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Knowledge Transfer at Husqvarna AB

The role of leadership, IT and management

Filosofie magisteruppsats inom Informatik

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Kunskapsöverföring i Hus- qvarna AB

Rollen av ledarskap, IT och styrelsen

Master's thesis within Informatics

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Sammanfattning

Kunskapsöverföring och rollen av ledarskap, IT och styrelsen diskuteras flitigt då de finns att hitta på den vardagliga agendan. Det är därför viktigt att genomföra en mer djupgående undersökning för att få en uppfattning om dagens förståelse för kunskapsöverföring och samtliga roller.

Syftet med den här undersökningen är att studera kunskapsöverföringsprocessen i ett företag och studera rollen av ledarskap, IT och ledningen i denna process. För att genomföra denna undersökning, har jag valt att använda den kvalitativa metoden (hermeneutiska synsättet), den induktiva ansatsen samt applicera intervju metoden för att samla data. Dessa metoder ger mig mer frihet i min tolkning och i min analys. Intervjuerna har genomförts på fyra nyckelpersoner i Husqvarna AB och har analyserats med hjälp av litteraturen (sekundär data) och utifrån egna tolkningar.

Studien visar att de fyra nyckelpersonerna på Husqvarna AB har en väldigt bra uppfattning om kunskapsöverföring och rollen av ledarskap, IT och ledningen. Studien visar att ledaren skall motivera kunskapsöverföring i en organisation genom möten, dialoger som framförs ansikte mot ansikte, verbala dialoger, intranät samt tvåvägs kommunikation. Studien visar också att tre av de fyra nyckelpersonerna på Husqvarna AB är tillfredsställda med hur kunskapsöverföring och ledarskap hanteras idag. Studien visade också att Husqvarna AB för tillfället inte har någon ansvarig för kunskapsöverföring och samtliga respondenter påpekade att denna roll är oviktig i dagsläget. Vidare så betonas rollen av IT verktyg då de bidrar till snabbare kunskapsöverföring samt ledningens roll då de kan påverka kunskapsöverföringsprocessen.

Slutligen, så visar studien dessutom att förändringar är nödvändiga både inom kunskapsöverföring men också inom de andra områdena, på grund av den snabba förändringen av samhället. Förändringar är nödvändiga. Utifrån de kan vi lära oss nya saker, se nya perspektiv och dem ger större frihet till människor som vill lära sig mer. Denna studie (min studie av Husqvarna AB) är ny för både forskare, studenter med flera. Denna studie är också ny för företaget. Nya åsikter för denna tidpunkt kan användas för att analysera vad människor tycker och tänker om kunskapsöverföring och rollen av ledarskap, IT och ledningen. Nyhetsvärdet med denna studie är också att ledarskap frågor, ledningar samt IT området inom kunskapsöverföringsområdet är i alltmera fokus och därför är denna studie relevant.

Master's Thesis in Informatics

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Abstract

Knowledge transfer and the role of leadership, IT and management are seen to work more closely in the every day routines in companies today. That is why it is important to study these areas more deeply in order to establish what current understanding is for knowledge transfer and the role of leadership, IT and management.

The purpose with this paper is to study knowledge transfer process in a company and find out what role leadership, IT and management have in this process. In order to carry out this research, I have decided to use a qualitative approach (e.g. the Hermeneutic view), the inductive way and apply the interview method to gather data. These approaches give me more freedom in my interpretation and in my analysis. The interviews were conducted on four key persons at Husqvarna AB and were later analyzed with the help of literatures (secondary data) and own interpretation.

The conducted study showed that the four key persons at Husqvarna AB have a very good picture of knowledge transfer, the role of leadership, IT and management. The study showed that a leader should motivate knowledge transfer in organizations through meetings, face-to-face dialogues, verbal dialogues, intranets and two-way communications. Further, three out of the four key persons at Husqvarna AB are satisfied with the way knowledge transfer and leadership is handled today. The study also showed that Husqvarna AB does not have any responsible for KT today and this role was not that important, according to the respondents. Moreover, the importance of IT tools today is seen as well as the involvement of management in the KT process.

Finally, the conducted study showed that changes are necessary both within knowledge transfer and the other areas because of the rapidly, changing society. Changes are necessary in order to learn more, see new perspectives and give more freedom to people who want to learn more. This study (e.g. my study on Husqvarna AB) is new for researchers, students and others. This study is also new for this company, e.g. Husqvarna AB. New thoughts for this moment in time can be used to analyze what people of today think of knowledge transfer and the role of leadership, IT and management. The news value with this study is also that more and more leadership issues, management and the IT area are in focus and therefore, this study is relevant.

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1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the chosen subject, as well as problem discussion, purpose and delimitation of this work.

This chapter begins with background to the chosen topic, followed by problem discussion, purpose, delimitation, stakeholders and finally, a disposition of this paper. The purpose with this chapter is to clarify for the reader background to knowledge transfer and the role of leadership, IT and management, the problem area and state the purpose with this study. Delimitation and stakeholders for this paper will also be presented in order to understand the study area and identify possible stakeholders.

1.1 Background

Knowledge transfer (KT) and the role of leadership, IT and management (IT as one area and management as another) are seen to work more closely in the every day routines in companies today. KT is defined by Albino, Garavelli and Schiuma (1998, p.53) as following: “*knowledge transfer is a critical factor for a firm, necessary to rapidly respond to changes, innovate and achieve competitive success*”. Leadership, according to Dubrin (2004, p.3), is “*the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals*”. The IT and management areas are also important and their part in KT will be discussed throughout this paper. Leadership should be interpreted as an ability to inspire individuals (e.g. the education of leading) and management refers more to the actual leaders/board.

What do we reflect upon when we hear the word KT? KT is something that can be found among individuals but also among employees. To transfer knowledge from one person to another is not always easy. People in general must be open to communication and must also be capable of transferring knowledge. Successful KT can depend on several factors, such as group communication, observation, personal movement and more (Albino et al., 1998).

But where does leadership come into this discussion? In addition, leadership works as a complement to knowledge transfer and vice versa. Through a competent leader, knowledge can be transferred successfully and successful knowledge transfer in its turn can help leaders in their every day work. Scott (2003) stresses that leaders of today play an important role in the process of managing organizational knowledge. He stresses that “*Leaders are the ones who provide vision, motivation, systems and structures at all levels of the organization that facilitate the conversation of knowledge into competitive advantages*” (Scott, 2003, p.32).

Besides, managing knowledge is not always that easy. Knowledge, according to Davenport and Prusak (1998), refers to the information that is interpreted and used in a problem-solving context, which generates a competence or ability. So, managing knowledge requires a huge effort from leaders at all levels of the organization. This dilemma, e.g. managing knowledge, is also discussed by Garavelli, Gorgogline and Scozzi (2001). They stress that today knowledge is considered to be a fundamental asset in organizations. Although this concept is not new (e.g., authors like Nelson and Winter (1982) discuss the area of knowledge and knowledge transfer), in the last few years increased attention has been given to this (Garavelli et al., 2001).

Moreover, the society today puts a pressure on leaders and their ability to transfer knowledge in a successful way. According to Dubrin (2004), leadership is crucial at all levels in an

organization and the ability to lead others is a rare quality. The involvement of knowledge transfer and leadership is therefore vital as well as the role of IT and management and more observation of these areas are needed in order to find out how KT functions along with the area of leadership, IT and management.

Furthermore, knowledge transfer is today more or less connected to the IT (Information Technology) area. According to Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland (2000), KT occurs through a variety of mechanisms, such as training, communication and technology transfer. Technology transfer focuses on machines, computers and many more. The area of IT can more or less be a part of the variety of mechanisms through which KT can occur. In the IT area KT can occur, for example through manuals sent by e-mail or direct to individuals. By reading this manual, the individual can learn the procedure without any face-to-face contact with another individual.

Although many argue that knowledge cannot be transferred through e-mail, Internet or other sources, we see today that more and more distance courses are given to students where knowledge is transferred from the teacher to students via Internet or any other connection and where individuals do not have to meet face-to-face. Here, knowledge is transferred through a connection over the Internet and with the help of a computer.

Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) discuss how knowledge transfer can be handled, for example in IT projects. The authors argue that knowledge transfer is not a simple process but still IT can support all forms of knowledge transfer. By using computers and some kind of connection, people around the world can share knowledge with each other without even meeting each other. The area of IT can today support KT processes and make it work easier and faster through different connections, through computers, e-mails and so on. Leaders can communicate with staff much easier and faster and they can also benefit from video-meetings where they can sit in their offices in their own countries and talk to other leaders around the world. The IT area today will definitely give more benefits for both organizations and leaders.

Darr and Kurtzberg (2000, p.29) argue further that, "*Knowledge transfer is conceived as an event through which one organization learns from the experience of another*". Furthermore, Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland (2000) indicate the increased importance of knowledge transfer in organizations. Firms are becoming more aware of its advantage (e.g. KT) on the local markets as well as accessing markets around the world. Although organizations can realize performance benefits from transferring knowledge, successful knowledge transfer can be difficult to achieve, according to Argote (1999).

As today's society is rapidly changing, the knowledge transfer processes must also change or be viewed from new perspectives in order to be successful and stay competitive. The dilemma at this moment is to understand how knowledge transfer is comprehended in companies, what is its connection to IT, if companies can benefit from KT, what role the management plays and also to understand the role of leadership in KT. These questions should be clarified in order to obtain knowledge of how KT and its areas are handled in today's companies and if there is any difference between how things are handled today and how they were handled for some years ago. I state that it is interesting to find out how KT and the areas around it have evolved in today's society.

1.2 Problem discussion

According to the discussion above, I can state that at this moment, there are many questions and unclear issues regarding KT. One of these issues is the role of leadership, IT and management, because current literature does not fully cover the relation of these areas and that is why I feel there is a need to study these issues more. There is a need to go deeper within these areas in order to understand how the companies can benefit from these areas and also how they can work together in certain processes, departments, projects etc. Even if KT is an old area, e.g. several authors have studied it before, it is still interesting for companies today. Therefore, I feel there is a need to study even more. More information and real life studies/observations are important in the understanding of these areas.

Moreover, this is important because current understandings of these areas are quite general and more deeply observations are important in order to obtain an overall picture of the chosen topic. There is a need for a more up-to-date view within the chosen topic. Through this, readers will be able to better understand KT, the role of leadership, IT and management.

Nevertheless, many researches today discuss KT or leadership, IT or management. There are few books that cover all these areas at once. By searching in databases I was surprised by not finding more articles within the chosen topic. Most of the databases I searched in gave me a result of very few papers/articles within KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. This study (e.g. my study) is new for researchers, students and others because three different roles are discussed and connected to the area of KT. New thoughts for this moment in time can be used to analyze what people of today think of KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. More leaders within knowledge transfer are in focus today as well as the IT and management area and therefore this thesis is relevant under today's circumstances and is able to give news value for readers for this moment in time.

Besides, Argote (1999) points out that successful knowledge transfer can be difficult to achieve. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress further, that knowledge transfer is not a simple process to handle. Therefore, the success of KT is relevant to study. Today the dilemma is the understanding for KT and its benefits for companies and also different roles involved in work with KT. The dilemma is due to, that there are not enough books discussing these areas but also because these areas are quite new for both readers and researchers. Therefore, I argue, that a more deep study of this topic is needed in order to understand it better and give reflections of a real life situation (e.g. a study in today's society). Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) discuss that KT is connected to IT but also to leadership and management (as discussed throughout this chapter), so therefore, this study will hopefully clear out the importance of KT and the role of leadership, IT and management which is important and is seen to be a part of many organizations today. My study will hopefully also give more knowledge in these areas and therefore, readers will be more informed.

Furthermore, most of the books related to these areas date back to 2000-2001 and this does not give a fully covered picture at present time on the issue KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. There are not enough material within these areas and many of the articles and books I have read so far gives a general picture of, as mentioned before, either KT or the other areas. That is why it is important to study more within these areas and give an up-to-date view on this topic. The current literature does not discuss the chosen topic in more deeply manner and it is therefore difficult to judge what is new in the area of KT and the different roles.

In order to find out more I intend search for answers and try to study perspectives and opinions regarding KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. The aim is to find out how leadership can be a part of the knowledge transfer process and if good leadership can lead to successful KT or if there are other views/opinions regarding the connection of leadership to KT. This leads to my first research question, which is defined as following: play

- What role does leadership have in the knowledge transfer process?

Moreover, I wanted to find out more regarding the IT role in the knowledge transfer process and if IT is important for the knowledge transfer process. This leads to my second research question, which is defined as following:

- How can IT affect knowledge transfer?

Last but not least, the intend was also to find out what role the management within a company plays in the knowledge transfer process and whether their effort in knowledge transfer would make a difference. This leads to my third research question, which is defined as following:

- What role does management have in the knowledge transfer process?

1.3 Purpose

The aim with this paper is to study knowledge transfer process in a company and find out what role leadership, IT and management have in this process.

1.4 Delimitation

This paper aims to study knowledge transfer and the role of leadership, IT and management in an organization. This study also involves the understanding of KT's connection to leadership, how IT can benefit KT and managements role in the KT process. It is stated that more focus will be given to KT since it has a close connection to leadership, IT and management within organizations. KT is a process which can be found in many organizations and is without a doubt, essential, and that is why this paper focuses more on this issue.

The primary aim with this paper is to study one company and not several. If I were to study more companies I would need to compare and observe them at several occasions and not only one time. I also state, that this study will not compare several organizations since such kind of research will lead to a bigger study area and, as mentioned before, I would have to observe several organizations at several occasions which is not my purpose.

Instead, I seek for an understanding and a perspective of one organization. The reader will be able to focus on just one company and obtain a clearer picture of that one.

However, if it is necessary and I need to obtain more theory in order to have an understanding for KT and the role of leadership, IT and management, several companies will be studied. However, by only studying one company, it can affect the results but I argue that by only studying one, I am able to go more deeply within their thoughts and views and then still compare it with theories in order to establish an impartial analyze and come up with general conclusions.

1.5 Stakeholders

My stakeholders can for instance be all companies that are interested in evaluating their handling of KT and who want to know more about successful KT. Further, stakeholders could also be those who have a general interest for KT and want to find out current understanding for KT and the role of leadership, IT and management in today's organizations. Leaders, employees, researchers and students can take part of my paper because of its general thoughts and its easy structure.

My paper brings up general aspects, such as definition of KT, definition of leadership, how KT is seen from different perspectives and figures relevant to this topic. All these theories are explained on a basic level so that everyone can relate to it and understand it.

1.6 Disposition

Chapter 1- This is the introduction chapter, which brings up the background to the chosen topic, followed by problem discussion, purpose, delimitation and stakeholders. This chapter aims to explain, for the reader, the purpose of this study and why it is relevant.

Chapter 2- This chapter is called method. Here, relevant scientific views are presented as well as method approach, research approach, data gathering, choice of method and company and more. This chapter aims to explain why certain scientific views are more relevant and why other views are less important. This chapter also aims to clear out for the reader why certain methods are more important and how approaches are connected to my study.

Chapter 3- This chapter is called the frame of reference. Here, different theories are presented, which are relevant for the study and for the understanding of the chosen topic. Different views and opinions are presented in order to give the reader different angles of this area and not only one or two. The frame of reference is then used while continuing with the actual study.

Chapter 4- This chapter is called result and analysis. Here, results from the study is presented and then analyzed. The reader will be able to understand and draw conclusion from the presented results but also obtain a picture of what has been stated. The aim with this chapter is to give an impartial reflection of the conducted study.

Chapter 5- This chapter is called conclusions. Here, general conclusions of the study are presented. The chapter also brings up a final discussion of conclusions and suggestions for further studies. The aim here is to present conclusions drawn from the conducted study and reflect upon them (e.g. the study).

Chapter 6- This chapter is the final one. It is called, reflections. The aim with this chapter is to reflect upon my study and discuss if things could have been done in other ways and how valid my paper is. This chapter is more or less, a closure of my work.

2 Method

This chapter presents the methodological approach, how the research was conducted, which method was used and the reason behind choosing this method. Finally, validity, reliability, generalization and objectivity are discussed though this aims to judge the quality of a study.

This chapter begins with an overview of scientific views and continues with method approach, research method, data gathering, choice of method, choice of company, design of interview, critics to the sources and finally, validity and reliability but also generalization, objectivity and performance of the study.

The aim with a method chapter is to give the reader understanding for scientific views, research methods and a discussion to why I have chosen a specific method and company. The purpose with this chapter is also to explain different approaches for a scientific study.

2.1 Scientific views

There are two scientific views a researcher can use when conducting a study. They are called positivism and hermeneutic. These two views are important to bring up because they are relevant when choosing a suitable research method for this paper. The two views can be used to establish what is scientific and not and are discussed by Lundahl & Skärvad (1999).

Positivism aims to explain variables and avoids unverified speculations. Positivism is also more connected to the quantitative approach because this approach (e.g. questionnaires) is suited for mass data and answers are often analyzed in variables or diagrams. This helps the reader obtain a quick overview of mass data. Moreover, Lundahl and Skärvad (1999, p.39) stress the five main points within positivism: 1) A researcher should avoid anything that is not *real* and *observable*, 2) All scientific work should be done according to the “uniform, scientific approach”, 3) The scientific goal is to explain through seeking reason-result-connection, 4) *Generalization* of connections are an important goal in social science and 5) Separation between *fact* and *evaluation* can and must be done.

Hermeneutic, on the other hand, aims to see reason-result explanations and to understand and interpret the meaning of an action (Lundahl and Skärvad, 1999, p.42). Hermeneutic is more connected to the qualitative approach because this approach (e.g. interviews and observations) is much freer and allows own interpretation of phenomena/study from where a researcher later draws conclusions. The aim within hermeneutic is to interpret and understand. In order to make an interpretation, the individual must be aware of the *time perspective* in which the study is in, because this has an important role in the result of the study. The phenomenon is studied in a specific *context* and is ruled by the *person* who is making the interpretation and its *perspective*. Individuals interpret a phenomenon, which gives a *meaning* in order to *understand* and *interpret* the situation/study (Lundahl and Skärvad, 1999, p.42). Hermeneutic concludes an *interpretation*, which starts with a *problem*. Here, a researcher should, with *feeling* and *enthusiasm*, be a part of the phenomena, which is aimed to be studied. That is why an impartial study is impossible to carry out, Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) stresses. The purpose with the study here is to understand and accomplish possible *change*. Finally, Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) stress that *personal experiences* are often necessary in order to achieve scientific knowledge.

Due to the discussion of the two approaches, positivism and hermeneutic, I argue that the hermeneutical approach is more suited for my study. This approach (e.g. hermeneutic) seeks to understand a situation and interpret the meaning of a phenomena/study studied in a specific time perspective. With this approach a more personal interpretation can be done in order to understand KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. This approach is also more flexible. I state that the hermeneutical approach allows me to be more open-minded to the actual study and open to everything around me. This approach is therefore better because as mentioned before, a reason-result explanation is seen and through an action, conclusions can be drawn. This approach is also better suited because it allows me as a researcher to seek for answers from an action or I am able to draw conclusions from something concrete.

2.2 Method approach

By discussing the two scientific views, positivism and hermeneutic, we can say that one is more suited than the other. It depends on the study. However, there are also two main approaches a researcher can use when gathering data. According to Befring (1994), they are: inductive and deductive.

The deductive approach is also called hypothetical-deductive science where a researcher starts with a theory and evolves hypothesis, which will later be tested on a phenomena. Here, the theory and the hypothesis rule the scientific work. This approach can, according to the discussion, be connected to positivism because positivism aims to explain variables and avoids unverified speculations.

Befring (1994) also discusses the inductive approach. In the inductive approach, the observations and analysis of a phenomena/study lead to hypothesis and possible new theories. This approach aims to observe and analyze a phenomenon, which is later summarized into a conclusion and/or theory. This approach can, according to the discussion, be connected to hermeneutic view because hermeneutic aims to see reason-result explanations and to understand and interpret the meaning of an action

The discussion above gives me grounds for to stating that the inductive approach is more applicable for this thesis because the facts, observations and information will be analyzed in order to give an explanation of the chosen topic, e.g. KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. This approach is better because through an observation of a phenomena/study, conclusions can be drawn which can lead to a new theory. This approach is also more connected to the hermeneutic view where a reason-result explanation is seen. So, by applying the inductive approach, I am able to study first and draw conclusion later. I argue that this approach has both negative and positive outcomes. In the end, the inductive approach allows me to study and observe and then draw conclusions.

2.3 Research method

Finally, I can discuss two of the most important approaches for a study. I have discussed positivism and hermeneutic and I have established that the hermeneutical view and the inductive approach are the most suited approaches for my study. However, in order to start the data gathering, I need to present the two main methods for a research, namely quantitative and qualitative, which are discussed by Lundahl and Skärvad (1999), Befring (1994) and Halvorsen (1992).

The quantitative approach, according to Befring (1994), refers to empirical research, which aims to map out, analyze and explain the research-area. In this approach a researcher needs to collect information and later measure and calculate it into variables. Halvorsen (1992) points out that in a quantitative investigation the result is seen as a comparison where the inquiry gives an explanation to the phenomena. The quantitative approach is more suitable when a researcher studies population, citizens, people's behavior and more.

However, Befring (1994) stresses further that the qualitative approach focuses on personal experiences and explaining a phenomena/study. According to Halvorsen (1992), the qualitative approach can give a full understanding of a phenomenon with the emphasis on the unique. The advantage with the qualitative approach is that a researcher is freer in his interpretation but this can also be a disadvantage. Last but not least, Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) also stress, the qualitative approach is suitable for analyzing individuals' interpretation and views on certain phenomena.

Finally, due to the discussion of the two main methods for a research (e.g. quantitative and qualitative), I state that the qualitative method is more suited to my study because it allows me to study the unique (e.g. one company) and explain it from my own interpretation and observations but also from the certain phenomena in focus (e.g. the chosen company). By applying the qualitative approach, I would be much freer in my interpretations (e.g. by not following strict rules) and observations and personal experiences would lead to better understanding of the study area. By being more open and not following any strict rules can have both negative and positive effects. I state that the qualitative approach is better because it allows the researcher (in this case me) to rely on personal experiences and point out the unique (e.g. the niche of a company perhaps). It is also better because this approach allows the researcher to be open and take into consideration every movement and situation and not be forced to follow, for example a strict template.

2.4 Data gathering

After defining research method (I have chosen the qualitative) I can go on by discussing methods to collect data. Some of these methods are: observations, interviews, questionnaires, and more.

Befring (1994, p.66) argues, "*when using observations, a researcher uses himself as an instrument through listening, feeling, experience and by register his impressions*". Through observations a researcher can study a phenomenon quite systematic in order to obtain reliable data. The negative side with using observations is that a researcher must be aware of faults, expectations and prejudices, which can influence the objectivity.

Interviews, according to Befring (1994), are a personal conversation between two or more individuals and this conversation is done for a specific purpose. Here, data is gathered through a dialogue between the interviewer and the respondent. The respondent's answers are mainly used as primary data for the study. Interviews can be of three characters: Standard, non-standard and semi standard.

Questionnaires, according to Befring (1994), are a sort of an interview, because here you have standard questions and these questions are presented for a larger scale at the same time. The questions used in questionnaires must be short and precise and the data gathering is suited for mass data. The advantage with questionnaires is that a researcher reaches larger populations but the variations of the answers are more categorized. The answers are therefore more of a compare kind.

Due to the discussion of suitable methods to collect data, I have chosen to use interviews. This method is the most suitable because it allows me to have a face-to-face conversation with the respondents and find out specific answers and it also allows asking follow-up questions if necessary. By choosing this method, I am able to have dialogs with the respondents and be freer in my questions, all to find out as much as possible. The framing of the answers and the sequence between the questions is not decided in advance but rather adjusted to the specific situation, which allows me to adjust the interview to each and one of the respondents. Due to that every respondent is unique, interviews allow me to adjust the situation so that the respondents feel comfortable and we can have a dialog which generates important information. Therefore, I argue that interview is the most suitable method for my study.

However, there are also two kinds of data a researcher can use during the data collection process. These are: primary and secondary data.

According to Befring (1994), primary data is collected for a specific purpose. A researcher needs to follow preset rules and procedures for this kind of data. Primary data can be collected through questionnaires and estimation of a specific phenomenon. Secondary data, according to Befring (1994), is data that already exists. This data can be used in form of books, articles, newspapers etc.

In this paper, mostly primary data will be used because this data is collected for a specific purpose, namely my study. This primary data is new for the moment in time and will hopefully give readers some kind of news value. But secondary data, such as books, articles and more are also used in order to give several perspectives from researchers within the area of KT, leadership, IT and management.

2.4.1 Literature study

During the process of writing a paper, a researcher needs to conduct a literature study. This is done in order to understand and obtain useful knowledge and information for this paper. By conducting a literature study, pre-knowledge to the chosen topic is obtained and at the same time, the literature study will also be used throughout this paper. Relevant theories will be used and reflected upon throughout the process of writing this paper.

Before starting writing a paper, a researcher (e.g. in this case me) must read lots of articles, books, theses etc. to be able to better understand the chosen topic. The aim with a literature study is to obtain pre-knowledge to the study and the topic but also to later use relevant theories while analyzing the material and when conclusions are drawn. A literature study will, most often, tell me how popular the topic is and whether this topic is new or not. Through a literature study, I am able to choose an appropriate theme, which can give news value for readers.

Moreover, with the help of other researchers' perspectives, I am able to give the reader several opinions and not only mine. My own thoughts will be combined with the thoughts of several authors and experts, all to make this study reliable and point out that this area is interesting to study. The literature study was conducted at the Jönköping's University library, where relevant books, articles, newspapers, theses and more were used. Internet sources and relevant databases were also used.

Although the topic I choose is interesting, there is not much sources to find. As I mentioned earlier in this paper, there are few articles and books covering these areas, e.g. KT

and the role of leadership, IT and management. But, that is why I would like to find out more. Through this literature study, I found that this is a quite new area, and people will surely pay more attention to it in the future.

Last but not least, the literature study may have an impact on the interview questions because I will try to find out answers to questions, which are more or less connected to the chosen topic. Although my interview questions are new for this moment in time, they are still connected to relevant literature and authors within this topic. I state that my interview questions will try to focus on finding news value for this moment in time.

2.4.2 Interviews

Interview, according to Repstad (1988), is a personal communication between two to several individuals. Interviews are often done for a specific purpose and allow you to be more open and not follow any strict rules. It depends of course on which approach you choose (e.g. standard, non-standard or semi standard). Interviews are often used to obtain primary data for a study.

There are three kinds of approaches (Befring, 1994): 1) standard interviews, 2) non-standard interviews and 3) semi-standard interviews. The first one indicates that the framing of the questions and the sequence between the questions are established in advance. When a researcher interviews several respondents, the framing of the questions and the sequence must be done in the exact same way. The second indicates that the framing of the questions and the sequence between them can be chosen more free. A researcher's responsibility is to obtain answers that cover the information necessary for his work. The third and last one indicates, a researcher has in advance decided a sample of questions that will be addressed to the respondents but here a researcher can also supplement with follow-up questions. With a semi standard interview, a researcher has more freedom and he can adjust the questions to the respondent/s and the specific situation (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1999).

Due to the discussion and the purpose of my study, the most suitable method for my research is semi standard interview because it allows me to be freer in my interview questions and in the sequence of the questions. This method is better because the questions can be adjusted to each respondent with room for follow-up questions if necessary. The dialog between the interviewer (me) and the respondents can through this approach be more natural and open. Of course, the two other approaches are also suitable, but the semi-standard allows the researcher to combine the best from all the other ones. Not too strict and not too open, a mix is preferred. The aim with this paper is to study KT and the role of leadership, IT and management, so therefore, by applying the semi standard interview, I am able to obtain answers, which can cover the information need and answer my research questions. These answers can then later be compared with theories, all in order to understand the chosen topic.

2.5 Discussion of the choice of method

According to the discussion throughout this chapter, I have decided to use a qualitative approach (e.g. the Hermeneutic view), the inductive way and apply the interview method to gather data. These approaches give me more freedom in my interpretation and in my analysis. Due to the discussion of all the chosen methods/approaches, I state that they are the ones who correspond with my study and my research questions. By applying these meth-

ods/approaches, I am able to experience and interpret data much freer and more open-minded. As Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) stress, these approaches are suitable for analyzing individuals' interpretation and views on certain phenomena (in this case a specific organization). By applying these approaches, it will help me obtain relevant information for my study by using a combination or a mixture of what is best in every method/approach. The data gathered will also help me give the reader more knowledge on KT and the role of leadership, IT and management.

Moreover, I state that these approaches are much more suitable for my study of a company since I do not have to follow any strict, preset rules for how to examine the company, or how to handle the interviews or for my own interpretations. At the same time, the chosen approaches are the same for all researchers, meaning that the approaches have the same structure for everyone but they still give the researchers some kind of freedom in analyzing and studying, for example, a company.

Likewise, the aim with this study is to better understand KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. Due to the discussion that this topic is rather new (there is not much study done), the chosen methods will help me obtain knowledge about opinions, thoughts and perspectives within the chosen topic. By applying these approaches, it will also help me, as a researcher, to understand what others consider and if the chosen topic is interesting to study. Besides, according to the discussion throughout this chapter, the above-mentioned approaches are the most suitable for fulfilling my purpose and answering the research questions.

Furthermore, the qualitative approach will help me answer the research questions I have framed for this paper. By conducting interviews with key persons in an organization and with the use of personal observations, I am able to obtain answers to my questions. I am also able to draw conclusions from what these specific key persons have answered during the interviews and make an interpretation of the reality in a company.

The choice for using the qualitative approach, the inductive way and interviews, is based on the fact that I want to thoroughly study and understand a phenomenon (in this case a specific organization). Last but not least, it is important to choose right method, which will help me answer the research questions I have addressed in this paper.

2.6 Choice of company

According to the discussion throughout this chapter and the interest in studying KT and the role of leadership, IT and management more deeply, I have chosen to look at an organization in the industry sector, with a hierarchic structure and classified as a big company (e.g. more than 500 employees). I argue that this kind of company will help me to better understand how KT and the role of leadership, IT and management are handled. I also argue that such a company has employees with different opinions of how to handle specific areas and therefore it is interesting to observe and find out how they manage to combine different personalities and opinions. Any other company in other sectors and with smaller size could have been studied, but since the industry sector develops more and more and the size of a company matters (e.g. many employees) it is interesting to observe how they handle certain areas and different opinions. Because of its size and its area, this company may function as an example for other companies in their sector and its ability to handle these areas will definitely affect their result and the company as a whole. A large company with many employees must be good at handling general aspects.

I state that this kind of company will be interesting to study since their responsibility to handle KT, leadership issues, the IT area and management is very much in focus. Moreover, this company was known for me before. I worked there and therefore I have some experience of how the company is functioning and which persons can be of interest to ask for my empirical study. I also argue that a big company will help me to better understand or obtain a picture of how these areas in focus for my paper, are handled. Although there are several other companies in the same sector and with the same amount of employees, I state that the company I want to study will help me answer my research questions better since opinions from several persons involved will be given. I have also chosen to interview respondents which have been with the company quite a long time and their opinions are interesting because they have experienced changes in this company, which they can reflect upon.

Due to the discussion above, the selection of companies has been much easier. I have chosen to study Husqvarna AB, which is a manufacturing company in the industry sector producing chain saws, lawnmowers and more. This company has a hierarchic structure and the need of successful KT, good leadership, IT solutions and experienced management is necessary. This company may not be so much different than any other company. Still, I state that this company is interesting to study since it has many employees and customers all over the world and it is of big importance for them to transfer knowledge in a right way. Therefore, its ability to lead the company in the right direction and successfully transfer knowledge within the organization as well as to companies around the world is without a doubt, essential. This company is at the moment rather successful and known all over the world and it is therefore interesting to study how they handle KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. By obtaining an insight of how they handle these areas (e.g. through observations and interviews), I am able to see a reason-result explanation and from there draw conclusions for my study.

That is why this company (e.g. Husqvarna AB) is interesting to study, because its ability to work successfully states if it can compete on the market. Although there are several other companies I can study, Husqvarna AB is more suitable for my study, because from my previous experience within this company I can state that there is a need to study present understanding for KT and the role of leadership, IT and management and obtain a better insight of their company, thoughts and opinions for this moment in time.

Moreover, Husqvarna AB has today over 1800 employees at the factory in Huskvarna city. Husqvarna AB is a Swedish company established in 1689 in Huskvarna city. Ever since, it has produced different products for markets all over the world. Since 1977, Husqvarna AB is a part of the Electrolux concern, which is one of the world's biggest manufacturing companies in the business sector. 95 % of all manufactured products at Husqvarna AB are exported and Husqvarna AB can also be found in over 100 countries. They are world leaders in outside products.

2.6.1 Choice of respondents

Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) stress that choice of respondents concerns who should be interviewed and who are of less interest. According to these authors, the choice is often made with the help of an evaluation of what is possible and available.

Moreover, Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) state that the respondents are specialists/experts in their area because of their awareness and knowledge and their possibility to transfer their knowledge to others. When choosing possible respondents for my study, I have used the

judgmental approach, which allows the researcher (in this case me) to distinguish who can provide the best information in order to fulfill my purpose and answer my research questions.

The aim with this paper is to study KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. Taking into consideration these aspects and the chosen company, namely Husqvarna AB, I have chosen four different respondents within Husqvarna AB. They are: Håkan Herbertsson (Factory manager at Husqvarna AB), Lennart Wadsten (Product shop manager at Husqvarna AB), Peter Svensson (Production leader at Husqvarna AB) and Anita Christiansson (Executive assistant at Husqvarna AB). These four respondents are working closely with issues regarding KT and the role of leadership, IT and management and they are therefore suitable for my interviews. All four have competence in their area as well as experience and their every day routines concerns some level of KT which makes this interesting to study. My previous experience and current knowledge about the company gives me grounds to argue that these four respondents will be able to provide the best information, which will help me to answer the research questions addressed in this paper and also fulfill my purpose.

2.7 Design of interview

There are several techniques for how to develop questions for an interview. Eriksson and Wiedershiem-Paul (1999) argue that the first approach is problem questions. It is important to distinguish between how you wish something should be and how the current situation is in reality. It is from here a researcher puts together interview questions. Of course, these questions have a purpose, which is to give enough answers to solve a problem. The second approach that Eriksson and Wiedershiem-Paul (1999) discuss is hypothesis. A hypothesis has alternative answers and a hypothesis can be tested and proved. The third and final approach Eriksson and Wiedershiem-Paul (1999) state is themes. Themes are aimed as open questions with the purpose of giving exploratory investigations.

According to the discussion above, the most suitable approach for my study is the third one, also called themes. This approach allows me to investigate, ask questions and obtain information about the understanding of KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. This approach is better because the interview questions can be adjusted to each specific respondent and to the interview moment. Open questions related to the topic can generate relevant information and opinions depending of course on the respondent in focus. By applying this approach I am able to collect data for my study and use it to analyze the present reality at Husqvarna AB. Themes are aimed as open questions and therefore I find it more suitable for my study because open questions allows me to interpret, observe, ask and understand the situation more freer and at the moment in time.

The process of deciding interview questions is not always easy. The questions should be short and precise and easy to understand for the respondent but also give enough answers to cover the information need. I have chosen to use eighteen questions regarding KT and the role of leadership, IT and management (see Appendix 1) with room for follow-up questions and open questions, which will be adapted to each interview situation. These questions will be addressed to 4 key persons at Husqvarna AB and the approximate time for each interview is 1 hour with room for follow-up interviews if necessary. This interval and the amount of questions should be enough for obtaining information to cover the need.

The interview questions should not be seen as a question form but rather as a more open and freer interview, which hopefully will lead to a discussion. Through this, the respondent will not have to feel stressed over the interview situation, complicated questions or long interviews. My intention is also to send this thesis to the participants of the interviews and to get a feedback from them as well.

2.8 Critics to the sources

Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) argue to be critical to sources, especially if you use secondary data. This data can possibly be impartial, consciously angled, uncompleted etc. According to the authors, it is hard to criticize sources, meaning, put them through an examination in order to see how reliable they are. The actual problem with secondary data is to try to establish what has truly happened (ibid.).

In my case, however, mostly primary data (e.g. answers from interviews) will be used. This source is more than often reliable but can also be unconsciously angled because of the interview questions I use. The aim is not to angle the interview questions but rather be impartial and ask many questions to obtain relevant information for my study. If someone is too happy with the situation, my purpose is to ask questions why this is so and try to be impartial and analyze answers without taking part or side. Secondary data, e.g. books, articles and more used in this paper, will be judged from what has been brought up earlier in similar studies. I will try to see other authors' perspectives in this area, all in order to create a truthfulness, which can later support my primary data (e.g. theories connected to the topic).

Furthermore, Befring (1994) points out the importance of establishing the trustfulness in books, documents etc. This has a connection to the judgment of validity and reliability in the continuing process of gathering empirical data (Befring, 1994). Critics to sources indicate to evaluate the significance of different data from how useful it is to the paper.

In my case, several books, articles and more were studied all in order to find out as much opinions as possible and not only relying on one. When somebody was too positive or too happy with the situation, I asked for an explanation to why it is so. I state that I read many books, articles and more to establish what is useful and what is not. I also state that I was impartial in all situations although it is sometimes hard to really know if it is the actual truth. My purpose was to see different angels and take part of different opinions in order to give trustfulness and reliability.

2.9 Validity and Reliability

According to the above discussion of truthfulness and critics to sources, we can go on discussing validity and reliability. These are the two criteria to judge the quality of a study. In order to make the paper reliable, there must be a certain level of both criteria.

Ejvegård (1993) mentions that validity focuses on measuring what is intended to measure. In order to do that, a researcher must have clear measurements and methods so that problems do not occur. If you, for example, want to measure the size of a country, you use square kilometers. Every country can then be ordered in precedence after size (Ejvegård, 1993). It is of importance to notice that a researcher states the exact, same measurement or else problems will appear. It is essential to know what the measurement stands for and it is

wise to say; use it consequently. As a researcher you must not trust statistics from different studies, but rather investigate for yourself the actual area/topic more deeply.

Reliability on the other hand, focuses more on the authenticity and the usefulness of a measurement instrument but also on the actual measurement. Ejvegård (1993) stresses that a researcher needs to be careful with the reliability of a measurement instrument in almost every science area. This because a researcher very often assembles his own measurement instrument, for example a questionnaire with a certain interest, and the instrument's trustfulness will then be low (Ejvegård, 1993).

Likewise, a researcher must strive for making data and measurement instruments trustful so that possible readers will feel your paper is reliable.

Moreover, validity can be achieved, for my study, by actually measure what is intended to measure. This means that I, as a researcher, must strive for answering my research questions by applying the chosen method (e.g. qualitative). In order to fulfill my purpose, I must use the right measurement (in my case, interviews). Moreover, in order to obtain reliability, I as a researcher, must not angle or be partial to opinion/thoughts. I must seek to be impartial and not trust everything that is stated, but rather analyze the situation and come up with my own conclusions and thoughts. Reliability is also achieved by striving to make data trustful. My intention is to achieve both validity and reliability by measuring what is intended and by being impartial and last but not least, by criticizing answers, opinions and thoughts.

Last but not least, my purpose was to obtain answers and draw conclusions. I measured what was intended, in this case, interviews. They were done in the way that was intended and everything went as I have planned. After that, I analyzed the material and connected back to different authors and theories. With the combination of theories and real life observation, conclusions could be drawn. These are seen in chapter 5 (e.g. Conclusions). During this process, reliability and validity was the main purpose. I state that data presented in chapter 4 (e.g. Result and Analysis) is trustful and impartial and this with the help of several aspects such as literature study, critics to sources, and a combination of numerous methods/approaches suited for my study.

2.10 Generalization

Generalization concerns the findings of a study. These findings, according to Lundahl and Skärvad (1999), must be applied to other similar studies or the whole population.

Since I only studied a company, my findings will only be applied on similar industry companies that can recognize themselves in this situation or in the KT process. My findings are not generalized to a large scale, since my study only concerns companies in the industry sector classified as big companies (e.g. more than 500 employees).

Moreover, my study aims to focus on KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. Therefore a generalization can only be done on similar companies or studies dealing with the same issues and aspects. My study is not applied to the whole population since my study more or less concerns industry companies and therefore, other companies in other sectors will probably not recognize themselves in my findings.

2.11 Objectivity

Objectivity is more or less focused on not taking side or give own opinions to a study. Lundahl and Skärvad (1999) also stress that objectivity of a study refers to that a researcher should not influence a study due to his views and all data must be presented correctly. They stress further that any drawn conclusions must/should be based on actual facts and most definitely not on subjective views/opinions.

I intend to present actual facts and I strive for a high level of objectivity in my paper through a comparing of my interview answers with literatures and opinions from authors. My intention is not to give subjective views but rather achieve objectivity. Due to the fact that I knew the studied company before, it can have negative effect on the results to some degree. In the result and analysis chapter (see chapter 4), only actual facts will be presented from where conclusions can be drawn. I will strive for not to angle the facts since it is important for me to conduct a reliable study. I argue that previous experience within this company will only help me to analyse the company deeply and draw trustworthy conclusions. Last but not least, I strive for being objective and give readers a correct view of the actual situation/company.

2.12 The actual study

The intention was to carry out my study with the help of pre-knowledge within KT and the role of leadership, IT and management and by applying the semi standard interviews. The actual study took place at Husqvarna AB during the spring period 2005 where key persons (e.g. four) were interviewed. My research questions were addressed to all four in order to obtain different opinions and perspectives of the understanding for KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. The approximate time for each interview was set to 1 hour with room for follow-up interviews and I state that this was a reasonable time interval. After the conducting interviews, the analysis process began. I collected the data and put it together. I then tried to see a connection from the actual answers to the literature used in this paper. This was done with the help of a so-called retrospect. Relevant theories and opinions from authors were compared with the answers from respondents. Each interview was analyzed impartial, e.g. objectively and the answers are presented in the result and analysis chapter (see chapter 4). In chapter 4, I reflected upon the answers and analyzed as well as criticized the data from what the theory as well as researchers brought up.

Moreover, after analyzing the answers, I draw conclusions. The conclusions are short and concise but also general to some degree and can be of interest for companies in the same industry as Husqvarna AB. People or companies must relate to my study and sense that this is also relevant for them. Finally, I reflected upon my study and the performance of it, which lead to suggestions for further studies (see 5.2). A general discussion of thoughts to the study and the topic is also given (see chapter 6) in order to establish what was good and what can be handled differently. Last but not least, my study will lead to news value (as mentioned early in this paper), which people interested in this area can take part of.

3 Frame of Reference

In this chapter, theories relevant to the chosen topic will be presented. These theories were collected through a literature study, were books, articles, theses, papers etc represents the secondary data. These theories will also be used in the result and analysis chapter.

This chapter begins with an overview of KT where a general discussion is given to what it is, followed by KT in organizations, KT as a cognitive process, how we can transfer knowledge effectively etc.

Furthermore, leadership, the IT area and management are also discussed in this chapter, but with less focus because the main topic is KT and therefore more theories in this area are in focus. Besides, it is important to bring up and discuss these areas in order to establish what part they play in the KT process.

The aim with a frame of reference is to give the reader a deeper understanding for other authors' perspectives as well as opinions within the area of knowledge transfer, leadership, IT and management. This chapter also aims to explain important concepts as well as noteworthy theories connected to this area. This chapter will lie as a ground for this paper since theories discussed in this chapter will be used to analyze the data. Data will be compared with different theories and opinions in order to find out new value.

3.1 Knowledge transfer

Knowledge transfer is widely highlighted as a strategic issue for firm competition, according to Albino and colleagues (1998). The success of many firms today lies in their ability to manage knowledge transfer successfully. As Albino and colleagues (1998) stress, knowledge transfer is important both within the firm and between different firms.

So, what do we think about when we say knowledge transfer? Below follows a discussion of what knowledge transfer is according to several authors.

3.1.1 What is knowledge transfer?

According to Albino, Garavelli and Schiuma (1998, p.53), "*knowledge transfer is a critical factor for a firm, necessary to rapidly respond to changes, innovate and achieve competitive success*".

Albino and colleagues (1998) argue further that knowledge transfer is important both in the firm and between different firms. The achievement of many companies is often based on their ability to transfer knowledge, which is embodied in organizational routines from an organization unit to another as well as to improve their capabilities by integrate new technology.

Polanyi (1966) has another view on knowledge transfer. He mentions that knowledge can be defined as an abstract concept that is consciously or unconsciously built by the interpretation of a set of information acquired through experience and meditation on the experience itself, and that is able to give its owner a mental and/or physical ability in an "art".

Moreover, Albino and colleagues (1998, p.54) argue that knowledge has three characteristics: 1) the structural, 2) the process and 3) the functional. From a structural point of view, knowledge is formed by information. However, knowledge is not a simple aggregate of information. Information is defined as a structural set of data and is neutral, e.g. it is not de-

pendent on the owner (e.g. individual or organization). Seen from the process view, knowledge is a set of information associated to a meaning by an individual or organizational interpretation process (Albino et al., 1998). The interpretation process concerns new or existing information by which both individuals and organizations develop new knowledge. So, in order to deal with the concept of knowledge, it is necessary to separate simple information from information associated to a meaning (e.g. the knowledge). Lastly, from the functional view, all the knowledge owned by individuals or organizations defines their skills and core competences, respectively and enables them to carry out some tasks. According to Albino et. al. (1998), every skill is always referred to a specific task defined as a goal that can be achieved in given conditions.

Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress, that knowledge is a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information and expert insights that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. Knowledge and successful knowledge transfer can always be discussed more deeply because experts will always have different opinions on how you best achieve knowledge transfer which in this case involves some kind of knowledge.

3.1.2 Knowledge transfer in organizations

Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland (2000) argue that knowledge transfer is becoming more and more important in organizations. They stress that firms today are very often organized on a global basis in order to benefit from differences in expertise, labor costs and access to markets around the world. A product design team can for example consist of subgroups divided in different countries, and these subgroups must communicate with each other. Effective management here requires that knowledge must be transferred from one team or geographical division to another.

Furthermore, according to Argote and colleagues (2000), there are other business trends, which stress the importance of knowledge transfer and include interest in using joint ventures and strategic alliances as well as increased frequency of mergers and acquisitions. More firms today realize that they gain benefits from new relationships and this will lead to better knowledge transfer between organizations. Argote and colleagues (2000) stress further, that empirical evidence indicates that firms that are able to transfer knowledge more effective from one unit to another are more productive and more likely to survive than firms that are less effective in knowledge transfer.

Although organizations can realize performance benefits by transferring knowledge, successful knowledge transfer can be difficult to achieve according to Argote (1999). There are individuals that do not understand why particular practices are effective and they will often fail to communicate their knowledge to others. Other organizational members may not share information they possess just because they do not want to. A field study of 32 attempts to transfer knowledge brought up in Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland's paper (2000), showed that of 32, 10 failed and were finished. Therefore, as mentioned before, successful knowledge transfer is not always easy to achieve.

Moreover, Argote and colleagues (2000, p.3) argue, "*Knowledge transfer in organizations is the process through which one unit (e.g., individual, group, department, division) is affected by the experience of another.*" Further, Argote and colleagues (2000, p.3) stress, "*Organizations can learn not only directly from their own experience, but also indirectly from the experience of other organizations.*"

Knowledge transfer in organizations takes place through a variety of mechanisms. Among these mechanisms we can find: personnel movement, communication, observation, training, technology transfer, patents, interaction with suppliers and customers and more.

Finally, Argote and colleagues (2000) discuss that knowledge transfer has under a period of time received attention in the literature on individual psychology. They stress that at the individual level, considerable research in cognitive psychology has been dedicated to how experience on one task can affect the performance of another. Research on knowledge transfer in the cognitive psychology and training literatures has usually focused on results at the individual level of analysis, such as the degree and the accuracy of recall or the amount of time it takes to learn new tasks (Argote et al. 2000).

Here below, knowledge transfer as a cognitive process will be discussed as a continuing to this discussion regarding knowledge transfer in the cognitive psychology.

3.1.3 Knowledge transfer as a cognitive process

A cognitive process is involved in obtaining and storing knowledge. Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that knowledge is the result of an intelligent information processing, since it is defined as an epistemological framework originating in mind. This is an important remark because it lets us theorize that the conversation of data and information into knowledge is necessarily due to the activity of a cognitive system.

Davenport and Prusak (1998) provide an explanation of the difference between data, information and knowledge, which goes well in this discussion. Raw data derive from the measurement of environmental stimuli. Information results from the process of giving meaning to data, e.g. when a diagram is traced and data are graphically represented. When the information is interpreted and used in a problem-solving context, which generates a competence or ability, it can be considered knowledge (e.g. the same diagram can be used to solve different problems, resulting in different actions).

Moreover, Davenport and Prusak (1998) discuss that it is wrong to consider that knowledge can be gradually formed by combining knowledge objects. If we materialize knowledge in an object (e.g. a handbook), the transfer of that object does not necessarily fulfill the knowledge transfer process. What transforms that object in a competence is the activity of a cognitive system that interprets and uses the information communicated by that object (e.g. the worker that reads this handbook).

Garavelli, Gorgogline and Scozzi (2001, p.271) mention: “*Since knowledge transfer is the process by which a certain ability is transferred from a source to a user, its effectiveness is strictly related to the degree by which the user will own the same ability transferred from the source*”. The actual transfer process depends not only on the user’s cognitive characteristics (e.g. experiences, goals, beliefs and more), which influences his/her interpretation, but also on the way knowledge is communicated from the source to the user. Figure 3-1 shows the knowledge transfer process discussed by Davenport and Prusak (1998) and Garavelli, Gorgogline and Scozzi (2001).

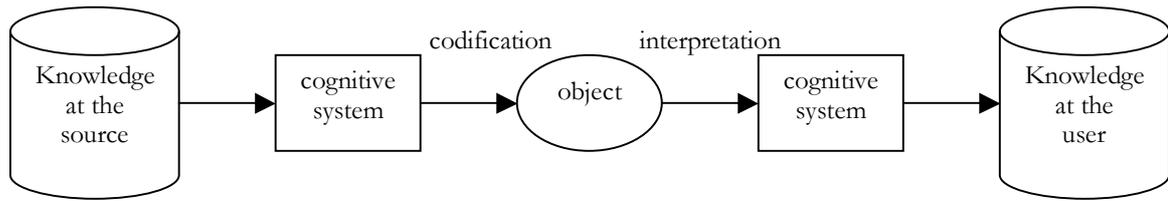


Figure 3-1 A schematic representation of knowledge transfer (Brought from Garavelli, Gorgogline and Scozzi, 2001, p.272)

Interpretation often involves the processes of high-level perception. Low-level perception refers to the neuropsychological interaction between the senses and the environmental stimuli and the high-level perception refers to the construction of mental representations, which will determine the individual's behavior. Garavelli and colleagues (2001) stress further that the selection and the organization of information is a very important part of this process.

Furthermore, interpretation is fundamental in knowledge transfer and it represents the downstream part of the process. The upstream part is codification intended more generally as the knowledge description by the use of a code, which can also consist in images or natural language. The codification process leads to building a knowledge object (seen in 3-1). In organizations, codification is often essential and can be carried out by different actors.

Finally, Garavelli and colleagues (2001) stress that a failure in knowledge transfer is due to a fault either in the interpretation or in the codification process. Since codification and interpretation are often performed by diverse cognitive systems, the effectiveness of knowledge transfer is also dependent on the interaction between them. Moreover, this interaction is usually affected by the cognitive context (e.g. subjects' culture, values, beliefs) in which the knowledge transfer takes place.

3.1.4 How can knowledge be transferred effectively?

Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.88) gives a short answer and according to them the best one: hire smart people and let them talk to one another. The second part of this dilemma is to put it into practice. Often organizations hire bright people and isolate them or load them with tasks that in this case leave no time for any conversation with other employees. Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that knowledge is transferred in organizations whether or not managers/leaders manage the process at all. An example of knowledge transfer could be: an employee asks a colleague to help him with a computer program. Here the employee is requesting unconsciously a transfer of knowledge from his colleague. When sales responsible ask his boss the needs of a particular customer, both of them are exchanging knowledge stressed by Davenport and Prusak (1998).

The authors indicate that these everyday knowledge transfers are a part of organizational life. People discuss with each other in the hall and they feel comfortable. We often make a judgment about who in our area is most likely to be able to help us and we rarely try to find the person who has the deepest knowledge of the subject according to Davenport and Prusak (1998). The authors point out that individuals try to get good enough information from anyone nearby. This is a typical example of the implications of bounded rationality- the limits on how much information people can absorb and how much time they use to get it. Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.89) stress, *"the larger and more complex the firm is, the less likely it is*

we will find the best expertise in the next office or anywhere at our location. Greater size may increase the chances that the knowledge we need exists somewhere in the company, but it decreases the likelihood that we will know how and where to find it."

Furthermore, knowledge transfer can occur at the water coolers or in talk rooms according to Davenport and Prusak (1998). They stress that conversations at the water coolers or in the company cafeteria are often occasions where knowledge transfer occur. Although most of the conversation will be about the game, weather and more, people also ask each other about current projects. Here, they share ideas and obtain advice on how to solve problems. *"Conversations are the way knowledge workers discover what they know, share it with their colleagues, and in the process create new knowledge for the organization."* (Davenport & Prusak, 1998, p.90).

Moreover, many Japanese firms have set up so called "talk rooms" to encourage unpredictable creative blending and exchange of knowledge. In these rooms neither meetings nor company activities are held. Here, the idea is to relax for approximately twenty minutes and talk to whomever you find. These random conversations will more or less create value for the firm. Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that Japanese managers spend many after work hours together. Visit to nightclubs and group dinners are common in Japan's culture. They function as an important knowledge-sharing mechanism, as well as mechanism for building a trust and also opportunities for criticism. Japanese rarely use e-mail to communicate with each other, they prefer to use face-to-face meetings instead.

The lesson here, stressed by Davenport and Prusak (1998), is that knowledge transfer methods should suit the organizational and national culture. It is not possible and also very often not desirable to enforce the Japanese model on American or even Swedish companies. This attempt will more surely fail. Instead, we should identify the value of both face-to-face and e-mail contacts, and provide opportunities for both.

Finally, two quotations from Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.93 & 98) are suitable here. The first one stress: *"When you need to transfer knowledge, the method must always suit the culture."* The second one points out: *"People can't share knowledge if they don't speak a common language."*

3.1.5 SECI Process-The four modes of knowledge conversion

Toffler (1990) stress that we are living in a "knowledge-based society" where knowledge is the source of the highest-quality power. In today's world where markets, products, technology and societies change rapidly, the focus is on innovation and the knowledge that enables this innovation. These two aspects (e.g. innovation and knowledge) have become important sources of sustainable competitive advantage for firms. Toffler (1990) argues further that knowledge and the ability to create and utilize knowledge have also become important aspects for firms today.

Moreover, the SECI process brought up by Nonaka and Teece (2001) discusses knowledge and how this can be captured. The SECI process refers to the process of knowledge creation via conversion from tacit to explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge according to Nonaka and Teece (2001, p.15) is *"deeply rooted in action, procedures, routines, commitment, ideals, values and emotions. It is difficult to communicate tacit knowledge to others, as it is an analogue process that requires a kind of simultaneous processing"*. Explicit knowledge, according to Nonaka and Teece (2001, p.15), *"can be expressed in formal and systematic language and shared in the forms of data, scientific formulas, specifications, manuals and more. It can be processed, transmitted and stored relatively easily"*.

Moreover, Nonaka and Teece (2001) argue that an organization creates knowledge by means of the interactions between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. The interaction

between the two types of knowledge is called “knowledge conversion”. Within this conversion, tacit and explicit knowledge expand in both quality and quantity. The four modes of knowledge conversion according to Nonaka and Teece (2001, p.16-19) are:

1. Socialization - from tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge

Socialization is the process of converting new tacit knowledge through shared experiences. Tacit knowledge is difficult to formalize and often time-and space-specific and that is why it can only be acquired through shared experience, such as spending time together or living in the same environment.

Socialization occurs often in traditional apprenticeship. Apprentices learn the tacit knowledge needed in their craft as being exposed to hands-on experiences rather than from written manuals or textbooks. Socialization can also occur in informal social meetings outside the workplace, where tacit knowledge such as mental models and mutual trust can be created and shared. It can also occur beyond organizational boundaries. Firms often acquire and take advantage of the tacit knowledge embedded in customers or suppliers by interacting with them (Nonaka & Teece, 2001, p.17).

2. Externalization – from tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge

The process of articulating tacit knowledge as explicit knowledge is externalization. When tacit knowledge is made explicit, knowledge is crystallized, allowing it to be shared by others, and it becomes the basis of new knowledge. Concept creation in new product development is an example of this conversion process. Another example is quality control circle, which allows employees to make improvements on the manufacturing process by articulating the tacit knowledge accumulated on the shop floor from years on the job. The successful conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge depends on the sequential use of metaphor, analogy and models (Nonaka & Teece, 2001, p.17-19).

3. Combination – from explicit to explicit knowledge

This is the process of converting explicit knowledge into more complicated and systematic sets of explicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is collected from inside or outside the organization and then combined, edited or processed to form new knowledge. The new explicit knowledge is then disseminated among the members of the organization.

Creative use of computerized communication networks and large-scale databases can facilitate this mode of knowledge conversion. When the controller of a company collects information from throughout the organization and puts it together in a context to make financial paper, that paper is new knowledge in the sense that it is a synthesis of information from many different sources in one context. The combination mode of knowledge conversion can also include the “breakdown” of concepts. Breaking down a concept such as corporate vision into operationalized business or product concepts also creates systematic, explicit knowledge (Nonaka & Teece, 2001, p.19).

4. Internalization – from explicit knowledge to tacit knowledge

The process of embodying explicit knowledge as tacit knowledge is internalization. Via internalization, explicit knowledge created is shared throughout an organization and covered into tacit knowledge by individuals. Internalization is closely related to “learning by doing”. Explicit knowledge, such as product concepts or manufacturing procedures, has to be actualized in action and practice. For example, training programs can help trainees to understand an organization and themselves. By reading documents or manuals about their jobs

and the organization and reflecting on them, trainees can internalize the explicit knowledge in such documents to enrich their tacit knowledge base. Explicit knowledge can also be embodied in simulations or experiments that trigger learning by doing.

When knowledge is internalized to become part of individuals' tacit knowledge base in the form of shared mental models or technical know-how, it becomes a valuable asset. This tacit knowledge accumulated at the individual level can then set off a new spiral of knowledge creation when it is shared with others in socialization (Nonaka & Teece, 2001, p.19).

The four modes of knowledge are illustrated in figure 3-2 below.

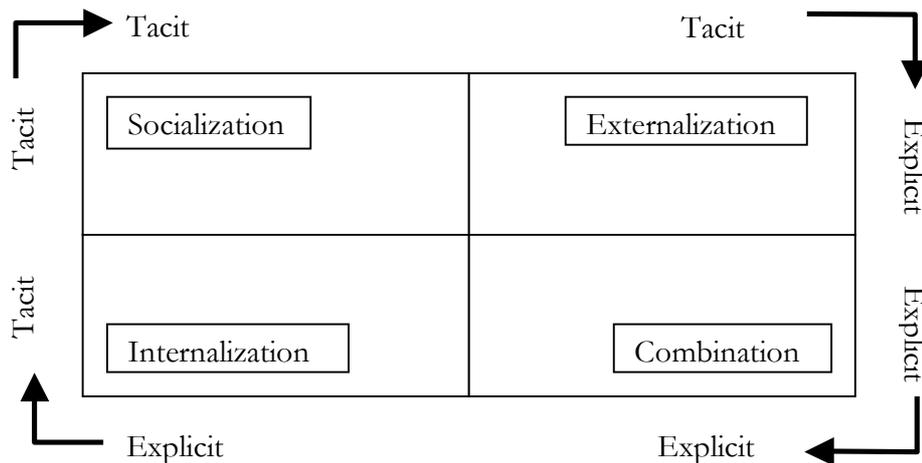


Figure 3-2 The SECI process (Brought from Nonaka & Teece, 2001, p.20)

This model explains the process of knowledge and how it can be converted from explicit to tacit and vice versa. This process is important because it explains how knowledge can be perceived among individuals and organizations seen from Nonaka and Teece's (2001) view. Since knowledge transfer in a way concerns knowledge, an explanation of tacit and explicit knowledge as well as SECI process, was needed.

3.1.6 The Chief Knowledge Officer (CKO)

According to Davenport and Prusak (1998), many firms have now appointed chief knowledge officers (CKOs) to lead the knowledge management charge. Other firms have created so called chief learning officers (CLOs), a related role (e.g. to the CKO) that involves both the management of the knowledge and the facilitation of organizational learning. Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that both these positions are senior management roles on the level of chief information officers (CIO's, involved in strategic planning within IT), heads of the human resources organization and other functional and business unit leaders.

According to Davenport and Prusak (1998), the role of CKOs is complex and multifaceted. They also stress that many consider this role a passing fad. In order to make the job real, Davenport and Prusak (1998) state that its specific tasks and responsibilities must be carefully enumerated. There is a list of CKO "musts", which will provide a good start for a company considering implementing this role. Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.114-115) state that a CKO in an organization must:

- Advocate or evangelize for knowledge and learning from it. Particularly given the important role for knowledge in the strategies and processes of many firms today,

long-term changes are necessary in organizational cultures and individual behaviors relative to knowledge. These changes will require sustained and powerful advocacy (Davenport and Prusak, 1998, p.114).

- Design implement and oversee a firm's knowledge infrastructure, including its libraries, knowledge bases, human and computer knowledge networks, research centers, and knowledge-oriented organizational structure (Davenport and Prusak, 1998, p.114).
- Manage relationships with external providers of information and knowledge (e.g. academic partners or database companies) and negotiate contracts with them. This is a major expense item for many companies, and efficient and effective management of it is important (Davenport and Prusak, 1998, p.114-115).
- Provide crucial input to the process of knowledge creation and use around the firm (e.g. new product development, market research etc.) and facilitate efforts to improve such processes if necessary (Davenport and Prusak, 1998, p.115).
- Design and implement a firm's knowledge codification approaches. Such approaches specify key categories of information or knowledge that the organization would address and entail mapping both the current knowledge inventory and future knowledge models (Davenport and Prusak, 1998, p.115).
- Measure and manage the value of knowledge, either by conventional financial analysis or by "anecdote management". If the organization has no sense of the value of knowledge and its management, the function won't last long (Davenport and Prusak, 1998, p.115).

Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that of these CKO responsibilities, only three are particularly critical, namely: building a knowledge culture, creating a knowledge management infrastructure and making it pay off economically. Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that the cultural factors usually involve long-term change and will probably depend on the types of people a company hires. In the short-term, however, a company can begin cultivate a knowledge culture through education, encouragement programs and management examples.

Settings up a knowledge management infrastructure involve so much more. Davenport and Prusak (1998) state that there is a substantial technology component to knowledge management. The task here involves: workstations, networks, databases and desktop-publishing tools. The task also involves human networks and relationships across firms. Finally, Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that the CKO has to determine how better management of knowledge will help the firm make or save money and he must be able to document that connection.

However, Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that creating a CKO role is not for every company. They stress that if a company has a decentralized organizational structure, the central knowledge role would be inappropriate. So, Davenport and Prusak (1998) argue that it is up to the company to decide whether a CKO role is implemental or not.

3.1.7 Knowledge transfer and IT

Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress that there is a growing recognition in the business community that knowledge is a vital resource for organizations and projects. This resource has not been treated as it should be, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue. They also stress that researchers believe that knowledge resources matter more than conventional resources. Furthermore, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) state, project management is more and more used to manage many tasks and functions within IT department. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004, p.3) define a project as “*a one-shot, time-limited, goal-directed, major undertaking, requiring the commitment of varied skills and resources*”. Moreover, an IT project can be the design, development and implementation of a new product, service or process. According to Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004), projects in general become temporarily limited and people involved are often diffused when the project ends. It becomes difficult to develop stable routines that maximize knowledge flow and capture learning, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue. Creating, transferring and sharing knowledge becomes a challenge.

Furthermore, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue that systems and procedures describe the methods and phases in the knowledge transfer process. An organization’s culture combines shared history, attitudes, expectations, unwritten rules and social norms that affect the knowledge transfer process. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue that it is hard to distinguish if successful KT depends on social and cultural aspects or technological and procedural mechanisms. Anyhow, KT is defined by Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004, p.4) as “*how knowledge acquired in one situation applies to another*”. Knowledge transfer can occur at various levels in an organization, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress. It can occur: between individuals, from individuals to explicit sources, from individuals to groups, between groups and more. Knowledge transfer channels can be informal or formal, personal or impersonal.

Moreover, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress that IT can support all forms of knowledge transfer, but they argue that it mostly has been applied to informal, impersonal means (e.g. discussion databases) and formal, impersonal means (e.g. corporate directories). They stress further that IT can increase knowledge transfer by extending the individual’s reach beyond formal communication lines. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue that computer networks and discussion groups create a forum that facilitates contact between the person seeking knowledge and those who may have access to the knowledge. Another example where knowledge can be transferred is in video technologies.

Likewise, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue that knowledge only is valuable if it is appropriate, accurate and accessible. Successful knowledge management and transfer require systems, methods and procedures. These systems and procedures make up a framework for knowledge transfer i.e. identifying what a user wants or needs to know, how knowledge should be created, collected, stored etc. This framework should also include a clear organizational plan on knowledge transfer.

Finally, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) discuss that many IT tools to support knowledge transfer have been developed in recent years. Some of these tools are based on technologies that, if correctly designed and implemented, can support knowledge management. In a way, knowledge transfer needs technology. This could be in the form of technical infrastructure, communication networks and a set of information services, according to Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004). IT (e.g. e-mail, intranet, databases etc.) enable individuals in an organization to share information from various sources. But in the end, the speed of transfer is often ruled by the IT tools.

Besides, how about leadership in this knowledge transfer process? Can good leadership enable knowledge transfer? What part does then leadership play in the knowledge transfer process? Well, in order to find out answers to these questions, leadership will now be discussed below, under headline 3.2. Less focus is given to leadership because the main topic of this paper is knowledge transfer and not leadership. Leadership is discussed as a complement to knowledge transfer and in order to understand its role in knowledge transfer.

3.2 Leadership

Today, leadership is kind of a challenge for anyone that wants to become a good leader. Ersgård (2004) discusses the awareness of this role by pointing out its huge responsibility and the actions needed in order to realize the good intentions. The great challenge here is to go from words to action and to make sure that the company's vision and mission is fulfilled. A good leader today has these things in common: 1) he has the ability to inspire and stimulate others, 2) leadership is a relationship between the leader and his group and 3) leadership is about managing and developing resources in order to fulfill goals but also about communicating and sharing experience and knowledge (Ersgård, 2004).

Furthermore, below will follow four definitions on leadership and how individuals perceive this role.

3.2.1 Four definitions on leadership

According to Bjerkeseth (1990, p.14) leadership is divided in four definitions:

1. Making people work as they should

The definition here puts emphasize on the administrative side of the leader's work. If the aim is to make people work, as they should, then the relationships must work for this specific cause. Here, the leader is the organizer and he must make sure that the company prepares a time plan. The goal is to considerate different demands and thereby work out a system which will use the capacity at every employee in order to be more effective, while it at the same time, leads to good and practical systematization of employees' time at the company (Bjerkeseth, 1990).

Many leaders consider this definition to be their primary and even their only real, important assignment. The leader should just sit in his office planning and be the one who pulls the strings.

2. Strive for achieving the company's goals

Under this definition, the leader's function is within a board, where last year's result and result for the coming year is discussed. Here, the leader must focus on what the board wants and which goals the company has, both in shorter and longer terms. After that, the assignment is to make everything in his power to achieve these goals.

If the leader wants to succeed here, he must plan in advance and he must consider what an individual employee is capable of and not. If it is necessary, the leader can let people go or he can even consider hiring new employees in order to achieve his tasks and the company's goals. This is not done with a consideration to employees' opportunities but rather with a consideration to production and/or the market (Bjerkeseth, 1990).

3. Achieve results through others

This definition is not that different from the first definition. The difference is, that here emphasize is on the relationship between the leader and his staff. In the first definition the employees are the one who should administrate and work, but under this definition is it the leader who will be responsible for the process. The result here will be something that both the leader and his staff are responsible for, together (Bjerkeseth, 1990).

4. Be a coach for the employees

The forth and last definition sees the employees as a team as it gives a whole different picture of both the employee and the leader. Whether it is a football-team or a team in an organization, there is no doubt in what the individual wants: to achieve the best result as possible, meaning, to succeed with the tasks or functions, which lie in the responsibility area. Concerning individual accomplishments, we know they are not achievable without the help of a team.

The other employees must be there to support and encourage as well as the coach/leader. His part or his involvement is crucial. The leader tries continuously to look for untried possibilities at the individual and he focuses on bringing them to surface while weaknesses are eliminated. By describing the leader as a coach, the solidarity with his staff becomes even stronger (Bjerkeseth, 1990).

3.2.2 Which are the goals with leadership?

Within a company there are several steps to how a leader should fulfill the company's goals. Bjerkeseth (1990, p.21) stresses four main steps of development in an organization:

1) *See* - here the leader observes possibilities, weaknesses and problems either with the employees, the daily routines or with the market; 2) *Think* - In step two the leader tries to study how the possibilities can be used in the best way. He also focuses on reasons to possible weaknesses and problems but also on how these problems can be solved; 3) *Plan* - Step three is based on answers from *Think* phase in order to go on and create a plan. Here, the focus is on: Who is doing what? When is it supposed to happen? How long will it take? How much will it cost? ; 4) *Perform the task* - The last and final step focus on carry out the plans with a focus on make the most of the possibilities and solving the problems.

According to Bjerkeseth (1990), the first three steps are usually done by the leader whereas an employee performs only the fourth step. He argues though that this is neither effective nor healthy. Bjerkeseth (1990) points out that everybody who is involved in performing the tasks must also in one way or another also be involved in the three first steps as well. This is necessary because people see and value things differently. Often, our own opinion is not always the best. But that is why we should let others come with suggestions and improvements because they are outsiders and they see things from another perspective. What we do individually is not always the best solution.

Furthermore, an active participation in every level makes work a lot easier because everyone sees possibilities, problems are solved and opportunities are discussed in order to make the most realistic plan and from there perform a task.

3.2.3 The responsibility

A leader should take his responsibility and not be afraid of challenges, according to Bjerkeseth (1990). When the leader and his staff have gone through the first three steps (see headline 3.1.3) and come to the actual performing of the task, problems can occur. Such as: it takes longer time than expected, it will be more expensive and the result may not be a success. Here, Bjerkeseth (1990) stresses the importance of going backwards to the first steps and try to figure out what went wrong or what can be done better. Maybe the fault is of an employee where he missed to actually perform through his task. The leader must then take his responsibility and call for a meeting with this person, maybe even make the employee aware of his responsibility area and perhaps it was his fault to why the actual performing of the task went wrong. The leader and the employee must have a discussion about aspects concerning the responsibility area (ibid.).

Although this is some of the leaders' responsibility areas, there are several things to consider along the way. The actual responsibility is to achieve the goals and long-time plans of the company, which also includes action plans made specially to help the process of achieving the long-time plans. The leader should also have in mind the vision of the company and make sure this vision goes along with the company's values and organizational culture (Bjerkeseth, 1990).

Moreover, another side of the responsibility is the evaluation of the employees. What kind of people does this company need? Are they offered the right education? Does the company take care of long-time working employees to stimulate their interest and to encourage them to be a part of this organization? The leader is also responsible for him. He is also supposed to serve this company. He must continuously seek for new and unknown paths and he must not be afraid of using his creativity. Along with this, he must encourage the employees to follow the same path in order to achieve goals (Bjerkeseth, 1990).

3.2.4 Leadership in organizations

According to Drucker (1975) a leader's work can be described as plan, organize, coordinate and measure. A leader in an organization must coordinate his work in a top down direction, i.e. employees should paper to him. A leader has an important task and that is to lead people, i.e. lead the employees that paper to him. He should inspire and support his staff in order to fulfill the company's goals. Drucker (1975, p.277) stress further that a leader within an organization has two central tasks: 1) he should create a whole of many separate things. A leader should capture the strength at every individual and try to eliminate the weaknesses; 2) in every decision that a leader takes, he must strive for fulfilling the short- and long terms the company has put up. He must not expose the organization for any risk.

Moreover, Drucker (1975) states that a leader within an organization must balance and harmonize the company's different divisions. He should run the business, lead workers and the actual work and he should also build a relationship with customers and the society. Decisions and measures taken by the leader must give the company benefits or positive effects though the relationships with different actors must not be affected. Every decision made by the leader must also be considered for both the short and long run. A leader should always think forward and strive to achieve better results for the future. According to Drucker (1975), the leader lives in two time dimensions: the present and the future. He must think in present time, i.e. what is to be done right now? and for the future, i.e. what should we do for the future? A leader within an organization also deals with other tasks than just leader-

ship. Among his daily tasks we can find, paper work, paper to committee, statistic work (e.g. analysis) and talking to un-happy customers.

Drucker (1975, p.278) states that there are five fundamental moments in every area of leadership within organizations. They are:

1. A leader should put up *goals* for the organization. He decides both main goals as well as part goals for the different work areas. He also decides what needs to be done in order to achieve these goals. He communicates these goals to the rest of the organization and makes people aware of them (Drucker, 1975).
2. A leader should *organize*. He should analyze decisions, activities and more. He classifies the work and puts up suitable actions. He appoints individuals, which will lead the units and people as co-workers (Drucker, 1975).
3. A leader must *motivate* the employees and keep the communication channel *open*. He puts up work specification for employees and also for him. This in unites with preset rules and laws. The communication channel is always open during this process so people can express their thoughts or unhappiness (Drucker, 1975).
4. A leader must *measure*. This is important for both individual employees and the whole organization. It is up to the leader to decide suitable measurements to calculate achievements. A leader analyses, evaluates and interprets the result/s. These results are later distributed to his subordinate, superiors and colleagues (Drucker, 1975).
5. The final step regards the *education* and *development* of the employees and the leader. Every individual should be given the chance to educate himself and grow as a person (Drucker, 1975).

These fundamental moments can more or less be found in every organization. Many of them are not written exactly like this but probably stated somewhere in an old document.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that leaders today work with people. People are seen as a resource in today's society. According to Drucker (1975) people are a unique resource. We have special qualities and these qualities can be used to achieve goals. When it comes to leading people, there are several things to consider, e.g. speak a common language, and make sure that everyone has understood. Drucker (1975) states that people in general can easily learn to lead. For example, an individual can learn to lead a conference or a meeting. For some of us it can take shorter time and for others longer time.

All in all, a leader must like people, he must help and support them and he must not be afraid of having contact with them. Being a leader is an interesting and challenging role.

Due to the discussion under this headline (e.g. 3.2), it is quite reasonable to continue with a discussion of the connection between knowledge transfer and leadership. What things do these two areas have in common? How can these areas benefit companies? Hopefully, the presented connection below will clear out some of these questions.

3.3 Knowledge transfer and leadership

Knowledge transfer and the role of leadership are on the daily agenda of many organizations today. A connection between knowledge transfer and the role of leadership can there-

fore be seen. A good leader within organizations must know how to transfer knowledge successfully. Scott (2003) stresses that today leaders play an important role in the process of managing organizational knowledge. *“Leaders are the ones who provide vision, motivation, systems and structures at all levels of the organization that facilitate the conversation of knowledge into competitive advantage.”* (Scott, 2003, p.32)

Moreover, managing knowledge requires a huge effort from leaders at all levels of the organization. They must manage three key knowledge processes: creating, sharing and exploiting knowledge. Scott (2003) argues that more and more leadership theories and literatures provide a foundation for understanding how leaders impact the development of knowledge and knowledge transfer. *“Exploring the role of leadership styles in converting knowledge into competitive advantages is important to our understanding of leaders and organizations?”* (Scott, 2003, p.32).

Furthermore, Scott (2003) brings up in his paper Nonaka and Teece’s SECI process where he stresses that firms today create new knowledge through four primary modes that involve the interaction of tacit and explicit knowledge. The SECI process has been discussed above (see 3.1.5) and it is an important aspect for firms today. Managing and sharing knowledge today is a challenge for any organizational leader. Scott (2003) argues further that leaders provide the context in which workers create knowledge and can influence the levels of creativity in the organization. Leaders are the ones who have direct control over what activities are rewarded, what behaviors are encouraged and how work will be valued in the organization. According to Scott (2003), these factors all influence workers’ motivation and ability to develop new knowledge. *“Individuals develop new ideas and new knowledge during the creation process by converting their personal experiences and images into personal insights. These insights can then be shared with others in the team”* (Scott, 2003, p 35).

Leaders should encourage workers to share ideas by creating an environment that is receptive to new ideas. In this environment, knowledge can also be transferred from an individual to another. This can be done through conversations about ongoing organizational projects, actual problems and more (Scott, 2003).

All in all, successful leaders are competent people and very motivated. They know who they are and what they believe in and why. Leaders often know where they are headed in life as well. Besides, leaders of today care about their organizations, their employees and their mission in life. A good leader speaks the same language as everyone else. As mentioned by Davenport and Prusak (1998), the method must suit the culture when someone wants to transfer knowledge. *“Knowledge that is not absorbed has not really been transferred”* (Davenport & Prusak, 1998, p.101). So, leaders must have in mind that knowledge only can be transferred through a right method suited for the culture and situation. Individuals must also absorb the transferred knowledge in order for it to be called successful knowledge transfer.

That is why leaders today have a great impact on knowledge transfer. They are the ones who must support and encourage knowledge transfer among staff and individuals in organizations. People are seen as an important resource for leaders today. Leaders should strive for using this resource as a benefit for any organization and achieve company goals through it (Scott, 2003).

Finally, leaders’ abilities influence the success of new knowledge and knowledge transfer. They are the ones who must play their cards right in order to achieve success within the organization and among individuals.

3.4 Knowledge transfer, leadership, IT and management

Knowledge transfer and the different involvement of leadership, IT and management are seen to play an important role in today's companies. Knowledge transfer cannot function successfully without help from good leadership, which benefits the knowledge transfer process. Authors like Bjerkeseth (1990), Drucker (1975) and Scott (2003) discuss different issues, which indicates that through good leadership, successful knowledge transfer can occur in one way or another. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) discuss further the increased involvement of IT and IT tools within the area of knowledge transfer. They argue that in today's society, knowledge can be transferred through different solutions such as E-mail, Internet and more. Moreover, Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) argue also that it is hard to distinguish if successful knowledge transfer depends on social and cultural aspects or technological and procedural mechanisms. Several authors stress that it sometimes is a mixture of these things that contributes to a successful knowledge transfer. In today's society more and more focus will be given to both IT and IT tools. They make transfer a lot easier and faster than for some years ago and more and more people will use easy solution to transfer knowledge perhaps to a larger scale.

Furthermore, management within an organization plays an important role as well. Management takes more or less a part in the leadership issue/area since they are the one who must give directions and work up a structure. Bjerkeseth (1990) and Drucker (1975) discuss many aspects of leadership and how to achieve what you have established for a department or company. Management can therefore be seen as some sort of leaders were they communicate with staff and employees what is to be done, when and how. Management must put up a structure, a plan and come with ideas to how to achieve goals. Management today is also involved in leadership issues, which are not always easy. Ersgård (2004) states that being involved in leadership issues is kind of a challenge or everyone today. Being a good leader/management requires some effort. Being a part of management, you have a responsibility towards staff and employees. Management must not be afraid of taking chances or be afraid of challenge.

Bjerkeseth (1990) states that management must strive for achieving goals and long-time plans of the company, which also include action plans. Management in general must strive to follow the company vision and organize work from it. In the end, a mixture of all roles is important in the knowledge transfer process. Successful knowledge transfer today is due to the involvement of several other roles/parts.

3.5 Summary of the frame of reference

Throughout this chapter, relevant theories connected to KT, leadership, IT and management have been discussed. This chapter, e.g. frame of reference and its content form an important part in this paper. The frame of reference lies as a ground for my paper. The theories brought up aim to help me go on with my study and find answers to my research questions addressed early in this paper (see under headline 1.2).

Moreover, theories connected to knowledge transfer but also to leadership, IT and management have been brought up. More focus was given to knowledge transfer since this area is more interesting and is rapidly changing in today's society. This area is also more connected to my study and the purpose of this paper. Leadership theories were brought up as well as theories concerning IT and management but with less focus, in order to understand how this can be connected to the knowledge transfer process.

Relevant theories that I will use while analysing the data are those discussed by Albino et al., (1998). They discuss what knowledge transfer is and aspects around it. Polanyi (1966) as well as Davenport and Prusak (1998) are well known authors, which have come up with very interesting thoughts and many researchers review to them. Their thoughts concerning KT are most definitely interesting to use when analysing data. Karlsen and Gottschalk's (2004) thoughts on KT and IT are also interesting since they discuss the increased attention IT has received and also its relation to KT. Authors like Bjerkeseth (1990) and Drucker (1975) discussing leadership issues are also in focus while analysing data. Their thoughts will help me when analysing the role of leadership and management in the KT process. Remaining authors brought up in this paper are also important but the above mentioned authors are more in focus when moving on in the process of analysing data and where my purpose is to compare it back to certain theories. I state that what above mentioned authors state/argue corresponds with my study and my purpose since many of their thoughts can be used when analysing the interview questions. These authors will have a greater role in the process of analysing data and reflect upon the answers from my interviews.

Finally, chapter 3 aims to summarize the most important theories used later in the analysis part. As mentioned before, some authors correspond with my study more than others. It is also stated that remaining authors are also important but they will be given less focus. I also state that Davenport and Prusak's (1998) thoughts on KT are well known and I agree with most theories as well as Drucker's (1975) thoughts on leadership issues which are very interesting and that I agree on.

4 Collected data and analysis

This chapter presents the results from the conducted interviews and a critical analysis of my study.

I have chosen to put together results and analysis, since it is very often easier to present results and at the same time also analyze it than by divide it into two chapters. By doing like this, an overall picture will be obtained. After presenting the results, I am able to analyze and connect it back to the frame of reference. Through this way, the reader will obtain a fully picture of the interviews.

Under each interview, a short analysis will be given. This to establish a discussion from the obtained answers and try to connect it to the theories used in this paper I will try to combine earlier knowledge within this area with personal interpretation and theories. At the end of this chapter, a summarized table of the interviews will be given. This because the paper will be more structured and it will be easy for the reader to follow the results from each interview.

Moreover, material has been gathered with the help of the interview guide, see Appendix 1. I have chosen to present the interviews in text because it will be easier to read and I would not have to use a huge amount of pages by presenting each interview in a table. If I was to present each interview in tables, I would probably have to use between 5-10 pages just for the answers. By presenting the interview answers in text, answers and thoughts can go in one another and a more readable text is obtained. At the end of this chapter however, table 4-1 will give an overview of the most important questions and answers for the one who is interested in finding out answers more quickly.

Furthermore, the time put up for each interview was 1 hour with room for follow-up interviews if necessary. This time was enough to obtain answers to my research questions and each interview also gave me enough information to fulfill my purpose. By analyzing my interview questions, afterwards, I found out that they were neither too difficult nor too easy. However, it is sometimes difficult to satisfy every person but in general, I believe the respondents found the interview questions interesting.

Below, each interview is presented, followed by an analysis.

4.1 1st Interview

Herbertsson (Factory Manager at Husqvarna AB) defines knowledge transfer as somebody who has the knowledge and must share it with someone else. According to him, knowledge cannot be transferred but it can rather be taught or motivated to others. It is up to the individual to learn. Knowledge transfer can be more successful through understanding the situation and be a part of this learning, Herbertsson states. By applying this method an individual learns more. Today, knowledge is transferred more effectively than for some years ago because of staff meetings, written documents etc. According to Herbertsson, this knowledge transfer can be done better. He sees a connection between knowledge transfer and the role of leadership.

Moreover, a leader must delegate work and let people be a part of decisions, Herbertsson argues. Through this, people in general learn more. Knowledge can be transferred more easily to several departments by finding the right channel for communication, by daily meetings, phone calls or by sitting at the same table discussing face-to-face. The most knowledge, according to Herbertsson, is transferred when something is put into action. Knowledge can be transferred through meeting but also in coffee- rooms. Herbertsson

stresses also that it sometimes depends on the culture as well. In some cultures, knowledge can be transferred in coffee rooms but also in so-called, talk-rooms. Here, ideas can be shared. If knowledge were to be transferred in coffee rooms, any organization would benefit from it, because you can take action right away, Herbertsson stresses. He thinks that a group is more effective than an individual and that is why knowledge transfer is necessary in coffee-rooms.

Likewise, knowledge can be transferred more effectively through good communication and common points. People must constantly be motivated in order to learn more, Herbertsson points out. Although today's knowledge transfer is good within Husqvarna AB, it can always be handled better. Herbertsson stresses that more focus on spreading knowledge is needed. Leaders of today deal with this issue on a daily basis and they still need to learn more. According to Herbertsson, Husqvarna AB has succeeded within knowledge transfer since this company is world known. They have succeeded through good, organizational culture and good dialogues between departments. The current understanding for knowledge transfer in Husqvarna AB is general. "*People do not think of it, it is there*", Herbertsson says (Håkan Herbertsson, personal communication, 2005-05-09).

Moreover, Herbertsson stresses that there is a connection between knowledge transfer and the role of leadership today. Since an organization must constantly change, the leaders within must therefore learn new things and new knowledge (e.g. new ways of handling things) must be build. A leader can influence an organization and knowledge transfer through good communication, and clear and direct decisions. Moreover, Herbertsson states, a leader can influence knowledge transfer by learning more about the routines within the organization as well as part elements to his work but also by obtaining knowledge in fundamental principles from where this specific organization works. Finally, the understanding for leadership is quite good, Herbertsson stresses. He mentions that leadership is not discussed every day. "*It is there, but the focus on it is rather little*" (Håkan Herbertsson, personal communication, 2005-05-09).

On the question: Does Husqvarna AB have any responsible for knowledge or the transfer of it? Herbertsson answered, "*No, not that I know of.*" (Håkan Herbertsson, personal communication, 2005-05-09). He stresses further that IT is a tool that can help you in many ways but the most important to remember is that IT is not a cure medicine. Husqvarna AB has today abolished the so-called personal magazines and replaced them with IT tools, which is supposed to fill up the information need. Further, on the question: Which systems/technical means within IT does Husqvarna AB have today to facilitate the KT process? E.g. E-mail, Intranet etc. Herbertsson answered that a mix between a Lotus Notes environment and web-based systems is the answer. He considers most systems to be KT systems. Finally, Herbertsson states that management within Husqvarna AB is involved in the KT process through their every day routines and through meetings and that their involvement is crucial for KT.

4.1.1 Analysis of interview

Additionally, the interview was performed in that manner so that as much information as possible could be gathered from the respondent. The interview situation became an open dialog due to the chosen research method. The analysis of the interview was done with the help of theories and opinions from other authors. A comparison between the respondent's answers and authors' statements constitutes the analysis.

An analysis of the interview will now follow below.

Herbertsson argues that knowledge transfer is very important for an organization. In this paper, Albino and colleagues (1998) stress that knowledge transfer is important both within the firm and between different firms. This can give any company positive benefits. Argote and colleagues (2000) stress further, that empirical evidence indicates that firms that are able to transfer knowledge more effectively from one unit to another are more productive and more likely to survive than firms that are less effective in knowledge transfer. Herbertsson points out the same thing. He argues that through meeting and face-to-face discussions knowledge can be better transferred.

Davenport and Prusak (1998) indicate that the everyday knowledge transfer, e.g. conversations in talk rooms or by the water cooler, is a part of organizational life. People discuss with each other in the hall and they feel comfortable, Davenport and Prusak (1998) argue. Herbertsson argues further that people share knowledge through discussions and more.

Furthermore, Herbertsson mentions during the interview that through actions and clear decisions, a leader obtains support and can later achieve goals put up for certain areas. Ersgård (2004) mentions, the challenge with leadership is to go from words to action and to make sure that the company's vision and mission is fulfilled. Herbertsson stumbled, during the interview, on a few things a leader has in common these days, also mentioned by Ersgård (2004). They are: 1) ability to inspire and stimulate others 2) leadership is a relationship between the leader and his group and 3) leadership is about managing and developing resources in order to fulfill goals.

All in all, knowledge transfer and leadership are seen to work more and more together today. Herbertsson argues that more focus on the organization and the knowledge transfer process is needed. Because of the rapid change in today's society, leaders must constantly seek for new knowledge. Scott (2003) stresses that leaders of today play an important role in the process of managing and transferring organizational knowledge. Maybe companies today can focus on the CKO role, which is discussed by Davenport and Prusak (1998). This role will help define who will be in charge of managing knowledge and knowledge transfer.

Finally, Herbertsson points out that Husqvarna AB does not have any person responsible for knowledge or KT and therefore no so called CKO role. Although this role does not exist, much attention is given to IT tools and systems to help the KT process. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress that IT can support all forms of knowledge transfer, but they argue that it mostly has been applied to informal, impersonal means (e.g. discussion databases) and formal, impersonal means (e.g. corporate directories). Still, Herbertsson states further that management within a company have big influence on the KT process and their ability to express themselves or communicate is crucial for all involved.

4.2 2nd Interview

On the question: How do you define knowledge transfer, Wadsten (Product Shop Manager at Husqvarna AB) argues that knowledge transfer is seen as some sort of information that needs to be shared or transferred. Wadsten shares his knowledge with co-workers either in paper form, via intranet or documentation. Knowledge is not easy to transfer, it depends on where it is aimed to be transferred, Wadsten says. According to Wadsten, knowledge can be transferred through meeting, face-to-face dialogues and more. He stresses also that short and clear messages are the best method. According to him, clearness is very impor-

tant. The knowledge leaders want to transfer, must be clear for all members, e.g. everyone must have understood it. Leaders must see to the individual, he must discuss direct with the individuals, Wadsten says. On the question if knowledge transfer is working today at Husqvarna AB, he answers that it is definitely better then for some years ago. But it can always be better, Wadsten continues.

More meetings, more information and more documents are a way to improve knowledge transfer, he argues but also better communication from leaders is quite important. According to Wadsten, knowledge can be transferred to units/departments through intranet, internal newspaper, meetings and verbal dialogues. Wadsten thinks the most knowledge is transferred at meetings but also in coffee rooms where different problem and/or opportunities are discussed. Wadsten stress, that one positive aspect at Husqvarna AB right now is the so called morning meetings where leaders, managers, and employees discuss what has happened in the last days, what should they do, when should they do it etc. These morning meetings are very important to Wadsten and the rest of his co-workers because if something is wrong, they can act immediately. The response is very quick through this method. Although knowledge transfer works today, changes are necessary within this area, Wadsten says. This because mistakes are made, which affects the transfer of knowledge, i.e. knowledge does not reach the intended employees, Wadsten argues further.

Moreover, this can be avoided by improving the structure of knowledge and through better understanding of the importance of knowledge transfer etc., Wadsten stresses. A leader must always be clear in his communication. Further, on the question: Are you satisfied with today's knowledge transfer in Husqvarna AB, he answers immediately yes. He points out that it is a huge lift for them compared with earlier years. Things are handled much better today then for some years ago, and this because they have realized the importance of successful knowledge transfer. Wadsten argues that changes are necessary, because of the competition from other organizations.

Moreover, the understanding for knowledge transfer today is good at Husqvarna AB, Wadsten argues. They see the need of communicating direct with individuals, customers and more. *"Everyone is aware of the importance of knowledge transfer and they continue to constantly improve this area"*, Wadsten says (Lennart Wadsten, personal communication, 2005-05-10).

Moreover, a leader can influence knowledge transfer through the way he is, Wadsten says. It is in the way you act and the way you are that influence the company and its processes. Wadsten sees himself as a soft leader and he stresses that he rather focus on the individual and not the whole group. The individual can create possibilities for himself if he is aware of the goals. Wadsten argues that a leader can influence knowledge transfer through meetings. Husqvarna AB has today, so called morning meetings (also mentioned above) where managers and responsible for units/departments paper to each other how work has been the last day and what can be done for today or tomorrow. A leader can also influence through education. He can support staff by offering education and encourage them to educate themselves within knowledge transfer and IT for example but also by creating a bridge between him and employees. Wadsten points out that knowledge can today also be transferred in coffee rooms where work is discussed. Wadsten and the organization try to always see new things, hire new leaders and be aware of the importance of leadership. Leadership questions are on the agenda and these questions are discussed frequently, Wadsten stresses.

In addition, Wadsten also states that Husqvarna AB does not have any person responsible for knowledge or KT. Everyone is in one way or another responsible to transfer what he or she knows and in a way so that everyone involved understands. When asking the ques-

tion: Do you believe that IT in general can support/help the KT process? In what way? Wadsten answered: “*Yes, absolutely. Through IT tools information travels faster and is directed to many more at the same time*” (Lennart Wadsten, personal communication, 2005-05-10). Wadsten states that e-mail and Intranet are IT tools that Husqvarna AB uses today. He mentions further that management has an impact on the KT process through decisions that are made, what should and should not be informed, at what time and so on. Husqvarna AB is constantly trying to handle things better. Last but not least, on the question: What role does the management play in the KT process? Wadsten answered, “*management plays an important role. As part of the management, we must constantly be careful with how we handle things or inform people. Management can choose to inform through e-mail or through personal meetings*” (Lennart Wadsten, personal communication, 2005-05-10).

4.2.1 Analysis of interview

Additionally, the interview was performed in that manner so that as much information as possible could be gathered from the respondent. The interview situation became an open dialog due to the chosen research method. The analysis of the interview was done with the help of theories and opinions from other authors. A comparison between the respondent’s answers and authors’ statements constitutes the analysis.

Further an analysis of the interview will follow below.

Knowledge transfer is an important issue for Wadsten. He stresses that knowledge can be transferred through meeting, face-to-face dialogues and more. Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland (2000) argue that knowledge transfer is becoming more and more important in organizations today. An organization’s ability to handle knowledge will definitely let us know how successful the company is.

When asking Wadsten to define knowledge transfer he mentioned that it could be seen as some sort of information that is aimed to be shared or transferred to others. Davenport and Prusak (1998) explain the difference between information and knowledge. According to them, information results from the process of giving meaning to data (Raw data derive from the measurement of environmental stimuli). Furthermore, when the information is interpreted and used in a problem-solving context, which generates a competence or ability, it can be considered knowledge. This explanation is important because many leaders today speak of information and knowledge without really explaining the difference between these two.

Furthermore, knowledge transfer and leadership are seen to work more close to each other today. Wadsten argues that it is important for leaders to realize the benefit from these two areas. A constant change and new knowledge within these areas are necessary for every company today, he points out. As Scott (2003) argues, leaders of today play an important role in the process of managing and transferring organizational knowledge.

Wadsten argues further that leadership often means to organize and divide work. Bjerkeseth (1990) mentions four steps that are included in leadership. The third step is *Plan* and this step focus more or less on planning resources, planning processes, employees and the actual work. As Wadsten stresses, a leader should always plan for the future and in the end create new possibilities for the company and the processes involved. According to Drucker (1975), a leader should build relationships with staff, customers and the society. Drucker (1975) stresses that decisions and measures taken by the leader, whether they are in man-

agement or in knowledge transfer processes, must give the company benefits or positive effects.

Wadsten believes that every person is responsible for sharing or transferring knowledge he possesses. Husqvarna AB does not have any person responsible for KT and also no CKO role within the company today. He argues that IT tools are today a fast and easy way to inform people. He states that e-mail and the Intranet at Husqvarna AB are frequently used and as many other authors stress, these tools are becoming more and more popular and they replace personal magazines or meetings sometimes. Wadsten also believes that management has a huge impact on KT processes since they are the one who must communicate information top-down so to say.

4.3 3rd Interview

Svensson (Production Leader at Husqvarna AB) defines knowledge transfer as communicating with others, sharing what you know. A leader can transfer knowledge to others by talking, showing and having dialogue with them. Knowledge can be transferred but Svensson argues that it is quite difficult. He often uses his subordinators to transfer knowledge to units/departments because or else it is not clear if all individuals have received the knowledge. By using subordinators, knowledge can be transferred so that it fits every individual. His subordinators speak the same language as the employees and through this method they can reach many more individuals. Svensson argues further that he uses notes so that everyone can take part of the information. According to him, knowledge transfer can be improved through, for example signatures to follow up so that everyone has read the text/document.

Additionally, Svensson argues that knowledge can be transferred to units/departments through meetings and dialogues. Subordinators have an important task here. They must see to that knowledge is transferred to the rest of the employees. According to Svensson, the most knowledge is transferred through meetings but also in so called coffee rooms. He stresses that it is a mix of several methods, which makes knowledge transfer successful. He points out that changes within knowledge transfer are necessary, things can always work better. His opinion is: *“It is better to improve what you already have rather than start from the beginning”* (Peter Svensson, personal communication, 2005-05-10).

Moreover, Svensson is not satisfied with today's knowledge transfer within Husqvarna AB. He argues that better information channels and an improvement of the communication between individuals, is needed. Everyone must see to that they understand the knowledge and it lies in everyone's interest to inform co-workers, in order for it to work. The current understanding for knowledge transfer today is so and so, Svensson argues. Knowledge transfer within Husqvarna AB can be better. *“When something is wrong, people complain”*, he says (Peter Svensson, personal communication, 2005-05-10). Moreover, the understanding for knowledge transfer is there, but people must realize its importance, Svensson argues.

Finally, Svensson stresses that a leader should be keen to others (e.g. listen to people), be clear in his decision and goal-oriented. He argues that a leader can influence an organization and knowledge transfer by setting norms for a unit/department but also by showing others what is right and wrong. Svensson mentions further that a leader can share knowledge through communication and by coaching and supporting others. A leader must not be afraid of communicating with other individuals, asking co-workers for suggestions in spe-

cific issues or admitting when something is wrong. He argues that managers and leaders should be even more focused on coaching and stimulating employees to achieve company goals. He argues further that managers and leaders should not rule in detail but rather focus on groups and let them know what is expected of them. Svensson states that leadership questions are discussed frequently and that the level of leadership within Husqvarna AB is rather good.

In addition, Svensson states that Husqvarna AB does not have someone responsible for KT. On the question: Do you believe that IT in general can support/help the KT process? In what way? Svensson answered: “*Yes, it is very easy to search for information through different IT solutions, such as e-mail*” (Peter Svensson, personal communication, 2005-05-10). Svensson states further that Husqvarna AB today uses Intranet, CMS and e-mail to facilitate the KT process. Likewise, Svensson also mentions that management has a huge impact on KT process, since most of the information comes from the management. An open environment makes it easier to transfer knowledge, Svensson states. “*Management is the ones responsible for making it all work and making the KT process easier and faster*” (Peter Svensson, personal communication, 2005-05-10).

4.3.1 Analysis of interview

Additionally, the interview was performed in that manner so that as much information as possible could be gathered from the respondent. The interview situation became an open dialog due to the chosen research method. The analysis of the interview was done with the help of theories and opinions from other authors. A comparison between the respondent’s answers and authors’ statements constitutes the analysis.

Further an analysis of the interview will be presented.

Some interesting thoughts came up during the interview with Svensson. He is not satisfied with today’s knowledge transfer within Husqvarna AB. He argues that things can be handled differently. According to Garavelli and colleagues (2001), a failure in knowledge transfer is due to a fault either in the interpretation or in the codification process (see figure 3-1). The authors stress that people’s values, culture and beliefs can have an influence in the process of transferring knowledge.

How can then knowledge be transferred successfully? Well, Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress that by hiring smart people and let them talk to each other knowledge can be transferred more effectively. But this is probably not the answer. The dilemma is to put it into practice. As Davenport and Prusak (1998) stress, often organizations hire bright people and isolate them or load them with tasks that in this case leave no time for any conversation with other employees.

As Svensson argues, knowledge is a benefit for organizations today. Leaders must learn how to handle this knowledge. According to him, a leader is someone that people have trust in and who will lead them through difficulties and must in the end learn how to deal with knowledge, people etc. Moreover, as Drucker (1975) stresses, a leader lives in two time dimensions: the present and the future. A leader must think in present time, i.e. what is to be done right now? and for the future, i.e. what should we do for the future? Drucker’s (1975) thoughts resemble more or less with Svensson’s thoughts. Svensson argues that leaders should have in mind several aspects, e.g. what should we do at this moment in time, what we must change, how we can change it etc. These questions are related to both knowledge transfer but also leadership.

In addition, Svensson sees an ensemble between knowledge transfer and leadership. Without a good and competent leader, knowledge transfer cannot be successful. Still, things must change in order to be even more successful, as a company, on the market. Scott (2003, p.32) brings up an important issue, which fits well in this discussion: *“Leaders are the ones who provide vision, motivation, systems and structures at all levels of the organization that facilitate the conversation of knowledge into competitive advantages”*

Finally, Svensson believes that there is no need for a CKO role today at Husqvarna AB. Everyone handles KT in their one way. He also argues that IT tools today are necessary and that these tools make work a lot easier. Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress that IT (e.g. e-mail, intranet, databases etc.) enable individuals in an organization to share information from various sources. But in the end, the IT tools often rule the speed of transfer. All in all, management is very much involved in the KT process and they are the one who can enable this process in a way so that everyone can benefit from it.

4.4 4th interview

Christiansson (Executive Assistant at Husqvarna AB) defines knowledge transfer as some sort of network where people share knowledge and information with each other. A leader must always have a network in which he can communicate. If a leader is open to suggestions and opinions, he can learn from others through possible knowledge transfer, she argues. Knowledge is as important as actions. It is essential to act and delegate work but also to have a dialogue with people involved. Christiansson argues that knowledge transfer can be improved through intranets, written documentation, and more. People must be aware of the communication channels, which can make things easier for everyone involved. Regular meeting with managers, staff and co-workers are also important, she argues. Here, knowledge can be transferred verbal or in written documentation.

Likewise, Christiansson is satisfied with today's knowledge transfer but she argues that others probably have different opinions. Today's intranet is a good communication channel within Husqvarna AB, she says. But things can always be better. Further, Christiansson argues that knowledge can be transferred to units/departments through week meetings, month meetings, and more. According to her, it is here most of the knowledge is transferred. Another thing to consider is that all units/departments do not need the same knowledge. A leader must be aware of this difference and he must coordinate meetings that fit the specific unit or department.

All in all, Christiansson argues that changes within knowledge transfer in Husqvarna AB are necessary. A constant change is important in order to stay competitive. She also stresses that an improvement of the communication channels is needed. She points out: *“It is better to change what you already have instead of implementing something from the scratch”* (Anita Christiansson, personal communication, 2005-05-10). Although changes are necessary within knowledge transfer, Christiansson argues that she is satisfied with current knowledge transfer. *“The company is successful, so things must be handled right then”* (Anita Christiansson, personal communication, 2005-05-10). Further, the current understanding for knowledge transfer in Husqvarna AB is good. Christiansson stresses, that there is an interest in knowledge transfer and managers seek to find new ways to transfer knowledge.

Moreover, a leader can influence an organization and knowledge transfer through motivation and encouragement of his staff, she says. According to Christiansson, a leader must look after the unique in every individual and he must hire competent persons. Christians-

son stresses further that knowledge can be transferred within organizations through two-way dialogues (e.g. a sender and a receiver). It is important to transfer knowledge in a top-down but also in a bottom-up approach, Christiansson states. “*The transfer of knowledge in a two-way communication gives the best effect*”, she says (Anita Christiansson, personal communication, 2005-05-10). Here, possible misunderstandings can be cleared out. Finally, Christiansson argues that managers and leaders within Husqvarna AB are aware of leadership questions and these questions are on the agenda. Issues regarding leadership are discussed continuously, she states.

Likewise, Christiansson mentions that Husqvarna AB does not have any special person working with KT issues. She argues that every department director is responsible for his part. On the question: Do you believe that IT in general can support/help the KT process? In what way? Christiansson answered: “*Yes, through interactive data education where people learn to share knowledge through IT tools*” (Anita Christiansson, personal communication, 2005-05-10). She stresses further that Husqvarna AB uses e-mail and Intranet today to communicate with others. She also believes that management can transfer knowledge by informing the staff about strategies, plans etc. The management on a lower level can then rule the work and instruct the staff how to handle certain issues. It is up to the management to decide a suitable way to transfer knowledge.

4.4.1 Analysis of interview

Additionally, the interview was performed in that manner so that as much information as possible could be gathered from the respondent. The interview situation became an open dialog due to the chosen research method. The analysis of the interview was done with the help of theories and opinions from other authors. A comparison between the respondent’s answers and authors’ statements constitutes the analysis.

Further an analysis of the interview will follow.

Christiansson’s definition of knowledge transfer is that it can be seen as some sort of a network where people share knowledge. She argues that two-way dialogues are important because people can express what they feel right away. Further, according to her, through meeting most of the knowledge is transferred. A combination between verbal and written knowledge will lead to more successful knowledge transfer, according to her.

Albino, Garavelli and Schiuma (1998, p.53) stress that, “*knowledge transfer is a critical factor for a firm, necessary to rapidly respond to changes, innovate and achieve competitive success*”. If knowledge transfer is not given enough attention, it can affect the company later in time. By handling knowledge right, a company can benefit from it (e.g. new educated leaders, well competent staff etc.). Argote and colleagues (2000) stress that empirical evidence indicates that firms that are able to transfer knowledge more effectively from one unit to another are more productive and more likely to survive than firms that are less effective in knowledge transfer.

So, as Christiansson points out, a constant change within knowledge transfer is important because of the rapid changing market. If a company wants to be effective and survive on the market, more attention to knowledge transfer and the role of leadership must be given.

In addition, Christiansson finds the topic of knowledge transfer and the role of leadership very interesting. By learning new knowledge and go deeply into leadership questions, an organization can survive in the future. A leader’s ability to influence knowledge transfer in organization is very important. They are the ones who are pulling the strings and who have

influence over knowledge transfer. Besides, leaders of today are involved in their organizations and their employees. They are aware of their mission in life.

Finally, Christiansson states that it is important that everyone is responsible for his/her own way of how to handle knowledge and how to transfer it to others. She argues that it is not necessary to have a special person responsible for knowledge transfer. Moreover, Christiansson argues that e-mail and Intranet are the IT tools that are frequently used in their every day work. As Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004) stress, these IT tools enable people to share information fast and easy. Last but not least, Christiansson also points out that management has a huge role when it comes to transfer knowledge. They must inform and delegate information right. Management is responsible for making sure that everyone has received the information and understood it.

4.5 Summary

Under this headline a short summary of the results will be given. This is done in order to reflect upon the gathered data and the actual results. The reader will be able to quick and easy compare different opinions, thoughts and reflections.

Table 4-1 will give an overview of the most important answers from each interviewed person.

Table 4-1 Summarize of the most important answers

	Håkan Herbetsson	Lennart Wadsten	Peter Svensson	Anita Christiansson
1) How do you define knowledge transfer?	-Somebody who has knowledge and wants to share it.	-Some sort of information that needs to be transferred.	-Communicating with others, sharing what you know.	-A network where people share and learn from each other.
2) How can knowledge transfer be successful?	-Knowledge cannot be transferred but rather taught or motivated.	-Through meetings, dialogues and more.	-By talking, showing and through dialogues.	-Through intranets, meetings, written documentation etc.
3) Is knowledge transfer working in present time? In what way?	-Yes. We are more effective today then for some years ago.	-Yes, it is definitely better now than before.	-Yes, but sometimes it is rather difficult to reach all employees.	-Yes, we have good communication channels.
4) How can knowledge transfer be improved?	-By motivating staff, better communication and clear routines.	-Through meetings, more information and more documents.	-By using more people who can spread the knowledge.	-More awareness within this area. Involve more competent people.
5) In what way can knowledge be transferred	-Through meetings, face-to-face meetings, infor-	-Through intranet, internal newspaper, ver-	-Through meetings and dialogues with oth-	-Through week meetings, month meetings and by

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to all levels within an organization?	mation meetings etc.	bal dialogues etc.	ers.	involving all to take part.
6) Where do you think the most knowledge transfer occurs? In talk rooms? Coffee rooms?	-Through meetings but also in coffee rooms.	-Through meetings but also in coffee rooms.	-Through meetings or dialogues but also in coffee rooms.	-Through meetings, not so much in coffee rooms.
7) Are changes necessary within knowledge transfer? Why/Why not?	-Yes. Because things can always be handled better.	-Yes, we can handle things better.	-Yes, we need to improve what we have. We need to make it better.	-Yes, a constant change is necessary. We must see beyond ourselves.
8) Are you satisfied with current knowledge transfer within Husqvarna AB? Why/Why not?	-Yes but more focus within this area is needed.	- Yes, at the moment, but more focus is needed.	-No, we must handle it better. Better communication channels and improvement of communication between individuals is needed.	-Yes, things are handled right most of the time. But we need to realize that we need to change in order to stay competitive.
9) Has Husqvarna AB succeeded within knowledge transfer? Why/Why not?	-Yes we have. We are a successful company and this for a reason.	-Yes, we are a successful company so this are handled right.	-Yes we have but we need to change several things.	-Yes, we see that things work and we are successful, so we must do something right.
10) How do you perceive current understanding for knowledge transfer at Husqvarna AB?	-People do not think of it constantly, it is there when they need it.	-It is good but we constantly change so that we stay competitive.	-The understanding is good but there are people who complain anyway.	- The understanding is good, there is an interest in knowledge transfer and new ways of handling this area.
11) How can a leader influence knowledge transfer in an organization?	-Through communication and focus on routines and part elements in his work.	-Through meetings where knowledge can be transferred.	-Through communication and by coaching others.	-By communicating and through meetings.

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<p>12) What is current understanding for leadership?</p>	<p>-Leadership is not discussed every day. It is there, but the focus on it is rather little.</p>	<p>-The understanding is good, people are aware of the importance of leadership.</p>	<p>-It is good, but more focus within this area is needed.</p>	<p>-It is good, people are aware of the importance of leadership. Leadership questions are on the agenda.</p>
<p>13) Does Husqvarna AB have any responsible for knowledge or the transfer of it?</p>	<p>- No. Not that I know of.</p>	<p>-No. Not that I know of.</p>	<p>-No.</p>	<p>-No. We do not have any responsible for knowledge. Every department director is responsible for his/her department.</p>
<p>14) If Yes – How much influence does this person have on the KT process within Husqvarna AB?</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>15) Do you believe that IT in general can support/help the KT process? In what way?</p>	<p>- IT is a tool that can help you in many ways but the most important to remember is that IT is not a cure medicine.</p>	<p>- Yes, absolutely. Through IT tools information travels faster and is directed to many more at the same time.</p>	<p>- Yes, it is very easy to search for information through different IT solutions, such as e-mail.</p>	<p>- Yes, through interactive data education where people learn to share knowledge through different IT tools.</p>
<p>16) Which systems/technical means within IT does Husqvarna AB have today to facilitate the KT process? E.g. E-mail, Intranet etc.</p>	<p>- A mix between a Lotus Notes environment and web-based systems is the answer. Most systems are in a way KT systems.</p>	<p>- E-mail and Intranet are IT tools that Husqvarna AB uses today.</p>	<p>- Husqvarna AB uses today Intranet, CMS and e-mail to facilitate the KT process</p>	<p>- Husqvarna AB uses e-mail and Intranet today to communicate with others.</p>
<p>17) Does the management have any impact/influence on the KT</p>	<p>- Yes. They must handle things right.</p>	<p>- Yes. They have an impact on the KT process through decisions that are</p>	<p>- Yes. Management has a huge impact on KT process, since most of the in-</p>	<p>-Yes. Management can transfer knowledge by informing the staff about</p>

process? In what way?		made, what should and should not be informed, at what time etc.	formation comes from the management	strategies, plans etc.
18) What role does the management play in the KT process?	- They are involved in the KT process through their every day routines and through meetings and that their involvement is crucial for KT.	- Management plays an important role. As part of the management, we must constantly be careful with how we handle things or inform people. Management can chose to inform through e-mail or through personal meetings.	- Management is the ones responsible for making it all work and making the KT process easier and faster.	- It is up to the management to decide a suitable way to transfer knowledge. They are responsible for a successful KT process.

By analyzing the results and answers, we can see that most of the respondents have the same opinions. They are satisfied with how things are handled today, although changes are necessary. The respondents argue that changes are necessary within knowledge transfer because a constant change will lead to better competitiveness on the markets around the world. There is a good understanding for knowledge transfer, e.g. knowledge transfer is obviously handled right, according to the respondents. Moreover, the respondents argue that KT, the role of leadership, IT and management is important and more focus is needed here, since these areas become more and more essential. The respondents argue that a leader should focus on transferring knowledge to co-workers as well as staff within an organization. The respondents mention that a leader has huge responsibility, e.g. he must communicate clearly and he must motivate and encourage his staff. According to the respondent, a leader is the one pulling the strings.

A leader must not be too monotonous either. If a leader is monotonous, he becomes boring. A leader should motivate his staff as well as knowledge transfer between individuals, groups and within an organization. A leader can use the support of IT tools to encourage knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer. Examples of IT tools, according to Karlsen and Gottschalk (2004), can be e-mail, intranet, databases etc. According to them, these IT tools enable individuals in an organization to share information from various sources. By using IT tools, people are able to learn from each other but they also learn to be more open to new knowledge (e.g. new methods, new areas), new ways of handling things and new perspectives.

Results showed that there is an interest for the chosen topic and that positive reactions towards KT, the role of leadership, IT and management will definitely lead to more studies within these areas. All respondents stated that Husqvarna AB does not have a role for handling KT and they also mentioned that this role probably is not needed today. Besides, most of the respondents answered that every individual is responsible for his own way of

handling knowledge and KT. The respondents also stated that IT tools in general can benefit the KT process since knowledge can travel faster and easier. Husqvarna AB uses e-mail and Intranet today to share ideas and to transfer knowledge. According to the respondents these tools are frequently used in their every day work.

The respondents stated that management plays an important part within the KT process. They are the ones who can plan what is to be done, in what way, how fast, with what tools etc. Management in general can benefit from rapid KT since decisions can be made quicker and more precisely. Management can also use IT tools to better inform staff but also to inform them fast. Decisions must very often be made quickly, and with the help of IT tools, this is no longer an obstacle.

All in all, results showed also that the respondents are almost too satisfied with how things are handled today. They expressed that knowledge transfer works today at Husqvarna AB. Only one respondent, i.e. Svensson, stated that he is not happy with how Husqvarna AB handles current knowledge transfer. He argues that the communication between individuals as well as between leaders and employees, does not work as satisfying as he would have liked it to work. Svensson argues further that more focus and more resources are needed within knowledge transfer. As stated by Garavelli and colleagues (2001), a failure in knowledge transfer is due to a fault either in the interpretation or in the codification process (see figure 3-1). This means that the interaction (e.g. communication) is usually affected by the cognitive context such as subjects' culture, values, beliefs, in which the knowledge transfer takes place.

Moreover, management, leaders and organizations in general should not be too focused on the idea that everything is ok and that things are handled right. They need to see ahead and constantly come up with ideas on how to evolve to the better. Management and the organization in general should not be all too comfortable and secure in their routines. Changes are necessary for organizations, for leaders and for employees etc. The respondents state this as well. A constant change will lead to motivation into doing things in new ways and the individual will then not lose focus. Through motivation and encouragement, employees and leaders work better towards achieving company goals.

All individuals have flaws, nobody is perfect. That is why management and leaders within organizations should focus on the positive qualities a person has and use this to achieve goals. They (e.g. management and leaders), speaking generally, should not get caught up in reality but rather remain with both feet on the ground. A denial that everything is ok and changes are not essential, will only lead to lack of motivation among employees as well as co-workers. Every organization needs to change, either in small or large scale.

The respondents state that there are satisfied with Husqvarna AB's way of handling knowledge transfer. Although the company is successful at this moment, things could change, e.g. the market can change or other aspects. Awareness is the key in situations like this. Even if something is working satisfying now, the situation can change over night. Being open and aware of the fast, changing, society will definitely help you survive on the market and be competitive.

Lastly, I want to point out that this study (e.g. my study on Husqvarna AB) is new for researchers, students and others. This study is also new for this company, e.g. Husqvarna AB. New thoughts for this moment in time can be used to analyze what people within the company think. The news value with this study is also that more and more leaders and management within knowledge transfer are in focus, so therefore this study is relevant.

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Their, e.g. KT leaders' thoughts and their responsibility towards the area of knowledge transfer becomes more and more interesting today. The angle that I have taken, e.g. to study current attitude of KT, the role of leadership, IT and management in Husqvarna AB is new to them as a company as well. People have studied this company before but never really seen it from my perspective, e.g. how knowledge transfer process can be handled better in order for it to be successful.

5 Conclusions

In this chapter I reflect upon my work and present final conclusions that I have come up with after conducting interviews and I also discuss suggestion for further work.

The purpose with this paper was to study KT, the role of leadership, IT and management. I believe this purpose was fulfilled through conducted interviews with four key persons at Husqvarna AB where answers from respondents constitute the primary data. This data is new for this study and for the company in focus. The purpose was also fulfilled in the frame of reference (see chapter 3) where theories connected to this topic were presented.

A discussion concerning KT, the role of leadership, IT and management has been brought throughout this paper. In the frame of reference, theories related to the chosen topic were presented as well as thoughts and opinions of different authors. In results and analysis chapter (see chapter 4) answers and opinions from the interviews were presented and analyzed. The conducted interviews gave answers to my research questions addressed in this paper.

During conducting the analysis I came up with the following conclusions:

The first research question: What role does leadership have in the knowledge transfer process? has the following conclusions:

- Leadership is about taking action, being open and communicating with others, which can enable knowledge transfer in the organization
- Leadership inspires and motivates individuals and employees to share their knowledge with each other
- Leadership can influence KT through different methods such as meetings, verbal dialogues, two-way communication etc.

The second research question: How can IT affect knowledge transfer? has the following conclusions:

- IT tools/solutions are a quick and easy way to transfer knowledge, for example through interactive data education people learn to share knowledge using different IT tools
- Through IT tools the knowledge transfer can be enhanced since information travels faster and is directed to many more at the same time
- Today more focus is given to the IT area when it comes to knowledge transfer since benefits of using IT tools are obvious and they are constantly developing

The third research question: What role does management have in the knowledge transfer process? has the following conclusions:

- Management ability to handle certain processes of knowledge transfer, such as meetings with the employees or presentations, in a right way may determine how fast knowledge can be transferred

- Management must decide what is to be done, at what time, to what costs etc. and it is through this they can influence the KT process
- Competent people are required within management since they are involved in many different knowledge transfer areas

5.1 Final discussion of conclusions

The study was conducted with the help of interviews in order to find out opinions and thoughts from key persons at Husqvarna AB. The study showed that current understanding for KT and the role of leadership, IT and management within Husqvarna AB is good. Managers and staff are interested in finding new knowledge and new perspectives for these areas.

Moreover, the respondents had good idea of leadership and what the role of it is in the knowledge transfer process. Through the way a leader is and the way he acts, he can motivate others. Nobody wants a stiff leader who is afraid of communication, or afraid of taking action. A leader has a responsibility, and that is to achieve goals and manage processes within a company. The study showed further that a leader must influence knowledge transfer through different methods/approaches. He can use regular meetings, verbal dialogues, two-way communication, intranet, documents etc. The most important is to focus on the actual transfer of the knowledge.

Furthermore, as respondents state, they are satisfied with the way knowledge transfer is handled within Husqvarna AB at this moment. But once again, leaders and organizations must be aware of the fast changing society and markets. The respondents' answers, in many cases, go along with what was pointed out in several literatures, that leaders are the key and they should take action concerning the organization and everything in it. As brought up in the frame of reference (see chapter 3), leaders today play an important role in the process of managing organizational knowledge. Besides, to do that, it requires huge effort from leaders at all levels of the organization.

The study showed further that Husqvarna AB does not have a specific role for handling KT issues. This role is, according to the respondents, not necessary today. Although this role is unnecessary today, more and more focus will be given to a similar role (for example CKO role) since KT will become essential in companies in the future. According to the study, IT tools/solutions are also used today, since they can transfer knowledge quickly and easily. However, the study has showed that today not so much special attention is paid in the company to IT tools when it comes to knowledge transfer processes. More focus should be given to the IT area. It is a lot easier to send an e-mail than to call (according to me). Moreover, the study showed further that management play an important role within the KT process. Their ability to handle things right may determine how fast knowledge can be transferred. Management in general must be aware of their influence in the KT process since they are the ones who can decide what is to be done, at what time, etc. Management today is involved in every area of the company and therefore competent people are often required. A constant renewal is good for every company.

All in all, the study showed that there is a good understanding for knowledge transfer and its role in the society becomes more and more important. More focus will surely be given to KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. Although everything works satisfying at the moment, changes are necessary. This in order to learn more, see new perspectives (new ways of managing things) and give more freedom to people who want to learn

more. By being open to suggestions and new ideas as well as by using necessary IT tools a leader or management learns more and can later use this knowledge when coaching others in the process of the knowledge transfer. Many issues discussed in this chapter (e.g. chapter 5) were also suggested or expressed by authors in the frame of reference (see chapter 3).

Finally, according to the conducted study, the chosen topic is constantly developing. These areas are very interesting for organizations today and more authors and experts will surely give their opinions within this area in the near future.

5.2 Suggestions for further studies

Several suggestions can be given for further studies within KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. For example, more key persons can be interviewed under a longer period of time. To obtain a more deeply picture of the reality I suggest to study Husqvarna AB at several occasions. This will probably give a more deeply and accurate picture of the understanding of the chosen topic and how these areas can work more successfully in the future. Future studies can also include questionnaires, which can be handed out to employees within Husqvarna AB. Through this, a larger scale is observed at the same time and employees can express their opinions regarding KT and the role of leadership, IT and management.

Future studies can also include several companies. A comparison between companies in the industry sector would probably give broader perspective on how different companies deal with KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. A future study can also be conducted on small organizations (e.g. 1-150 employees) as well as larger organizations (e.g. from 150 employees and up) within Jönköping's region. Here, comparisons can be done to see if there is a difference between small and large organizations in our region.

Further studies can also be done on companies throughout the country (e.g. Sweden) and study if KT and the role of leadership, IT and management are handled differently in other regions or if there are any similarities. The most important thing to remember is to study understanding of these areas. As mentioned before, the chosen topic is new and quite interesting to study.

Finally, it must be stated that a certain, chosen, research method can have consequences on the result. With this I mean that by applying, as in my case, a qualitative method (e.g. interviews) the questions can be unconsciously angled in order to obtain information to answer the research question. The aim is not to angle but rather be impartial, although this is not always the case. A suggestion is to argue for your chosen research method and give examples how it can benefit your study but also to analyze it afterwards to establish if the method was suitable. All in all, any chosen method will more or less have an effect on the study. The aim is to strive for a method that will have fewer consequences on the study.

6 Reflections

The study and the research process went as it had been planned. There were no difficulties in finding persons for my interviews since I knew the company before. I have been in contact with the respondents (e.g. interviewed) at several occasions just to build up a trust between them and myself. I informed them about my thoughts and my paper, all this to make them feel more comfortable in the interview situation. However, it is necessary to point out that it is difficult to make an appointment with highly positioned persons because very often they are busy or they are in meetings, fortunately I did not have this kind of problems.

Besides, to create a more reliable paper, several other companies or more key persons could have been studied. However, this would have meant to study more companies and interview more persons at several occasions, which was not the aim with this paper. The aim was also not to compare companies with each other but rather show and study one company's reality and understanding for KT and the role of leadership, IT and management.

Moreover, by using other research methods, for example a quantitative method (e.g. questionnaires) and by relying on secondary data instead of primary data, this study could have been performed differently and taken different angles. Through questionnaires a larger population could have been studied due to that this approach is suited for mass data. So, using, in my case, a qualitative method (e.g. interviews), it can have effects on the results. The interview questions can be unconsciously angled, which is not my intention. A researcher must strive for being impartial, although this is not always the case. But in the end, the method you chose should help you obtain information to answer the research question and fulfill the purpose.

Furthermore, the topic of this paper has been interesting and because many literatures discuss either KT or several other areas, I saw a need to investigate more within the chosen topic, e.g. KT and the role of leadership, IT and management. I found out thoughts and opinions regarding the chosen topic that I will definitely have in mind when writing similar papers and I have learned a great deal from the interview moments. When talking face-to-face with highly positioning people you can not help of starting a conversation about the actual topic but also about the interest for it and pre-knowledge within the studied area. A more deeply conversation leads to better answers and better insight in people's thoughts and opinions.

My study is also interesting for similar industry organizations today and it is relevant for today's circumstances. Other organizations can take part of my study and use it to analyze their situation. However, with a change in society, theories, opinions and more, the result of this paper can have different perspectives in the future or be of old character due to changes.

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Reflections

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Appendix 1- Interview questions

The following questions were asked to key persons at Husqvarna AB. The interview questions should not be seen as a question form but rather as a more open and freer interview.

1. How do you define knowledge transfer?
2. How can knowledge transfer be successful?
3. Is knowledge transfer working in present time? In what way?
4. How can knowledge transfer be improved?
5. In what way can knowledge be transferred to all levels within an organization?
6. Where do you think the most knowledge transfer occurs? In talk rooms? In cafeteria? Etc.
7. Are changes necessary within knowledge transfer? Why/Why not?
8. Are you satisfied with current knowledge transfer within Husqvarna AB? Why/Why not?
9. Has Husqvarna AB succeeded with knowledge transfer? Why/Why not?
10. How do you perceive current understanding for knowledge transfer at Husqvarna AB?
11. How can a leader influence knowledge transfer in an organization?
12. What is current understanding for leadership?
13. Does Husqvarna AB have any responsible for knowledge or the transfer of it?
14. If Yes – How much influence does this person have on the KT process within Husqvarna AB?
15. Do you believe that IT in general can support/help the KT process? In what way?
16. Which systems/technical means within IT does Husqvarna AB have today to facilitate the KT process? E.g. E-mail, Intranet etc.
17. Does the management have any impact/influence on the KT process? In what way?
18. What role does the management play in the KT process?

Appendix 2- Abbreviations

e.g.- for example

i.e.- in other words, that is, that is to say

etc. – etcetera, and so on