participating in the researchers’ collection of data has the right to privacy (Behi & Nolan, 1995). For researchers to approach individuals about their participation in the research, it is crucial that participants are informed about the objectives and the purpose of the study. Furthermore, it is necessary for qualitative researchers to communicate how the findings will be used and the conditions of anonymity and confidentiality. Anonymity and confidentiality are two important aspects regarding ethical issues. To maintain respondents’ confidentiality when presenting detailed descriptions and sensitive and rich information is vital for researchers to consider (Kaiser, 2009).
Anonymity means that no other than the researchers who conduct the data will know the participant's identity. Confidentiality is defined as the researcher’s agreement with participants about what may be done with the data collected (Kaiser, 2009). The two phenomenon should be given extra thoughts before conducting interviews and also be clear to participants (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). In this research, participants are informed about the subject and their right to anonymity. They are also informed that only the researchers will know their identity and at which organization they work at. Participants will also be able to decide whether or not the interviews can be audio recorded by the researchers. The authors have informed the participants that once the thesis is submitted, it will be sent and shared with them in order for them to be able to take part of it.

3.14 Summary of methodology and methods

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the use of digital communication tools and their potential effects on the communication flow throughout organizational levels. Employees’ attitudes and opinions towards these digital communication tools are examined. The aim is to get more insight and a deeper understanding in the subject. Due to this, the authors find an exploratory study to be suitable for this thesis. The research philosophy interpretivism are interpreted by using the abductive approach. The authors are collecting data with qualitative research method through a case study strategy in form of individual semi-structured interviews. When selecting an appropriate sampling for the research, a non-probability sampling technique is applied using a purposive sampling approach. The collected data is analyzed by using the analytical process by Saunders et al. (2015): preparing, summarizing, categorizing and structuring. To increase the trustworthiness of the study, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability are taken into consideration.
4. Empirical findings

In this section, empirical data from the interviews are presented. The chapter is divided into findings concerning vision and goals, e-mail, intranet, social media, communication flow and digital vs. face-to-face communication.

4.1 Vision and goals

During the first part of the interviews, vision and goals are discussed with each participant. According to TM1, the vision and goals of the organization are currently more on a long-term basis. This can be difficult for operative workers to assimilate, since the goals tends to enlighten the organization’s statistics. MM2 is of the same belief, that daily goals are unclear. Although, MM2 explains that it is a work-in-progress to improvement. Furthermore, TM1 believes that it is difficult for operative workers to assimilate the organization's vision and goals and feel engaged in the organization. TM4 on the other hand states that the vision and goals are clear and the CEO is good at delivering the message to the organization. MM6 explains that the organization has changed vision and believes that very few are aware of this change or what the organization’s vision was before this change.

“The thing that has been difficult with the goals, is for every individual worker to understand what they can do to contribute to these goals”. TM1

“We have changed vision and I think maybe 5 percent knows about it, it has been uploaded on the intranet, okay, do you even check the intranet and if you check it, are you even aware of what vision we had before”. MM6

MM10, MM9, TM12 and OW11 all mention the importance of safety and that their organizations talk a lot about that. MM10 and MM9 also mention that their organizations act responsible towards the environment, which is communicated by the organization.

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1 “Det som har varit det svåra med målen, är för varje enskild medarbetare att förstå vad kan just jag göra här och nu för målen”. TM1

2 “Vi har bytt vision och jag tror att kanske 5 procent vet om det, det har lagts ut en bild på intranätet, ja okej, går man ens in och kollar och om man går in och kollar visste man ens vad vi hade för vision innan”. MM6
We at least say that safety is always the most important. Then we have visions and goals to make money as well”. OW11

According to OW3, the vision and goals of the organization have been more acknowledged the latest time. OW3 further explains that one does not know the vision and goals of the organization at the moment. OW7 and OW8 also explain that they do not know the vision and goals of their organizations, but both of them have received the information. OW8 explains that there is a lack of interest in the visions and goals since the participant argue that the overall long-term vision and goals of the organization does not affect the daily work.

“I definitely know where to search and find it on the intranet if I get the question but I do not know it in my head”. OW7

4.2 E-mail

The participants are asked about their opinion of the digital communication tool e-mail, what kind of information that is communicated through e-mail and to whom. According to MM5, OW3 and TM12, e-mail is a fast, easy and effective tool to use when communicating internally. However, MM10 argues for the opposite, saying that it is a very slow communication tool since you do not know when or if the receiver is online. TM1 mentions that e-mail is preferable to use when time is not sufficient and one can read through the e-mail in peace and quiet. OW3 supports this by saying that e-mail is read when there is time for it.

“E-mail is fast and easy, sometimes even too fast and easy”. MM5

TM1, TM4 and OW7 explain that one positive aspect about e-mail is that it allows time to think before sending and that it is easy to formulate the message through e-mail.

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3 “Vi säger i alla fall att säkerheten alltid är viktigast. Sen har vi naturligtvis visioner och mål att tjäna pengar”. OW11

4 “Jag vet absolut vart jag kan söka och finna det på intranäten ifall jag får frågan men jag kan det inte i huvudet” OW7

5 “E-mail är snabbt och enkelt, kanske lite för snabbt och enkelt ibland”. MM5
“One positive aspect of e-mail is that you think the message through and do not just send something in a hurry”. TM4

“When using e-mail, one can put a little bit more thought into it and formulate the message according to what one wish to communicate”. OW7

MM6, MM10, OW11 and TM12 mention the benefits of having information in print, that it simplifies when searching for specific information. They say that it is easy access to information through e-mail and when there is something more detailed that is discussed, it is preferable to have the e-mail in front of you on the screen as ground material.

“It is easy for people to have everything on paper or on the screen or how to call it, an e-mail containing the information about tasks to be made. If you just talk about it, it is easy to forget if you do not write it down, an e-mail always functions as a support”. MM10

MM5 and MM6 say that it is an enormous amount of e-mail and one negative aspect which MM6 highlights is that e-mail sometimes is sent to people whom it may not concern. MM6 explains that it is a hectic e-mail culture in the organization. MM9 says that it can be chaotic and that e-mail results in information overload. MM9 further explains that e-mail can be time consuming and people tend to not think through to whom the information is relevant for, they just send it.

“There is a lot of e-mail, the e-mail culture is crazy. You send way too much to everyone”. MM6

Another negative aspect that is brought up by several participants during the interviews is how common misunderstandings occur when communicating through e-mail. According to OW8, when communicating information through e-mail, it is easy to misunderstand the information if it is unclear. MM10 explain that written communication can be interpreted differently by

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6 “En fördel med mail kan vara att man tänker efter och inte slänger ur sig någonting”. TM4
7 “I e-mail kan man vara lite mer eftertänksam och formulera sig efter vad man vill kommunicera”. OW7
8 “Enkelt för folk att ha allt på papper eller på skärmen eller vad man nu ska kalla det, e-mailen om vad man ska göra för uppgifter. Pratar man så glömmer man lätt bort det om ingen skriver upp det, men ett mail finns alltid där till hands”. MM10
9 “Det är mycket e-mail, det är en mejlkultur som är galen. Man skickar till alla aldeles för mycket”. MM6
different people, that it is hard to express feelings and expression in written communication and that the receiver and sender might have different interpretations. TM12 believes that e-mail often lead to misunderstandings.

“I often say that if there is something you do not agree on, you should avoid e-mail since it often lead to misunderstandings and the reason why it happens often depends on how the message is interpreted”. TM12

According to MM10 and OW8, e-mail can be perceived as impersonal since it is hard to express feelings and expressions. MM9 use e-mail when contacting just one person or a couple of people.

“It can be a bit impersonal with e-mail, you do not write as detailed and clear”. OW8

The participants are asked about their usage of e-mail in both complex and simple situations. OW11 explains that the receiver might need to see more detailed information in complex situations, then an e-mail is sent with this specific information. TM12 share this opinion, that e-mail is preferred in complex situations when a lot of facts are presented. However, TM12 also prefers to get simple information through e-mail. MM6 prefers e-mail in situations where simple information is communicated. MM9 and OW3 use e-mail when it is not very urgent and when an answer to the question is not needed immediately.

“If it is more facts, more complex, an e-mail can be helpful”. TM12

“If it is just information, well send an e-mail so I have that information or a text message, I do not need a phone call”. MM6

Furthermore, the participants are asked about who in the organization they communicate with through e-mail. OW3 mention that e-mail is used to communicate with employees at all levels.

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10 “Det brukar jag säga att om det är något man inte håller med om ska man undvika e-mail för det blir ofta missförstånd och det beror så mycket på hur man läser in”. TM12
11 “Det kan bli lite opersonligt med e-mail, man skriver inte lika utförligt och bra”. OW8
12 “Om det är mer fakta, mer komplex, så kan det vara bra att få mail”. TM12
13 “Å r det bara information men skicka det i ett e-mail så att jag har den infon och annars ett sms jag behöver inte ha ett samtal”. MM6
in the organization, but it occurs more seldom with top managers. MM5 says that a lot of e-mail is communicated with both top managers as well as with operative workers. MM6 and MM10 share the same experiences, that they communicate with other middle managers as well as upward through e-mail. MM10 also mentions that operative workers might be harder to reach through e-mail since they often do not work in front of a computer. TM12 explains that the middle managers who operate in the same department handle all the e-mail contact with operative workers.

“If it is top managers or people in the same position as me, it is primary e-mail”. MM10

“Those below my position do probably send up to 100 e-mail every day, they handle all communication with operative workers”. TM12

4.3 Intranet

The intranet within the three organizations is an additional digital communication tool in focus of this thesis. When conducting the interviews, participants are asked similar questions as when the authors’ collect answers about e-mail. Participants are asked about how the intranet is used and their general perception of the intranet; the positive and negative aspects of it. Participants are asked questions of what type of information that is communicated through the intranet and in what situations.

MM6 and TM1 argue that it is the easiest channel to reach everyone in the organization and OW7 thinks that the intranet fulfils its purpose. TM12 highlights that the intranet is a one-way-communication tool. OW3 says it is an easy communication tool to use when reaching out to the employees. MM5 explains that the information published on the intranet need to be relevant for as many employees as possible. TM4 thinks that the intranet is a good communication tool, although TM4 does not get the feeling that other employees use the intranet, saying that it is too complex to find information on the intranet. This is supported by TM1 who thinks there are a few in the organization who actually search for information on the intranet.

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14 “Är det ledningen eller några som sitter i samma position som mig så är det ju mail först och främst”. MM10
15 “Dom under mig skickar säkert 100 mail per dag, dom har all dialog med alla som jobbar på golvet”. TM12
“I think it is the simplest channel to reach everyone and when gathering and providing the same information to everyone it is the easiest and best way”. MM6\textsuperscript{16}

“If information is published on the intranet, it needs to be relevant for as many employees as possible, not just a group of five people, in that case we might as well use e-mail”. MM5\textsuperscript{17}

MM2 explains that top managers as well as middle managers take initiative to post information on the intranet. However, TM1 mentions the individual improvements that needs to be made in taking initiative to post information on the intranet. TM1 says that the top managers need to be more involved in the intranet.

Furthermore, questions about positive and negative aspects with intranet were asked. MM10 thinks it is a convenient tool. OW11 finds the intranet and its functions very pleasant and do not find any negative aspects about the intranet. MM9 mentions one positive thing about the intranet, which is that it is structured and easier to handle than other channels who tend to create information overload.

"I believe it is very convenient, for everything and everyone”. MM10\textsuperscript{18}

TM4 mentions one issue with the intranet. TM4 explains that it sometimes occurs that information posted on the intranet, only is directed to operative workers, but the operative workers never use the intranet and therefore never read the information. MM6 explains this further:

“I believe that if you have a position in the organization where you are attached to a computer all day, you get the information needed if you look into the intranet. But the majority of our employees do not have access to a computer every day”. MM6\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16} “Det är den allra enklaste kanalen tänker jag för att nå ut till alla och samlat och alla får samma info så det är de enklaste och bästa sättet”. MM6

\textsuperscript{17} “Går vi ut på intranätet med information då brukar vi säga att det ska vara relevant för så många medarbetare som möjligt, inte bara gälla en grupp på 5 personer, då kan vi lika gärna ta det på e-mail”. MM5

\textsuperscript{18} “Det är väldigt lättillgängligt tycker jag, för allt och alla”. MM10

\textsuperscript{19} “Har man en tjänst där man sitter vid datorn hela dagarna då tycker jag att man får den informationen man bör få om man ser till att kolla på intranätet men majoriteten av våra medarbetare har inte en dator varje dag”. MM6
However, OW7 is of the opinion that information on the intranet rarely is directed to the operative workers.

“I look into the intranet every work shift, it is rarely or never posted anything about our work, the operational flow and what we work with”. OW7

TM4 says that the intranet is not the primary information source, that it cannot always be relied on. MM9 has a negatively view of the organization’s intranet, saying that it is old-fashioned and further explain that as little time as possible is spent there.

“The intranet is not my primary information source, I do not always rely on it”. TM4

“It is very old fashioned; I really wait for when we have a new system. I do not like the intranet at all and I want to spend as little time as possible there”. MM9

Participants are asked about in which situations that the intranet is used as a digital communication tool. According to MM2, the intranet is used in simple situations when communicating daily information. Although, MM2 mentions that the information on the intranet contains a lot of numbers and statistics and that it lacks exciting information about the organization. OW3 believes that the intranet is a good communication source when looking for general and simple information. OW8 gets the perception that complex information is not communicated on the intranet.

“The intranet is a good tool, for general information, you get a lot of information from the intranet”. OW3

MM5 says the intranet is used to communicate fast information to the employees, for example when an organizational change is coming up. On the contrary, TM12 is of another opinion and

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20 "Jag blickar in där varje arbetspass, det är sällan eller aldrig som det handlar om det vi håller på med, de operativa flöden och det vi håller på med". OW7
21 "Intranätet är inte min primära källa, jag litar inte på det så starkt". TM4
22 "Intranätet är en bra grej, för allmän information, där får man veta mycket". OW3
does not think it is a good tool for fast news. According to MM9, one-way-communication is an easy tool to forward information when there is a complex situation. MM5 illustrates that in a complex situation, top managers gather their employees and explain the situation face-to-face, then the information is published on the intranet.

“It is our communication tool for urgent news”. MM5

"I do not think it is an efficient tool for fast news since the information gets old before it is published”. TM12

"One-way-communication is very easy to forward information, for example if there is a crisis”. MM9

4.4 Social Media

MM10 and MM9 explain that social media is an effective communication channel that allows management to communicate with operative workers. Furthermore, MM9 explains that their social network is the main channel to use when communicating with operative workers, it is also the one they rely on the most. TM12 and MM10 mention that in simple situations, social media is used as a communication tool where it works to remind employees and give daily information.

“I think it is easier to communicate directly through that, to all operative workers. That way we can skip a step and everyone gets the information the same time”. MM10

Participants are asked about the benefits of social media, where the answer show that the participants agree with each other on most aspects. According to TM12 and MM10, social media is easy to use and also convenient since you can read it any time. TM12 also explains that the social network is interactive with employees in the organization since you are able to create groups and comment posts which OW11 supports as well. MM9 and MM10 explain another benefit with the social network, which is that one can see how many who have read each post.

23 “Det är vår kanal för snabba nyheter”. MM5
24 “Jag tycker inte det är bra för snabba nyheter för det hinner bli gammalt innan det kommer upp”. TM12
25 “så tror jag att det är lättare att kommunicera direkt genom där, till alla operaativa. Så vi slipper ta ett steg, så får alla informationen på en gång”. MM10
“You can see who have read everything, so that is a positive thing”. MM10

“It is also good because you can create groups and direct information to those affected”. ELW11

“I think it is good because it is convenient, fast, it is also interactive, you can post files, texts, pictures, we can get an interaction with our workers. it is not one way from the organization, they can react as well”. TM12

4.5 Communication flow

According to TM12, TM1, OW8, MM6, OW11 and OW7, there is a hieratical flow of the information in their organizations. Firstly, the information is decided by the management and is then filtered down to each employee. TM1 explains that the information is decided by top managers, and is further communicated to the relevant department. Further, it is the manager of that specific department who is responsible for informing operative workers. OW3 and OW8 both explain that they receive information from their department manager. MM10 confirms that operative workers always communicate through middle managers if they want to get in contact with top managers. TM4 confirms the organizational hierarchy explained by MM10, saying that all communication with operative workers are communicated by middle managers.

"I believe that the information is filtered down and that some managers are a little too bad to inform, maybe they think it is not so important that employees are not affected by it, but you might want to know anyway”. MM6

“If they want to contact management I think they go through me. I have not heard anyone who has gone around me and went to the top”. MM10

26 “Man kan se vilka som har läst alltting, så det är en positiv grej”. MM10
27 “Sen är det bra för man kan skapa sina grupper och styra information till dom man vill”. ELW11
28 “jag tycker den är bra för den är lättillgänglig, snabb, den är även interaktiv, man kan lägga ut fil, texter, bilder, vi kan få en interaktion med våra medarbetare. det är inte ensidigt från företaget utan dom kan också reagera”. TM12
29 “Tror att informationen filtreras ner och att vissa ledare är lite för dåliga på att informera, de kanske tänker att det inte spelar så stor roll, att medarbetarna inte berörs av det men man kanske vill veta i alla fall”. MM6
30 “Men ska de kontakta ledningen, så går de nog via mig, skulle jag tro att de gör. Jag har inte hört någon gång att de gått förbi mig och gått till högsta ledningen liksom”. MM10
“If it should go through CEO it goes through the closest boss but we do not have that much to do with him so if there is something that needs to go upwards it mostly goes through closest bosses for review and acquaintanceship”. OW7

However, OW3 explains that it is possible to speak with top managers without any problems. OW3 feels comfortable to communicate with anyone in the organization, no matter what it regards. Furthermore, OW8 explains that one communicates directly to top managers if it is required. TM12 shares the opinion together with MM9, explaining that they communicate with operative workers and try to be as visible as possible out in the organization. MM9 further explains that the organization structure is not very hierarchical.

“They prefer that we go through middle managers so we go the right way, I do not go around my closest bosses, the information should be filtered both up and down”. OW8

“We do not act very hierarchical. I can call my CEO or contact him through skype, that is not a problem”. MM9

When asking the participants what type of information they receive from top managers and their opinions about it, the answers differs. OW3 and OW8 agree that information from top managers is general and mostly consists of numbers and statistics. OW8, OW11 and OW7 share the opinion that the closer the information source is to them in the organizational hierarchy, the more detailed the information is. Operative workers believe information from top managers is important but mention that it often reach them too late. MM5 illustrates that when a change has been implemented in the organization, operative workers are the last ones informed of this change. When operative workers finally reach the information, top managers already started on their next project.

“We feel that we get the information too late”. OW8

“It is depending on how general it is, the higher up the more general the information gets and the closer me it comes the more detail we are in”. OW7

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31 "Om det ska gå genom vd:n så går det via närmaste chef men vi har inte så mycket med honom att göra direkt och om det är något som ska upptå så går det oftast genom närmaste chefer för granskning och kännedom”. OW7

32 ”Dom föredrar att vi ska gå via underchefer så att vi går rätt steg, jag går inte förbi mina närmaste chefer, utan man ska filtrera det upptå och likadant det ska filtreras nedåt”. OW8

33 “Vi känner att vi kan få informationen lite sent”. OW8

34 ”Det är beroende på hur övergripande det är, ju högre upp det är desto mer övergripande blir informationen och ju mer närmare mig det kommer desto mer i detalj är vi”. OW7
According to MM2, MM5 and MM6, there is a gap in the communication between top managers and operative workers. These participants also share the opinion that information from top managers is filtered on the way down to operative workers. MM5, MM6 and TM12 also explain that middle managers are responsible to deliver information to operative workers. MM5 describes that the way information is communicated depends on the relationship with top managers. TM12 confirms this by explaining that middle managers need to function as an intermediary when forwarding information. However, MM5 and MM6 explain that not all middle managers deliver information further down to operative workers which is a big problem.

“I believe that it sometimes stays within the top management”. MM2

“I think that the top managers are too far away from the rest of the organization”. MM6

4.6 Digital vs. face-to-face communication

When the participants present how they communicate within their organization, both face-to-face and digital communication tools are brought up. Top manager, middle manager and operative worker mention weekly or monthly meetings as an occasion to communicate face-to-face with as many as possible regarding simple information about the organization. TM1 as well as MM2, MM6, OW8 and OW3 mention that meetings are arranged to gather all employees to communicate information regarding the organization.

When discussing the difference between face-to-face communication and digital communication; TM12, MM5 and MM2 mention that the digital communication act as a complement to face-to-face communication. This is mentioned by a majority of the participants during the interviews. OW7 mentions face-to-face as the primary communication source,

35 “Ledningen har själva jobbat igenom dom här förändringarna väldigt länge och känner sig ganska klara med det. Sen ska det ut och då är det för dom där borta, medans medarbetare ska huntera det här och försöka smälta det, och det kan bli väldigt svårt”. MM5

36 ”Då kan väl jag ibland tycka att det fastnar lite i ledningsgruppen”. MM2

37 “Jag tror att ledningen är alldeles för långt borta från verksamheten”. MM6
whilst digital communication is available as a complement for the occasions where it is needed. MM5 also indicates that digital communication tools are a complementary way to communicate, where meetings in first hand is arranged to transfer the information. According to TM12, the digital communication tools are a complement to reach a wider group of people in an efficient way, whilst the primary communication is face-to-face.

"I would say that our digital channels always are a complement". MM5

"The digital is a complement to personal contact". TM12

A large scale of the top managers and middle managers mention face-to-face as a necessity. According to MM6 and MM2, it is of great importance that top managers not only communicate by using digital communication tools, but also meet the co-workers in person and communicate face-to-face. The importance of top managers to involve face-to-face communication is further stated by TM12, to include physical meetings with all employees in the organization. TM12 believes that top managers’ role involves face-to-face communication among the coworkers to inspire and inform all levels of an organization. TM1 further highlights the importance of having an open atmosphere at the office.

"It is very important that people from the management actually were personally in place, that it is not just enough digital". MM2

"It does not matter how good channels we have, but the managers must be there and talk with their employees". MM2

"More personal contact than digital, it is part of the role of being out and communicating and making people walk in the same direction". TM12

Giving the question how the participants prefer to communicate feedback, the common factor of the answers is that face-to-face communication contributes to the ability to express yourself in a more understanding way. To have the possibility to really understand and learn from what

38 “Jag skulle säga att våra digitala kanaler alltid är ett komplement”. MM5
39 “Det digitala är ett komplement till personlig kontakt”. TM12
40 “Det är jätteviktigt att folk från ledningen faktiskt personligen fanns på plats, att det inte bara räcker med det digitala”. MM2
41 “Det spelar ingen roll hur bra kanaler vi har, men cheferna måste finnas där och prata med sina medarbetare”. MM2
42 “Mer personlig kontakt än digitalt, det är en del av rollen att vara ute och kommunicera och få människor att gå åt samma håll”. TM12
is said, OW7 states that it does not matter who the information comes from, as long as it is face-to-face. OW11 and TM12 mention face-to-face as a preferable way to communicate feedback, due to the ability to sit down and talk to the person and discuss. According to TM4 and MM10, it is preferable to deliver feedback face-to-face with employees within the same department. OW8 discusses the difference between e-mail and face-to-face communication regarding feedback, where face-to-face is preferred. OW8 explains it as positive to be able to communicate as detailed as possible, and being able to reflect over it. Negative and constructive feedback is something MM10 prefers to give and take face-to-face with the person it concerns, to be able to express emotions and get a better understanding of what is said to one another. MM9 mentions face-to-face as the preferable way to communicate feedback if it is possible to talk in person.

“It depends what the matter is, but I prefer to sit down and talk to a person, to be able to discuss”. OW11

“Prefer to get it directly, on-topic and verbally”. OW8

“It is very hard to show emotions and expressions in a comment, it can be perceived as completely different by others, compared to how you thought”. MM10

Face-to-face communication is mentioned by almost all participants as a preferable way to communicate in complex situations. OW7 prefers to communicate face-to-face in situations where it might be hard to understand each other and gives the example of “Well, I do not understand what you are talking about; then it is better to go there and we will talk” (OW7).

During the conversation regarding complex information, OW8 discusses the difference between e-mail and face-to-face, where face-to-face is preferable since it is more personal and detailed. MM10 prefers face-to-face communication, since it allows one to understand each others comments and body language more precisely in person. MM6 illustrates the importance of face-to-face communication as an optimal occasion to deliver complex and important information, and not for simple occasions. TM12 prefers to communicate complex information in writing and face-to-face. MM2 prefers face-to-face communication in both simple and

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43 “Det beror ju på vad det gäller, men jag föredrar att sitta ner och prata med någon person, att kunna diskutera”. OW11
44 “Föredrar att få det direkt och sakligt och muntligt”. OW8
45 “Det är ju väldigt svårt att få fram alla känslor och uttryck i en kommentar, som kan uppfattas helt annorlunda av folk, mot vad du själv har tänkt”. MM10
46 “Ja men jag förstår inte vad du pratar om; då är det bättre att åka dit och så pratar vi”. (OW7)
complex situations and describes face-to-face as the possibility to communicate easily, being able to explain as well as ask the person directly.

"More personal contact, where you can understand each other's comments and see body language and so on". MM10

"I hate when people book a meeting in an hour to inform about something in 5 minutes, I like when it is effective". MM6

"However, the oral contact is best in a way if you have that opportunity, so it will be easier to explain and ask". MM2

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47 “Mer personligt kontakt, där man kan förstå varandras kommentarer och se kroppsspråk och sånt”. MM10
48 “Jag hatar när folk bokar in ett möte på en timme för att informera om någonting på 5 minuter, jag gillar när det är effektivt”. MM6
49 “Den muntliga kontakten är ju ändå bäst på ett sätt om man har den möjligheten, då blir det lättare att kunna förklara och fråga”. MM2
The link between the theories presented in the frame of reference and the empirical findings are analyzed. The empirical data analyzed is presented in the following sequence: vision and goals, intranet, e-mail, social media, communication flow and digital vs. face-to-face communication. Further, a revised theoretical framework and a perceptual map of communication tools are presented as a summary of the analysis.

The authors are able to see links between the frame of reference and empirical findings. The theories presented in the frame of reference are applied and connected to the findings from the interviews. Important links are found concerning the communication flow between different organizational levels. The authors see from the interviews how the digital communication tools are implemented and in which situations they are used. The links between the theories presented in the frame of reference and the findings from the interviews are relevant for the thesis’ research questions and help to fulfil the purpose.

5.1 Vision and goals

While investigating the visions and goals, the authors find that the participants’ knowledge of their organization’s vision and goals differ significantly. Interviews with OW3, OW7 and OW8 reveal that almost all operative workers are not aware of their organization’s vision and goals. The authors anticipate that the majority of the interviewed operative workers do not feel interested in knowing the vision and goals since they share the belief that it does not affect their daily work. This is rather contradicting to what the authors present in the frame of reference, where Bindl and Parker (2010) state that employees can be engaged if organizations effectively transfer the vision and goals onto employees since it will make them feel involved. However, all interviewed middle managers and top managers are well aware of their organization’s vision and goals, which indicates that the theory by Bindl and Parker (2010) is more accurate. The authors perceive middle managers and top managers to be more involved and engaged in their organization in comparison to operative workers. One important link is that TM1, TM12 and MM6 predict that the majority of operative workers are not aware of the vision and goals of their organizations. This is true according to the findings, MM6 explains:
“Most of them know it but I do not think that all of our employees within the operative level knows it”. MM6

In the frame of reference, studies show that it is of great importance for organizations to provide information of its vision and goals on a regular basis in order for employees to feel involved (Sanchez, 2004). This theory is accordingly to the findings where it showed that MM9, MM10, OW11 and TM12, constantly are updated about their organization’s vision and goals. These participants are well informed of the goals and are aware of their organization’s vision which are shown since they could ramble vision and goals by heart.

5.2 E-mail

Several employees share opinion about the positive aspects of e-mail. OW7, TM1 and TM4 explain that e-mail allows time to reflect over the message before sending it. These statements by the participants are in line with a theory presented in the frame of reference, explaining that e-mail provides the opportunity to check and correct a message before sending it. In contrast to verbal communication, it allows the possibility to keep a record of conversations and comments (Lipiäinen et al., 2014).

As stated by Hewitt (2006), it is argued that the ability of e-mail is to push information quick and easy often lead to information overload (Hewitt, 2006). This is confirmed by MM9 who says that e-mail can be chaotic and that e-mail results in information overload. Additionally, other middle managers agree that there is a lot of e-mail and that people tend to send too many e-mails with irrelevant content. When analyzing these answers, the authors do not experience that top managers and operative workers share the same experience as middle managers, which is that e-mail creates information overload and that the there is a hectic e-mail culture. However, one top manager highlights the effects e-mail have on employees, that it might be stressful to get too many e-mails and irrelevant e-mails are not appreciated.

“I do not want a lot of e-mails just because it might be good for me to be informed, it is better to send directly to those who are in charge, it can be stressful with e-mail”. TM12

50 “De flesta har koll på de men jag tror inte att all vår personal inom det operativa har koll på det”. MM6
51 “Jag vill inte ha massa e-mail bara för att det är bra för mig att veta, det är bättre att skicka till dom som är ansvariga direkt, det kan vara stressande med e-mail”. TM12
Furthermore, middle managers share information concerning the e-mail culture which indicates to the authors that they are the employees in the organization who handle a lot of e-mail every day. They have contact with employees at all organizational levels through e-mail, in comparison to top managers and operative workers. Since OW3 explains that e-mail rarely is used to communicate with top managers, and MM5 says e-mail is used when communicating with both top managers and operative workers, the assumption made by the authors is that middle managers often function as an intermediary. When middle managers are presented in the frame of reference, they are defined as being important when delivering sufficient information to other departments of an organization (Smith, 2005). The assumption made by the authors is also supported by a statement made by TM4, who explains that middle managers handle all the e-mail contact with operative workers. Middle managers are said to use internal communication more frequently than top managers since middle managers have daily contact with employees (Karanges et al., 2015). This theory is in line with the findings from the interviews and the assumption made by the authors, that middle managers have a greater e-mail traffic than other employees.

A discussion by Gummesson (2000) mention the negative aspects of e-mail. It is argued to have a negative impact on internal communication and on the employees. The theory states that e-mail can distance employees from each other and create an impersonal work atmosphere. When analyzing the statements made by MM10 and OW8, this theory can be applied to their organizations, where they mention that e-mail can have negative effects on the personal contact. It is brought up during the interviews that e-mail result in a lot of misunderstandings. This is stressed by several participants, all from different organizational levels. These statements are not supported by any theory in the frame of reference but are found by the authors to be a crucial part when evaluating the effectiveness of e-mail.

According to Barrett and Davidson (2006), e-mail as a digital communication tool do not provide rich communication. However, OW11 and TM12 contradict this theory by explaining that e-mail is a favorable tool in complex situations where details need to be provided. The theory is also challenged when several participants argue for the benefits of having information in print, that it is easy to have an e-mail with detailed information and ground material. The authors believe that these positive aspects of e-mail contradict the theory made by Barrett and Davidson (2006).
5.3 Intranet
When investigating the intranet in the three organizations, significant differences in how it is used are discovered, as well as what is known about it and the employees’ opinion about the intranet. The design of intranet portals is fundamental for organizations, otherwise there is a risk that employees do not understand the full benefits of using the intranet (McNaughton et al., 1999). This is confirmed by several of the participants who mention the layout and functions as reasons for not using the intranet. TM4 explains that it is too complex to find information on the intranet and therefore, it is not used by employees. OW11 on the other hand, finds the organization’s intranet and its functions very pleasant and does not find any negative aspects about the intranet. OW11 uses the intranet on a daily basis. It appears that the better the design of the intranet is, the more frequent it is used by employees. The statement by MM9 supports this assumption. MM9 has a negative attitude towards the intranet and explains that as little time as possible is spent there since the layout is old-fashioned.

“The search function is the worst; it is impossible to use it”. MM6

Moreover, an intranet is argued to be efficient only when top managers empower employees at other organizational levels (Stenmark, 2003). The authors found limited material concerning this theory. Although, as presented in the findings regarding face-to-face communication, OW7 mentions that it does not matter who the information comes from as long as it is relevant. TM1 says that top managers need to be more involved in the intranet. When analyzing who the information on the intranet is provided for, it appears to be used when reaching all employees within the organization, and that it is supposed to be relevant for everyone, including top managers. Therefore, the theory by Stenmark (2003) is not equivalent to the findings of this study.

There are disagreements in the different levels in the organizational hierarchy concerning operative workers’ usage of intranet. TM4 is of the opinion that operative workers never use the intranet, while OW7 argues that information on the intranet rarely are relevant for operative workers. OW3 describes the usage of the intranet as not being significant for daily work tasks. The authors believe that as explained by MM6, all operative workers do not have access to a

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52 “Sökfunktionen är sämst; den går inte att använda”. MM6
computer and are therefore not as informed about the intranet as middle managers and top managers who have access to a computer all the time.

"It is probably not information that is necessary for my daily work, it can be more information about general things". OW3

5.4 Social media

Social media is one of the digital communication tools which all organizations have implemented differently. In the frame of reference, social media is discussed as an open, interactive and dynamic internal communication (Mcfarland & Ployhart, 2015). This is supported by the employees who use social media as a source of communication. It is discussed as integrating due to the possibility to create groups and reach employees at all levels of the organizational hierarchy. It is mentioned as preferable due to the possibility to give information directly, without any intermediaries. This is clearly stated by TM12, MM10, OW11 and MM9. One example of this is when MM10 mentions the following:

“I think it is easier to communicate directly through that, to all operative workers. In that way we can skip a step and everyone gets the information the same time”. MM10

According to King and Lee (2016), social media is accessed both through smart phones and web-based devices. Many participants mention that most operative workers do not have access to computers on a daily basis, for example MM5 and MM6 mention that the majority of the employees do not work in front of a computer. This limits the use of social media by all employees of the organization and makes it difficult for operative workers to take part of that information.

53 “Det är nog inte någon information som jag måste ha för att klara av mitt dagliga arbete, men det är kanske mer upplysningar om diverse saker”. OW3

54 “så tror jag att det är lättare att kommunicera direkt genom där, till alla operativa. Så vi slipper ta ett steg, så får alla informationen på en gång”. MM10
5.5 Communication flow

Cowan (2014) argues the importance of organizations having an open communication climate among departments and organizational levels. MM9 mentions that top managers’ openness is appreciated and describes the organization to have an open communication atmosphere. TM12 has a positive attitude towards openness and being as visible as possible for the employees. It appears to the authors of this thesis that the organization that strives for an open communication culture are the one with the least hierarchical boundaries. Smith (2005) highlights that what type of organizational structure, if it is flat or hierarchical, affects how internal communication are done in practice. MM9 supports this by explaining that their organization is not very hierarchical. OW3 also makes a statement supporting the assumption made by the authors of this thesis, that if there are any specific question to a specific top manager, it is communicated directly with the top manager it concerns. This indicates that the organization climate at OW3’s organization is very open and there are no hierarchical limits.

“I would say that we have a good and open communication atmosphere, an open culture”. 

MM9

On the contrary, participants mention that downward communication, from top managers to operative workers, is always communicated through middle managers. Upward communication, from operative workers to top managers, are always communicated through middle managers. This indicates that it is a presence of a distinct hierarchy of the communication flow in the organization.

“If there is anything particular that is communicated upward, it often pass through the closest manager for review and awareness”. OW7

Albrecht (2010) discusses that operative workers loose optimism when top managers mainly focus on giving short, specific and task-oriented information. In the empirical findings, several of the operative workers believe the information to be even more general and task-oriented the higher up the organizational hierarchy it comes from. They mention that the information from

55 “Om det är något som ska uppåt så går det oftast genom närmaste chefer för granskning och kännedom”. OW7
top managers is general and statistic, which they believe do not have any relevance for their daily work. This is clearly shown in an example said by OW7:

“It depends on how general it is, the higher up the more general the information gets and the closer to me it comes the more detail we are in”. OW7

A connection can clearly be drawn from almost all participants. Most top managers, middle managers and operative workers mention that they believe that the information from top managers to operative workers gets filtered throughout the organizational levels. This is stated in the frame of reference by White et al. (2010), that the information from top managers throughout the organizational hierarchy is discussed as inconsistent and filtered. Smith (2005) also discusses that the information tends to stay on the middle manager level and that it is not always processed down to operative workers. In the empirical findings, several middle managers mention that there is a gap in the communication from top managers to operative workers which the authors believe supports the theory by Smith (2005). The authors of this thesis make an assumption that middle managers function as intermediaries, where most information pass for them to forward.

“It is essential that our middle managers understand the task, how we are supposed to do it and why, so they can explain it to their co-workers”. TM12

According to Gray and Laidlaw (2002), middle managers believe they receive too little information. It is discussed that they want information even if it does not directly affect them (Gray & Laidlaw, 2002). What the authors can see is that information also tends to stay already at the top manager level and not only at middle manager level, which supports the statement by Gray and Laidlaw (2002). This is clearly quoted by MM2:

“I believe that it sometimes stays within the top management”. MM2

56 ”Det är beroende på hur övergripande det är, ju högre upp det är desto mer övergripande blir informationen och ju mer närmare mig det kommer desto mer i detalj är vi”. OW7
57 ”Det handlar mycket om att våra mellanchefer ska förstå vad vi ska göra, hur vi ska göra och varför så att dom kan förklara det för sina medarbetare också”. TM12
58 ”Då kan väl jag ibland tycka att det fastnar lite i ledningsgruppen”. MM2
According to Gray and Laidlaw (2002), operative workers perceive that they receive sufficient information about the organization. Regardless of the filtered information and the gap in communication, many operative workers believe that they are well-informed. The authors of this thesis assume that operative workers do not even know that they are uninformed. This assumption is drawn from comparing answers between top managers, middle managers and operative workers from the same organization. Since operative workers do not know all important things top managers or middle managers mention during the interviews, this assumption is drawn.

5.6 Digital vs. face-to-face communication

In the frame of reference, face-to-face is only discussed as an efficient two-way communication (Kalla, 2005). During the analysis, the empirical findings suggest face-to-face as one of the major source of internal communication, which is an important finding for this study. The participants discuss their preference of using digital communication tools, where it is highly dependent on the person’s need of face-to-face communication. The authors notice a pattern, that the attitude towards digital internal communication are somewhat dependent on which generation the participant belong to. Several participants mention age as an impact on the attitude. This is clearly stated by MM2 and MM10 who argue that it depends on the generation whether the employee is encouraged enough to communicate through digital communication tools or not.

Smith (2005) argues that face-to-face is a repeatedly favored communication strategy among employees. This is supported in the empirical findings, where more or less all participants prefer face-to-face communication in complex situations. Since almost all participants indicate this, it contrasts the previous assumption of generation being one of the main influence of using digital communication tools. Instead, many mention face-to-face as the major complement of digital communication tools in complex situations. This is clearly stated by MM2:

"One should not exclude the personal contact. They must probably complement each other".

\textit{MM2}\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{59}“Man bör inte utesluta den personliga kontakten, dom måste nog komplettera varandra”. MM2
The frame of reference states that during uncertain situations within the organization, operative workers have many questions due to their central role of the organization (Cowan, 2014). Top managers, middle managers as well as operative workers all mention the need to ask questions during complex situations. They further indicate that face-to-face is needed when communicating these types of messages. This is clearly illustrated by MM2:

“The personal contact is still best if you have the possibility, then it becomes easier to explain and ask”. MM260

Another indication is that digital internal communication is stated in the frame of reference as a two-way communication which allows feedback to be given and received within the organization (Lipiäinen et al., 2014). However, the majority of participants who use digital communication tools in their daily work still prefer to communicate feedback face-to-face.

5.7 Revised communication flow

Based on the empirical findings, the authors have conducted a revision on the theoretical framework (see figure 1) presented in frame of reference. This framework illustrates that the findings of the analysis both support and contradict the framework. It is shown that depending on the position in the organizational hierarchy, the employee perceives information differently. This is illustrated by the revised model (see figure 2).

Figure 2 illustrates how intranet is no longer considered as a two-way communication. It does not include any further interaction among the employees, which indicates that it functions as a one-way communication. Social media is stated as an interactive two-way communication among all employees of the organization. This allows communication to be interactive among top manager, middle managers as well as operative workers. Operative workers are able to have direct contact with middle managers as well as with top managers by using social media. E-mail on the other hand, is not used as a digital communication tool among all organizational levels. Instead, as shown in figure 2, it is most commonly used as a digital communication tool between top managers and middle managers and between middle managers and operative workers. The authors predicted that the digital internal communication would be more

60 “Den muntliga kontakten är ju ändå bäst på ett sätt om man har den möjligheten, då blir det lättare att kunna förklara och fråga”. MM2
implemented. Although, face-to-face is included in the revised version, since it is one of the major communication source in all organizations. Likewise, e-mail and face-to-face is communicated similarly.

**Figure 2. Revised Digital communication flow in organizational hierarchy.**

### 5.8 Preferred Communication tools

Figure 3 illustrates the findings of the interviews, which is a perceptual map of how employees prefer to communicate internally in their organization. It illustrates how employees prefer the communication in complex and simple situations, as well as how they prefer to communicate personally or impersonally. Given this, figure 3 provides answers to employees’ attitudes towards digital communication tools.

The perceptual map of communication tools shows that face-to-face is preferred in complex situations where the participants prefer to get the information personally. E-mail is considered to be preferred in simple situations but also as a complement in complex situations. It is also
considered as more personal than non-personal. E-mail is considered personal since it creates the possibility to write an e-mail to a specific person, and it is categorized as two-way communication. Social media is mostly preferred in simple situations. It is positioned in the middle of personal and non-personal since it acts as both a one-way and two-way communication. Intranet on the other hand is preferred in rather simple situations and is perceived as a non-personal communication tool. The intranet functions as an information source for guidelines and work instructions, rather than an interactive two-way communication tool.

Figure 3. Perceptual map of communication tools
6. Conclusion

In the following section the thesis is concluded and the answers to the research questions are presented.

The research questions of this thesis are (1) if and how the use of digital communication tools affect the communication flow throughout three levels in the organizational hierarchy and (2) employees’ attitudes towards digital communication tools. This study shows that the communication flow are in fact affected by digital communication tools. Depending on how interactive the digital communication tool is, the communication flow among the organizational levels are affected differently. E-mail is a fast and effective tool when communicating one step in the organizational level (figure 2). Although, it contributes to information overload, especially for middle managers who have a more hectic e-mail traffic than other organizational levels. This results in a negative effect on the communication flow as information is not flowing throughout the organizational levels. Intranet intends to reach all employees in the organization as a one-way communication tool. However, everyone is not taking part of the information provided on the intranet, especially not operative workers who lack resources. Since everyone do not have access to computers at the organizations, the intranet does not contribute to a successful communication flow throughout the whole organization. It shows that the organizations that use social media have a more integrated communication throughout all organizational levels than those that have not implemented it. This is due to the ability for top managers, middle managers and operative workers to communicate among each other and create a functional communication flow. The conclusion is that communication flow is still interrupted when transferred throughout the organizational levels. Even though the implementation of digital tools extends the way information is communicated in the organizations and ease how employees communicate with each other, it is social media that interacts employees and contribute to a functional communication flow.

One significant conclusion is that employees’ attitude towards digital communication tools does not depend on which organizational level the employee is positioned in. It rather depends on the situation the digital communication tools are used in. The attitude also depends on employees’ perception of face-to-face communication (See figure 3). Even though the digital communication tools are characterized by several positive aspects, they are always a complement to face-to-face communication. Intranet, e-mail and social media are not the
primary communication tools, since it is not as preferred as face-to-face communication. Email is a complement in complex situations, but is preferred in simple situations. Although, it often leads to misunderstandings. Intranet shows to be preferred in both simple and complex situations. However, employees’ attitudes depend on its design and functions. Social media is used in simple situations since it is a convenient communication tool. Social media is easily applicable but due to its modern functions, the older generation tend to not have a positive attitude towards it. To conclude, nevertheless how well implemented a digital communication tool is and in which situations it is used in, employees’ attitudes are that digital communication tools are insufficient. Face-to-face is still the most preferred communication tool. Although, one can see that digital communication tools are becoming more popular for organizations to implement. Therefore, the authors are of the belief that organizations are shifting more towards digital communication tools within their internal communication and for the future it is possible that face-to-face will be a complement for organizations.
7. Discussion

The following section concludes the research paper by discussing the implications that can be drawn from the empirical findings, as well as limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

7.1 Implications

The research purpose is developed with the aim to serve both a theoretical and a practical purpose. In this thesis, the authors contribute with additional fields of study to the existing literature and theories, in terms of including three organizational levels. Previously, there has been an absence of the middle managers’ and operative workers’ opinions and attitudes towards digital internal communication. The presented findings are relevant for organizations aiming towards being more digitized in its internal communication. This study is also useful for organizations when implementing a digital communication tool.

7.1.1 Theoretical implications

The theoretical framework is based on existing literature. By combining the existing literature with the empirical findings, a revised model of the framework is presented. This study includes three organizational levels within the field of digital internal communication which have not previously been made. The modified framework contributes to the literature as it illustrates the three organizational levels: top managers, middle managers and operative workers, and how they interact using the digital communication tools investigated.

The authors focus on intranet, e-mail and social media and evaluate these digital communication tools against traditional face-to-face communication, which is unique for this study. After analyzing the empirical findings, a perceptual map with the communication tools is presented. The perceptual map contributes to the literature by providing information based on how the examined tools are used and in which situations, based on perceptions from all three identified organizational levels.
7.1.2 Practical implications
This study gives contribution to organizations regarding how to improve the usage of digital communication tools when communicating internally. It provides organizations with a better understanding of how digital communication tools are perceived by the employees and how they can be better at implementing them. The findings of this thesis also provides organizations with an insight of how the overall communication flow is perceived by employees from three organizational levels.

The aim with this study is to investigate the most common digital communication tools. This thesis show that digital communication tools are seen as a complement to face-to-face communication. It is important for organizations to be aware of the fact that the intranet is not as effective as one might assume; social media is the most effective communication tool once it is implemented. Once intranet and social media is implemented as a digital communication tool, it is important for organizations to encourage employees to use it and to put extra effort into the functions and design.

It is important for organizations to include all organizational levels in the hierarchy and to look into the issues of each organizational level. For example, operative workers often feel very far away from the rest of the organization, middle managers have a lot of e-mail traffic and tend to become intermediaries, and top managers need to be more aware that the information they communicate downward is not flowing effectively through the organizational levels. Furthermore, in order for an organization to increase its effectiveness in communicating the vision and goals to employees, constant reminders on a regular basis is preferred.

7.2 Limitations
During the process of conducting this thesis, several limitations and shortcomings were encountered. Due to the limited time, the authors of the thesis had to limit the depth of the qualitative research. The sample size was relatively small at each organization. Since the chosen organizations have employees throughout Sweden and the world, the time frame limited the ability to interview employees from several locations. To some extends, the participants are from different locations, but not in all organizations. Additionally, the number of top managers, middle managers and operative workers interviewed at each organization were not similar. This was due to the inconvenience to meet a fix number of employees at all organizations. It varied
depending on their organizational situation. The authors are well aware that the relative small sample size at each organizational level does not represent the entire organization. This is of course taken into considerations when conducting the study.

Another aspect that might limit this study is the fact that all organizations are not of same size and are not involved in the same industry. This might limit the results of the study, since operative workers at the smaller organization might have other possibilities regarding internal communication with top managers, than those from larger organizations. Due to these differences, it was also found during the collection of primary data that the organizations differed tremendously in the implementation of digital communication tools. Different digital communication tools were used in all organizations and they were implemented to different extents. This could make the analysis somewhat hard to analyze, since for instance all organizations do not use social media. Although, this is taken into considerations and the authors explain that the organizations that implemented this are facing a greater level of interaction. The authors were unaware to what extent social media was used in the organizations. Due to this, the interview questions could have been formulated differently if the authors would have been aware of this.

The anonymity and confidentiality is not considered as a limitation when conducting this study, since it allows the authors to gain deep insight into the organizations’ internal communication. Although, it limits the ability to include age, gender and a more detailed work position, which could have made the study more trustworthy and understandable. Since digital internal communication is on its uprising, gender could be an interesting viewpoint of this study.

7.3 Suggestions for Further Research

The authors found several suggestions for further research due to the contributions, learnings and findings of this study. This thesis does not focus on different cultures between employees or background for the employees, neither does it focus on gender, due to the anonymity. This opens up for further research, where the authors suggest future researchers to investigate this topic with a greater gender and cultural focus sample. Another suggestion for future research is to include a larger sample size since it would contribute to an increase in generalizability within the topic. This could be done by using a quantitative study where a larger sample size
would be used, which also could contribute to an improved understanding of gender and cultural differences within digitized internal communication.

One conclusion found was that flat organizations tend to have a more integrated communication flow compared to organizations with a clear hieratical structure. The authors were unaware of the impact that organizational structure has on the communication flow. The findings of flat and hierarchical organizational structures are not enough to make a generalization. Therefore, this is suggested to be studied further since an investigation of the two different organizational structure can specify the research. This can contribute to a greater understanding of how organizations can implement and use digital communication tool to its fullest potential. When conducting the interviews and analyzing the result, it was found that which generation the employee belongs to had a great impact on employees’ attitude towards social media. The authors suggest that this can be further investigated as it is an interesting finding which can be developed. For example, by studying different age groups and their attitude towards social media as an internal communication tool in organizations.
8. References


Appendix 1

Interview questions to the communication manager.
1. Tell us about yourself and your position of the organization.
2. How do you perceive the values and the vision that your organization have?
3. Generally, what is your opinion of the internal communication in your organization and how do you perceive it to work?
4. How many do you communicate with face-to-face vs. through digital communication tools on a daily basis?
5. How do you prefer to provide and receive information in complex vs. simple situations?
6. What is your take on Feedback? Through what tools is it communicated?
7. What is your opinion of intranet and what is it used for in your organization?
8. What is your opinion of e-mail and what is it used for in your organization?
9. What do you believe is the attitude of all employees towards digital communication tools vs. face-to-face communication?
10. Back to the organisation’s vision and goals, how do you make sure they are known and received by the whole organization?

Intervjuunderlag till kommunikationsansvarig.
1. Berätta gärna om dig själv och din position i organisationen.
2. Hur uppfattar du er organisations visioner och mål?
3. Generellt sett, hur ser ni på den interna kommunikationen i er organisation och berätta gärna hur du tycker att den fungerar?
4. Hur många kommunicerar du med face-to-face vs. genom digitala kommunikationsverktyg på en daglig basis?
5. Hur föredrar du att ge och få information i komplexa vs. simpla situationer?
6. Hur ser du på att kommunicera feedback? Genom vilka kommunikationsverktyg blir det kommunicerat?
7. Vad är din åsikt om intranät och till vad används det i er organisation?
8. Vad är din åsikt om e-mail och till vad används det i er organisation?
9. Hur tror du att attityden hos de andra anställda är till digitala kommunikationsverktyg jämförelsevis med face-to-face kommunikation?
10. Om vi återgår till er organisations visioner och mål, hur gör ni för att de ska genomsyra och nå ut till hela er organisation?
Appendix 2

Interview questions to the top managers.
1. Tell us about yourself and your position of the organization.
2. How do you perceive the values and the vision that your organization have?
3. Generally, what is your opinion of the internal communication in your organization and how do you perceive it to work?
4. How many do you communicate with face-to-face vs. through digital communication tools on a daily basis?
5. How often do you communicate with other top managers? and how do you communicate with them?
6. How often do you communicate with middle managers? and how do you communicate with them?
7. How often do you communicate with operative workers? and how do you communicate with them?
8. How do you prefer to provide and receive information in complex vs. simple situations?
9. What is your take on Feedback? Through what tools do you provide and receive it?
10. What is your opinion of intranet? How often do you use it and what do you use it for?
11. What is your opinion of e-mail? How often do you use it and what do you use it for?
12. What do you believe is the attitude of all employees towards digital communication tools?
13. Back to the organisation’s vision and goals, how do you make sure they are known and received by the whole organization?

Intervjuunderlag till Företagsledare.
1. Berätta gärna om dig själv och din position i organisationen.
2. Hur uppfattar du er organisations visioner och mål?
3. Generellt sett, hur ser ni på den interna kommunikationen i er organisation och berätta gärna hur du tycker att den fungerar?
4. Hur många kommunicerar du med face-to-face vs. genom digitala kommunikationsverktyg på en daglig basis?
5. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med andra anställda på företagsledningen?
6. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med underchefer?
7. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med de operativt arbetande?
8. Hur föredrar du att ge och få information i komplexa vs. simpla situationer?
9. Hur ser du på att kommunicera feedback? Genom vilka kommunikationsverktyg ger och tar ni emot feedback?
10. Vad är din åsikt om intranät? Till vad använder du det och hur ofta?
11. Vad är din åsikt om e-mail? Till vad använder du det och hur ofta?
12. Hur tror du att attityden hos de andra anställda på de olika avdelningarna är till digitala kommunikationsverktyg?
13. Om vi återgår till er organisations visioner och mål, hur gör ni för att de ska genomsyra och nå ut till hela er organisation?
Appendix 3

Interview questions for the middle managers.
1. Tell us about yourself and your position of the organization.
2. How do you perceive the values and visions that your organization has?
3. Generally, what is your opinion of the internal communication in your organization and how do you perceive it to work?
4. How many do you communicate with face-to-face vs. through digital communication tools on a daily basis?
5. How often and how do you communicate with other middle managers?
6. How often and how do you communicate with the top managers?
7. How often and how do you communicate with Operative workers?
8. How do you prefer to provide and receive information in complex vs. simple situations?
9. What is your take on Feedback? Through what tools do you provide and receive it?
10. What do you believe is the attitude of all employees towards digital communication tools?
11. Back to the vision and goals of your organization, how do you communicate this further to other employees?
12. How do you feel that you contribute to the organizations vision and goals?

Intervjuunderlag till underchefer.
1. Berätta gärna om dig själv och din position i organisationen.
2. Hur uppfattar du er organisations visioner och mål?
3. Generellt sett, hur ser ni på den interna kommunikationen i er organisation och berätta gärna hur du tycker att den fungerar?
4. Hur många kommunicerar du med face-to-face vs. genom digitala kommunikationsverktyg på en daglig basis?
5. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med andra anställda på din position?
6. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med företagsledningen?
7. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med de operativt arbetande?
8. Hur föredrar du att ge och få information i komplexa vs. simpla situationer?
9. Hur ser du på att kommunicera feedback? Genom vilka kommunikationsverktyg ger och tar ni emot feedback?
10. Hur tror du att attityden hos de andra anställda på de olika avdelningarna är till digitala kommunikationsverktyg?
11. Om vi återgår till er organisations visioner och mål, hur känner du att du bidrar till detta?
12. Hur känner du att du bidrar till er organisations visioner och mål?
Appendix 4

Interview Questions for the operative workers.
1. Tell us about yourself and your position of the organization.
2. How do you perceive the values and visions that your organization has?
3. Generally, what is your opinion of the internal communication in your organization and how do you perceive it to work?
4. How many do you communicate with face-to-face vs. through digital communication tools on a daily basis?
5. How often and how do you communicate with top managers?
6. How often and how do you communicate with your closest manager?
7. How often and how do you communicate with others in your department?
8. How do you prefer to forward and get information in complex vs. simple situations?
9. What is your take on Feedback? Through what tools do you provide and receive it?
10. Back to the vision and goals of your organization, how do you feel that you contribute to this in your work?

Intervjuunderlag till de operativt arbetande.
1. Berätta gärna om dig själv och din position i organisationen.
2. Hur uppfattar du er organisations visioner och mål?
3. Generellt sett, hur ser ni på den interna kommunikationen i er organisation och berätta gärna hur du tycker att den fungerar?
4. Hur många kommunicerar du med face-to-face vs. genom digitala kommunikationsverktyg på en daglig basis?
5. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med företagsledningen?
6. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med din närmsta chef?
7. Hur och hur ofta kommunicerar du med andra anställda på din position?
8. Hur föredrar du att ge och få information i komplexa vs. simpla situationer?
9. Hur ser du på att kommunicera feedback? Genom vilka kommunikationsverktyg ger och tar ni emot feedback?
10. Om vi återgår till er organisations visioner och mål, hur känner du att du bidrar till detta?
Appendix 5

Additional Questions
1. What is your opinion of the intranet? How often do you use it and what do you use it for?
2. What is your opinion of e-mail? How often do you use it and what do you use it for?
3. What is your opinion of Social Media? How often do you use it and what do you use it for?

Kompletterande frågor
1. Vad är din åsikt om intranät? Till vad använder du det och hur ofta?
2. Vad är din åsikt om e-mail? Till vad använder du det och hur ofta?
3. Vad är din åsikt om sociala medier? Till vad använder du det och hur ofta?