Organic organizing - leverage for wellbeing and sustainability?

*Formal power structure in relation to organizational conditions for sustainable development*

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Abstract

Organizations of today are facing disruptive and changing times with a lot of uncertainties how to survive, evolve and stay relevant in the future. At the same time there is an increased awareness and external pressure on organizations to develop sustainably. With these challenges in mind, is it possible to state that there are certain ways of organizing that are more supportive of sustainable development than others? Is it even possible to say that there are perspectives of formal power structure that have major implications on sustainable development? The purpose of this master thesis emerges from these questions as to explore how formal power structure relates to conditions for sustainable development of organizations. Particularly, the thesis has its focus on individual perception of formal power structures in organizations and how they are related to conditions for sustainable development. This from the scope of three organizations differentiated in the mechanistic and organic continuum. The empirical data is collected in ten semi-structured interviews and analyzed according to the method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The main findings of the thesis are clear indications that formal power structures designed from an organic perspective have positive relations to organizational conditions for sustainable development and most likely even important effects on sustainable development in a larger system. The connection to conditions for sustainable development is especially emerging from the individual social perspective expressed as wellbeing, a sense of meaningfulness, involvement and connection to a common purpose together with a feeling of personal responsibility. On the contrary it is also found that formal power structures designed from mechanistic principles have negative effects on organizational conditions for sustainable development. Suggestions for future research are also discussed and outlined.

Keywords: mechanistic structure, organic structure, sustainable development, formal power structure, hierarchy, heterarchy, non-hierarchical, decentralization, formalization
# Table of content

1 **INTRODUCTION** ........................................................................................................1
   1.1 PREVIOUS RESEARCH .........................................................................................2
   1.2 RESEARCH GAP .................................................................................................4
   1.3 DEFINING FORMAL POWER STRUCTURE .........................................................5

2 **FRAMING THE RESEARCH** .....................................................................................6
   2.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM .......................................................................................6
   2.2 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH ................................................................................7
   2.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....................................................................................7
   2.4 RELEVANCE .......................................................................................................7

3 **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK** .............................................................................7
   3.1 ORGANIZING AND FORMAL POWER STRUCTURE ..........................................7
   3.2 CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ........................................9
   3.2.1 Triple Bottom Line (TBL) ...........................................................................10
   3.2.2 Strategic Sustainability - conditions for sustainable development ..........11
   3.2.3 The Sustainability filter - monitoring sustainable development ...............13
   3.2.4 Summarizing and concluding ....................................................................14

4 **METHODOLOGY** ..................................................................................................15
   4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN ..........................................................................................15
   4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH ...................................................................................15
   4.2.1 Exploratory and qualitative research ...........................................................15
   4.3 METHODS OF COLLECTING DATA ................................................................15
   4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews .......................................................................15
   4.3.2 Arguments for choice of method .................................................................16
   4.4 METHOD OF ANALYZING DATA - INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS ..................................................16
   4.5 PRACTICAL APPLICATION - COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA ..........17
   4.5.1 Contextual factors and sample selection ....................................................17
   4.5.2 Chronological order of research procedure ..............................................18
   4.6 RELIABILITY ......................................................................................................20
   4.6.1 Reliability and interviews .........................................................................20
   4.7 VALIDITY ...........................................................................................................20
   4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .........................................................................21
   4.9 LIMITATIONS ....................................................................................................21

5 **RESULTS** ...............................................................................................................22

6 **ANALYSIS** .............................................................................................................23
   6.1 ORGANIZATION A; A SWEDISH GOVERNMENT OWNED UNIVERSITY ..........23
   6.1.1 Interviewee Adam, org. A ............................................................................23
   6.1.2 Interviewee Jen, org. A ................................................................................24
   6.1.3 Interviewee Kenneth, org. A ........................................................................25
   6.1.4 Conclusion from narratives of organization A ...........................................26
   6.2 ORGANIZATION B; A PRIVATELY HELD CONSULTANCY FIRM .....................27
   6.2.1 Interviewee Gregory, org. B .........................................................................27
   6.2.2 Interviewee Steven, org. B ............................................................................28
   6.2.3 Interviewee Henrik, org. B ...........................................................................29
   6.2.4 Conclusion from narratives of organization B ...........................................30
   6.3 ORGANIZATION C; A “FOLKBILDNING” ORGANIZATION (ADULT EDUCATION AND SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT) .................................................................30
   6.3.1 Interviewee Anders, org. C ..........................................................................30
   6.3.2 Interviewee Anna, org. C .............................................................................31
   6.3.3 Interviewee Lena, org. C ..............................................................................32
   6.3.4 Interviewee Petra, org. C ..............................................................................33
   6.3.5 Conclusion from narratives of organization C ..........................................34
   6.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF ANALYSIS ..................................................34
Table of tables

TABLE 1. SIX BASES OF POWER .................................................. 6
TABLE 2. OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVIEW SAMPLE .................. 18
TABLE 3. SAMPLE: EXCERPT FROM TRANSCRIPTION OF ADAM, JEN AND KENNETH (ORG. A) 19
TABLE 4. SAMPLE: THEME INTERPRETATION OF TRANSCRIPTION OF HENRIK (ORG. B) 20
TABLE 5. SAMPLE FROM EXCERPTS AND THEME INTERPRETATION (HENRIK, ORGANIZATION B) 22

Table of figures

FIGURE 1. THE STRUCTURAL ICEBERG - ILLUSTRATING FORMAL AND INFORMAL STRUCTURE OF AN ORGANIZATION 5
FIGURE 2. THE PROCESS OF ORGANIZING FROM THE CONTINUUM OF MECHANISTIC AND ORGANIC STRUCTURE. 9
FIGURE 4. THE SUSTAINABILITY FILTER; A CONCEPTUAL MODEL TOWARDS STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY 14
1 Introduction

Organizations of today are facing disruptive and changing times with uncertainties how to survive and evolve in the future. In the wake of these circumstances, organizations are challenged to be more adaptable when the stakeholder and beneficiary needs become more complex and at the same time are changing rapidly. The general understanding and awareness of the world are increasing due to globalization, digitalization, technological development together with the emergence of social and environmental challenges. At the same time, we are facing a strong polarization in how the world is to be understood and how to socially and planetary evolve, for example; exclusion versus inclusion - national versus internationalism - ego versus eco - capitalism versus socialism - growth versus de-growth, new-use versus re-use, reflection versus reaction and so on. Potential conflicting values that do not have straightforward understandings or obvious strategies.

It is clear that it is challenging times for many organizations trying to stay relevant and long term strategic when the surrounding reality is highly disruptive. This is also where sustainability comes in. There is a growing demand by customers and governments towards individuals and organizations to act responsibly in order to stay relevant. That involves not only the economic side, but also the way people are treated and the way this world is exploited. Having a balanced approach towards social, economic and environmental sustainability is highly relevant today and this has of course implications on how organizations are structured and how they strategize (Elkington, 1994, 2018; Brundtland, 1987; Werther & Chandler, 2012; Bhattacharyya, 2009).

Since Tolbert and Hall (2016) states that our societies are built upon organizations, there seems to be considerable reasons to deepen the understanding on how to develop and reinvent organizational structure to be more sustainable, adaptable, innovative and sustainable to better meet complexity and the nature of change (Lam, 2005; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018; Praszkier & Nowak, 2012).

When looking at the organizations of our society today, most of them have a basis of hierarchical, vertical and formal top-down power distribution in silos with different outspoken degrees of power, for example; Chief Executive Officer (CEO), division manager, department manager, group manager and team manager. At the same time research points out that flat, decentralized, horizontal and more organic structures support the abilities of adapting, innovating and seeing the whole system better than organizations that are built on height (Lam, 2005; Laloux, 2014; Senge, Hamilton & Kania, 2015; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018). Adaptability, innovation and systems thinking are then to be seen as crucial abilities navigating in complexity and to create more social sustainable value in a larger system (Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Praszkier & Nowak, 2012). In his research, Frederic Laloux (2014) identifies the organic way of organizing as the next potential quantum leap in organizational performance. Since the research of Laloux (2014) does not particularly highlight sustainability, even if it is done in an implicit way, is it then possible to say that this is the case even when it comes to performing in a balanced sustainable way?

A structure closely related to the organic structure is heterarchy. Cumming (2016) writes that there is no connection between the hierarchical structure and the peer-to-peer (network) structure, but that the concept of heterarchies connects these two perspectives. Peter and Swilling (2014) state that heterarchies are basically flat hierarchies where the organizations members can have influence, depending on what needs to be solved or according to the skills and knowledge they have. In their article, Wilson and Hölldobler (1988) use the word ‘heterarchy’ when looking at how ant colonies work. Despite having a hierarchical order, the ants at the bottom of the hierarchy can contact the ants at the top without any mediators, in order to better sustain the 'ant-business'. Heterarchy is a structure where the top level and the bottom level have a mutual influence on each other which is also seen in the dynamics in theories on complex social systems (Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge, 1990; Saynish, 2010; Klein, 2016; Espinosa & Porter, 2011; Wulun, 2007; Luhman, 1984).
To summarize, there seems to be an understanding in research that a more organic organizational structure with a flat, horizontal power distribution and peer-to-peer network structures provides better conditions when it comes to creating balanced social and sustainable value in an organization as well as in a larger system, also known as sustainable development. At the same time there is no clear answer to the question why this seems to be and how it is related. We also know that it is in nature complex matters. Even if the whole of a complex system is, more or less, impossible to understand for us there seem to be some potentially important factors that are supporting, or not supporting, sustainable development of organizations. The following section will focus on previous research to help clarify an identified research gap as well as the purpose and relevance of this research.

1.1 Previous research

The aim of this section is to clarify how organizational structures, especially formal power structures, are to be understood and related to sustainable development and sustainable performance. Further this understanding aims to clarify the gap this research is trying to fill.

Previous research in the area of organizational structure shows that factors such as complexity, centralization, formalization and functional differentiation have significant effects on the organizational performance (Damanpour, 1987, 1991; Damanpour & Schneider, 2006; Gosselin, 1997; Hashem & Tamm, 2007) and potentially sustainable performance. When it comes to managing organizations, research shows that strengthening of managerial capacities and practices is important for optimizing the performance (Birkinshaw & Mol, 2006; Volberda, Van Den Bosch, & Mihalache, 2014). Further on it is highlighted that the organizational ability to integrate different functional departments and teams in an organization, to support learning and exchange of resources as a cross functional integration, contributes to both creativity and innovation (He, Sun, & Chen, 2016; Troy, Hirunyawi-Pada, & Paswan, 2008). In their research, Su, Chen and Wang (2019) points out that a organization with a mechanistic structure has harder to manage and strengthen these managerial capacities and practices than an organic structure and therefore also has harder to optimize their performance. In an organic structure there is no designed hierarchical top-management; the formal power is instead defined by task-relevant capacity with great decisional autonomy and control in daily activities (Crisan-Mitra, 2019; Poza & Markus, 1980; Manz & Sims, 1986; Walton & Schlesinger, 1979).

Burns and Stalker (1961) stated that an unstable and unpredictable environment needs an organic structure whilst a stable and predictable environment needs a mechanistic structure. Later research by Sibindi and Samuel (2019) do not completely agree and suggest more of a hybrid structure when confronted with a highly unstable environment. In their research they are highlighting the important perspective of contextual influence since Burns and Stalker’s (1961) research was conducted in a rather stable socioeconomic environment. Sibindi and Samuel's research (2019) was on the other hand conducted in an operating environment in South Africa that was characterized by turbulent socioeconomic and political instability. Battilana (2018) describes the hybrid as an organization balancing the creation of financial and social value. It is also pointed out that balancing these values in an organization helps to create commitment among stakeholders to a long-term joint venture (Battilana, 2018). Both these perspectives described by Battilana (2018) are to be seen as a strive towards sustainability supported by the framework of Strategic CSR (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009).

When looking at the perspectives of centralization and decentralization, previous research shows that people who work in an organization with a decentralized structure are more inclined to find innovative solutions (Damanpour, 1991). According to Cao, Simsek and Zhang (2010), individuals in decentralized organizations are even more motivated. To become exploratory, employees need to shift away from typical routine problem-solving and take new knowledge into account to identify new services, products, technologies and to meet new customer demands (Wei, Yi & Yuan, 2011). There are many other advantages when it comes to a decentralized structure as the
following examples describe. Jansen, Van den Bosch & Volberda (2005) write that a decentralized structure helps people to solve upcoming issues more quickly, which makes the response to problems more effective. It also enhances the flow of information (Hempel, Zhang & Han, 2012) and it helps the employees to realize and discover new customer demand, market opportunities and possible developments earlier (Wei et al., 2011). Foss, Lyngsie and Zahra (2015) write that decentralization gives even employees who work at the lowest level the freedom to act or judge according to what they think is the best response to change strategies in order to go after new market opportunities and also to make use of the knowledge they have. According to Mihalache, Jansen, Van den Bosch and Volberda (2014), decentralization therefore enhances the flexibility at the operational level which leads to a faster response and therefore to new possibilities. Another interesting fact is that decentralization encourages experimentation, spontaneity, creativity and the development of new ideas (Lee & Choi, 2003). Liao (2007) writes that decision-making that is based on decentralization may promote the creation of knowledge through motivating employees to get involved. Also, Pertusa-Ortega, Zaragoza-Sáez and Claver-Cortés (2010) brings up that argument that decentralization, especially when it comes to the lower levels within an organization, simplifies the use and creation of new knowledge. They add that the more employees are willing to become involved, the more diverse ideas come up, which increases the possibility that those ideas actually will be implemented. In contrast, Cao et al. (2010) states centralization reduces the amount of information that reaches the CEO, because of the limited capability to take in all that information and also due to the high effort that people have to attain to actually get the leader's approval. Another problem is that the information quality suffers since the information that is communicated is distorted on the way through the different levels (Cao et al., 2010). It goes through a long process of filtering until it reaches the people who make the decisions (Sheremata, 2000). As stated earlier sustainability is a complex matter that needs an approach of embracing this complexity rather than reducing it to parts without taking the whole into consideration (Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Saynish, 2010; Klein, 2016; Espinosa & Porter, 2011; Wulun, 2007; Luhman, 1984). Having this approach towards sustainability, it is supportive to have a dynamic organization with possibilities of acting agile, innovative and decision-making close to the actual matter (Lam, 2005; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018; Praszker & Nowak, 2012; He, Sun, & Chen, 2016; Tsai & Hsu, 2014; Brettel et al., 2011; Troy, Hirunyawi-Pada, & Paswan, 2008).

When it comes to formalization, Jansen, Van den Bosch and Volberda (2006) write that formalization is a good tool to organize and structure new knowledge that results from the possible new innovations into procedures and capabilities. They further write that it also helps spread that knowledge within the organization and supports the reproduction of those innovations through the earned knowhow. There are two different types of formalization: Coercive and enabling formalization (Adler & Borys, 1996). The coercive formalization refers to procedures and rules that are non-negotiable and that need to be followed without questioning (Johari & Yahya, 2009; Sinden, Hoy & Sweetland, 2004). According to March and Simon (1958), this kind of formalization can stop people from trying out new things. It also can confine the creation of new knowledge and limit exploratory attempts, according to von Krogh (1998). Sinden et al. (2004) argue that, on the other hand, enabling formalization, may help people to work more efficiently because they can directly solve challenges that they are currently struggling with. They write that this type of formalization is much more flexible. Formalization is an important tool when it comes to organizational structure, not least when it comes to strategic CRS and Sustainability. Strategies need to be formalized so that they can be followed, measured and controlled (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009).

Oshry (2007) describes hierarchical structures as something that is difficult for all parts. He writes that the leaders at the top often are burdened with the difficulties to manage complex organizations and that at the same time the people who are at the lower end feel neglected, exploited and not cared for. And there in-between is the middle management that feels caught between all the different demands that come from everyone. He further writes that this kind of structure creates negative feelings for the ones that are at the lower levels and that these feelings lead to an inability
to invest themselves with their creativity into their tasks. In other words, it is possible to say that there is a negative relation to the internal social perspective of sustainability (Oshry, 2007). Cloke and Goldsmith (2002) write that hierarchical structures create resistance in people, since its structure actually runs against how human relationships work. And on top of that, hierarchies often exclude the people who resist, which leads to an even more top-down-leadership. They add that miscommunication is a very common problem in hierarchies. They write that the one-way communication that often is the result of the unbalance in power and status, leads to many dead-end messages because they miss the actual recipient. Since the communication goes up and down the hierarchy and gets filtered on the journey, it causes problems and feelings like hostility, rejection, resistance, distrust, rumors, etc. (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002). According to Cloke and Goldsmith (2002), this leads to demotivated and disconnected employees, which ultimately hurts the organization. In his book, Good to Great, Jim Collins (2001) writes that the most successful CEOs have a humble and distributed leadership style. Another word for distributed leadership is empowerment and participative management. This kind of leadership can be applied from anywhere in the organization (Ancona, Malone, Orlikowski & Senge, 2004). Again, when it comes to acting sustainable, all stakeholders are important. Having a broad stakeholder perspective is a very important part when it comes to for example CRS (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009). This means to not focus just on the most visible external ones like customers, funders or shareholders but the ones that are connected to a larger more complex system incorporating the organization and its co-workers (Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Saynish, 2010; Klein, 2016; Espinosa & Porter, 2011; Wulun, 2007; Luhman, 1984).

Spender and Kellser (1995) write that organizations often use mechanistic structures when it comes to keeping control, shaping routines or planning future results. They add that in contrast to that, organic structures facilitate flexible reactions when it comes to handling change, especially when it comes quickly. In his article, Crisan-Mitra (2019) shows that organic structures provide better conditions for creative and innovative handling of suddenly upcoming challenges (Albers, Wohlgezogen & Zajac, 2016; Young-Hyman, 2017) while mechanistic structures provide more restricted opportunities to creativity and innovation in the sense of emergency (Perez-Valls, Cespedes-Lorente, Martinez-del-Rio & Antolin-Lopez, 2017). When it comes to sustainability there are seldomly clear and straightforward, linear solutions due to the nature of non-cause and effect relation. This further supports an organic way of organizing supporting sustainability in general (Elkington, 1994, 2018; Saynish, 2010; Klein, 2016; Espinosa and Porter, 2011; Wulun, 2007; Luhman, 1984; Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge, 1990).

1.2 Research gap

A lot is written and researched within the areas of organizational structure, formal power structure, organizational performance and the intersection in between. Appealing to the presented previous research, we find that there is a gap specifically when looking at organizational structure as condition for sustainable development and sustainable performance. The research we have found has mainly a more traditional approach to performance with strong connections to finances and growth rather than a balanced sustainable performance, clearly involving the social and environmental perspectives. Some research is focusing on hybrid organizing as a way of balancing financial and social perspectives but not clearly connecting to a balanced perspective of sustainability in a broader sense. Since previous research shows that there is a strong tradition in formal power structure, especially hierarchical organizing with fundamental top-down power structure, we find it interesting to look further into the gap of how formal power structure relates to conditions for sustainable development in organizations.
1.3 Defining formal power structure

When defining formal power structure, it is reasonable to start with the wider concept of organizational structure. According to Tolbert and Hall (2016) organizational structure can be divided into formal and informal structure. This divide may be illustrated as an iceberg according to figure 1 (Tolbert & Hall, 2016).

![The structural iceberg of an organization](image)

**Figure 1. The structural iceberg - Illustrating formal and informal structure of an organization**

Informal structure can be viewed as the part over the water line representing formulated and known perspectives of structure as hierarchy, role definitions, organigram, formal grouping, salary policy, visions, goals, control functions, defined rules, outspoken values and so on. The part of the iceberg that is under the water line is representing the informal structure. The informal structure is characterized by a fluidity of norms, values, behaviors, mental models, informal grouping, informal power, culture, etcetera.

The formal power structure is then a part of the formal organizational structure and represents the formal and visible idea of how power is meant to be distributed throughout the organization. This typically includes hierarchy, role definitions, formal responsibility and mandate together with outspoken rules of how power is to be distributed (Tolbert & Hall, 2016).

Raven (1965) and earlier, French and Raven (1962), identified six bases of power that increase the influence of a leader on his or her followers. There are different ways to use power to influence other people's values, behaviors and attitudes (Northouse, 2013). (See table 1 below)
Another important view on power when it comes to informal and formal power is what Kotter (1990) calls 'Position Power' and 'Personal Power'. Position power describes the more formal aspect of power that comes from a certain position or rank. Looking at French and Ravens research from 1962, legitimate power, reward power, coercive power and information power can be assigned to position power. Personal power is different, since it explains the influential power of a leader who does not have his power because of a rank or the position. Obviously that person could also have a rank or position, but it is not the main source of power in this case. Personal power is when followers want to follow a certain person. They get their power based on their relationship to others. Expert power and referent power are examples of personal power.

### 2 Framing the research

#### 2.1 Research problem

There is a lack of clarity in how the formal power structure of an organization affects their conditions of sustainable development as described earlier. It also seems as if organizations in general organize themselves according to mechanistic principles with hierarchical top-down power distribution rather than using a decentralized bottom-up and a more horizontal power distribution. The mechanistic way is in practice a seldom questioned way of organizing with strong presumptions and societal norms connected to an industrial paradigm. Already in the 1970's Zucker (1977) provided some evidence to the idea that organizational structures are taken for granted as 'right and proper' elements of organizations. This could also be connected to the characteristics of complex social systems having the purpose of keeping status quo. In practical terms this means that the system will 'bounce back' when stressed by external forces like a stretched and released rubber band (Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Capra & Luisi, 2018, Prazkier & Nowak, 2012). Since organizing seems to be connected to strong presumptions and societal norms even to this day, we perceive organizational structure as an important subject to explore further. As expressed in the introduction, the world is calling for a greater focus on sustainability both from the social and the environmental perspective with organizations as a key actor. As previous research indicates there seems to be important relations between formal power structure and sustainability that are not yet clarified as potential drivers of sustainable development. Is it even possible to say that there is a right and proper way to formally structure in order to create sustaining organizations when complexity and change is the new reality? And if so, how does this formal power structure set conditions for a long-term sustainable development?

### Table 1. Six bases of power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referent Power</td>
<td>Based on followers’ identification and liking for the leader. A teacher who is adored by students has referent power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Power</td>
<td>Based on followers’ perceptions of the leader's competence. A tour guide who is knowledgeable about a foreign country has expert power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate Power</td>
<td>Associated with having status or formal job authority. A judge who administers sentences in the courtroom exhibits legitimate power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward Power</td>
<td>Derived from having the capacity to provide rewards to others. A supervisor who gives rewards to employees who work hard is using reward power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coercive Power</td>
<td>Derived from having the capacity to penalize or punish others. A coach who sits players on the bench for being late to practice is using coercive power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Power</td>
<td>Derived from possessing knowledge that others want or need. A boss who has information regarding new criteria to decide employee promotion eligibility has information power.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Purpose of research
Due to the research framing, problem definition and identified research gap the following purpose of research is formulated;

The purpose of this research is to explore how formal power structure relates to conditions for sustainable development of organizations.

Striving to fulfill the purpose, we find it suitable to focus on how individuals in different organizations perceive their organization’s formal power structure - from the lens of Burns and Stalkers (1961) continuum of mechanistic and organic structure - and how it is related to conditions for sustainable development.

2.3 Research questions
The following research questions are set to further guide the research;

RQ1. How is the relation between formal power structure and conditions for sustainable development in an organization perceived from the individual?

RQ2. How does the continuum of mechanistic and organic structures of organizations relate to conditions for sustainable development of organizations?

2.4 Relevance
A deeper understanding and a higher awareness of how organizational structure and specifically formal power structures are related to sustainable development may help organizations to create a more accurate structural design. A structural design that helps to increase the sustainable performance and therefore their relevance now and in the future. Further on, it is relevant to know more about how formal power structures affect the perception of sustainable performance among individuals in organizations and how they perceive the actual effects. From the perspective of future research, the exploration of mechanistic and organic structures can help to open up for new ideas in theory building since many of the theories and frameworks on leadership and organizing in practicality are presuming a more traditional mechanistic way of organizing.

3 Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework aims to bring ideas and theories to the front that can be tested and explored from the perspectives of how formal power structures relate to conditions for sustainable development and how this relation is influenced by mechanistic and organic structures in organizations. The theoretical framework is therefore focusing on organizational structure especially towards formal structure from the perspective of mechanistic and organic principles together with sustainable performance especially focusing on organizational conditions for sustainable development.

3.1 Organizing and formal power structure
When looking deeper into the perspective of formal power structure together with mechanistic and organic ideas it then seems reasonable to start exploring from a wider perspective of organizational structure.

Tolbert and Hall (2016) are pointing out that there is not one clear, agreed upon definition on organizational structure but that there are different dimensions that could be listed as follows;
- Organizational structure includes a set of organized working units that is overlaid with organized executive units - organizing of people (Barnard, 1968)
● …. includes a pattern of activities that are related to the purpose of the organization -
organizing of work, tasks and activities (Merton, 1957)
● … includes distributions along various lines of social positions of people influencing role
relations, distribution of relations, tasks and activities in structured way (Blau, 1974)

When summarizing these three definitions it is possible to point out two areas that are of
importance when talking about organizational structure; organizing of people (relations),
organizing of work (tasks/actions) and how these two areas are distributed within the organization.
Tolbert and Hall (2016) are reasoning that the lack of clear definition or organizational structure
could be due to the complexity of formal and informal aspects of organizing.

When looking at organizing from a perspective of innovation, Wilkesmann and Wilkesmann
(2018) points out that there are two main concepts of organizing that could be defined as
'mechanistic structure' and 'organic structure' (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Sibindi & Samuel, 2019).
The organic structure is clearly influenced by the power of dynamics in an emergent complex
biological ecosystem while the mechanistic structure is influenced by a human idea of creating the
optimized and efficient organizational 'machine'. Burns and Stalker (1961), the founders of
the definition of mechanistic and organic structure, points out the following characteristics:

**Mechanistic structure - suited for a stable organizational context by;**
- Centralized authority and decision making with a managerial hierarchy
- Clearly specified tasks with low differentiation
- A high degree of standardization and formalization
- Low integration between function areas and departments
- Close supervision of employees
- Optimized production minimizing the use of resources and maximizing the most efficient
production of goods and services

**Organic structure - suited for an organizational context that are dynamic, uncertain and are
changing rapidly by;**
- Decentralizing authority and decision making
- A high differentiation of tasks
- A low degree of standardization and formalization
- High integration between function areas and departments
- Distributed responsibility with low supervision of employees
- Quick actions for purging scarce resources

From the contingency approach, organizational structure is a function of the situation and
prevailing environment (Burns & Stalker, 1961). This approach is dominated by the work of Burns
and Stalker (1961), who proposed that mechanistic structures are well suited for stable
environments and organic structures for unstable environments (Sibindi & Samuel, 2019).
According to Lam (2005) a more organic structure is more adaptable to the context of complexity
and is therefore supporting innovation better than mechanistic organizations (Burns & Stalker,
1961; Lam, 2005; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018). The horizontal communication and
decision-making also helps knowledge and learning to flow in more self-determined actions in
organic organizations which leads to an increase of intrinsic motivation among the employees
(Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2011; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2006). In theory it is possible to make a
clear cut between mechanistic and organic organizing but in practicality most organizations have
elements of both perspectives even if the mechanistic approach often tends to be the fundamental
idea in practice. The complex and fluid relationship between the two perspectives could be
illustrated in a model from the idea of a process with two extremes - the mechanistic and the
organic structure.
The examples in the following model is inspired from HolacracyOne (2017) and Burns and Stalker (1961) showing the continuum of mechanistic and organic organizational structures;

![The process of organizing from the continuum of mechanistic and organic structure](image)

Figure 2. The process of organizing from the continuum of mechanistic and organic structure.

This model can be viewed as the base of our theoretical framework from the perspective of formal power structure and will be connected to the organizational perspective of sustainable development as presented in the following section.

### 3.2 Conditions for sustainable development

When looking at different ideas to frame sustainability and sustainable development it becomes clear that the concepts of Triple bottom Line (TBL), Corporate Sustainability (CS) and Sustainable Development (SD) has a holistic, broad and more of a philosophical approach than for example Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility (Strategic CSR) that is more hands on and connecter to organizational structure aiming to support and integrate value creation of a specific organization rather than at a societal or planetary level (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009; Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014; Elkington, 1994, 2018; Purvis et al., 2018; Brundtland, 1987). Since the interest of this research is to investigate how organizational structure and especially formal power structure are related to organizational conditions of sustainable development in different types of organizations along the mechanistic-organic continuum (Burns & Stalker, 1961), none of these frameworks are perceived to meet our purpose completely. Mainly since the ideas of TBL, CS, SD do not have many concrete ideas of how sustainable development is to be achieved at the organizational level and Strategic CSR is framed for corporations and firms with a push on (just) maximizing economic and social value (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009). According to the authors knowledge and perception this is the case for many organizations (for example NGOs, Municipalities, Social Organizations and Associations), which are not corporations and firms, and where there is no clear aim of maximizing economic value, or where the aim is more connected to value creation in a larger societal and/or environmental system. This is also connected to funding which may not be primarily by selling products or services. There might not even be a very clear business model or an external push for revenue. Therefore, it may be fruitful to explore the synthesis and intersection between these different concepts trying to conceptualize an approach of Strategic Sustainability which are framing an integrative, concrete and broad perspective of important organizational conditions for sustainable development. This conceptual framework is aiming to be applicable to different types of organizations from a broad definition of value.
creation. Since the framework of Strategic CSR is quite hands-on with a rather clear idea of how to create preconditions for social value creation, it is rather a transformation of this model, to evolve from 'corporations striving to maximizing value' (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009). This since sustainable development is also about balancing value due to the perspectives of TBL; social, economic and environmental value (Elkington, 1994, 2018; Purvis et al., 2018; Brundtland, 1987). An important perspective of this research is also the formal perspectives of organizational structure and power structure which then makes the formal perspectives and conditions for sustainable development interesting to look at. Is it even possible to say that certain variables of formal power structure are related to the conditions of sustainable development, typically Strategic Sustainability, in a general way in every organization, whatsoever?

3.2.1 Triple Bottom Line (TBL)

The Triple Bottom Line is a framework that was coined by John Elkington (1994). It was meant to be a framework helping to examine the impact an organization had on economic, social and environmental issues. Henriques (2007) referred to the TBL as a “brilliant and far-reaching metaphor” (p.26) and Roger and Hudson (2011) referred to it as the practical framework of sustainability. As figure 3 shows, the TBL puts a balanced focus on the economic, environmental and social areas and provides different measures.

![Figure 3. The interconnection of the elements of the Triple Bottom Line concept. Dalibozhko and Krakovetskaya (2018)](image)

Slaper and Hall (2011) mentions flow of money, income, taxes, employment as some examples for economic variables. Some examples for environmental variables are air and water quality, energy consumption and natural resources. Some social variables are education, equity, health and wellbeing and quality of life, just to mention a few. Slaper and Hall (2011) summarizes his article by emphasizing that John Elkington’s (1994) TBL has changed many organizations (businesses, non-profits, governments) ways of measuring sustainability and performance. The TBL can be
applied to the specific needs of any organization and allows them to evaluate their decisions from a long-term perspective.

Dalibozhko and Krakovetskaya (2018) write that sustainable development can be characterized as socially desirable, economically viable and environmentally sustainable development of society. In order to reach sustainable development from the triple bottom line the perspectives of social, environmental and economic need to be in balance with each other.

But as Elkington (2018) writes, many organizations have mainly used it as an “accounting tool” (para. 8) and to make “trade-offs” (para. 8). Even though the TBL framework has contributed to a more sustainable thinking, there still is a long way to go as Elkington (2018) stated:

“Indeed, none of these sustainability frameworks will be enough, as long as they lack the suitable pace and scale - the necessary radical intent - needed to stop us all overshooting our planetary boundaries. (Elkington, 2018, para.16)”

Elkington (2018) is critical to what his framework achieved during the past 25 years, since it has not produced the outcome he had wished for, namely, to bury the single bottom line paradigm that was mainly focusing on the economy. According to him, the concept has been watered down by accountants and consultants. All those written reports seldomly lead to a clear picture on how policymakers can engage and help lead towards a more sustainable future.

Gray and Milne (2004) write that a real TBL report would give social and environmental interactions equal billing with the financial. Further they write that it is “virtually impossible” (p.7) that social or environmental issues are given priority over the financial issues. It is a build-in problem that a company must consider foremost the financial bottom line in order to stay on the market. They mention three reasons when the social and environmental dimensions are considered: **(1) when there are enough financial elbow-room choices, (2) when it does not conflict with the financial (3) or when there is a win-win situation.** Gray and Milne (2004) states:

“So, a triple bottom line report – to be worth anything at all beyond public relations puff - must contain a substantial and believable social report and a full and audited environmental report. Only in this way can these conflicts and tradeoffs be exposed, and ultimately, their causes explored, and solutions considered. (Gray & Milne, 2004, p.8)”

### 3.2.2 Strategic Sustainability - conditions for sustainable development

As the frameworks of Strategic CSR and CS are well researched areas which are closely connected to sustainability in a broader sense it seems reasonable to start at this end when trying to go towards a concept of Strategic Sustainability (of organizations). Werther and Chandler (2011, p.89) defines Strategic CSR as follows;

“The incorporation of a holistic CSR perspective within a firm’s strategic planning and core operations so that the firm is managed in the interests of a broad set of stakeholders to achieve maximum economic and social value over the medium to long term.”

When looking at the broader perspective of sustainable development Werther and Chandler (2011, p. 452) uses the definition of Gro Harlem Brundtland (1987):

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

When it comes to Corporate Sustainability (CS), Montiel and Delgado-Ceballos (2014) observed that there is no standardized definition of CS. The origin of CS is though connected to Brundtland’s (1987) definition as one of the definitional components of CS relate to the long-term perspective.
Marckevich (2009) points out the following six perspectives of CS; (1) regulatory compliance, (2) incremental mitigation, (3) value alignment, (4) whole system design, (5) business model innovation, and (6) mission transformation.

All the three perspectives of CS, Strategic CSR and Sustainable development are addressing the holistic perspective of meeting long term needs with a balanced value creation to a broader set of stakeholders. Brundtland's (1987) definition has a wider approach more focusing on societal and global sustainable development while Strategic CSR together with CS are focusing on how firms can be more sustainable through the incorporating core strategies into the structure and culture of the firm (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009; Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014; Marckevich, 2009).

From the definition of Werther and Chandler (2011) it is possible to point out five core areas that are crucial when having a Strategic CSR approach; (1) The holistic CSR perspective incorporating (2) The core operations managing (3) A broad set of stakeholders to achieve (4) Maximum economic and social value over (5) The medium to long term.

The five pillars of Strategic CSR integrated with CS, TBL and Sustainable development will here be further used for developing a conceptual framework of Strategic Sustainability (SS) (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009; Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014; Marckevich, 2009, 2014; Elkington, 1994, 2018; Purvis et al., 2018; Brundtland, 1987). This framework could be formulated as follows.

(1) A holistic sustainability perspective
In the transition from CSR to sustainability this means that the perspective of sustainability should be present, incorporated and seen as a natural part of the strategic planning and evaluation processes of the organization. These processes are to be continuously monitored by a Sustainability filter (corresponding to CSR filter) which is to be seen as a conceptual screen that enables a continuous evaluation of how strategic and tactical decisions impact a various set of the organization's stakeholders (Werther & Chandler, 2011, p.153). As the Sustainability filter is very important for monitoring, directing and evaluating the holistic and strategic perspective of sustainability it will be further examined and clarified in the next section of this chapter. The holistic aspect, connecting to the whole system, also highlights the importance of having systems thinking highly present within the organization and its members (Senge, 2006; Senge et al., 2015).

(2) Sustainability is incorporated into the core operations
Is sustainability present in the core operations of the organization and how is this reflecting all the three perspectives of the TBL (Elkington 1994, 2018)? Or is sustainability more to be seen as a separate and complementary strategy or branding at the side?

(3) Managing a broad set of stakeholders
To be able to create social and environmental value in a larger system there is a need of having a broad stakeholder and beneficiary approach and not just handling the closest, most visible and obvious relations as employees, customers, partners, suppliers and authorities. If we want or not there is a set of more complex relationships with stakeholders that may be very important and are indirectly influenced by our organization and/or are having power of influence that may be underestimated. This approach connects closely to systems thinking and theories on complex social systems which is defining a system as a whole created by the interdependent and complex interaction of its inseparable parts (Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Prazkier & Novak, 2012; Saynish, 2010; Klein, 2016; Espinosa & Porter, 2011; Wulun, 2007; Luhman, 1984). From the systems perspective all the stakeholders and beneficiaries are potential influencers of changing the system as a whole by starting chain reactions with proportionally small acupunctural forces (Praszker & Nowak, 2012, Capra & Luisi, 2018).
(4) (and 5) Maximizing and balancing the value creation over medium to long term according to the perspectives of TBL

This perspective highlights the importance of maximizing and balancing (Dalibozhko & Krakovetskaya, 2018) the value creation due to all of the three perspectives of the TBL over the medium to long term perspective (Elkington, 1994, 2018; Werther & Chandler, 2011). Since the value creation and the time perspective is highly connected, the points (4) and (5) are integrated into one. The perspective of value creation is also closely connected to the dynamics of a broader set of stakeholders (3) with different perspectives and needs over time rather than just short-term financial perspectives of shareholders and owners.

3.2.3 The Sustainability filter - monitoring sustainable development

The Sustainability filter (corresponding to CSR filter) is an important tool for holistically and continually planning, securing, monitoring and evaluating the strategic and tactic perspective of sustainable development and how it impacts the organization's various stakeholders (Werther & Chandler, 2011). In other words, The Sustainability filter is a way of maximizing and balancing the value-creation of the organization without losing mid- and long-term perspectives from the view of a broad set of stakeholders.

In his article, Bhattacharyya (2009) discusses a conceptual framework explaining the filter more detailed. He divides the filter into four different screen levels used for evaluating if it is a strategic approach or not. In other words, a decision or action may be sustainable from a specific short-term perspective without connecting to the holistic perspective of the Strategic sustainability framework, for example as a parallel strategy not connecting to the core operations of the organization. From a sustainability perspective Bhattacharya's (2009) conceptual framework could be explained as follows;

1. The Intent screen - This screen segregates the reactive and unplanned from the proactive and planned sustainability activities. To qualify and pass the intent screen the activity needs to be proactive and anticipatory in nature.
2. The Focus screen - The focus screen intends to ensure that the activities are having the right direction and intent supporting the purpose, vision and mission of the organization. If this connection is unclear it will not qualify and pass the focus screen.
3. The Commitment screen - The role of the commitment screen is to secure a medium to long term perspective together with a dedicated and adequate amount of resources allocated.
4. The Activity screen - Sustainability activities are strategically interconnected with the organization's internal and external core operations in its nature.
An activity or decision, addressing sustainability is then to be viewed as strategic, supporting the framework of Strategic Sustainability, when it qualifies to the constraints of all of these four screens. The processing and qualifying of the activity as strategic are illustrated as a practical and conceptual model in figure 4.

**Screen explanation**

1. **The Intent screen**
   - Proactive and Anticipatory activity?

2. **The Focus screen**
   - Activity supporting purpose, vision and mission?

3. **The Commitment screen**
   - Medium to long term activity with Allocated resources?

4. **The Activity screen**
   - Activity connected to core operations?

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**Figure 4. The Sustainability filter; A conceptual model towards Strategic Sustainability**

### 3.2.4 Summarizing and concluding

When summarizing the attempt of framing Strategic CSR, CS, TBL and Sustainable development into a conceptual framework of Strategic Sustainability it seems to make sense. The framing is following the foundational and practical ideas of Strategic CSR together with a more general approach to organizations instead of corporations. It also points out a general connection to the framework of TBL, CS and sustainable development and that there is a need of balanced and maximized, medium and long term economic and social value creation. Four pillars are then used for framing the conceptual framework of Strategic Sustainability (SS) and are suggested to be formulated as follows;

“The incorporation of (1) a holistic sustainability perspective, within an organization’s strategic planning and (2) core operations so that the organization is managed in the interests of a (3) broad set of stakeholders to achieve (4) a maximized and balanced value creation over the medium to long term according to the perspectives of TBL.”

Since this is a conceptual framework defining how the sustainability perspective needs to be incorporated and considered for having a strategic approach towards sustainability, it is to be viewed as conditions rather than certain clearly defined outcomes or impact. The continuous planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities at different levels is an important part of fulfilling the framework and could with advantage be done by the conceptual model of the Sustainability filter. The filter supports the implementation of Strategic Sustainability by securing that the organization keeps on track towards sustainable development. With that said it is important to highlight that sustainable impact and outcomes are not due to a linear process of Strategic Sustainability and Sustainable development but rather by a complex process of interactions of the system as a whole (Senge, 1990; Capra & Luisi, 2018; Praszker & Nowak, 2012). So, the presented conceptual models and frameworks are mainly to be used as a support when implementing, planning, evaluating and developing the perspective of Strategic Sustainability towards sustainable development of an organization.
4 Methodology

4.1 Research design

Due to the detected research gap and the emerging research problem and research questions, it is decided to use a qualitative method to conduct the research. Further explanations why the qualitative method was picked and why an exploratory and inductive way was elected is presented below. As the method to collect the data, semi-structured interviews were chosen as a relevant way and closely connected to the choice of method for the analysis, the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA is further explained in the following sections. The data sample consists of ten employees from three organizations within the municipality of Malmö.

4.2 Research approach

4.2.1 Exploratory and qualitative research

As mentioned above, this research has an exploratory approach using qualitative research with the help of semi-structured interviews. The choice of conducting semi-structured interviews connects back to the purpose and research questions and how they are to be pursued in a suitable way. The chosen method of analysis, the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), is a relevant method when studying the perception of individuals. Due to these reasons, semi-structured interviews are evaluated to be a suitable tool collecting relevant empirical data in this qualitative research (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012; 6 & Bellamy, 2012; Silverman, 2015). The exploratory approach is chosen due to the interest of investigating to have better understanding connected to the defined research gap rather than provide definite conclusive results.

Gratton and Jones (2010) points out that qualitative research studies are often used when the focus of the study is on people’s perception as experiences, feelings and thoughts. This is a good method to look deeper into the context of the interviewees and helps to get a deeper understanding of the organization itself (6 & Bellamy, 2012; Silverman, 2015). This aims for getting a better overview of the perceived relation between formal power structure and conditions for sustainable development both from the individual and the organizational perspective. To get a more balanced result, the interviewees are conducted with both managers and non-managers.

Beyond being an exploratory approach, it also is an inductive approach, since this research is based on the interviews of employees in organizations. This is done to detect a possible relationship between formal power structures and conditions for sustainable development. An inductive study is often used when the approach is less formal (6 & Bellamy, 2012; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Research, focusing on perception is used when trying to find out how people understand or feel about their situations and environments. The study of perception through interviews can identify gaps between what is perceived and what is formally outspoken and practiced in the organizations and can also highlight differences and conflicting values between different formal and informal roles. In this research it can help to identify gaps between the perceived and formulated power structures and conditions for sustainable development and how they relate to each other and to previous research (Gratton & Jones, 2010; 6 & Bellamy, 2012; Silverman, 2015).

4.3 Methods of collecting data

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are held with co-workers and managers in the chosen organizations. The interviews are primarily investigating the employee’s perception on how they relate formal power structure to sustainable development of their organization. In total there are ten interviews
conducted with people from three different organizations. The length of the interviews is approximately one hour. The aim is to look at three organizations with differences in their formal power structures.

4.3.2 Arguments for choice of method

The reason for choosing semi-structured interviews for collecting data, is our focus on the perceived relation between organizational structure, especially formal structure, and conditions for sustainable development. Through conducting semi-structured interviews with employees in these organizations, connections can be made about how the organization is perceived to meet their achievements of sustainable development goals and sustainability and how this relates to the formal power structure. The choice of method to collect a fundamental ground of data for the analyzing part is supported by Silverman (2015) referring to Bridget Byrne (2004) who writes that this kind of qualitative interviews is very helpful when it comes to looking at people's values and point of views, which is hard to obtain through surveys. She writes further that this kind of research allows the researcher to come to a deep level.

When starting the thesis, there was initially an idea of including documents from the three organizations but as the interviews and the analysis were carried through it made more sense to focus just on the data from the interviews because perception is chosen to be the central piece of this research. During the analysis process it was noticed that it could be interesting to look at how certain documents were produced rather than the content of the document itself, since it is not directly connected to our interviewee's perception. Therefore, documents were chosen to be excluded as a source of empirical data of this research.

4.4 Method of analyzing data - Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The semi-structured interviews were transcribed and then analyzed using the method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Smith and Shinebourne (2012) write that IPA aims to look at how the interviewees are making sense of their role in the context they are in. The researcher is aiming to get into the interviewees world to get the perspective of an insider (Conrad, 1987). Obviously, this is not 100 percent possible, since the researcher's own conceptions and perception come in and play a role as well. Smith (1999) writes though that the IPA method is flexible because it allows the researcher to adapt the method depending on the aims of the research. The process involves two stages of interpretation. First the interviewee going through his/her own process and then the researcher going through the process to understand the interviewees process. In IPA, the aim is to understand the content of what the interviewee says, rather than how often they say it.

In order to collect this kind of data, one of the best ways is conducting semi-structured interviews which was already mentioned in the beginning of this chapter as the method of this research. Smith and Shinebourne (2012) write that semi-structured interviews “allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of the participants’ responses and the investigator is able to probe interesting and important areas which arise” (p.57). This method supports an explorative form of research. In this way the researcher can go deeper in areas that seem more important and of more interest for the interviewee. This way of interviewing opens new areas that the researcher was not aware of and it gives the researcher insight in the psychological world of the interviewee, which makes the interview rich and interesting. The challenge with this kind of interviewing is that every interview (if conducting many interviews) takes longer and can go into different areas and therefore makes it harder to analyze and compare (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

Smith and Shinebourne (2012) describe the way of analyzing according to IPA like this: They write that the way to analyze the interview within IPA is to find themes throughout the interview. This is done by reading the transcript repeatedly in order to write down everything that comes to
the researcher’s mind. Further they write that, it is important that the researcher writes down everything that comes to his/her mind. The reason why the text should be read many times is for the researcher to become familiar with the text. They add that the second step is to go back to the transcripts and the notes the researcher made to now look for themes that stick out. Those are then written down in chronological order. After that the researcher orders the themes in an analytical manner to see which of the themes that cluster together, and which themes arise more often. But it is important for the researcher to not get carried away with the themes that arise but to have an ongoing conversation between the transcript as it is and the themes so that the words of the interviewee are still there. After that, those themes are connected and put into a table. This is then translated into a more narrative account to make the analysis more approachable. But it is important in this phase to distinguish between the interviewees account and the researcher’s narrative analysis. (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012)

4.5 Practical Application - collecting and analyzing data

4.5.1 Contextual factors and sample selection

Due to practical circumstances the area of research is limited to the Malmö area. To narrow the research down to a specific area, it was most suitable to choose three organizations with head offices located in the same municipality. The reason why only three organizations were picked was due to the size of the study. The same study could easily be scaled up or could be conducted in different countries or cultures. The size of the study is limited to ten interviews and to get at least some reasonable insight from three organizations, the number of interviewees was divided into three to four persons per organization. The goal was to look from a lens of individual perception connecting to their organizational context but also being able to draw comparable conclusions between the organizations. Looking at these three organizations, different in size and different in core business and activities, helps to broaden the foundation of this research. Another reason for selecting these organizations was that the researchers perceived one of them as more mechanistic, the second one as more organic and the third one as being in a transformation process from mechanistic to organic. This choice of samples gives the research an interesting foundation, looking at different organizational structures and comparing them due to the continuum of mechanistic and organic structures (Burns & Stalker, 1961). Because of the short time frame and due to the challenges of the current corona pandemic, the researchers decided to contact people in their own network to find relevant interviewees. Five of the interviewees were direct contacts and the other five were contacts of the contacts. The researchers tried to have a balance in gender, six of the interviewees were men and four women. When it comes to the organizational position of the interviewees, the researches picked people with different roles. In the analysis part, the organizations and interviewees are more closely described. Table 2 gives an overview over the sample and collection of data.
4.5.2 Chronological order of research procedure

**Step 1:** After deciding the research purpose and the research question due to the discovered research gap, an interview guide was put together. This interview guide was then critically tested by the researchers and revised where necessary. The guide is presented in Appendix I.

**Step 2:** Then ten persons within three different organizations were contacted by email and asked if they were willing to be interviewed. These persons were either direct contacts, the researchers had before or contacts of the contacts. An information letter was sent with relevant information about the interview (Appendix II). All the persons that were asked, agreed to be interviewed according to the terms presented.

**Step 3:** Then the ten interviews were conducted within a time frame of three weeks. The interviews were all recorded and were held in Swedish, since it was the mother tongue of the interviewees and researchers. Being able to express thoughts and feelings in their mother tongue would imply a better quality, according to the researchers. Both researchers participated in every interview. The roles of the two researchers were divided into one focusing on leading the interview and one supporting, administrating and conducting additional questions. Prior to every interview the interview leader was chosen to be the one with the least bias (prior relation) connected to the interviewee. All interviews were conducted through the online platform Zoom, due to the current pandemic-situation in order to keep the governmental recommendations of social distancing.

**Step 4:** All ten interviews were then divided between the researchers and transcribed. The transcription was done in the web-tool Amberscript.com where it first was automatically transcribed and then manually worked through and quality secured by both researchers.

**Step 5:** The transcribed data was then analyzed according to the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012), practically described in the following steps.

---

### Table 2. Overview of the interview sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Interviewee (alias)</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
<th>Length of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>A (a swedish government owned university; 1400 employees)</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>2020-04-16</td>
<td>64 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jen</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Unit Manager</td>
<td>2020-04-17</td>
<td>54 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kenneth</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Lecturer &amp; doctoral studies</td>
<td>2020-04-20</td>
<td>59 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gregory</td>
<td>B (a privately held consultancy firm; 20 employees)</td>
<td>Founder &amp; various roles</td>
<td>2020-04-21</td>
<td>57 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Steven</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>2020-04-20</td>
<td>75 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Henrik</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>2020-04-23</td>
<td>68 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7   | Anders              | C (a “folkbildning”* organization; 40 employees)  
*Folkbildning = adult education and societal development | Regional Manager | 2020-04-24 | 53 min |
| 8   | Anna                | C            | Org. Developer & Project Leader | 2020-04-28 | 61 min |
| 9   | Lena                | C            | Org. Developer | 2020-04-27 | 60 min |
| 10  | Petra               | C            | Team leader | 2020-04-30 | 72 min |
Step 6: The researchers transcribed five interviews each. The transcripts were read through two to three times and notes were made according to what came to the researcher’s mind. The questions that were reflected upon while reading through the transcripts were: Is there a theme? How is it done in practice? How does the interviewee perceive it? The notes were in this step translated to English. The researcher’s intention was to be as objective as possible to catch the interviewee’s perception both in content and due to the language translation. At this point of the analysis it was very important to keep the detected themes as closely connected to the interviewees answers as possible to be aware of any bias from the researcher’s perspective. Those notes were then transferred into a table (see the exemplifying sample in table 3 below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Jen (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Kenneth (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inflexible vs. flexible - Positive to be inflexible according to not being influenced by temporary factors.</td>
<td>Perceived as a rather dynamic university.</td>
<td>More advancements in the organization to different roles than I am used to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived flat organization despite a clear hierarchy in Lund. Perceived that the local institution had more personal power to decide. There was a trust in the experts.</td>
<td>Are trying to work more team based and are working through all processes in the organization. All rocks are turned. We are heading towards a more moving, living organization but at the same time with a clear structure.</td>
<td>Different needs can change tasks and roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External pressure to support growth. Focus on growth - economic growth of the society</td>
<td>Aiming to have processes of involvement before decisions are taken from the formal power</td>
<td>Personal days are focusing on tasks within the given frame rather than relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on external processes rather than internal - external focus on sustainability but at the same time bad working environment, stress and bad leadership.</td>
<td>We can work even more long-term and thoughtful</td>
<td>In need of a better balance between men and women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 7: These notes were then narrowed down into possible theme interpretations which were formulated towards practical applications within the organization (see the exemplifying sample table 4 below). These results are more closely presented in the result part.
Step 8: The next step was then to translate those themes into researcher narratives to make the results more approachable. Those narratives, and how they were created, are closely presented in the analysis part.

Step 9: In the discussion part, the results/analysis are put into context of previous research, theoretical framework, research gap and research questions.

4.6 Reliability

Kirk and Miller (1986) state that reliability is normally referring to how much findings are independent to accidental circumstances. An important issue when it comes to reliability is that a research can be repeated and come up with the same results. But obviously it is more challenging when it comes to qualitative research (Silverman, 2015). In this case using the IPA-method it might be even harder since the researcher’s perception is an important part in creating narratives which makes the results more complex. This also means that the results of analyzing the empirical data will vary each time and may be hard to repeat in the exact same way. The conclusions might be similar but the process of going there will certainly differ every time. Moisander and Valtonen (2006) suggest two ways to satisfy the criteria to reach reliability in qualitative research: (1) to make the research process transparent in a detailed manner and (2) by paying attention to theoretical transparency by making the theoretical viewpoint clear in which the interpretation takes place which is highly taken into consider in this research.

4.6.1 Reliability and interviews

When it comes to interviewing people, Silverman (2015) writes that it is very important that every interviewee understands the questions in the same way and that all the answers can be coded so that all uncertainty can be excluded. How this can be done is by pre-testing the interview schedule, training the person who conducts the interviews, fixed-choice answers and by checking the inter-rater reliability. Other ways for meeting the criteria of reliability is by recording and transcribing the interviews. To handle the aspect of reliability of interviews in this research, the interview design will be made by both researchers and it will be discussed how to minimize the influence of personal bias when conducting the interviews. Both researchers are attending during each interview. The transcriptions of interviews are divided and then analyzed by one researcher and then by the other researcher complemented and changed when needed. All interviews are conducted and recorded online via video-link due to the pandemic of corona. This could also be an advantage when it comes to reliability because it excludes a lot of other biases that come from meeting a person at a specific location. Now the focus is fully on what the interviewee says.
4.7 Validity

An important perspective of validity in this research is the limited amount of data that is collected: ten interviews with approximately ten hours of data from three organizations. This highlights the importance of only drawing conclusions that are connecting to the actual context of the interviewees and their organizations. It is not likely that it is possible to draw general theoretical conclusions from this amount of limited data but rather to highlight phenomena and suggest general conclusions that need more research to be proven. The conducted data could though be used to be supported or declined by the chosen theoretical framework and to help to push the understanding of how formal power structure and sustainable development are interrelated. It may also highlight new possible and interesting areas of further research.

Practically it has been important to go back and forth during the research-process to ensure that the intention and methods of data collection relates closely to the research questions (RQ). If this connection became unclear the setting of the research has been revised and the RQ's were updated. In the data collection there was a strive towards objectivity and when drawing conclusions, the researchers were careful to search for objective patterns and narratives rather than reasonable truths. The researchers were aware and observant on critically reviewing their subjective influence of this research. Therefore, the researchers have been open to feedback from other peer-researchers and supervisors throughout the research process to minimize the risk of being caught in their own presumptions, predefined beliefs and mental models.

One identified, important personal bias of this research was that both authors have the hypothesis that 'Organic principles of organizing is a more healthy and suitable way of organizing in the context of today, and therefore has better preconditions for performing sustainably'. To minimize the biased effects from this hypothesis the researchers were critically aware and reminded each other throughout the research and cross-checked each other's analysis. Creswell (2014) writes that it is important to minimize the possibility of personal bias interfering in the research.

The conclusions of this research need to be examined critically to approve the results and to guarantee that the same research can fit in other contexts. Silverman (2015) states that research study without seriously ensuring the audience that the methods used are reliable and the conclusion valid are pointless. That is why those parts are crucial in any research. He further writes that qualitative research can be made credible if every effort is made to falsify the initial assumptions about the researcher's own data.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Since this research builds on the perception of employees and managers when it comes to their view on the organization they work in, there are some ethical parts that need to be taken into consideration.

The researcher's aim is to get an honest answer when it comes to the perception of the interviewee, which is why it is important to affirm their answers as confidential. Therefore, the interviewees were assured that their identity was held confidential. In the information letter (Appendix II) that was sent out to the interviewees prior to the interview, the interviewees were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could terminate the interview at any given point. The interviewees were also informed that the researchers followed the recommendations of the Swedish Research Council when it comes to ethical guidelines in research (Vetenskapsrådet, 1990). The interviewees were assured that their names, age and organizations would be held anonymous. The names of the interviewees that are mentioned in the thesis are not their real names. At the start of every interview the researchers asked if the interviewee agreed to the terms that the interview would be recorded and transcribed. The researchers repeated the information about the confidentiality terms again to assure the interviewee that the recordings are deleted after the thesis is approved.
4.9 Limitations

There are some constraints when it comes to conducting interviews and collection data, with the obvious challenge conducting a research paper during a pandemic. Many organizations face big challenges at the time being and therefore it is a challenge to have available people for face-to-face interviews. Conducting the interviews online makes it harder to control the setting of the interviews and potential bias effects of being in different locations and having a lack of personal face-to-face interaction. The format of a thesis is also limiting as it only enables a relatively small amount of data due to the time frame and extent. Another limitation is that the perceived data from an interview is closely connected to the complexity of the personal context, bias, ideas, understandings and preconditions which makes every interview unique. Therefore, the different interviews, as well as the organizations are compared with caution. The interviewees themselves are influenced by their own biases and by the fact to be interviewed by a 'stranger', which influences the given answers consciously and unconsciously. Another limitation is the researcher's own prejudice, preconceptions and biases. In this case the researchers had a bias that organic power structures provide better conditions for sustainable development than hierarchical power structures. So that is why the researchers were aware of the importance to examine the data self-critically and to be as objective as possible. One positive aspect with being two researchers is that the bias is less strong, because the interviews are read and approached from two different persons with their individual biases. In this research it was supported to challenge perceived truths and beliefs from the metaphor: 'no cows are holy'.

5 Results

In the result section the empirical findings are shown. This part shows the results from the data collection through the transcribed semi-structured interviews. Since the empirical data is very extensive, the full table can be found in Appendix III. The table below shows a sample of the table in two columns per interviewee. Column one presents the excerpts from the transcription done by the researcher, corresponding to what the interviewee actually said. And column two presents the theme interpretation of those excerpts that the researcher put together which are connected to the researcher's perspective of the content and excerpt from the interview. Those themes are then aimed to support the creation of a coherent story (researcher narrative) which is presented in the analysis part.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Henrik, org B, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[a]Consultant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[b]Flexible Organization: continuous change of roles</td>
<td>Flexible: change of roles is ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[c]Distributed Power structure: no hierarchy</td>
<td>No hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[d]Distributed Power- not delegated but distributed. There is no one who has the power and delegates it. You already have the power. That is written down in our constitution</td>
<td>Distributed power - not delegated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[e]There are some formal papers that explain how we are structured, which we are required to have by law. But we are not letting these formal papers shape our way of working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[f]The CEO and the board have a legal responsibility since we are a Stock Corporation. So that responsibility cannot be ignored. But in practice we handle it differently. Formalized process of how to do it. (2)</td>
<td>Formal documents for legal reasons, but otherwise organic structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 Analysis

The analysis due to the method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) points out the strive to create a narrative analysis where the researcher's narrative is distinguished from the interviewee account. In Appendix III there is a presentation of the transformation from the interviewee account (excerpt from transcript) to the theme interpretation (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). These themes are then developed to narratives with the aim of coherent and condensed stories in this section. The narrative should be viewed as a researcher narrative transformed from the content of the transcribed semi-structured interviews. Since the chosen method is aiming to explore phenomenon and to be open to different paths, this section is focusing on this exploration rather than narrowing down specifically to the research questions. This for minimizing the risk of excluding content that could be of relevance and to minimize personal bias effects from personal presumptions and mental models. The framing according to the aim of the research and connecting to theory will therefore be made in the discussion and conclusion sections.

Every individual narrative is guided by the themes from the “theme interpretation” and the content from the excerpts in Appendix III. The themes presented under each interview are meant to act as a guide and quality filter ensuring that the created narrative is emerging from the collected data rather than from the researcher's presumptions and pre-understandings. It also gives the reader a visual connection between the themes and the narratives. The analysis section starts off with focusing on the narratives based on individual perception and then it is analyzed at organizational level and at the end the analysis is concluded for all the three organizations.

6.1 Organization A; A Swedish Government owned University

Organization A is a university located in a Swedish mid-size municipality having approximately 1 400 employees. The university was founded about 20 years ago. The university's core business is to conduct education and research and to cooperate with the surrounding society (regulated by law).

6.1.1 Interviewee Adam, org. A

Adam is a male that describes himself as a lecturer that also carries other, more informal, roles that are changing due to different needs in the organization as; project manager, project co-worker and researcher. Adam has worked for the organization approximately 20 years.

6.1.1.1 Themes in independent order

Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- Inflexibility leads to less influence from temporary external changes.
- Inflexibility leads to more talking and less action
- The perception of 'flatness' is influenced by the autonomy of the sub-group you are in.
- Focus on external processes rather than internal presetting’s, has a negative effect on the sustainable performance both internally and externally - less sense of meaningfulness, 'individuals finding their positions', creativity and innovation. Organization being a part of the problem.
- When creating a new organization, it is more organic 'new builder's spirit' - collective effort
- High dependency in individuals - Individual influence in power positions is high
- Internal processes are mainly task oriented
- Center of power - where it is located is important and how it creates informal ways

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.
6.1.1.2 Narrative

Adam describes organization A as a rigid formal hierarchy, highly connected to external regulations and laws. The organization has a high dependency on the individual level which both takes form as power centered individuals as well as low focus on the collective effort. The formal power structure is seen as rigid and inflexible which leads to less influence and organizational adaptation due to temporary external changes, focusing on preserving and creating stability. On the other hand, it leads to more talking about change than taking action for change. Parallel with the formal power structure there is a more fluid informal power structure that is need-oriented and that handles external partnerships and external development projects together with informal ways of influencing positions with formal power. These two parts are perceived to be a potential leverage for organizational change. At the same time there is an expectation of going up the formal power structure when decisions are about changing or developing the core business. This makes Adam choose more informal ways to influence decisions, since the formal way makes him lose energy from the perspective 'you should be quiet and obey'. The organization has a high focus on specialization of tasks rather than relations and interrelations which also makes the role of being a manager less attractive. At the same time though, middle managers are pointed out as key-roles in relation to the success of the organization. There is a high degree of focus on external delivery due to the high degree of individuality, specialization and task orientation with a perception of being led from external pressure. The external focus and the perspective of being led could be formulated as the organization having a main focus on processes that have the direction outside-in, rather than inside-out. This is also highlighted in the perception of a bad working environment with a lot of stress and a perceived bad leadership.

6.1.2 Interviewee Jen, org. A

Jen is a woman who presents herself as a unit manager at Organization A. Her managerial role is formally held to 40 percent and the remaining 60 percent is focusing on education and external assignments regarding leadership and organizing. Jen has worked for the organization for 11 years and the last two and a half years as a middle manager.

6.1.2.1 Themes in independent order

Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- In search for a more balanced, dynamic, autonomy, moving, living and decentralized structure (organic)
- High task/low relation orientation
- Individuality is high
- Power structure - formal and informal
- Centralized power to the top. Clear hierarchical structure
- External focus 'outside and in'
- Performance factors
- Talking rather than acting

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.1.2.2 Narrative

Jen is perceived to have many ideas of how organization A needs to change towards a more living and moving organization. One example is how the organization is trying to work more team based and is turning 'all the rocks' and reinvents internal processes. Jen expresses a need for being more flexible, having a more holistic view in top-management, change in how leadership and management is viewed, more curiosity in the organization, relation orientation, feeling secure and at the same time being change oriented. There is a personal search here for a more balanced, autonomic and dynamic organization. The organization is described as task oriented with a hierarchical structure with power centered at the top and a high degree of task orientation. The role
of the middle manager, which mainly has its focus on relations and managing resources, has a low status in the organization since specialization, individuality and task orientation has a strong focus. The middle managerial positions are recruited internally with a low focus on leadership and organizational skills together with a predefined time frame of three to maximum six years. The role of the middle manager also takes turns internally. Decisions by managers in the formal power structure are highly reliant involving persons with informal power which also makes it more reliant on individual capacities. There are formal and outspoken ambitions of developing the organization as mentioned above but at the same time it is perceived as ‘talking before acting’. For example, when a decision is made within an area of shared interest involving the surrounding society, things happen faster. There are also rules and regulations of the organization that are perceived as hinders for shorter ways of decision-making as well as hindering individuals. The performance of the organization is reliant on which individuals are sitting in positions in the formal power structure and sometimes it is hard and frustrating having to adjust to what is second or third best, and due to Jen, there is a limit to pain there. Internal processes can be a little bit winded and take a long time which leads to a loss of energy and motivation on the way. This leads to a need of deciding to go from talking to acting.

6.1.3 Interviewee Kenneth, org. A
Kenneth is a male who describes himself as lecturer and doctoral student divided into 50/50. He perceives this divide helps long-term processes supporting fertilizing between the two areas. He has worked in Organization A for 12 years and has held different working assignments during this time dependent on the need and that he had become niched due to his specialization.

6.1.3.1 Themes in independent order
Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- Individuality and specialization (task-focus) dominating
- Two folded mission of the organization - support individuals and to secure the structure of tasks
- Long-term processes support fertilizing between different tasks and areas
- Sense of emergency
- Power structure, rigid formal top-down structure
- Freedom inside the frames
- Performance factors
- External focus (outside and in)

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.1.3.2 Narrative
Kenneth is perceiving that there are more career advancements in this organization that he is used to. It is an organization with a classical hierarchy with responsibility for holding structure together within assignments and business, putting people in the right places and developing competence and to support their individual career. There is a high degree of individuality which shows itself as competition between individuals, importance of showing strength and competence at the individual level and the personal history of individuals supporting outdated structures. The individuality is also perceived to be supported by the structure. Collegiality often shows itself in self-organized smaller groups with the people you are sitting with. There is a top-down resource management focusing on hours and task-orientation. For example, the daily work is mostly focusing on tasks within the external given frames rather than on relations. The focus on tasks also makes it easier to down-prioritize relation-building. Kenneth perceives that there is freedom and trust within these external given frames on planning the 'how', which also supports creativity. The given frames are though quite rigid and to a high degree determined by external laws and regulations. Within those areas even the manager has nothing to say. When going beyond the frames, you are stopped.
Emergent tasks are normally decided and directed through the hierarchy, without the opportunity to say no. The given advice is 'just solve it'. You can always tell your opinion, but the manager makes the decision. On one hand this leads to loyalty based on pride, that they are doing something important. On the other hand, it may hinder the right person from getting the assignment which leads to more time and effort needed. The learning goals of the courses are pretty much top-down and even decided outside of the university. Changes outside of this system do not inflict the goals of the organization that should be achieved, whatsoever. The actual control structures of the organization are perceived to hinder flexibility and at the same time clear rules and regulations support distribution of power and trust. There are also discussions about how the power is to be distributed and changed towards a flatter organization and there is more collaboration between departments and assignments. When it comes to sustainability, there is much focus on creating resilience for the students for their future working roles. The focus is there because we think it is important rather than in the core business. Limits of time and resources set pressure which hinders sustainable performance. Our performance is generally measured by the external governmental control system for example, valuing the level of our education.

6.1.4 Conclusion from narratives of organization A

Claims that are based on the narrative of common perception among the interviewees are highlighted with a lowercase letter and are marked as (a, b, c……) bolded text.

The three interviewees of organization A perceive their organization similar. See those perspectives highlighted here. What stands out is the perception of (a) a clear hierarchical structure that all three describe. Organization A is seen to be highly influenced by external regulations and laws that create a rigid formal power structure that is seen as inflexible. This is described as 'not possible to influence on the individual level' and often not even by the persons that hold a high degree of formal power in the organization. All the interviewees showed examples that there is (b) an important and more informal self-organized organic structure that is complementing the formal structure. This structure supports flexibility, meeting complex matters and to make faster decisions, especially connected to external stakeholders, for example; students, project partners, external partnerships and commissioned assignments. This structure is to a lower degree formulated and outspoken and sometimes it is interpreted leaning towards anarchy. All interviewees mentioned (c) a high degree of specialization and individuality as two perspectives that form the culture within the organization. This leads to a high dependency on powerful individuals for how the organization is managed, led and directed. It also is more of a (d) task-oriented workplace, then a relation-focused even though all the interviewees expressed a desire for moving towards relation focus. There is little focus on collective efforts and interrelation processes. It is a place where there often is a (e) focus on talking rather than on acting, connected to a perceived long distance to decision-making and that someone else is responsible. At the same time, persons in formal power positions are perceived to be highly dependent on persons holding informal power when making decisions. The strict hierarchy is expressed not to support development since many good ideas never reach the top and it is not seldom that things are “reinvented” again and again due to a (f) lack in structure for organizational learning and (g) lack in decision-making close to the issue. One interviewee describes it as ‘going up the ladder’ the formal way is slow and has uncertain outcomes which leads to avoidance and lower engagement. At the same time there are challenges connected to the hierarchical power structure. All of the interviewees expressed (h) a wish for more organic and dynamic structures with a higher degree of relation focus and that there is a lot of talk about this in the organization. At the same time this is not perceived to be a part of actual organizational structure at this moment.
6.2 Organization B; A privately held consultancy firm

Organization B is a privately held consultancy firm located in a Swedish mid-size municipality having approximately 20 employees. The organization was founded about 19 years ago. The organization's core business is management consultancy with a focus on leading and carrying out projects.

6.2.1 Interviewee Gregory, org. B

Gregory is a male and has worked approximately 19 years within this organization. He is the founder of the organization. He has many different roles within the organization, like for example process coach, recruiter, culture bearer, responsible for operational structures and responsible for decision-making procedures.

6.2.1.1 Themes in independent order

Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- There is a very clear and formalized distribution of power (ex. constitution)
- There is only very little formal power due to legislative rules, but there is informal power, which is not always desired but naturally
- Power is naturally distributed through the ecosystem
- Decisions are made by the people closest to the issue/problem
- Ownership is emphasized through owning shares
- Culture of ‘expectation to act’. Only short delay of response
- Ownership higher performance
- Empowerment to make everyone's voice heard
- Self-organizing/ Organic principles
- Formalization important in organic organization
- Consent-decision as a base to make organic decisions.
- Sustainability: employee wellbeing, long-term perspectives, conscious decisions, helping projects to be successful
- Existing Culture of: Reflection, Feedback, Loop-learning
- Top-down-tendencies in crisis

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.2.1.2 Narrative

Gregory's vision is, and has been for about 8 years, to form an organization that is non-hierarchical. His drive for changing the structure of the organization comes from inspiration by studying member active change methods. The aim is to have an ecosystem structure, where leadership and power is distributed in a natural way, which means that people with the most trust also have the most power. Formal positions are irrelevant when it comes to power distribution and decisions should always be made by the persons closest to the issue or problem in order to be able to solve problems within short timeframes. That increases performance and also the quality and forms a culture where everyone is expected to act and to take responsibility for his or her own actions and decisions. Ownership and empowerment are two very important values within Organization B. Gregory also clarified that formalization is an important part within the company that basically has no hierarchy. It is important that everyone knows clearly what and how the procedures are and within which frame decisions can be made. A lot of time is given to reflect, discuss, give feedback and to allow input from everyone. To facilitate this, there are different meetings that occur monthly and annually. Decisions are made in consent, which is a form of decision-making where everyone can come with input or counter proposals, but you can only stop a decision if you have a better idea to propose otherwise you give your consent. There is one document that sticks out as the most important in organization B: The Constitution. Everything is subordinated to that document and it
should not be changed lightly. Another main value to mention is that the wellbeing of the employees plays an important part in all decisions and comes before economic success. Gregory also mentioned that in times of crisis, where decisions have to be made quickly, top-down decision making comes in.

6.2.2 Interviewee Steven, org. B
Steven is a male and he has worked at Organization B for two years. He is a consultant, part of the wellbeing-team and has a passion for sustainability.

6.2.2.1 Themes in independent order
Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

• Flexibility in roles and everyone has the same job title to not get to 'position-focuses'
• Informal power depends on knowledge and time in the organization
• Meeting culture that creates a place for everyone to be heard and where things are processed together and reflected upon
• Quite a lot of formalized structures and processes
• Double and Triple loop learning
• The employee's wellbeing plays an important role in organization B
• Organic way of working. Economy is handled more mechanically
• Sustainability: Help other organizations to have successful projects
• Collective responsibility
• Share value with society through knowledge transferring
• Main document is the constitution, which focuses on values and principles
• Crisis leads to top-down leadership from the informal leaders
• Challenge how to remain organic, when growing

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.2.2.2 Narrative
Steven wants to make the company more knowledgeable in the area of sustainability. He said that positions within the company are regularly shifted to make sure that people are not becoming position focused. Of course, there is a need of balance between shifting position and having stability. Steven also mentioned that even if there is no formal hierarchy, there still is an informal power with the ones who have been in the company longer and the ones who have more knowledge. One of the important values at Organization B is the meeting culture. There are many meetings in order to process things, reflect together, plan together and to give feedback. It is an important forum where everyone can be heard, listened to, give suggestions and to come with input. In those meetings people are expected to come with input and show collective responsibility. It is a place of learning from each other. This culture of reflection, feedback and organizational learning is very strong at Organization B and a lot of time is devoted to that. It creates an atmosphere of trust, honesty, transparency and wellbeing for all employees. But it is hard work to form a culture like that and to maintain it. Many processes are therefore formalized in order to make things clear. Wellbeing plays an important role in the organization and is therefore prioritized and regularly checked. It is the holistic wellbeing of a person that is important, which means that even personal challenges are taken into consideration. Another personal drive is to share value through engaging in society, for example through knowledge-sharing in other boards, organizations and foundations. A challenge that Steven mentioned was, how to stay organic when an organization grows. He also mentioned that in times of crisis or economic uncertainty the organization structure becomes more top-down, since there is no time for collective processes. Even though that can sound negative for a flat and organic structure, this was considered positive and necessary when taking in account the companies best. Clearly the organization's survival plays
an important role when it comes to wellbeing, which is why in a crisis the first goal is to guarantee the organization's survival.

6.2.3 Interviewee Henrik, org. B
Henrik is a male who has worked in the organization for approximately four years. As the other interviewees he also works as a consultant.

6.2.3.1 Themes in independent order
Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- Flexible: change of roles is ongoing
- No hierarchy
- Distributed power - not delegated
- Formal documents for legal reasons, but otherwise organic structure
- Decision-making processes: Formalized, Participation process
- Purpose-driven
- Drivers as a tool to reflect and move forward
- Consent decisions
- Double and Triple loop learning
- Wellbeing is very important for us
- Strength -focuses, people can work with what they are good at
- Teamwork
- A ground for personal growth
- Informal leaders: Cultural bearers
- Freedom how and when to work

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.2.3.2 Narrative
When he started at the company, Henrik was very enthusiastic about the organizational structure and perceived it as very inspiring. Coming from a CEO background with hierarchical settings for a big part of his former work life, he perceived this way of organizing as more inspiring and more fulfilling. The non-hierarchical structure and the flexibility in roles and positions opened up for more participation and input from all employees. He also mentioned specifically the consent-process as an eye-opener and a great facilitator when it comes to making good decisions. The consent-process allows people to participate in the process. Everyone can share their opinions and come up with better solutions, without stopping it and without undermining it. If you give your consent you are also giving your loyalty to not undermine the decision. Also, the fact that Organization B is a very purpose-driven organization, where people can work with their strengths and where knowledge is shared in between employees was a good ground for personal growth. He mentioned specifically that he had learned a lot about sustainability through other work colleagues and that he also shares his knowledge when it comes to his former experiences. One thing that he pointed out was also that the power was not delegated but distributed. There is no leader who delegates power to others, but instead the power is already with the employees, which gives everyone the freedom to make their own decisions. Everyone is responsible for their own actions and decisions as long as it is within the formalized frame and discussed with the people that are influenced by the decisions. Henrik also mentioned that despite the distributed power structure, some people are naturally more important for the organization and have more influence than others, because of their role as culture bearers. Since the current culture is very important to maintain, the people who bear the culture are very important. One thing that Henrik brought up was the fact that well being played an important role within organization C. There was no point to earn more money at the expense of people's wellbeing. Of course, the economy is important and
also plays a role when it comes to wellbeing. But seeing it from the other side, people's wellbeing influences performance and the performance influences the economic outcome. One thing he longed for was even more teamwork and less individual work.

6.2.4 Conclusion from narratives of organization B

Claims that are based on the narrative of common perception among the interviewees are highlighted with a lowercase letter and are marked as (a, b, c, ….) bolded text.

One highlighted pattern that all interviewees expressed as important is (a) clear formalized frames for how to structure people and business and how different types of decisions are to be made. Since (b) the organization is perceived as having a structure of an ecosystem with decentralized authority and decision-making the formalized “constitution” is mentioned to be fundamental for this to work. They also expressed that there are (c) constantly changing informal roles that are made formal to not getting stuck in hierarchical roles, to meet actual needs and to support the collective effort. One of the interviewees even said that formal roles of power are irrelevant and that they mainly have these roles due to external demands. In practicality (d) every employee has the same formal right to make decisions. (e) Decisions that influence others, or the organization in itself, are thought to be made due to the consent method. All interviewees mentioned that (f) there is an informal power structure that is influencing how power expresses itself in the organization. Formal power is supposed to be supported by the individual degree of trust among the rest of the colleagues. (f) Wellbeing, from the individual employee perspective, is highlighted as the second most important factor of the organization (organizational survival is the first) and it is grounded in the organizational purpose and constitution. (g) In a potential crisis-situation risking the organization's survival, the decision-making tends to be more hierarchical, and at the same time this is handled by a pre-defined order in the constitution and not perceived as a problem.

6.3 Organization C; A “folkbildning” organization (adult education and societal development)

Organization C is a member driven association with an elected board. The board is utterly responsible and is delegating the operational responsibility to the regional manager. In this case, it is a region in the south of Sweden with approximately 40 co-workers. The organization has its roots back in the early 20th century. The organization is carrying out adult education and activities supporting societal development.

6.3.1 Interviewee Anders, org. C

Anders is a male who has worked as a regional boss for one and a half years now. His vision is to reform the organization's structure from a hierarchic structure to a more organic structure.

6.3.1.1 Themes in independent order

Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- Hierarchical heritage
- Still hierarchical
- Hierarchy counteracts performance and development
- Better to turn the pyramid upside down. Better for development and performance
- Formalizing of values. Collective thinking
- Difficult change process from hierarchical to organic structure - Counter to our society
- Sustainability: To transcend yourself every day - without getting a burn-out
- What do you measure? Traditional focuses on economy. I want to focus on what value we give
- Vision needs to come from the leader at first, even in an organic structure
These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.3.1.2 Narrative
Anders came to a very hierarchical organization and his goal is to work more organic and to distribute power and decision-making to the employees. His experience is that organizations perform better and employees feel better when they are empowered to be involved in decision-making and have influence in the organization. It has been a difficult process, since the hierarchical tradition has been deeply impregnated within the organization. The change-process has been and still is difficult. In the beginning of the process there was an insecurity and also confusion about him as a leader. Many wondered why he would not lead more, go in and solve problems, fix things, intervene and tell the employees what to do. First now, after 1,5 years, things start falling into place as his co-workers start taking initiative and come more and more with input. Anders says that a hierarchical structure counteracts performance and development. He rather turns that pyramid upside down and works as coach and facilitator for everyone to become 'their best themselves'. It is a difficult process to take an organization from a hierarchical structure to an organic, but it is worth it when you start seeing results and you see how the employees develop. One strategy to become more organic has been to use the current hierarchy to put middle managers into place who are supposed to distribute power. Basically, a way to use hierarchical processes to tear down hierarchy itself. One goal is to focus on the value the organizations can give the society, instead of just thinking in monetary terms. One thing he realized was that it was difficult to start the process without any formulated vision. His goal was to form a vision together, but he realized that he needed to start with vision first in order to help and guide people to see his vision. Then, during the next phase, it was important to form the vision together on the way in a shared ownership. Anders also expresses that the vision 'become the best yourself' can easily lead to a burn-out if it is implemented within a hierarchical structure. On the contrary it can lead to a positive way of outperforming yourself every day in an organic setting without burn out. Anders said that in a hierarchical setting you can easily get overwhelmed with all the tasks that are thrown upon you, which can lead to burn-out due to a lack of personal influence. In a more organic setting it can lead the employee to perform better because they are in control themselves. Another aspect that Anders brought up was that he perceived formalization as a positive and needed tool, especially when it was about forming values.

6.3.2 Interviewee Anna, org. C
Anna is a woman who has worked in organization C for four years. She works as an outward organizational developer and project leader.

6.3.2.1 Themes in independent order
Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- Change to a more organic way of working - clearer and more expectations now to come with input and work as a team
- Increased motivation
- Hierarchy still there in some areas - Heritage
- Bigger picture now
- Structure influences people
- Sustainability is working long-term. Contribution to the three areas: social, environmental and economy
- Need more information
- Good relationship with my leaders. More difficult to colleagues - Heritage of the hierarchical model?
- Since we get funded, we are also dependent
- Short-term thinking - difficult to build relationships
These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.3.2.2 Narrative
Anna describes the process going from a hierarchical structure to a more organic as a positive change. The expectations are clearer, and they are expected to come with input and be more team oriented. She perceives that the motivation of the employees has increased due to the fact that people feel that what they do is important and that they get response. They also see the bigger picture because they are more involved in the processes and the shaping of the future. But there still is a heritage when it comes to hierarchy and it takes time to get rid of that totally. Some people still feel a bit isolated and disconnected. What is needed here is more information and more meetings to get a team feeling and an understanding for what people do. But it is very obvious that the structure influences how people act and feel. If the structure allows people to be participative and come with input, it also opens up for that. If the structure does not allow that, people become more closed and less engaged. Therefore, the structure is vital in what culture is formed. The relationship to the leadership has increased and Anna feels trusted and appreciated by the leadership. The challenge at the moment is more to build an open culture horizontally because there still is some insecurity toward colleagues, which is because many people have worked in organization C for a long time and are still influenced by the former structure and change brings insecurity. Another thing Anna sees as a challenge is the short-term-thinking due to the fact that the organization is government-funded and that on the higher levels often only monetary results are measured. She hopes for more long-term-thinking, which is a lot more sustainable.

6.3.3 Interviewee Lena, org. C
Lena is a woman that has worked in Organization C for 13 years and the last half a year in a role as an outward organizational developer. Previously Lena worked in the organization with internal services as an administrator and coordinator.

6.3.3.1 Themes in independent order
Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

● High dependency on individual top-management to initiate and support change
● Process towards decentralized authority (from formal top-down to informal power towards new formal power)
● From individuality to individual responsibility
● From static to dynamic, complex performance
● Adapting to outer circumstances (Action before talking)
● Broadening the stakeholder perspective into core business
● Inside and out focus
● Humanistic view

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.3.3.2 Narrative
Lena describes the organization as being in transformation from working with a traditional, clear top-down hierarchy with static performance towards organizing with decentralized authority and complex performance, connecting to societal challenges and sustainability. The change process is described as moving from formal top-down-power to informal power, in order to create a new structure that is flat and decentralized. One strategy has been to create shared values, in four sentences, where everyone in the organization was involved and could tell their opinion. Lena mentions that this way hinders people to say, 'I have not been a part of that'. It is not completely 'wild west' though because there still is a structure. Sometimes though it is too flat, for example in the corona crisis, according to Lena who wished that someone had pointed with their hand. There
is a tendency of the organization to move from individuality to a clearer individual responsibility with a broader stakeholder approach connected to a larger system. This connection is also integrated into the core business, typically going from delivering study circles to creating the sustainable society. This is also connected to a strive towards adapting to outer circumstances and showing by acting, rather than talking and waiting until someone else acts. Lena highlights the importance of the regional manager’s personality as an inspiring coach and a visionary with a completely different view of how to manage an organization. Her previous experiences are from a hierarchical top-down power distribution. She is curious to see if it is possible to reach the place he wants to reach; an organization and society where everyone has the possibility to be the best themselves. When it comes to solving problems, the formal structure of cooperation groups is used and at the end the formal manager has the last word. The process of organizing into smaller teams, with a coaching team manager, is perceived by Lena as supporting different thinking and perspectives.

6.3.4  Interviewee Petra, org. C

Petra is a woman that has worked in the organization for four years. She is now a team leader with a formal responsibility as a manager with a two-folded assignment. On one hand it is a formal responsibility for the working environment, setting salaries etc., but the perceived main responsibility is for creating her own role but also the work of the group and sustainability together with the sustainability work of the region. She has previously worked as an outward organizational developer in the organization.

6.3.4.1 Themes in independent order

Following themes are interpreted and transformed from the interview according to Appendix III.

- Transforming towards more organic structure mechanistic principles is used
- Sustainability - Task orientation and into core fundamentals
- Complexity opens for different perceptions
- Rigid formal power structure leads to talking rather than action. "Stands for the old" - same for different system levels
- The shared and common ground is a fundament
- Inside and out is the focus (action before talking). "Main mental model"

These presented themes have guided towards the direction and content of the following narrative.

6.3.4.2 Narrative

Striving towards an organic structure, power is visually delegated by appointing middle managers. The principles of the system are reminded by 'sometimes there is something outspoken and said but the actions are connected to the old structure'. In this strive, it makes sense to give away formal power since it gives more power to collective solutions. Petra describes the organization as mechanistic right now. Nationally to 100% and formally even regionally, but in the region, they don't want to be. This is expressed as problematic because in some informal contexts it works but overall it is more mechanistic and it needs to me more dynamic in the business. When it comes to being more sustainable, a challenge is that there can be mental obstacles, built on skepticism: 'we don't have any money', 'Aha, can we use money for this?' or a mistrust of how the money is distributed to different groups and projects. It also is harder to perform due to a focus on quality because it is harder to define than a predefined quantity. Petra says, that it is important to create legitimacy for sustainability work both regionally and locally and the complexity opens to different perspectives of what problem they are trying to solve. The national organization sees the organizational existence as a solution in itself and regionally they are saying 'that is not the whole picture'. Even if the regional organization formally is independent of the national it is not perceived that way since the director holds compulsively in everything. It is also perceived that the national top-management holds back information to maintain power. National decisions are not perceived
as in line with what the region wants, and they do not feel heard, which leads to a lack of trust upwards towards the national organization. In the local management group, there is also a perceived lack of trust where group members have a hard time confronting each other with different opinions. The previous regional manager ‘had all the answers’ and his perspective was the most important. Ideas that were initiated, often became something else than initially planned. It was not even anchored due to the formalized cooperation agreements that were there. Even if a lot of things are done, Petra thinks that they do not ‘bring about change’ in the larger system towards a sustainable society. In the strive towards their hypothesis of ‘a better society’ it is important to support an individual journey 'towards the best yourself'. This is perceived to lead to a collective intelligence which leads to desired effects outside the organization as well. This to challenge an unsustainable system that is built on 'that we all are slaves under it'.

6.3.5 Conclusion from narratives of organization C

Claims that are based on the narrative of common perception among the interviewees are highlighted with a lowercase letter and are marked as (a, b, c…. ) bolded text.

All interviewees in organization C mentioned their (a) start of a change process from a hierarchical to a non-hierarchical structure, that came into the organization through a leader-change. This change is perceived as (b) difficult because of the hierarchical heritage but (c) the change is also very welcome and perceived as very positive due to the new possibilities it has brought. All of the interviewees feel more (d) motivated to work, because they feel more (e) empowered to come with input and (f) everything feels more dynamic. One of the first changes the new leader came with is the (g) collective forming of common values that the employees have developed together and formally accepted. The employees are (h) challenged to become their best self, which was seen positive by the employees. Becoming 'the best yourself' means to outperform yourself and surprising yourself that you can achieve more than you thought you could. As mentioned above, the process has not been easy and according to the leader there still is a long way to go. The employees felt good about the process but also mentioned that it (i) took time to really break loose from the former hierarchical mindset. Many of the employees were still stuck in the old thinking and especially in the beginning of the process it caused confusion and irritation towards the new leader. (j) Now things are falling more and more into place, but there is still a need for a closer connection to one another. More information about each other's duties and more community was desired. When it comes to sustainability, the interviewees perceived it as a (k) challenge to be state-funded, since it made them dependent to act in a certain way and it also made the future and long-term-planning uncertain. Here the goal is to find new ways to complement the funding’s with other finances to build a more long-term and sustainable organization.

6.4 Summary and conclusion of analysis

When concluding the narratives, it is highlighted that all the ten interviewees are preferring a decentralized, horizontal power structure before a hierarchy with top-down power, because it is perceived to support them better and to give them more possibilities to develop. Organization A and C are both perceived to have a hierarchical top-down structure in the backbone whilst organization B has a perceived decentralized and horizontal power structure with decision-making close to the issue. Both organization B and C are perceived by the interviewees striving towards decentralization which implies to be more dynamic and they are perceived to have a higher internal focus on relations and wellbeing amongst the employees. Organization B has had an organic structure since the early beginnings and organization C has practically adopted the idea of moving the formal power closer to the employees. A difference is that organization C has a long history of hierarchical organizing, which is perceived to hold back a new way of organizing. Despite this history they are now forming and envisioning new values together and having a manager at the top who actively is driving towards decentralization and an employee driven organization with the motto that 'everyone can be the best themselves'. Not less important is that this motto is perceived...
to be the human view that is needed to pursue their purpose of 'a better society'. In organization A there is a strive as well, but it is more characterized by a 'talking rather than acting- culture', which means that organic organizing is a highly present topic for discussion, but it cannot clearly be seen in the formal organizational structure. In organization C as well as in organization B there is a high focus on individual as well as organizational wellbeing and relational focus which also is integrated into the core purpose of both organizations. In organization A, on the other hand, there is a high degree of task-orientation together with a high degree of specialization and individuality which is perceived leading to less focus on internal relations and wellbeing both from the individual and organizational perspective focusing mainly on external demands and external stakeholder needs. This could be visualized by saying that organization A has a main process of organizing that is emerging from external needs and demands leading to internal actions and processes whilst organization B and C start with organizing from individual and collective organizational capacity for optimizing the relation to the external world. In other words, this could be identified as two main differences of organizational self-perception that have a major influence on how the interviewed individuals perceive their working situation and possibilities to make a difference in their daily working life. In organization B and C there is an attitude at the individual level that 'what I do makes a difference' whilst this is not present that clearly in organization A. All the three organizations perceive that formalization is an important foundation of their organization. In the case of organization A it is though perceived as too bureaucratic and highly connected to external demands in order to control and regulate the business. In organization B on the other hand it is perceived as creating organizational resilience for supporting the decentralized power structure and to keep the power of decisions close to the issue rather than creating a top-down hierarchy. In organization C the interviewees think that there is too much formalization with a hierarchical mindset which needs to be changed, and at the same time they agree that some formalization is needed. One other thing that is interpreted to be a disadvantage from the employees of organization A and C is external funding. Even though it gave some financial security, it also meant giving away control and the ability to take own initiatives which strengthened the hierarchical structure. Organization B as a private consultancy has no mentionable external funding. When it comes to emergent decisions and change due to crisis, in this case the corona pandemic, organization B adapts more top-down decision making to secure the survival of the organization. The interviewees in organization A showed enthusiasm about the fact that their organization in the current pandemic was so quick to shift over to online teaching and showed some signs of organic behavior in that situation helping each other out working towards a common goal.

7 Discussion

In this chapter, the results and the analysis are discussed in relation to the identified research gap, the research questions, the theoretical framework and former research. In the discussion it is important to highlight that potential claims and conclusions are to be viewed as suggestions and indications rather than general truths. This is primarily connected to the exploratory approach and the limited amount of empirical data. On the other hand, it is not to be interpreted as random suggestions, but as suggestions that potentially can be verified in future research.

Both, organizations B and C, highlight employee wellbeing as a natural part of their purpose and a condition for their future survival and development. This is also what they refer to when reflecting over their own sustainability. Organization B has mainly an internal focus on social responsibility while organization C has the purpose of 'creating a better society' from a human point of view. This points out that organization C tries to embrace the social responsibility both internally and externally as a part of their core business. The interviewees express that they truly believe in this, which affirms their connection to the core business rather than this just being words in a document. This further supports the conditions for sustainable development due to 'sustainability integrated into the core business' from the framework of Strategic Sustainability. Both, organization B and C, have visions of bottom-up involvement and shared ownership when creating drivers and strategies for their organization. This together, with a strive to secure ownership as close as possible to the
issue with an ambition of decentralized decision-making and distributed power are to be seen as core elements of an organic structure (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Sibindi & Samuel, 2019; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018). In previous research it is highlighted that the perspectives of centralization and decentralization has significant effects on organizational performance (Damanpour, 1987, 1991; Damanpour & Schneider, 2006; Gosselin, 1997; Hashem & Tann, 2007) and further on, decentralization in particular may promote collective knowledge creation by employees motivated to get involved (Liao, 2007; Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2010). Here it seems that decentralized and horizontally distributed power supports integration of individual and collective wellbeing into the core business. This is not the case in organization A, which does not have a clear integration of sustainability into their core business. Kenneth (org. A) expressed that it is rather a parallel strategy focusing on external stakeholders from a personal engagement among the employees rather than being part of the core business. In organization A there is a wish to move towards decentralized decision-making, but in daily life it is a clear centralized top-down hierarchy, not least when it is about developing or changing the core business. Adam (org. A) expresses his choice of not pursuing ideas that have to go up the hierarchy because it is not worth the effort. Oshry (2007) states that people at the bottom of the hierarchy-pyramid feel oppressed because they perceive the top leadership as distant and not caring, whilst Crisan-Mitra (2019) points out that formal power in an organic structure is defined by task-relevant capacity with great decisional autonomy and control in daily activities rather than in a vertical hierarchical manner (Poza & Markus, 1980; Manz & Sims, 1986; Walton & Schlesinger, 1979). This further strengthens the meaning of having a strong focus on internal employee motivation and wellbeing and that it is to be viewed as a natural part in an organic structure but not necessary in a mechanistic.

To sustainably develop through creation of social and environmental value in a larger system (Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Capra & Luisi, 2018), typically the society, there is a need of having a broad stakeholder approach, involving other parties than just the most obvious and common (Werther & Chandler, 2011; Bhattacharyya, 2009; Praszkier & Nowak, 2012). Organization C is striving towards a broader stakeholder approach framed in their purpose of 'creating a better society'. Petra (org. C) says that supporting the individual journey 'towards the best yourself' is important and leads to increased collective intelligence with long-term effects outside the organization, even pushing systems change. In the research of Nonaka, Von Krogh and Voelpel (2006) it is supported that an organic structure has better abilities for larger scale system change than a mechanistic (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Sibindi & Samuel, 2019; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018). Lena (org. C) says that in the long run it is about supporting citizens in their strive towards 'the best themselves'. Collaborative efforts with partners outside the organization is said to be a highly important activity within organization C and it has already led to positive effects, inspiring others to approach societal challenges in similar ways. Organization B has integrated sustainable customer development into their purpose and are promoting voluntary work supporting personal development and wellbeing among their employees. A broader stakeholder engagement together with a decentralized power structure has better effects when pursuing changes in a larger system than if power is bound to fewer persons at the top. This is also one of the most crucial elements when it comes to building a sustainable organization; the inclusion and engagement of a broad set of stakeholders (Werther & Chandler, 2011). Senge et al. (2015) refers to this as going from the general truth of the strong, powerful individual leader at the top making all the decisions towards having a holistic system view with a catalyzed collective leadership (Senge, 1990; Capra & Luisi, 2012; Praszkier & Nowak, 2012; Ancona et al., 2006). Anders, the regional manager of org. C, expresses that he often avoids making decisions that could be made lower in the formal hierarchy. This is a personal strategy to support a culture of decentralized decision-making with empowered individuals striving towards 'the best themselves'. Even if it often has short-term implications of confusion. Anders (org. C) even recruited temporary middle managers to support a short-term distribution of power to smaller integrated teams in order to create long-term sustaining effects of an organic structure by catalyzing collective leadership (Senge et al., 2015). When optimizing organizational performance, which is the strive of org. C, previous research says that it is important to strengthen managerial capacities and practices.
The idea of integrating different functions and teams in order to support learning and cross functional integration is also contributing to creativity and innovation (He, Sun, & Chen, 2016; Tsai & Hsu, 2014; Brettel et al., 2011; Troy, Hirunyawi-Pada, & Paswan, 2008). It is even pointed out by Su et al. (2019) that an organization with an organic structure has easier to optimize the organizational performance than a mechanistic structure. When looking at this research the conclusion of Su et al. (2019) is then also applicable when trying to optimize a border stakeholder approach as a condition for sustainable development. When looking at organization A there seems to be a stakeholder approach that is emerging from external needs rather than internal. That could be described as a main process flow 'from external need towards internal actions'. The interviewees (org. A) describe that organic principles are adopted in some contexts of the organization, especially handling assignments and partnerships that are closer connected to external stakeholders. At the same time, it is not described as a clear part of the formal top-down power structure but rather an informal ad hoc structure that still follows the main process flow. Adam (org. A) expressed a positive aspect of this process flow and the hierarchical power structure as resistant to temporary, short-term, external changes. This is also supported by the ideas of Burns and Stalker (1961), where a mechanistic structure is suited for a stable environment, later complemented by Sibindi and Samuel (2019), including stable socioeconomic and stable political conditions.

From a holistic and systemic perspective of sustainable development in the researched organizations different organizational goals, purposes and visions influence the core businesses in different ways. Not least by the understanding that there are complex relations between 'what they actually are doing' and 'how goals, purposes and visions are fulfilled'. The complexity also makes it difficult to come up with clarifying general conclusions without reducing or simplifying it from a mechanistic view. Instead it has to be accepted and embraced as the living system it is (Lam, 2005; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018; Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 2015; Capra & Luisi, 2012). This perspective is especially highlighted in organization C where it is expressed that it is more important for them to move in a direction, they believe in instead of waiting for the definitive failure. In this movement it is also important to be open for turning around if anyone else is showing a better idea. Previous research supports an organic structure in this case due to the need of decentralized and distributed power and decisional autonomy with close individual control in daily task-related activities for being able to adapt and turn when needed (Crisan-Mitra, 2019; Poza & Markus, 1980; Manz & Sims, 1986; Walton & Schlesinger, 1979; Damanpour, 1991; Wei et al., 2011; Jansen et al., 2005). When connecting to sustainability, the turning around part is of immense importance, because it reflects a willingness and ability to reflect and to change, stated as conditions of the Sustainability filter as a part of the framework of Strategic Sustainability.

From the perspective of formal power structure assumptions can be made based on the interviews that basically any organization structure can provide good or bad conditions for development depending on which perspective of the TBL (social, environmental and economic) they are approaching. Therefore, it is important to point out the need of having an optimized and balanced performance from the perspectives of TBL according to the framework of Strategic Sustainability. One advantage with a mechanistic structure, which Burns and Stalker (1961) point out, is the fact that a mechanistic structure is good for short-term economical optimizing through minimizing the use of resources and maximizing the most efficient production of goods and services. However, this is not clearly connected to the social and environmental perspectives probably since they were less present in the 60's than they are now. It is also a matter of complexity since the optimizing of production is not to be viewed as complex, as it is in the case of social and environmental challenges (Lam, 2005; Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2018; Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge et al., 2015). When concluding this research, it becomes obvious that the best conditions for sustainable development, from a social perspective, is created in an organic structure with high flexibility, dynamic relations, decentralized decision making and a horizontally distributed power structure. The employees express that they are motivated, engaged, appreciated and included because they can influence, make their own decisions and contribute with their knowledge which is also supported in previous research (Wilkesmann & Wilkesmann, 2011; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2006).
Cloke and Goldsmith (2002) states that hierarchical structures create resistance in people, because it actually runs counter to how human relationships work. The way communication often works in hierarchical structures leads to employees that feel demotivated and disconnected. The human resistance that Cloke and Goldsmith (2002) talks about is also supported by the theories on complex social systems and living ecosystems (Capra & Luisi, 2018; Senge et al., 2015; Senge, 1990; Ancona et al., 2006). Even if it is not explicitly expressed, both organization B and C see the internal social sustainability and wellbeing of its employees as a condition for long-term economic development. Environmental responsibility is vaguely mentioned by all of the three organizations but both organization B and organization C express their awareness and will to embrace the environmental perspective even if it is not a main focus of today.

According to the conceptual framework of Strategic Sustainability, another crucial point is to maximize and balance the value creation over medium and long-term from the perspective of TBL. This goes hand in hand with Strategic CSR (Werther & Chandler, 2011), that many organizations apply nowadays where long-term value creation is an integrated part of the organizational strategy. Short-term does not equal sustainability.

Obviously all three organizations want to create value and also do create value for a specific group of stakeholders. Organization C stands out as having the broadest stakeholder perspective compared to the other two organizations and at the same time it is interpreted as almost utopian to create conditions for everyone in the society to ‘be the best themselves’. On the other hand, this does not seem to be an operational problem of organization C, probably because it is expressed as a qualitative purpose to live by, rather than aiming of ‘checking the box’ of a concrete quantitative goal. As Lee and Choi (2003) write, the decentralized structure supports a more agile way of working because it invites more spontaneous and creative action.

There is a vision and strategy in organization C on how to create value internally for all the employees and externally for all other stakeholders over a long-term period. The focus on creating value internally and externally over a long-term period goes both in line with Werther and Chandler’s (2011) definition of Strategic CSR and Brundtland’s (1987) statement on sustainable development, that meeting today’s needs should not compromise future needs. Organization B works very thorough with creating value for their own people, but also has a strong strategy to create value for their customers. Organization A's assignment is to basically create value connected to the external goals stated by the government. The government is also the main funder and the assessor of external regulations and control which leads to a high degree of control to what values should be created and for whom. This makes it more difficult for Organization A to create an internal feeling of ownership and empowerment which leads to less drive towards sustainable development both regarding the internal life of the organization and as expressions in surrounding society.

To summarize the discussion with a look at the earlier identified research gap, this research started scraping at the surface of this gap and started opening doors to further research. As mentioned before, this research is too small to claim that it fills this gap. But it points out that organizational structure, and specifically formal power structure, has an impact on the conditions of sustainable development. It is also possible to say that an organic structure generally supports sustainable development better than a mechanistic structure when matters are complex, as they generally are within sustainability. This research shows that there are many areas to elaborate on and to go deeper into. The key findings from this research can be a springboard for further studies suggested to be framed in multiple case studies and/or ethnographic studies. Since this research mainly has approached conditions for sustainable development it could be interesting to further investigate the connection to measured organizational and sustainable performance.
8 Conclusion

The reason for this research was to get insights on how individuals in different organizations perceive the relation between the formal power structure and how that structure possibly supports sustainable development. Some of the most valuable key findings contribute to filling this identified research gap. One conclusion is the ironic contradiction of something that seems to be a lot better for the human collective (the non-hierarchical way of organizing), so easily and almost automatically is drawn to something that reduces humans into competing egos by default (the hierarchical way of organizing). The interviewees agreed on a satisfactory longing towards working in a more decentralized, non-hierarchical and organic atmosphere because it is perceived to contribute to their creativity, engagement, meaningfulness and personal wellbeing. Still there is a major challenge either to maintain an organic structure or to transform into it. The historical and traditional way of doing things the hierarchical top-down way seems to be stuck into the backbone of our society holding back a more progressive and open development. Organizational culture and leadership are commonly used as two main areas for increasing organizational performance. This research contributes with further knowledge that this is not the whole picture. It is indicated that clearly formalized organic principles of formal structure as decentralization, distribution of power and increased personal responsibility has a positive relation to conditions for a sustainable development. On the contrary this also means that a formalized and formal structure of mechanistic principles has negative effects. It is important to acknowledge that the environmental perspective of the Triple Bottom Line had a minor presence in the collected interview data. The data generally showed a major focus on economic and social conditions for sustainable development. In context of this research that seems natural since the exploration emerges from the individual perception towards a collective organizational perspective. In this context the environmental perspective is more peripheral than the social and economic since they have a closer connection to the actual conditions and boundaries of an organization. The findings of this research need to be further investigated strengthening the conclusions especially from the perspectives of different organizational contexts and stakeholders. Despite of this, the observation that people feel better, become more innovative and engage more with their knowledge as a steppingstone for better organizational and sustainable performance is highly relevant. The organic way also implies a humanized process flow that emerges from the inside of individuals catalyzed as collective and directed energy, without major disturbance from old outworn solutions and truths, meeting the external world. This is almost to be observed as a complete metaphor of an economically and socially balanced sustainable development.
List of references


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APPENDIX I

Interview Guide - Semi-structured interviews for Master thesis
Cristian Sjövind and Andreas Giger

Setting: One of the researchers is responsible for leading and carrying through the interview. The other one is responsible for time, recording and sharing the picture together with support to the interview processes as well as asking complementary questions.

Why?: To collect data (both from documents and interview) from three organizations in Malmö with the purpose of exploring the perceived relation between organizational structure, power structure, organizational performance and sustainability.

1. Consent form
   - Present the setting
   - This interview will be recorded and transcribed. Your name and your organization’s name are held confidential. Is it ok that we record this conversation?
   - The recording will be deleted after our Thesis is approved
   - Is it okay to quote you if needed?

2. Introduction
   - Present ourselves shortly and why we are conducting this interview
   - The interview is supposed to take approximately one hour. It might be that we stop and guide the discussion at some point if the discussion drifts away.
   - Do you have any questions before we start?

3. Introduction questions
   - What is your role in the organization?
   - How long have you been here?
   - What different positions have you held in the organization?

4. Organizational structure / power structure
   - How do you perceive the power structure and distribution of power in your organization?
   - How do you think that this distribution supports the achievement of your organizational goals?
   - When looking at this model how do you relate this perspective of organizing to your organization?
• Why is that?

5. **Sustainable performance**
   • How would you say that your organization is performing in general?
   • What is sustainability for you?
   • How would you say that your organization is performing when it comes to sustainability?
   • Why do you think your organization is performing as it does?

6. **The intersection of organizational structure (power structure) and sustainable performance**
   • What recommendations would you give to your own organization for increasing the performance when it comes to sustainability?
   • Specifically looking at the power structure and how power is distributed in your organization, what recommendations would you then give?
   • How do you perceive your own possibilities to carry through these recommendations?

7. **Complementary**
   • Do you have anything to add?
   • Is it okay if we possibly get back with complementary questions?
   • Are you interested in taking part of our thesis when we are finished?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview! We appreciate that!

Best regards

Cristian Sjövind & Andreas Giger
APPENDIX II

Introduction Letter to interviewees

Hej,
Vi är två studenter som just nu skriver tillsammans vår Magisteruppsats inom ”Leadership for sustainability” på Malmö Universitet.

Det vi vill utforska är hur organisationers formella maktstruktur (typiskt hierarki) står i relation till organisationens prestation när det kommer till att vara hållbar. Eftersom det inte finns någon absolut sanning i vad det innebär att “prestera hållbart” så kommer ett viktigt inslag att vara kvalitativa intervjuer där vi undersöker subjektiva uppfattningar och perceptioner snarare än objektiva sanningar. Det innebär också att vårt syfte inte primärt är att bedöma er organisation utan snarare utforska fenomen och relationer i kopplingen formell maktstruktur och hållbar prestation.

Vi har valt ut tre olika Malmö-lokala organisationer som vi vill titta närmare på, där Ni är en av de utvalda:-). Det material vi samlar in via intervjuerna analyseras och jämför sedan den med befintlig forskning och teorier.

Vår målsättning är att intervjuar 3-4 personer i olika positioner inom varje organisation. Några praktiska detaljer kring intervjun:
1) Vi uppskattar att intervjun kommer ta ca. 1 timme.
2) Vi kommer båda två vara närvarande där en av oss leder intervjun.
3) Vi kommer spela in intervjun för att kunna transkribera den.
4) Vi håller en videointervju online t ex via skype eller zoom.
5) Vi vill genomföra intervjun under vecka 17 eller vecka 18 (mellan den 20 april och 30 april. Återkom gärna till senast den 14e april med något/några tidsförslag.


Med vänliga hälsningar
Cristian Sjövind cristian@sjovind.se 0707127724
Andreas Giger gigersson@gmail.com 0739-48 58 11
**APPENDIX III**

Excerpts from Transcription and Theme Interpretation Organization A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
<th>Jen (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
<th>Kenneth (alias), org A excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inflexible vs. flexible - Positive to be inflexible according to not being influenced by temporary factors.</td>
<td><strong>Inflexibility leads to less influence from temporary external changes.</strong></td>
<td>Perceived as a rather dynamic university.</td>
<td></td>
<td>More advancements in the organization to different roles than I am used to.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Inflexibility leads to more talking and less action</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aiming to have processes of involvement before decisions are taken from the formal power</td>
<td></td>
<td>Different needs can change tasks and roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived flat organization despite a clear hierarchy in Lund. Perceived that the local institution had more power to decide. There was a trust in the experts.</td>
<td><strong>The perception of &quot;flatness&quot; is influenced by the autonomy of the subgroup you're in.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal days are focusing on tasks within the given frame rather than relations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External pressure to support growth Focus on growth - economic growth of the society</td>
<td></td>
<td>We can work even more long-term and thoughtful</td>
<td></td>
<td>In need of a better balance between men and women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on external processes rather than internal - external focus on sustainability but at the same time bad working environment, stress and bad leadership.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Classic hierarchical organization with responsibility for holding structure in assignments and business together and putting people in the right places and developing competence and support for their career.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
<td>Jen (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
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<td>Kenneth (alias), org A excerpt from transcript</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A part of the problem or the solution. The perception of the own organization. The university is rather a part of the problem helping to cement the unsustainable system.</td>
<td>Change wished for: Learning over departments and research areas</td>
<td></td>
<td>The conversion to digital learning due to the emergency of Corona has worked relatively well. There is a drive in the personnel to do as good as possible and there is pride and a perception that what we do is important.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>To lead or to be led by externalities?</td>
<td>Aiming for resilience - Balancing keeping safe and being change oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is important for individuals to show strength and competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university is much lead.</td>
<td>We have things to work on when it comes to sustainable leadership and organization - sometimes we reinvent the wheel 38 million times.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals competing to get more power</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have an increasing part of administrators that are handling the university like we are building cars.</td>
<td>A sense of emergency gets the personal focused on solving the situation with innovation, listening, learning and helpfulness</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is easier to do things in groups with the people you sit together with. More collegial it is not that often.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of the organization in its context.</td>
<td>An ongoing work trying to connect the different research environments to each other.</td>
<td></td>
<td>History keeps outdated structures, and history is also in individuals. This can be contradictory as a driver of development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steering by regulations and laws</td>
<td>Internal decisions need long processes. Leads to demotivation and loss of energy at the individual level</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is easy to down prioritize relation building.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
<td>Jen (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create space for individuals for by them self finding their positions. Leads to creativity and innovation</td>
<td>Focus on external processes rather than internal presetstings has a negative effect on the sustainable performance both internally and externally - less sense of meaningfulness, “individuals finding their positions”, creativity and innovation. Organization being a part of the problem</td>
<td>Need of change; holistic view on positions up the hierarchy</td>
<td>Individual needs supported by structure</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the start we needed to be flexible but now when we are established we don't need that so much. Then it was more clear connections to the city, region and civil society.</td>
<td>The view of leadership and management has to change</td>
<td>Competition thinking with the aim of getting more merits for the possibilities of promotion and thereby get more power.</td>
<td>Individuality and specialization (task-focus) dominating</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more emergent the problem is the more possibilities to explore new ways.</td>
<td>Need to be flexible; Gas and hit the brake at the same time</td>
<td>The hierarchical organization is for holding the structure together and to put the right persons in the right place.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many informal roles</td>
<td>Change needed: Other formal responsibilities outside the hierarchy</td>
<td>Resource management is top-down. Focus on hours</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a new unit was created we had to search for which functions and activities we should have</td>
<td>When creating a new organization it is more organic &quot;new builders spirit&quot; - collective effort</td>
<td>Management groups are more randomly set together and it is luck if it ends up well</td>
<td>Individual needs supported by structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme interpretation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Searching for their role as an organization created a more organic structure</td>
<td>In need of an organization curious about the people working there.</td>
<td>In search for a more balanced, dynamic, autonomy, moving, living and decentralized structure (organic)</td>
<td>The top management has a divided role to secure structure for the assignments and business and to support individuals to develop competence and to do their career</td>
<td>Twofolded mission of the organization - support individuals and to secure the structure of tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where more organic during the first 10 years. Forming an organization, more natural for organic structures? &quot;New builders spirit&quot;</td>
<td>Formal middle manager roles are not based on qualifications in leading and organizing. It take turns internally in the organization</td>
<td>Long-term processes supports fertilizing between different tasks and areas</td>
<td>Long-term processes supports fertilizing between different tasks and areas</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a new unit was created we had to search for which functions and activities we should have</td>
<td>middle managers are recruited internally</td>
<td>Emergent tasks creates loyalty and are based on pride and that we are doing something important</td>
<td>Emergent tasks hinders the right person from getting the assignment which leads to more time and effort needed</td>
<td>Sense of emergency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual feelings and bias influences decisions</td>
<td>It is hard to be a manager and colleague at the same time. On one hand I am a colleague and on the other hand I set salaries and have manager-co-worker talks.</td>
<td>Emergent tasks hinders the right person from getting the assignment which leads to more time and effort needed</td>
<td>Sense of emergency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived power distribution dependent on which middle managers. Large differences, The degree of freedom differs</td>
<td>Aiming to focus more on relations and less on tasks but now it is vice versa</td>
<td>High task / low relation orientation</td>
<td>Sometimes assignments come top-down without possibility to say no. You can always tell your opinion but the boss decides</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Utterly we are a top-down power org.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worked a long time in the org, so I know which questions I can go directly to the ice principal with.</td>
<td><strong>High dependency in individuals - Individual influence in power positions is high</strong></td>
<td>Individual dependency in formal power structure in decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td>In practice I don't have that much power since it is regulated because there are large classes and the given time and resource frames.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an openness to critical thinking due to the academic context. Project results are easier implemented and institutionalized due to this environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A high degree of individualism but at the same time a lot of talk about collegiality.</td>
<td>Individuality is high</td>
<td></td>
<td>Informal grouping is self organized and common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal service functions, not part of the core tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td>There are many informal ways and forums to influence decision-making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The learning goals or the courses are pretty top-down controlled. Sometimes it is even outside the university reach. It is formal top-down power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource focus rather than focus on purpose and business activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Informal power is important for supporting formal decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External change does not inflict the goals that should be achieved what so ever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not attractive to be a (formal) manager</td>
<td></td>
<td>The assignment as managers are on three years assignments with a possibility to extend another three years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Top-down: “just solv it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus by numbers</td>
<td><strong>Internal processes are mainly task oriented</strong></td>
<td>Both the bureaucratic system and individuals can be hindering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Persons with informal power is involved in the formal decision making</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Micro management with detail steering - You should be quiet and obey. Focus on resources rather than the purpose and content.</td>
<td>Jen (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>But it is dependent on the line the top management are driving and that they are creating a structure for that.</td>
<td>Kenneth (alias), org A, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>The actual control structure and organizing hinders flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoids going up the hierarchy for decisions leads to less initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal middle manager roles are not based on qualifications in leading and organizing. It take turns internally in the organization</td>
<td></td>
<td>There is talking about how the power is to be distributed and changed to a more flat organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing projects with external financing has strengthened the paths of decision outside the formal structure. Projects can be a way forward to change the ordinary organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Governmental regulations hinders shorter ways of decision-making</td>
<td></td>
<td>The learning goals or the courses are pretty top-down controlled. Sometimes it is even outside the university reach. It is formal top-down power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To change or develop the core business i have to go up the hierarchy</td>
<td></td>
<td>As a new manager it is important to identify informal leaders and work with them to substantiate rather than ruin and destroy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>At the same time there is a thrust when the authority is distributed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of operative units</td>
<td>Main manager responsibilities are related to managing resources, securing working environment, competence development and salaries</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clear rule and regulations supports distribution of power and trust</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Power structure, rigid formal top-down structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller units to create a better autonomy in the operational parts of the organization</td>
<td>One formal role as unit manager. It is 40% of my employment. Head responsibilities as working environment, managing resources, supporting strategic decisions of our manager. Quality, education and content of education. Dialogue with co-workers regarding competencies, salary, future task assignments. You could say it is many things.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inside certain frames, decided top-down and from governmental regulations and laws, there is trust and decentralized power. It is connected to the “how” inside these frames and their creativity takes place.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center of power at the top</td>
<td>The advisors of the principal are very important with their view of the operations that the principal does not have.</td>
<td><strong>In the area where I have power I think there is room for creativity. And there are areas where even my boss does not have anything to say when there are governmental decisions etc.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The organizing and decision-making is it is dependent on which principal we are having.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside and outside hierarchy - formal and informal roles</td>
<td><strong>Power structure - formal and informal</strong></td>
<td><strong>In the pedagogical parts (how) I have large space.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Centralized power to the top. Clear hierarchical structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let the decisions be made at a lower level when good bosses (leaders) are needed.</td>
<td>Centralized power to the top. Clear hierarchical structure</td>
<td><strong>I can walk in the area where I have the mandate to manage and when I go outside of that is stopping, there it is clear.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Centralized power to the top.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active decision to not move up the hierarchy for a decision. Sometimes I take the road directly to the vice principal.</td>
<td><strong>Center of power - where it is located is important and how it creates informal ways</strong></td>
<td><strong>When there is a decision that is made in areas with a shared interest with surrounding society, for example commissioned assignments, things happen faster.</strong></td>
<td><strong>External focus &quot;outside and in&quot;</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning loops- action vs. reflection and mental processes.</td>
<td>Crisis leads to action and increased the sustainable performance</td>
<td><strong>I am involved in how to formulate the sustainability goals in my education but I don't have that much to say about the decision that it should be there.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Freedom inside the frames</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics is important when testing. Who is responsible and who is going to take the hit if failing.</td>
<td>External in partnerships: Short processes of decision-making</td>
<td>Sustainability is not integrated into the core but we focus on it because we think it is important.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience and respect is important due to sustainability - Systems thinking.</td>
<td>Sometimes it is hard and frustrating to go ahead because it is hard to adjust to what is second or third best. There is a limit of pain there, what is okey and not okey.</td>
<td>The relational support in different arenas is an important part of the education for more resilient students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like to be defined by actions rather than talking. Strive towards consensus? Decision-making</td>
<td>We can be a little bit winded, processes take time and people loose energy and motivation on the way.</td>
<td>Less time to focus on the relational. The time limits sets pressure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The sustainable performance is connected to who is sitting on positions and assignments.</td>
<td>Performance factors</td>
<td>Increasing collaboration between departments and assignments</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes we need to stop and say 'now we have to make a decision'</td>
<td>Talking rather than acting</td>
<td>The &quot;well-performance&quot; is due to an external attention paid from the governmental control system.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>More learning processes to learn more and to handle things better as students. This is not written in the learning goals.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aiming for resilience among students to handle high pressure and demands in working life. Also to use the resources that we have not like they are inexhaustible.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External focus (outside and in)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Excerpts from Transcription and Theme Interpretation Organization B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gregory (alias), org B, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
<th>Steven (alias), org B, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
<th>Henrik (alias), org B, excerpt from transcript</th>
<th>Theme interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[a] responsible for the culture in the organisation and the shaping of a frame to lead and to guard the process and “living” of that frame.</td>
<td>[a] Consultant &amp; Member in the “wellbeing-team”. Develop the area of well-being for the employees.</td>
<td>[a] Consultant</td>
<td>[b] Power distribution is defined in the “constitution” of the organisation.</td>
<td>[d] Forming of power-structures: we form our own structures, where we nominate a person to specific roles. We delegate power. We have structures that allow people to have power within a specific time frame and within a specific role.</td>
<td>[b] Flexible Organisation: continuous change of roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[b] Power distribution is split in three parts: (1) Law that defines our frame of controlling, like terms, policies, responsibilities, (2) Execution and (3) Interpretation.</td>
<td>[d] Balance: Find the right balance between moving people around and letting people have the same role to become better. To find a balance between who fits best into a role and the value of rotating positions.</td>
<td>[c] Distributed Power structure: no hierarchy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>[c] IMPORTANT issue in our organization how POWER is distributed</td>
<td>[e] Job-titles: All have the same job titles, so that you cannot make a distinction. We are all X.</td>
<td>Flexible power - not delegated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>[d] Power distribution</td>
<td>[f] There are some formal papers that explain how we are structured, that we are required to have by law. But we are not letting these formal papers shape our way of working</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>[e] The “Law”-part has a lot of power. This is distributed within X that all employees have the same formal power to be listened to and to participate</td>
<td>[g] Some tasks are more specifically delegated to specific persons, as long-term-business-plan and the overbridging strategy. That’s a form of leadership of course but not necessarily a position of power.</td>
<td>Distributed power - not delegated</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a very clear and formalized distribution of power (ex.constitution)</td>
<td>[h] Informal roles ‘Hero-roles’. Every year in the “participation-process” we formulate strategies and business plan. But also decide on Hero-roles.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i] The CEO and the board have a legal responsibility since we are a Stock Corporation. So that responsibility cannot be ignored. But in practise we handle it differently. Formalized process how to do it. (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal documents for legal reasons, but otherwise organic structure</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory (alias), org B, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Steven (alias), org B, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Henrik (alias), org B, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td>[f] The formal power is distributed even, but the &quot;real&quot; power lies mostly on the individuals who have the most trust in the organisation. This is an inbuilt mechanism in the organisation.</td>
<td>[c] &quot;Hero-roles&quot; are informal roles that are voluntary but necessary and improve the wellbeing. Can be planning the christmas party or decorate the office.</td>
<td>[w] FORMALIZATION is important in an organic organisation.</td>
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<td>[as] One challenge is that often ecosystems tend to reward strong leaders. Would be more healthy to have a broader distribution of power.</td>
<td>[a] Power - structure: Self Organizing organization, which makes the power structure very weak.</td>
<td>[y] FORMALIZATION N gives cleanness, och gives you a frame to move in. And if we are not happy with the frame we can work with it in our other processes.</td>
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<td>[bc] Power - the organization is still too dependent on some individuals.</td>
<td>There is only very little formal power due to legislative rules, but there is informal power, which is not always desired but naturally.</td>
<td>[c] For an organic structure to work, there needs to be a frame of rules and guidelines/values. NOT to centralise the power, but to know were to move.</td>
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<td>[aw] Power: The goal is not to eliminate power totally. The goal is to have an ecosystem that decides the distribution of power. To listen only to one person creates bias and shows shortage in the system.</td>
<td>[b] Power - distribution: distributed to everyone in the organization. No hierarchy in decision-making or influence.</td>
<td>[n] Participation process: First we only allow Comprehensive Questions. Then we go over into the argumentation phase.</td>
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<td>[g] Power is the ability to influence. And this influence is given through the ecosystem.</td>
<td>Power is naturally distributed through the ecosystem.</td>
<td>[c] Informal power: it exists and often lies with those who have been longer in the organization. Because they are very knowledgeable within the field.</td>
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<td>[j] The &quot;Executive&quot;- part is the practical part of getting the job done. Act within the frame you have been given. This frame is quite big in organisation X, so that the employee has a big mandate.</td>
<td>[f] Meeting structures that remind about specific biases. ex. the first who talks has an advantage to make his/her message heard.</td>
<td>[l] Participation process: follows a routine.</td>
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**Theme interpretation**

- **Formalization** is important in an organic organisation.
- There is only very little formal power due to legislative rules, but there is informal power, which is not always desired but naturally.
- For an organic structure to work, there needs to be a frame of rules and guidelines/values. NOT to centralise the power, but to know where to move.
- Participation process: First we only allow Comprehensive Questions. Then we go over into the argumentation phase.
- Meeting structures that remind about specific biases. ex. the first who talks has an advantage to make his/her message heard.
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<td>[i]The &quot;Executive&quot;-part is the practical part of getting the job done. Act within the frame you have been given. This frame is quite big in organisation X, so that the employee has a big mandate.</td>
<td>[l]Participation process is an ongoing process</td>
<td>[h]Participation process: This is where we every year take the big decisions. Decisions that influence the whole organization. ex. Budget, Generell questions that influence everyone.</td>
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<td>[j]Decisions should be made where the wisdom, knowledge, insight and competence is, which is why this mandate to take decisions is pushed out as far as possible within the organization</td>
<td>[j]Decisions are made by the people closest to the issue/problem</td>
<td>Decision-making processes: Formalized, Participation process</td>
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<td>[k]The Power-distribution is therefore clearly distributed out to the employees to make all necessary decisions within the &quot;steering&quot;-frame.</td>
<td>[k]Different meetings: Tactics-meeting &amp; Governance-meeting. Feedback on how things are being done and processed. What are the expectations?</td>
<td>[s]Higher engagement. And even if i have the power to influence everything in the company, i personally don't have time to focus on everything. My focus is on the things I enjoy and want to drive forward. (2)</td>
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<td>[l]The board consists of only employees within the organisation</td>
<td>[j]Meeting culture: open, involving. all have the right to say something. There are process-coaches who are aware of possible biases and informal structure tendencies who make sure that meetings give all the same possibilities to act and participate.No one is allowed to take over.</td>
<td>[l]Purpose Driven: Towards sustainable projects and change processes! And it should be repeatable</td>
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<td>[m]Everyone who owns more than 10% of the stock-share is automatically on the board. One representative who represents the other who has less than 10%.</td>
<td>Meeting culture that creates a place for everyone to be heard and where things are processed together and reflected upon</td>
<td>[l]PURPOSE-DRIVEN: everything under this purpose is allowed. Gives energy and inspiration (2)</td>
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<td>Ownership is formalized through the shares. We want to spread the shares to more people within the org. But there of course is POWER connected to owning shares and that is also the fall-back-plan when consent decision is not working.</td>
<td>[bb] Ownership is formalized through the shares. We want to spread the shares to more people within the org. But there of course is POWER connected to owning shares and that is also the fall-back-plan when consent decision is not working.</td>
<td>[k] Clear expectations on the process and on the individuals. We are clear on what we expect when it comes to deadlines, time, and that we keep each other accountable and help each other.</td>
<td>[j] Power distribution: Our Power distribution helps us to fulfill our goals as an organization. We are a purpose-driven organization. Everything that fits into this purpose is allowed. Our way of organizing ourselves has alot of power. Helps us to continuously reflect and go back to why we do the things we do!</td>
<td>Purpose-driven</td>
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<td>[n] OWNERSHIP. Every employee has shares and the more value you create for the org., and the longer you have been part of the organization, the more you own.</td>
<td>[n] OWNERSHIP. Every employee has shares and the more value you create for the org., and the longer you have been part of the organization, the more you own.</td>
<td>[h] Formalization about use of power</td>
<td>[c] DRIVERS has a tool within the strategy that helps to make individual decisions that improve the organization. Adds value, but also engages the employee</td>
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<td>[o] Everyone is offered to have shares after a 6-month employment. But its voluntary since it costs</td>
<td>Ownership is emphasized through owning shares</td>
<td>[i] Participation-process: Important yearly meeting, where structures and roles can be questioned and revised. This is very FORMALIZED!</td>
<td>[m] DRIVERS that help us in our strategies: The drivers help us to reflect on our strategies. What should we do more or less of? What are the positive effects? What impact does this decision have?</td>
<td>Drivers as a tool to reflect and move forward</td>
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<td>[p] Culture of &quot;expectation to act.&quot; If you see something that needs to be changed or if you have an opinion about something, you are expected to take action, take charge and be responsible. You have a big mandate to influence and also to help the organization to move ahead</td>
<td></td>
<td>[z] Feedback/Discussion within our team if organizations that are questionable seek our services.</td>
<td>[p] My biggest &quot;AHA&quot;-experience was the power of consent decision. (2)</td>
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<td>[r]There should only be a short time between the identification of a problem/tension and the solution of that. This way of power-structure leads to improved performance</td>
<td>Culture of &quot;expectation to act&quot;: Only short delay of response</td>
<td>[as]Triple Loop Learning: Thoughts about thoughts. We operate in a complex environment and that's why it's important to talk about our purpose and our values continuously.</td>
<td>[o]CONSENT as a decision making tool. Not to confuse with &quot;that everyone has to agree&quot;. That means you can be against the decision, but since you don't have a better solution to offer, you give your consent.</td>
<td>[am]My own recommendations: We work well, We are good at questioning our own processes and we challenge each other to become better. Its a very dynamic and creative place.</td>
<td>Consent decisions</td>
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<td>[q]Ownership/Mandate highers the performance.</td>
<td>[m]Dialogue/Feedback/Questioning about processes. Inclusiveness, Are people in the right spot? Who should move to another role? An ongoing process</td>
<td>Double and Triple loop learning</td>
<td>[s]Wellbeing is a very prioritized area.</td>
<td>[aa]Two different operational areas that we clearly separate in our meetings and focus on separately: Tactics and Governance. Tactics focuses on the question: &quot;Are we doing it the right way?&quot; Governance: &quot;Are we doing the right things?&quot;</td>
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<td>[s]The power-structure in X leads to a culture that stimulates to take responsibility. It creates a feeling of Accountability which also leads to more performance</td>
<td>Ownership highers performance</td>
<td>[s]Wellbeing is a very prioritized area.</td>
<td>[a]Empowerment: We work on how we can empower everyone to make their voice heard even if you are young or from a different background. We work on improving that through more efficiency of our control-frame</td>
<td>[p]Self Organizing Organization: To help others and be helped. Highers the wellbeing.</td>
<td>Empowerment to make everyone’s voice heard</td>
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<td>[a]Empowerment: We work on how we can empower everyone to make their voice heard even if you are young or from a different background. We work on improving that through more efficiency of our control-frame</td>
<td>[x]We RESHAPE our organizations every year to become our best “WE”. We work through our GOVERNANCE SYSTEM</td>
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<td>[t] It’s hard to say what influences what. Is it the power-structure and the control-frame OR is it the culture. It goes hand in hand. The structure and frames create a culture and those two together shape a way of behaviour and that behaviour characterizes responsibility and a mandate to take decisions.</td>
<td>[q] Proactive when it comes to working with employees wellbeing</td>
<td>[q] The employee’s wellbeing plays an important role in X</td>
<td>[t]STRATEGY PROCESS: Every third year. What are our goals? Where do we want to be in three years? Decide on drivers that help us to reach those goals. All drivers need to be measurable and need to be reflected upon.</td>
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<td>[v] Reorganization to a model that builds on these principles of self-organizing</td>
<td>[t] Organic way of working. When it comes to the economical aspects, we use mekanik tools and principles</td>
<td>Organic way of working. Economy is handled more mechanically.</td>
<td>[u] Double and triple loop learning and reflection about strategies, recruiting. Driver, Measurable goals... (2)</td>
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<td>[x] No top-down. No static job descriptions</td>
<td>[u] Economy has to be handled correctly but not at the expense of wellbeing</td>
<td>[v] Organic Organization</td>
<td>Double and Triple loop learning</td>
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<td>[y] In our org, we have distributed authority, Dynamic roles, tension-driven change process, Alignment by purpose!</td>
<td>[v] Good performance. Satisfied customers. Good economy</td>
<td>[ab] Create Value: Value in monetary form, but also in wellbeing. For us wellbeing has a priority. But money is of course also a part that influences wellbeing</td>
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<td>[aa] High interaction between departments and functions.</td>
<td>[w] Sustainability: Brundtland rapport, social, environment, economy</td>
<td>[ac] Our own wellbeing is a priority and since only we own shares, we are not forced to earn money to people outside the organization (2)</td>
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<td>[a] Lead change through bottom-up instead for top-down</td>
<td>[x] Organizations goal. Contribute to sustainable successful projects and change.</td>
<td>[af] If people feel good, then they will perform better and then the company also earns more.</td>
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<td>[w]Selforganising organisation, without formal bosses and with distributed decision-making</td>
<td>Self-organizing/ Organic principles</td>
<td>Continuous discussions: What is sustainability for us? What do we mean with that?</td>
<td>Sustainability: Help other organizations to have successful projects</td>
<td>[ag]Research shows that there is a correlation between &quot;having the conditions to perform&quot; and &quot;performance&quot;. We feel good if we can perform</td>
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<td>[g]Formalization - yes, not too much, but it is necessary in this kind of organization. Formalization is important, especially with the &quot;control-frame&quot;. There is a fear that its bad to formalize, but i argue differently</td>
<td>[y]Process of blacklist organization/industries we don't want to work with.</td>
<td>[ad]Of course there needs to be a balance. Money is needed to run a company, but we weigh in health and wellbeing.</td>
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<td>[ag]Formalization- What should be formalized? Decision-making! How we make decisions, how we do if we don't agree. As little as possible should be formalized: DEFAULT: everyone can decide whatever as long as it is not formalized or defined.</td>
<td>[aa]VISION for future: Have a good understanding of what sustainability is and how it is applied in our context.</td>
<td>[ae]Everyone wants to perform.</td>
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<td>[ab]Formalisation - very important to have things formalized - what happens in crisis? How are decisions made? If things are not formalized it is easy to fall into top-down hierarchy or into endless discussions</td>
<td>Formalization important in organic organization</td>
<td>[ab]Build a capacity. Be clear on what sustainability means for us.</td>
<td>Wellbeing is very important for us.</td>
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<td>(ac) Consent - Lack of sustained opposition. / Its a longer process but we use it and call it consent method, meaning that if no one comes with a better suggestion, then you give your consent. / In X everyone can block a decision temporary to make their voice being heard. You can come with a proposition and be heard.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(ac) We have a very good reputation.</td>
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<td>(ai) Sustainability is also when people with their strengths invest their strengths into organizations. Our system to earn money on money is also unsustainable. There needs to be a change.</td>
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<td>(ad) After you have been listened to, you cannot block a decision anymore. We don't vote, but it is obvious what the majority thinks. Its a important process, that ensures that all important perspective have been heard.</td>
<td>(ad) Communication can improve. How can we communicate what we do better</td>
<td>(ad) We perform good. But I wish we could work more in teams, because we work alot one on one</td>
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<td>(ae) But it also is important that decisions are not dragged out, but that decisions are made within a specific timeframe.</td>
<td>(af) If we want to work totally sustainable, then sustainability needs to permeate our whole organization.</td>
<td>(ak) Trend that young people are and will even more challenge the work system we are in. 'Why do we need to work 40 hours a week? We can work as effectively if we just work 4-5 hours a day.</td>
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<td>(az) We are not striving after consent. We are striving after the best solution. And of course people will get upset, but every decision-making process hurts some people.</td>
<td>(ag) If you oppose a suggestion, then you have a responsibility to come with another solution.</td>
<td>(al) Future lookout: population will decline and be older. Its not feasible to expect a 10% rate of return for your own investment.</td>
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<td>Consent-decision as a base to make &quot;organic&quot; decisions.</td>
<td>[af]If you &quot;stop&quot; a decision, you are expected to come with a better solution within two weeks.</td>
<td>[ab]Collective responsibility contributes to a culture of loyalty! Knowing that we are dependent on each other. We shape a strong &quot;WE&quot;. No boss to talk bad about or to blame.</td>
<td>Collective responsibility</td>
<td>[an]TEAMWORK: Important with colleagues. Help each other.</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
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<td>Sustainable performance is to contribute to a sustainable development through taking responsibility in influencing society, environment and economy</td>
<td>[ap]Sustainable performance is to contribute to a sustainable development through taking responsibility in influencing society, environment and economy</td>
<td>[ae]Become more sustainable. More people need to be involved into this process.</td>
<td>[ar]Important how to inspire others or to get their consent. Also inspiring to see when the suggestions you give become real.</td>
<td>[aq]If i see a potential for the organization to improve i have a possibility to impact with my ideas and take charge through our &quot;participation-process&quot;</td>
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<td>[aj]Sustainability: High efficiency when it comes to making conscious decisions. There is a high maturity when decisions are taken.</td>
<td>Sociocracy principles</td>
<td>[ai]Sociocracy principles</td>
<td>[aj]Sociocracy principles</td>
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<td>[ak]Sustainability: Our way of working sustainable is to help that more projects are successful</td>
<td>[al]Share value with other organizations</td>
<td>[aj]Share value with other organizations</td>
<td>[ak]Share value with other organizations</td>
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<td>[al]We offer services for sustainable success within the project. Not so much towards the sustainable sector, but more to help other companies to reach their goals.</td>
<td>Take social responsibility through sharing your knowledge to others without taking paid</td>
<td>Take social responsibility through sharing your knowledge to others without taking paid</td>
<td>Share value with society through knowledge transferring</td>
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<td>[ah] The wellbeing of our employees has a very high grade of importance when it comes to our performance. We value that and I would say we perform better in that area than other organizations</td>
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<td>[ar] Yearly assessment of the &quot;participation-process&quot; to have an ongoing development to improve.</td>
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<td>[an] Self-organizing Organization: Our constitution is a stable point. It consists of values and principles that are important for us. Its not a power-structure, but it leads us.</td>
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<td>[ar] Big companies: harder to maintain an organic organization when the organization is growing. How can an organization stay organic while it is growing.</td>
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<td>[aq] In CRISIS, sometimes authority is needed to make decisions. Because there is too little time to take in all perspectives, wishes and needs.</td>
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<td>[aw] Challenge how to remain organic, when growing</td>
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<td>[av] Improvement Ideas: the salary system needs to improve because it still pressures people, which affects wellbeing negatively.</td>
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<td>[aq] Mazlows pyramid. Its a challenge to talk about sustainability if not the basic needs are met.</td>
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<td>[at] Sustainability: We exclude some organizations through having a frame that we don't want to work with.</td>
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<td>[aq] Consciousness in decision-making, knowing the consequences for the long-term-perspective</td>
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<td>[au] Different salary levels that are connected to different expectations.</td>
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<td>Change is good and important, but it has to be done carefully and not too hasty.</td>
<td>Existing Culture of: Reflection, Feedback, Loop-learning</td>
<td>Working on to be more diverse. Less white, bearded men in their 40/50s.</td>
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<td>Working on to be more diverse. Less white, bearded men in their 40/50s.</td>
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<td>Top-down has its place, especially in times of crisis</td>
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<td>Might be good to have a &quot;fall-back&quot; plan in times of crisis.</td>
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<td>Difficult for self-organising organizations when someone needs to be &quot;fired&quot;. No boss to take this decision.</td>
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<td>Top-down-tendencies in crisis!</td>
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## Excerpts from Transcription and Theme Interpretation Organization C

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<tr>
<td>[a] Regional boss</td>
<td>[a] Branch head and project leader</td>
<td>I was in love with the personality and the visions of our new manager. Then I started wondering if it is possible to reach the place where he wants to reach, but I think so. We are dependent on his thoughts</td>
<td>[u] Use short-term mechanistic principles to achieve organic structure</td>
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<td>[b] Very hierarchical before I came in.</td>
<td>Hierarchical Heritage</td>
<td>[i] We are more organic and we strive towards that.</td>
<td>Top-management is an inspiring coach. We are dependent on his thoughts and visions.</td>
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<td>[r] I didn’t talk about those values with my own leadership. Because otherwise they would have wanted a say in that.</td>
<td>[a] We work not so hierarchically anymore. I can see a change. It’s much more inclusive and it is very clear that we are expected to come with our input and that we shape our work together as a team.</td>
<td>Leadership influence - a completely different view of how to manage an org</td>
<td>[y] Talking, not doing) Sometimes there is something outspoken and said but the acting is connected to an old structure.</td>
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<td>[s] I have the boards ok to work with the values, but I’m not telling them everything otherwise it would be very difficult to go through this process</td>
<td>[b] We were clearly included in the process to set goals and how we reach them. We are encouraged to be inclusive.</td>
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<td>[w] Individual vs. collective intelligence</td>
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<td>Hierarchical and the leadership wants to have interpretative prerogative.</td>
<td>[c] Hierarchical and the leadership wants to have interpretative prerogative.</td>
<td>I feel included in the processes and my boss is very clear with me.</td>
<td>A risk is that people misuse the freedom of the job.</td>
<td>[t] I would say it is mechanistic. We try to move towards organic. Nationally it is 100% and Regionally it is but we don't want it to be. It is problematic. Informally it works in some contexts but overall it is more mechanistic. In most of our business it has to be more dynamic.</td>
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<td>Despite the fact that I am formally the chief of operation, the board still tries to go in and undermines my position like that.</td>
<td>[d] Positive development when it comes to power distribution. More processed we do together. More possibilities for us personally to grow when we are invited to give our own opinion.</td>
<td>Sometimes I wish for some pointing with the hand because I may be too flat. In crisis (as corona) I wished for some to point with the hand.</td>
<td>[a] The role of the middle manager is not completely clear. It is also about forming your own role together with the group and region sustainability work.</td>
<td>Transforming towards more organic structure mechanistic principles is used</td>
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<td>I don't really have power as a whole, but I use the power I have to show how it could look like.</td>
<td>[b] We have freedom under responsibility. It feels that we have our bosses' trust. There are of course expectations to reach results but at the same time it's ok to fail.</td>
<td>It is not completely wild west there is still a structure.</td>
<td>[b] There is both a group responsible for sustainability as well as part of the fundamentals for everyone.</td>
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<td>[m]We are mechanistic but I strive to be organic.</td>
<td>[f]Before we normally were told what to do and what was expected of us. Now we changed the structure and we are expected to take more initiative and be more responsible for our own. Everything is more clear and the expectations are clear.</td>
<td>Change to a more organic way of working - more clear and more expectations now to come with input and work as a team</td>
<td>I wished that it had been a little harder steering. Towards Anarchy</td>
<td>[a]A challenge in becoming more sustainable is that there can be a mental obstacle, build on scepticism: &quot;we don't have any money&quot;, Aha, can we use money for this?&quot; or a mistrust how the money is distributed to different groups/projects.</td>
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<td>[t]The top-down structure makes it sometimes difficult for me to lead, since i want to have a change of culture and the board is more top-down focused. There is no clear border between my work and the board's jobb.</td>
<td>[w]This new way of working has shown me that cooperation is a necessity to influence the system and also that I can influence!</td>
<td>In four sentences formulated bottom-up with everyone involved. Not being able to say &quot;that i have not been a part of&quot;</td>
<td>[aa]From performing a predefined quantity to an quality harder to define</td>
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<td>[n]We have it very formalized. But it's not only formalized, it also is translated for us. So when i read the documents differently then my board, then they are &quot;correct.&quot; My way of &quot;translating&quot; the documents are seen as wrong.</td>
<td>[g]I feel that what I do is important and i get responses for what i do.</td>
<td>There are cooperation groups where you can get heard if you are not satisfied. I used to solve problems when I disagree. Then the formal manager has the last word on the decision.</td>
<td>[c]The most important responsibility is to together explore and form our sustainability work and to build legitimacy for this work both regionally and nationally.</td>
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**Sustainability - Task orientation and into core fundamentals**
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<td>[d] I try to decentralize the power and distribute it. It's difficult. The culture and tradition is still very hierarchical.</td>
<td>Still hierarchical</td>
<td>[e] People seem more motivated now.</td>
<td>Increased motivation</td>
<td>Smaller teams support different thinking and perspectives</td>
<td>Complexity opens for different perceptions</td>
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<td>[g] Taylorismen is very strong in this organisation structure. If you think too much you are not welcome.</td>
<td>[j] Our boss realized that the whole organization needed to change.</td>
<td>When we disagree we have the cooperative meetings with the closest managers and at the end it is the manager that makes the decision.</td>
<td>Three formal roles: Manager, business developer and administrator</td>
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<td>[i] The culture makes people send all the questions up to the leadership. And people are used to not to be listened to and are silent instead. It becomes a culture of silence and influences development negatively.</td>
<td>[r] Good performance, but it could be better. Many of us still feel abit isolated and want to come in more.</td>
<td>I think everyone falls into their right place when we work like this.</td>
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<td>[e] The trad. way, (hierarchy and interpretative prerogative) counteracts performance. People don't take initiative and dont think for themselves. Bad for development.</td>
<td>Hierarchy counteracts performance and development.</td>
<td>Hierarchy still there in some areas - Heritage.</td>
<td>How we work today (more organic) i would say was utopian 20 years ago.</td>
<td>Information is power - When Top-management holds information.</td>
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<td>[f]Own initiatives and own thinking is stopped.</td>
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<td>[l]I work in two different organizations, I see the big differences. Here in X I feel inspired and feel I can push forward, but within the project its more top-down, where my boss is restricted.</td>
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<td>[ad]People grow when you distribute power. If I keep all the power, then this won't happen.</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
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<td>[h]The Pyramid needs to be turned upside down so that the people closest to the operation and to the truth can take the decisions.</td>
<td>Better to turn the pyramid upside down. Better for development and performance</td>
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<td>[g]The previous manager had all the answers. His perspective was the most important. Often it became something else than we initiated it just came. We never anchored despite the cooperation agreements that was there.</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
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<td>[j] Transparency is important</td>
<td>[p] Bigger perspective within X.</td>
<td>Bigger picture now</td>
<td>Individual responsibility is important both for individual and organizational development.</td>
<td>[u] We also have roles where you don’t have to share this strive (internal supportive roles)</td>
<td>Sense of security, support to step out into the unknown. Internal resilience</td>
<td>[ac] We do a lot of good things but minimal when it comes to ‘bring about change’ to a sustainable society</td>
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<td>[k] Instead of getting a formal ok, i rather show the results and the possibilities. Before when i ask for things to do, then i got stopped directly. Now i jus make sure that i have the necessary support to move ahead but there still is opposition.</td>
<td>[q] It’s often the organizational structure that influences the people working within it.</td>
<td>Structure influences people</td>
<td>[y] Talking, not doing) Sometimes there is something outspoken and said but the acting is connected to an old structure.</td>
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<td>[o] Formalization is important. We focus on formalizing our values and we have an ongoing conversation about where we are heading. We want to be on the same eye-sight without any interpretative prerogative for someone.</td>
<td>[s] We think more long-term now then before. We are allowed to think. We are encouraged to think bigger and more long-term. That increased our sustainability compared to before.</td>
<td>[v] We are best at thinking about the social sustainability part but also to think long-term which also is sustainable</td>
<td>Due to transparency, regard to the individual perspective, feeling of being involved, team work</td>
<td>[x] A mechanistic structure tends to move persons towards mechanistic behaviour. Even if you take in others from small perspectives.</td>
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<td>[p] To shape a new culture, we meet monthly to talk about our values. We have defined our values together but to put them into live we need to talk about them.</td>
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<td>Formalizing of values. Collective Thinking</td>
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<td>[ai] Challenge how to bring about the organic. It is contradictory to give an order to everyone to think for themselves. It needs to come naturally and people need to start take initiative and realize that it works and that the leader does not stop them. Then it can spread to more people.</td>
<td>[s] Sustainability for me is that an organization works sustainable and long-term and that we contribute to a more sustainable society in all three areas (social, environment and economy)</td>
<td>Differences (personalities, experiences, education and mixing) creates a great group</td>
<td>[h] Power structure; Talk before action) The order of power controls the influence. Often it is expressed (before and nationally) that we should have open conversations and dialogue and that everyone can say What they want, but it is not really the case. &quot;There is an order here&quot;</td>
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<td>[s] We perform ok, but I want us to perform fantastic. I want us to become our best &quot;I&quot;. That should be the normal, but it’s not in our organization culture and not possible within a tayloristic model. There you just do what you are told to do.</td>
<td>[t] I believe that we contribute to a more sustainable society with our organization. Of course it’s not so sustainable how we are financed long-term</td>
<td>Sustainability is working long-term. Contribution to the three areas: social, environmental and economy)</td>
<td>[f] There is an idea of a flat structure in all our national org. But it has never really been that way.</td>
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<td>[aa] An important step for the future is that we need to distribute the power and this includes even &quot;interpr. prerogative&quot;. This increases the inspiration and people are more willing to invest themselves in the org. We all have smth to give and to say. We also have to tear down this hierarchy.</td>
<td>[x] To increase sustainability we need to meet more in groups and between different departments. More cooperation.</td>
<td>We do not perform static. We work with the complex questions that no one understands. We explore together and we learn a lot, a learning process you could say.</td>
<td>[l] Trust in the group is important. I will not be expelled from this group whatsoever.</td>
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<td>[x] To increase sustainability we need to meet more in groups and between different departments. More cooperation.</td>
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<td>[af] I have a tactic to use my formal position as a boss to act organic.</td>
<td>[y] There needs to be more communication between the departments and in between leadership and groups. I still feel that I have many gaps in knowing what others do.</td>
<td>Lena (alias), org C, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>It is hard to say how we perform due to sustainability but we know what we want. We want to change society.</td>
<td>Petra (alias), org C, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>[m] There is consensus around this idea of working but there is a lack of tools working in this culture. There are a lot of old habits and a lack of trust in how to be with each other.</td>
<td>The shared and common ground is a fundament</td>
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<td>[ab] To break down the hierarchy we put in middle bosses in order to distribute the power. We actually build a hierarchy in order to distribute the power and in that way take away the hierarchy.</td>
<td>[z] More information could help to distribute the power in our org. In order for everyone to see what the leadership is talking about and to get a better picture about the decisions that are being made.</td>
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<td>In future we need to rely more on project money that we have to look for by ourselves. It is a very uncertain situation. Some municipalities have already cut the subsidy completely. I don't think we have a choice.</td>
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<td>[ag] It's a challenge to shape an organic structure, since our society is more mechanical.</td>
<td>[aa] More cooperation, meetings, discussion. What are my colleagues working with? Get to know them. Can we find synergy effects?</td>
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<td>Need more information</td>
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<td>Showing upwards (in the society) as a driver for change. Small scale prototyping for potential up-scaling. Start on a small scale and show that it works and then take it upwards one step at a time. I think it works, but it takes time.</td>
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<td>[v] &quot;Becomes the person that the organization makes you&quot;</td>
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[aj] CHANGE is difficult. To change from a traditional hierarchical way of thinking to an organic way, "Don't fix them". It's important not to go in as a leader to fix things all the time. The organic needs to develop within this time of confusion, where the leader "seems" passive.

[ab] There is a coffee culture but it's quite closed.

[ac] My boss listens and tries to implement my suggestions.

[q] The change process has been very classic. First the employees were sceptical, then it was a period of confusion where people wonder who is the boss: "Why is our boss not telling us what to do?". Is he the boss or not? But now after quite a long period it becomes more alive.

Difficult change process from hierarchical to organic structure - Counter to our society

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<td><strong>Sustainability:</strong> To transcend yourself every day - without getting a burn-out</td>
<td>Some officers in the municipality think our way of working is interesting. Humble approach to have people following you.</td>
<td>Good relationship towards my leaders. More difficult to colleagues - Heritage of the hierarchical model?</td>
<td>Creating movement</td>
<td>Sustainability: To transcend yourself every day - without getting a burn-out</td>
<td>Usually it is: What is our part in this? Everyone is doing their little part. Instead we say &quot;We are not the best, but we want to do things together with others, trying to find solutions together and not just doing our own part.”</td>
<td>[w]Sustainability within our organisation means for me that we can outperform ourselves every day and still have the right balance between work and leisure. That we can be our best self through supporting each other and to reach great goals together.</td>
<td>[ad]I have a good relationship with my leaders. He is open and listens. But i feel more insecure with me colleagues.</td>
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<td>[x] To try to become your best self in the trad. structure can easily lead to burn-out but i want us to distribute power, take own initiatives, develop yourself, enjoy what you do. Then i don't think you get burn-out so easily. Because it does not mean that you need to work more. It means that we work differently. Sustainability also means for me that you enjoy your work and your team and that even if someone offers more salary, you stay.</td>
<td>Sustainability within our organisation means for me that we can outperform ourselves every day and still have the right balance between work and leisure. That we can be our best self through supporting each other and to reach great goals together.</td>
<td>[ai]Usually it is: What is our part in this? Everyone is doing their little part. Instead we say &quot;We are not the best, but we want to do things together with others, trying to find solutions together and not just doing our own part.”</td>
<td>[x]To try to become your best self in the trad. structure can easily lead to burn-out but i want us to distribute power, take own initiatives, develop yourself, enjoy what you do. Then i don't think you get burn-out so easily. Because it does not mean that you need to work more. It means that we work differently. Sustainability also means for me that you enjoy your work and your team and that even if someone offers more salary, you stay.</td>
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<td>[ae]Its a disadvantage that we get finances by the government. Makes us more dependent on what we work with and how to work. It would be better with another finance-modell.</td>
<td>[ax]To try to become your best self in the trad. structure can easily lead to burn-out but i want us to distribute power, take own initiatives, develop yourself, enjoy what you do. Then i don't think you get burn-out so easily. Because it does not mean that you need to work more. It means that we work differently. Sustainability also means for me that you enjoy your work and your team and that even if someone offers more salary, you stay.</td>
<td>[ak]Important question to reflect on for everyone working at X: &quot;What do we need to do to form a more sustainable X?”</td>
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<td>Anders (alias), org C, excerpt from transcript</td>
<td>Theme interpretation</td>
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<td>[y]Within traditional thinking, you measure performance economically.</td>
<td>[af]The short-term perspective of our financial supporters makes it sometimes hard to build relationship or to develop things</td>
<td>Short-term thinking - difficult to build relationships</td>
<td>To be sustainable everyone shall have the opportunity to be a part of the society. There are a lot of unused human resources.</td>
<td>[ab]Lead or be lead systems perspective: Inside or outside of change) The unsustainable systems builds on that we all are slaves under the system</td>
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<td>[z]I want to measure what value we give to our society. Not count money. Are we relevant to our society? If we do this well, the economy will be fine too. I told my coworkers that money is not the most important for me. But the board only wants to see economical results.</td>
<td>What do you measure? Traditional focuses on economy. I want to focus on what value we give</td>
<td>Supporting the people of society to be the best themselves</td>
<td>Broadening the stakeholder perspective into core business</td>
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<td>[ae]I rather be someone who &quot;supports&quot; and &quot;makes things possible&quot;. I don't care about titles. It's important that everyone can talk with everyone.</td>
<td>[q]Performing towards a hypothesis of a better society - We can not really know. The best &quot;I&quot; leads to the best of the collective intelligence that leads to effects outside of us as well. There is no proof of that idea but it is worth trying. If anyone else comes with a better idea than we can change, but we have not seen that yet. &quot;It is not a loose situation anyway&quot;</td>
<td>Inner change is a driver.</td>
<td>[p]Our values are formed from the question &quot;What do I need to be the best myself?&quot;</td>
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<td>Inside and out is the focus (action before talking). “Main mental model”</td>
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<td>[ah]To shape a vision on the organic side can be difficult. The vision needs to come from me as a leader even if I find it counter to what I want. But then we as a team can refine it together. Its difficult to come without any vision and shape it together.</td>
<td>Vision needs to come from the leader at first, even in a organic structure</td>
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<td>Ideas how to connect the larger purpose to the internal static perspectives</td>
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<td>[ak]Easy to give up in this kind of change process. Important to get feedback about the progress even if its only small</td>
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<td>It is required a lot from the people to create a better world.</td>
<td>Inside and out focus</td>
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<td>We hear often that we should take more place and I am not used to that. It is important that you are not scared to say what you think.</td>
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<td>It is appreciated when you say what you think, i am not used to that</td>
<td>Humanistic view</td>
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