Employee Engagement During An Organisational Change

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Abstract

The changing nature of organisation life becomes more and more intense as organisations are constantly striving to adjust to serve the needs of an ever-changing environment. At the same time, the importance of keeping employees engaged is essential to organisations. The aim of this thesis was to contribute with a deeper understanding of employee engagement during an organisational change process. A deeper insight of how individuals perceive a changing work environment on an emotional level will help managers to go through the process while they are ensuring engagement of their employees. Our fundamental research questions were: How do employees describe their own state of engagement during an organisational change process? Which factors are important, according to employees, in order for them to stay engaged during the process? The existing literature is reviewed with special attention to state engagement, including job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment and empowerment. The theoretical framework consists of the Job demand-resources model and attitudinal organisational commitment, which have been used as the analytical tools. Our empirical data was collected through a qualitative research design with semi-structured interviews at an insurance company in the middle of Sweden. The conclusion from this study was that the state engagement differed a lot according to dimensions as satisfaction, involvement and commitment, while most of the interviewees agreed that the empowerment and energy level decreased. We also discovered a special kind of engagement, frustration engagement, which was distinguished from the commonly positive view of engagement. The most important factors to continue being engaged were expressed by the employees as social support, managerial support as well as organisational support and communication.

Keywords: organisational change, employee engagement, state engagement, Job demand-resources model, attitudinal organisational commitment
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1.0 Introduction

The following chapter will provide a brief introduction to the subject of this paper, describing the background, the problem we want to address, the aim, the research questions and terminology.

In today’s society organisations constantly need to adapt to their surroundings in order to survive. The changing nature of organisations becomes more and more tangible as new economical and technological changes demand endless conformation (Drucker, 1988). The rapidly integrating global economy, technological developments and shifting consumer preferences accelerate the intense competition between organisations in business environments (Murphy, 2002; Cartwright & Holmes, 2006). According to Todnem (2005), the pace of change has never been greater than in the current continuously evolving business environment. Organisations persistently need to cut costs and increase their flexibility in order to be able to respond to changes in market demands and stay competitive (Näswall, Hellgren & Sverke, 2008). However, organisational changes are not new, but the speed and the intensity of the changes are bringing substantial consequences in management approaches, organisational structures and human resources practices.

Generally, a majority of organisational change is managed from a technical viewpoint, relying on economic principles of cost reduction, efficiency, action plans, calculating profitability and other quantifiable data to mention just a few examples (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008; Bovey & Hede, 2000). Consequently, the human elements tend to get insufficient time and attention or tend to be ignored entirely (Messinger & Havely, 2013). Leading an organisation through a change involves balancing human needs with those of the organisation (Bovey & Hede, 2000). If the understanding of the human mechanisms is missing, van Dam, Oreg & Schyns (2008) suggest that the organisational change will be jeopardised and probably obstructed. Insufficient knowledge about mental processes is a primary factor causing organisational dysfunction today, even threatening the survival of some organisations (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). This dominating perspective in handling organisational changes gives little room in recognising and understanding how the human beings are influencing the success or failure of the change. Bovey & Hede (2000) claim that the outcome of a change can be traced directly to employees’ understanding, resistance and adapting to the change.
Modern organisations today do not only need employees who are doing their job in order to prosper in a continuously changing environment. They need to rely on employees who are willing to put in some extra effort, are dedicated and give their best. To a greater extent organisations are expecting their employees to show initiative, take responsibility for their own professional development and be committed to high-quality performance (Näswall et al., 2008). Previous research has shown that having *engaged* employees is a key to competitive advantage from the organisational point of view (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008; Baumruk, 2004; Macey & Schneider, 2008; van Dam et al. 2008). These employees have an enthusiastic attitude in work performance and achieve or surpass the business objectives requested from the organisation (Baumruk, 2004; Brajer-Marczak, 2014; Macey & Schneider, 2008). They are also loyal and therefore less likely to leave the organisation. Viewing engagement as organisationally focused and adaptive behaviour is consistent with the recent emphasis on the changing nature of work, the dynamic nature of job roles and the active way of responding to problems in the business environment (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Thus, employee engagement becomes an important component and is no less crucial in the changing life of organisations.

1.1 Problematization

There is a gap in the existing literature when it comes to the understanding of employee engagement during periods of organisational change. Much research has been done about organisational change management (Burnes, 2004; Messinger & Havely, 2013; Murphy, 2002; Todnem, 2005), causes of resistance to change (Bovey & Hede, 2000; Dent & Goldberg, 1999; van Dam et al., 2008) and about strategies for overcoming this resistance (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Waddell & Sohal, 1998). Less research has been focusing on positive employee contribution, including conditions of employee engagement (Bakker & Schaufeli 2008; Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Saks, 2006). What has been written about employee engagement is mainly from a management perspective, paying little attention to the employees. Moreover, much recent research about employee engagement can be found in practitioner journals and more empirical research is needed (Saks, 2006; Ram & Prabhakar, 2011). An understanding of the psychological process involved regarding employees’ engagement during organisational change is important for organisations in order to manage a change process with as engaged employees as possible.

On account of the above we suggest that a successful organisational change management should more deeply involve the employees. How individuals handle their work situation is an
important concern for the organisation and the negative impacts need to be minimised (Näswall et al., 2008). Therefore, we will focus on the employees and their feelings and experiences of engagement during an organisational change process. The need for a better insight to how employee engagement is affected by an organisational change implies a qualitative approach to this study.

1.2 Aim and knowledge contribution
The aim of this thesis was to contribute with a deeper understanding of employee engagement during an organisational change process, in order to contribute with enhanced knowledge within this field. Our point of departure is that an organisational change process is a demanding situation to the employees. It is often characterised as a period of uncertainty, where the employees may be expected to tolerate ambiguity that can be long-running, be more flexible in their roles than before and even deal with increased expectations that come with the changes. Gaining a better understanding of employee feelings, reactions and needs are important from a management perspective to consider when pursuing an organisational change. A greater organisational awareness about the way individuals perceive a changing work environment on an emotional level will help managers to go through the process not losing the engagement of their employees. With an enhanced focus on the employees, there is a possibility for the management to maintain employee engagement during that period of time and the desired outcome of the change process may increase. Our thesis can serve as a foundation to the management of an organisation in order to adopt certain kinds of workplace practices to handle this issue, since successful change attempts require specific, targeted actions from the management side (van Dam et al, 2008).

1.3 Research questions
In order to be able to achieve the aim of the study we have designed two specific research questions. The following questions will help us to get a deeper understanding of employee engagement and what is important for them to be able to keep engagement when working in a changing environment.

- How do employees describe their own state of engagement during an organisational change process?
- Which factors are important, according to employees, in order for them to stay engaged during the process?
1.4 Terminology

In our thesis, we define the term *organisational change* as the process where an organisation is renewing its direction, structure or capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of internal and external customers. An organisational change can be a transformation of both the organisation's operational and strategic level. One can say that an organisational change cannot be separated from organisational strategy (Todnem, 2005).

The term *employee engagement* is given a multifaceted meaning throughout this paper. The most accepted way of defining engagement is that it is characterised by a positive fulfilling work-related state of mind that is composed of vigor, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker, 2002). Vigor is characterised by high levels of energy, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one’s work and experience a sense of enthusiasm, inspiration and pride. Absorption is characterised by being fully concentrated in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work.

The dimension of *state engagement* is referring to emotional and cognitive components. The different cornerstones represent four different categories; job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment and psychological empowerment (Macey & Schneider, 2008).
2.0 Theory

The theory chapter constitutes a literature review, in order to explain the earlier base of knowledge and a theoretical framework, to capture theoretical tools that we will use within the field of employee engagement. Since existing literature about engagement is written almost entirely from a management point of view, this chapter will also mainly reflect that perspective. By depicting the theoretical background primarily from the management point of view, the need of a greater employee focus will be apparent.

2.1 Literature review

In the following chapter we give an account of previous research within the field of organisational change behaviour, where human resistance mechanisms to change are explained and also the solely positive side of engagement. The chapter will illuminate the importance of employee engagement and also the varying meanings of the concept.

2.1.1 The nature of organisational change

According to Burnes (2004) organisational change is an ever-present feature of organisational life; both at an operational and strategic level and runs through all business regardless of size, industry and age. Organisational changes can vary in scope and intensity and cover structural, technological and administrative changes (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). Reasons why organisations are implementing changes are due to the belief that these investments will lead to improved productivity, profitability and market share (Murphy, 2002). Increased efficiency is one main motivator for organisational changes such as effective use of new technology. Through an effective functioning an organisation will enhance its ability to meet customer needs and enhance the flexibility in business processes as well as the responsiveness in relationships with clients and other firms (Murphy, 2002). The strategic decisions matter to everyone when organisations strive to change themselves (Johnson, Whittington, Scholes, & Regnér, 2015). Change initiatives are often resulting in new roles and responsibilities for the employees (Messinger & Havely, 2013). Therefore, the management should not forget their employees during the changes, since organisations consist of people and organisational change also involves personal change (Bouvey & Hede, 2000).
In the initial phase of a change process there is an increased incidence of employees experiencing a *moment of surprise*, that will lead to that some people voluntary consider leaving the organisation, which in turn brings significant direct and indirect costs to the organisation. (Morell, Loan-Clarke & Wilkinson, 2004). A study among 352 nurses in the US revealed that almost half of the sample reported that their leaving decision was caused by a single particular event. Such an event could be the initial announcement of an upcoming organisational change. A conclusion that could be made was that a shock plays an important role in many cases where people decide to leave. Initial thoughts to leave, but also the final decision to quit that are prompted by a shock are both more salient and avoidable, which indicate that the organisation can do something about it. An understanding of the experience of a shock is crucial for the management, since the role of shock is directly relevant when it comes to employees thinking of turnover.

Many changes relate to the increased occurrence of re-organisations, happening not only through changes in ownership, but also through downsising (or growth), which diminish the degree of predictability and increase experiencing of job insecurity for employees (Näswall et al., 2008). Often, organisational changes are also bringing increased expectations on many employees; they are expected to do longer work hours, be flexible in their roles and are expected to tolerate the continual change environment as well as the ambiguity that comes with organisational changes. Increased cynicism and mistrust among employees can arise due to the changing nature of working environment. Employee cynicism is seen as a negative outcome of the organisational change and is described as discomfiture and disenchantment in the workplace towards managers within the organisation. This is possibly affecting an employee’s engagement throughout an organisational change process (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006).

**2.1.2 Resistance to change**

For decades, there has been a widely accepted view that resistance to change is sited within individuals and that it is the manager’s task to overcome that resistance. Ever since Kurt Lewin introduced the term *resistance to change* in 1948 and lay the foundation of this dominating perspective it has not been significantly altered by academic work since then (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). According to Lewin, resistance to change was a system phenomenon, where systems of roles, attitudes, norms, behaviours and other factors could influence each other to be in disequilibrium. Zander (1950, cited in Dent & Goldberg, 1999, p 34) defines the term resistance as “behaviour that intend to protect an individual from the effects of real or imagined change”. Bovey & Hede (2000) accept this dominating view and
suggest that individuals unconsciously and in different ways use common defence mechanisms in order to protect themselves from a changing environment, which is a natural human process to escape from the feeling of anxiety. If the employees experience that the management ignores their input, resistance to change may become even stronger and the less effort the employees are able to put towards what is really happening around them.

In most of the literature, employee resistance to change is considered to be an undesirable behaviour if it is counter-productive to the organisation’s goals. When employees resist a change, they often withdraw and defend themselves cognitively or emotionally during role performances (Ram & Prabhakar, 2011). By that, resistant employees may prevent the organisation from reaching success. Therefore, it is something that must be “overcome” (van Dam et al., 2008; Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Waddell & Sohal, 1998). Resistance to change among employees is mostly associated with negative employee attitudes and organisational outcomes such as decreased productivity and satisfaction, and less psychological well-being.

Even if the dominating idea that employees are resisting changes seem to be taken for granted, Dent and Goldberg (1999) as well as Waddell and Sohal (1998) have another standpoint, arguing that individuals do not resist changes per se, but may resist loss of status, loss of comfort or loss of payment. There is a misconception in the classical management theory that resistance only is something negative to the organisation. Waddell and Sohal (1998) describe that there is some utility to be gained from resistant behaviour, because it is a way to actively show engagement and can be advantageous when it brings energy to different processes and sparks debate where opinions differ (Waddell & Sohal, 1998). Another interesting view is that of Fleming and Spicer (2003) who claim that when people are dis-identified with their prescribed social roles, they often still perform them — sometimes better than if they did identify with them. Therefore, resistance behaviours can be sort of an inadvertent success of corporate power relations, rather than their failure. The authors highlight that resistance should not only count as disruptive behaviour that must be re-evaluated. Latterly, the concept resistance seem to have shifting its focus from a system concept to a psychological one, indicating an increased interest in employee mental processes (Dent & Goldberg, 1999).

By paying attention to employees’ psychological thinking and experience of change, an organisation will potentially be able to prevent resistance (van Dam et al., 2008). This is one of the key determinants in managing organisational changes (Saks, 2006). In order to retain the employees of the organisation and to keep them motivated, managers have to understand
the deeper cognitive and affective components of their employees since how we think and how we feel influence how we act (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006; Gill, 2009).

2.1.3 Why employee engagement?
Because of the dominance of negative biased words within organisational change research there is a need for more focus on positive employee contribution within change business management (Avey, Luthans & Wernsing, 2008). The role of positive traits, states and behaviours of employees belong to research within the field of positive psychology, which explores what brings mental wellness by strengthening individuals. Scholars interested in this field also examine conditions under which employees are able to deliver peak performance (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). One important and fairly new concept within positive organisational behaviour is employee engagement.

From the employee perspective, the term engagement is almost entirely connected with a positive way of thinking, feeling and acting and is particularly related to well-being. An engaged individual has in general a favourable job-related attitude, a strong identification with the work, increased mental health, performance and motivation as well as access to job resources, including personal resources (Näswall et al., 2008). Furthermore, an engaged employee feels in general more connected to its organisation and the leadership. On the whole, engaged employees are commonly a result of challenged, empowered, excited and rewarded teams of people who together create what one can call an engaged workforce (Baumruk, 2004).

From the organisational point of view, most of the above stated individual outcomes are beneficial — directly or indirectly. Näswall et al. (2008) claim that high level of employee engagement may result in a positive corporate image, a competitive and effective organisation, the possibility to retain talented employees and desirable business-unit performance. An organisation is generally striving to produce more with fewer resources and to achieve its goals, companies must manage to engage every co-worker in the best possible way (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). There are several reasons why employee engagement contribution becomes an important business issue. Having engaged employees can also lead to a more successful organisational change implementation and play a significant role in the overall workplace (Saks 2006; Baumruk, 2004). The employee engagement can in some cases also predict the outcomes of performance and by that indicate whether the organisation and the organisation’s financial performance will be successful. Thus, organisations with employees that obtain a high level of engagement are more likely to create greater sales
growth and higher total of shareholder return (Saks, 2006; Baumruk, 2004). It is also possible to some extent predict and prevent the number of employee turnover when looking at the degree to which one's employees are engaged (Morell et al., 2004).

Linking the employee perspective and the organisational perspective together, employee engagement can be depicted as a positive double-sided relationship between an employee and his/her organisation (Brajer-Marczak, 2014; Baumruk, 2004, Baumeister & Vohs, 2002). By building employee engagement both the individual and the organisation can benefit from the positive outcomes, creating synergies between them both. According to Macey and Schneider (2008) there is an interchange between the employer and the employees, since those likely to demonstrate engaged feelings and behaviour are also likely to choose employers that provide the desirable environment to the employee. Organisations that manage to attract engaged employees and at the same time are able to offer the requested environment, possibly go for a situation where not only organisational goals but also employee goals can be achieved.

### 2.1.4 The meaning of employee engagement

In contemporary literature there is no clear definition of employee engagement. The concept is ambiguous and it has recently emerged (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Shaw, 2005). There is a complex interplay between many different dimensions in the engagement concept. Some scholars claim that the pursuit of employee engagement is endless; their personality, their working group, their supervisor, the company values, their own values, their age, their experiences and their tenure with the company are all factors that might influence (Shaw, 2005). From the organisational perspective, one reason to the ambiguous definition is that mixed goals at different levels in the organisation practically lead to uncertainty about what engagement is in day-to-day business and how this concept will be measured in employee surveys. In such a situation Shaw (2005) argues that there is a risk that each individual will interpret different meaning to the term and only the management will agree on the tenor.

However, there seems to be a consistent agreement that employee engagement does not mean just average performance, that is arriving to job in time and do what one’s manager expects one to do (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Many scholars seem to agree that engagement is about something more. The most widely accepted definition of the concept is that engagement is an individual’s “positive fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigor, dedication and absorption” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p 74). Empirical studies of Schaufeli et al. (2002) also show that engagement can be understood as the opposite of burnout. Thus, both
concepts are multidimensional constructs that have a complex relationship with underlying variables.

In conformity with other scholars Shaw (2005) is describing engagement as the degree to which an individual is attentive and able to be absorbed in the performance of his/her organisational roles. This ability is depending on an employee’s active use of his/her emotions and behaviours in addition to cognitions. According to Baumruk (2004) these aspects are measured by three primary behaviours; say, stay and strive, where the first term is referring to how an employee is speaking positively about the organisation, the second one to an employee’s strong desire to be a part of the organisation and the last term to an employee’s routinely desire to do a good job and contribute with extra effort to the organisation.

There is also a negative side of engagement, when it comes to drawing boundaries between engagement and overwork. Some studies show that certain people are experiencing a strong inner-drive to work hard in an excessively and compulsively way. The strong inner-drive to work hard in combination with constantly higher job demands can result in workaholism (Schaufeli, Taris & Van Rhenen, 2008). Engagement and workaholism seem to be hardly related to each other, but the underlying motivation to be completely engrossed in one’s work is different. Engaged employees are absorbed because they perceive the work is motivating, whereas workaholics are absorbed because of an inner drive they cannot resist (Näswall et al., 2008).

Macey and Schneider (2008) claim that the term engagement is possible to observe in three different ways:

- **Trait** engagement. Trait engagement is defined as an employee’s own positive view of life and work.
- **State** engagement. State engagement is referring to emotional and cognitive components.
- **Behavioural** engagement. Behavioural engagement is when employees actively are seeking “extra role tasks” as role expansion through personal initiatives.

These three dimensions are related to each other according to Macey and Schneider (2008). They suggest that trait engagement affects the state engagement, which in turn become visible through behavioural engagement. Besides, work attributes, such as variety in work tasks,
challenge and autonomy directly affect the state engagement as well as the organisational leadership.

2.1.5 State engagement
The different components of state engagement representing four categories, which are mostly not separated from each other but used together in order to capture different meanings of the concept. According to Macey and Schneider (2008) the four categories are:

- Engagement as job satisfaction. This dimension basically involves an individual’s satisfaction with the company; the manager, the work group and the environment. A satisfied employee expresses feelings of meaningfulness, enthusiasm to work and a willingness to invest his/her effort to help the organisation succeed.

- Engagement as job involvement. This dimension concerns the degree to which an employee psychologically relates to his or her job and the work performed therein. In a deeper sense it is about an employee’s willingness to invest effort towards goal attainment according to the overall organisation direction.

- Engagement as organisational commitment. It is about a psychological state of binding force between an individual and the organisation, to “being part of the family”. A committed employee feels pride as an organisational member and personally identifies with the employer. It is both about the employee’s emotional and intellectual commitment to the organisation; the energy and passion that the employee feels for the workplace and the effort that the employee brings to the employer.

- Engagement as empowerment. This dimension refers to an individual’s experience of authority and responsibility, including effort, persistence and initiative that the employee brings to the employer. With regard to this description, the empowerment dimension touches upon the behavioural facet of engagement, since it concerns different ways of behaving and not only the affective state of the employee.

Macey and Schneider (2008) also include feelings of energy and passion in all categories of state engagement mentioned above. They claim that energy and passion must be a present feature in order to feel engagement at work, because this is what distinguish a typical engaged employee from just an average satisfied, involved, committed and empowered one.
There are not many scientific models available with the main purpose to explain work engagement, especially not state engagement. Some well-known models of employee well-being, such as the demand-control model and the effort-reward imbalance model, are restricted to a given and limited set of predictor variables that may not be relevant for all job positions. A decade ago Bakker and Demerouti (2007) introduced an alternative model, the *Job demand-resources model* that has been used as a tool within human resource management. The JD-R incorporates a wide range of working conditions into the analyses of organisations and employees. It provides an understanding of how employee engagement is related to the performance of an organisation, because it explains the relationship between work engagement, job resources, personal resource, job demands and performance. According to the model, work engagement is most likely when job resources are enough high to deal with different kinds of demands.

Considerable more studies have used *attitudinal organisational commitment* to explain the emotional relationship between an employee and its organisation (Allen & Meyer 1991; Allen & Meyer 1997; Jaussi 2007). Previous research shows that individuals with a strong attitudinal commitment to the organisation are more valuable to the employer than individuals with a lower commitment, because their job performance is usually higher and absence from work lower. According to this theory, the level of engagement and involvement in the business is dependent on the attitudinal identification with the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1997).

### 2.2 Summary

Taken together, this literature review shows that organisations are constantly changing their direction, structure or capabilities to meet market demands. This endless shifting working life requires employees who are not trying to resist change, but who are engaged — who are able to adapt to changing circumstances and perform their job with satisfaction, involvement, commitment and empowerment. There is rarely no academic or empirical research within the field of employee engagement connected to organisational change (Saks, 2006). Thus, Ram and Prabhakar (2011) argue that the interest around employee engagement has grown among business managers lately.
As can be seen from figure 1, employees who are engaged are more likely to bring benefits to an organisation in terms of different target achievement, for example greater commitment and increased productivity. Previous literature has described employee engagement as something positive and desirable, primarily from an organisational point of view. The studies that have been done assume to a large extent a management perspective and adopt a functionalistic, performatively view of change. This is also visible in some of the theoretical models within work engagement, for example the JD-R model.

Although many scholars claim that employee engagement is crucial for success, few efforts seem to have been directed at understanding how employees react to change and what consequences this bears to their attitudes, feelings etc. Employee engagement is almost only described in a simplified way and from an uncritically viewpoint. It is depicted as something absolutely necessary to organisations in order to be competitive and does not problematize the context.

2.3 Positioning

In our thesis, we have chosen to investigate engagement with a focus on the employees, due to the lack of observed research within this field. We believe that the dominating management perspective puts attention reaching organisational goals during a change process, but directs less effort in understanding the reactions of their employees. A deeper understanding for how an organisation's employees perceive a changing work environment and how they are affected will be valuable in maintaining a desirable level of engagement. We think that, in order for an organisation change to be as successful as possible, the management has to learn how to harness its employee engagement potential.
In this paper we will focus on state engagement, because engagement as a psychological state has received most attention among different scholars and can be seen as a core aspect of engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). It is central because trait engagement (personality) affects state engagement, which in turn affects behavioural engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). The choice to focus on state engagement is due to the belief that this dimension will generate a greater usefulness than for example trait engagement, which is considered to be close to a statically personality type and the organisation would not be able to affect it. The fact that state engagement is referring to emotional and cognitive components of an individual means that it is possible for an organisation to affect these components, for example through changes in work attributes and leadership. These components have a direct effect on state engagement. A deeper understanding of how the different components are perceived from the employee’s point of view can help managers to affect them. We will assume from the four dimensions of state engagement suggested by Macey and Schneider (2008) in order to capture the phenomenon during an organisational change. These dimensions will then be related to the JD-R model and the attitudinal organisational commitment to examine how the state engagement can be related to different resources and the demands they experience during organisational change. Finally, we will relate levels of engagement to employees’ attitudes towards the organisation through attitudinal organisational commitment.

2.4 Theoretical framework

The Job demand-resources model and the attitudinal organisational commitment are two different tools which both aim to explain engagement. The JD-R model illuminates how personal resources, job resources, job demands and performance relate to engagement, while attitudinal organisational commitment complements the JD-R model by pointing directly at how a psychological state of commitment can attach an individual to the organisation on an emotional level. These two theories constitute our scientific pre-understanding of the engagement phenomenon and serve as an important framework. None of the theories are compiled to explain work engagement during an organisational change as such. However, according to our basic assumption for this thesis, these theories are useful since a change period can be demanding to the employees and trying their commitment to the organisation.

2.4.1 Job demand-resources model

One way of understanding how employee engagement is related to the performance of an organisation is through the JD-R model. The overall model builds on two assumptions. First, it is assumed that engagement is depending on some job resources that start as motivational
processes for the employees, such as social support and supervisory coaching. Further, the model also includes some personal resources, which can independently predict state engagement. That is, employees who are optimistic, have high self-efficacy and resilience, are more inclined to be engaged in their work. These both types of resources lay the ground in order to be engaged at work and consequently lead to higher performance. Second, these resources become more salient and gain their motivational potential when employees are exposed to high demands, such as workload as well as emotional and mental demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008, Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) “job demands require effort and are therefore related with physiological and psychological costs, such as fatigue, whereas job resources foster personal growth, learning, and development, and have motivational qualities” (p 150).

![Figure 2. Adjusted version of the ordinary JD-R model.](image)

As can be seen from figure 2, state engagement acts as both a dependent and independent variable, which to some extent explains the complexity in distinguishing the engagement notion from other variables. The picture also shows that the final performance in turn influences directly job resources and personal resources, in a never-ending process. In the following part, we will focus less on personal resources and performance, because we are most interested in how state engagement is affected by job demands and the important role of different job resources.
The JD-R model is relevant in our study since it points at different factors and their interrelationship in understanding work engagement. It is interesting to investigate how possible job demands during an organisational change process, such as insecurity and ambiguity, affect state engagement. Also the fact that job resources have a direct effect on engagement is useful, since these attributes become more prominent when employees are exposed to high mental and emotional demands. The job resources can serve as moderating factors when demands are high. Another observation that can be drawn is that the model is not very nuanced or deep when it comes to describing attitudinal organisational commitment. The extent to which an employee is emotionally committed to the employer also affects performance, but the JD-R model does not include different aspects of it. If an individual holds necessary resources and is not exposed to any demands, it is not certain that the employee will experience any engagement, because he or she may not be emotionally commitment to the organisation.

2.4.2 Attitudinal organisational commitment
There are three main types of commitment; attitudinal, normative and continuance commitment. Attitudinal organisational commitment focuses on the process of the relationship between an employee and the organisation. It is the type that is most strongly and positively related to an employee's job performance, the attendance and the employee’s citizenship behaviours. It is thought of as a mindset in which an employee reflects on the extent to which own values and goals are congruent with the values and goals of the organisation (Jaussi, 2007; Allen & Meyer, 1991). The attitudinal commitment is divided into three different dimensions; strong affection for the organisation, an employee's identification with the organisation and the willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organisation (Jaussi, 2007). Due to these different dimensions of the attitudinal commitment it is seen as a psychological state of being; including a desire, need and obligation to remain with the organisation, rather than the social psychological definition of an attitude which has been a common definition (Allen & Meyer, 1991).

This psychological state and attachment between the employee and the organisation is driven by the employee’s identification and involvement with it. The pride of and identification with the organisation is integrated with the extent of motivational feelings to the employee. The more an employee feels identified with the organisation, the better the employee’s task persistence is going to be. To what extent an employee feels involved with the organisation is driven by the willingness to exert some effort on behalf of the organisation (Jaussi, 2007). Also, the degree to which managers involve their employees in decision making and
communicate with them has a direct and strong impact on employee morale and their commitment to the organisation (Cornelissen, 2014).

This theory is of importance for the analysis of this thesis since we want to demonstrate how identification between the employee and the organisation can affect the employee's ability to perform their organisational duties. Attitudinal organisational commitment makes it easier to understand the emotional attachment and the underlying feelings of the employees in relation to the employer. It helps explain to what extent an employee is emotionally engagement at work and why.
3.0 Method

In the following chapter we will present and explain the scientific research method approach, based on the objective of our study — to examine and gain a deeper understanding of employee engagement during an organisational change. We will explain our scientific perspective, the research design, the method of collecting the data and how the organisation and the interviewees were selected. We will also present the procedure of collecting the data and how it was analysed. In the end, we will make some ethical reflections and considerations about reliability and validity in qualitative studies.

3.1 Scientific perspective

Before deciding which research design was the most suitable for our study, we needed to clarify our overall scientific research perspective, that it how we believe that new knowledge is added to the world (Bryman & Bell, 2014). Our point of view is that epistemology should reflect multiple realities according to the interpretative perspective, since we think that the world is constructed by each individual’s own subjective interpretations. Therefore, our study make sense by grasping different experiences of individuals and seeking patterns by identifying common themes of how each individual is constructing the world (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2010).

A research study can adopt either a deductive, inductive or an abductive approach. An abductive approach means that the researcher gathers the data in order to be able to investigate, identify and explain a phenomenon or pattern with theories and previous research in the specific research field. The abductive approach is based on empirical data, but do not reject new theoretical contributions since the approach is both empirical and theory driven. It is alternating empirical data and previous research so that they are used alternately throughout the study (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2014; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Our study adopted the abductive approach because the study was based upon a pre-understanding from previous research, but the purpose was not only to try existing theories. Rather, the purpose was to contribute to existing knowledge by investigating the phenomenon while moving alternately between theory and own empirical data. We wanted to conform to what is already known to be able to further expand the researched area, when linking existing body of knowledge and own empirical data together. We believed that it was of importance to gain
some prior understanding of the subject to be able to problematize the study in an interesting way, position ourselves and also contribute to the existing research field.

### 3.2 Research design

It is important to keep the specific research questions as the starting-point when determining which the most suitable design to use is (Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson & Wängnerud, 2012). Our research design was based on the objective of the study; to gain a deeper understanding of employee engagement during an organisational change. Since our research questions have an employee focus, describing how they are personally affected of organisational changes, our problem formulation is somewhere between a structured and an unstructured problem. Our intention was to describe how engagement was perceived, but at the same time these descriptions were aiming to explore which factors that are important according to the employees in order to stay engaged during an organisational change.

Consequently, we claim that the research design that fitted our research problem the most was an exploratory research design (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2010). Such a design can then be divided into subcategories, depending on whether the design is trying an existing theory, is theory consuming or theory developing (Esaiasson et al., 2012). Our research is best described as a mixture of theory trying and theory developing design, because the aim of our research was to use the knowledge about existing scientific theories, but also develop them through empirical findings if possible.

### 3.3 Data collection method

Since we were interested in engagement within a changing organisation we required a data collection method that allowed us to ask questions directly to the employees involved, which lead us to a primary data collection method. To be able to get insight into different aspects of the problem and deal with the phenomenon as a dynamic process a qualitative research approach was suitable (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2010). This data collection method made it possible to get a deep and holistic understanding of the reality. It also allowed us to analyse and describe our findings in words, which was a suitable way of answering our research question.

The most suitable way of gathering the data for this study was through interviews, which are often considered to be the recommended data collection method in qualitative research studies
Interviews allowed us to explore subjective experiences of employee engagement during an organisation change period. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2010) in-depth interviews let the interviewer partake of the rich response and get a clear picture of the respondent’s own experiences when meeting face to face. The interviews were designed in a semi-structured way, since it was a beneficial way of interviewing to gain the depth and enough interview structure. The first part of our interview was formulated in a way that allowed the respondent to speak freely about the phenomenon while the second part of the interview was focusing on capturing the essence of state engagement with more specific questions. In this way, we could leave room for the interviewees’ own interpretation of the concept but also ensure that we were capturing the dimensions that were supposed to be captured according to our theoretical framework.

There were many reasons to the decision using semi-structured interviews, although this type of interview is time-consuming and demanding to the interviewer (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2010). First, semi-structured interviews often contribute to unexpected findings and reveal some attitudinal information according to the respondent’s thinking. Second, it makes it possible for the respondent to partly influence the content and the outcome of the interview, since semi-structured interviews are flexible and can be adapted to the context. This is because the questions are not fully planned beforehand and therefore allow the respondent to go beyond the questions asked. Third, semi-structured interviews also provided us with a good chance to ask follow-up questions, which often result in even deeper insight into the topic. In sum, semi-structured interviews corresponded well to the aim of our study, as our intention was to both get a deeper understanding of employee engagement with a focus on the employees, but also to go beyond what was our pre-understanding of the concept as such. In that way, semi-structured interviews also fitted well with the abductive research method (Esaiasson et al, 2012).

3.4 Selection of organisation and respondents
We started our selection process by choosing a suitable organisation to study and then select the individuals to be interviewed. One of us had access to an insurance company in the middle part of Sweden that did fit our purpose and therefore we found it beneficial to do our study at this particular organisation. This organisation has been undergoing a major organisational change during the last year, mainly from September 2015 until now. The organisation chart has been restructured from scratch, from being a matrix organisation to now being a hierarchical organisation, which has affected almost all business units at different levels. In
connection with this extensive change, the company has also modified its overall vision and reworked important words of value. One of the new words of value that were implemented was the word *engaged*, which made the organisation even more interesting. Both the formal restructuring and the new values have heavily affected many of the employees. According to these changes, the organisation was a suitable, informative case to study given our aim and research question (Esaiasson et al 2012).

The selection of specific respondents consisted of a sample of nine volunteer employees between the ages of 30-65 who were permanently employed at the insurance company. They have been working at the insurance company between three and 28 years. All employees who participated in this study have been affected in one way or another by the change, either by changes in their work roles, changes in the unit structure or changes in leadership structure. In that way we ensured that the participants possessed the right experiences and were able to give us enough understanding of the phenomenon.

### 3.5 Data collection procedure

Our data collection procedure has mainly followed steps suggested by Ghauri and Grønhaug (2012). The first step was to ask the HR department at the insurance company to help us identify which specific business units that was accessible for us and then have a list of e-mail addresses to employees working at those different units. In the second step we sent out an information letter (Appendix 1) to the employees on the list, explaining the aim of our study and the reason why we wanted them to participate. When the sample of employees declared their interest to participate in our study we booked a date and time for each interview. As a third step we prepared for an information sheet (Appendix 2) and an interview guide (Appendix 3) to the interviewees. The interview guide contained a number of open-ended questions, which both were meant to capture different dimensions of the engagement notion as well as ensure that the focus would be about the state engagement.

One day before each interview, we sent out an additional confirmation letter as a fourth step, where we added a few example questions so that the employees could start to think around the topic beforehand. The interview procedure was performed so that one of us acted as the head interviewer, mainly focused on asking the questions, and the other one was just attending and asked follow-up questions if there was something to be clarified. In the last step, we sent out a “thank-you” letter to the entire group of participants, including the empirical result in a separate document so that they had the possibility to verify the content.
3.6 Data analysis
In the process of analysing the empirical data, the first step was to transcribe the gathered oral material into nine coherent interview documents. These documents were carefully read through one first time in order to get a clear overall picture of the content. The reading procedure was then repeated and in this analysing phase we identified important key content in the material. Then we categorised the material, searching for meanings and patterns according to some general themes (Bryman & Bell, 2014). These themes were partly based on the different elements capturing the state engagement presented earlier in this thesis and partly on the topics that were mentioned frequently as important engagement factors throughout the interviews. We intended to reflect on the empirical data in relation to the four categories of state engagement developed by Macey and Schneider (2008) but also extend existing theoretical framework and contribute to a deeper knowledge within the field.

In trying not to be too subjective in our interpretations of the data, we had a discussion about the chosen themes and critically re-categorise the themes where our opinions differed. As our pre-understanding from previous theoretical framework influenced our way of create meaningfulness of the findings, it is important to highlight that the process of analysing our qualitative data inevitably was depending on our own way of understand, select and categorise different pieces into a context.

3.7 Ethical considerations
To conduct ethical responsibility in our research method we have paid attention to the ethical principles, the individual protection requirement, through all stages of our research process (Vetenskapsrådet, 2015). These ethical principles aim to serve as standards, guidance and policy in the relationship between the researcher and the respondent. The individual protection requirement consists of four main requirements that we were considering while collecting and working with our data. According to the information requirement we gave our respondents information about the aim of the research and their contribution to the study. The requirement of consent is referring to our permission from all the respondents to accomplish interviews with them. The fact that no one else was supposed to know about the participation was covered in the confidentiality obligations. No names have been published in the thesis. In that way the respondents were anonymous. The utilisation requirement means that the data was only collected for our own purpose and is not used by others (Vetenskapsrådet, 2015).
3.8 Reliability and validity

The reliability and validity concept are commonly used in quantitative studies, since they are important criteria to be able to indicate the quality of a survey. These concepts are less applicative in qualitatively oriented researchers, since the main interest among qualitatively oriented researchers is not to measure, but to describe different views of a certain phenomenon (Bryman & Bell, 2014; Bryman, 2002). Researchers have suggested more relevant criteria, trustworthiness, which consists of the credibility, transferability, dependability of measure and the opportunity to demonstrate and confirm transferability in a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2014; Bryman 2002).

Credibility refers to that the researchers ensure that the study has been executed in a truthful way and that the empirical results have been reported to the involved participants to ensure that their social reality has been rightly understood (Bryman, 2002). In our study, we sent an email with the compiled result to each participant in order to receive their validation of the content. When it comes to the transferability, it describes the degree to which the results and conclusions of a given study can be generalised outside the context of the study (Bryman, 2002). Since this study was based upon a limited amount of participants from just one company, the transferability is limited. The dense description of our empirical findings provides an opportunity for the reader to assess the degree to which the results are transferable to other organisations. Dependability of measure was ensured by giving the reader a comprehensive and accessible account of the research process at all stages throughout the study (Bryman, 2002). Our supervisor helped us to ensure a high dependability as well as our own willingness to provide a rigorous scientific way of work. The opportunity to demonstrate and confirm transferability indicates that the researcher must be aware of the subjective influence of the outcome, even though the researcher should not deliberately let personal values or theoretical orientation, impact on the result and the conclusions of a study (Bryman, 2002). This study has benefitted from having two authors. Our way of questioning each other during the process may have enhanced the transferability.

3.9 Critical considerations of sources

Our sample of respondents was only representing employees from one single organisation, which means that we are not able to generalise our findings to a wider population, but this does not have to be a primary goal of qualitative studies. The empirical findings from this study are very much dependent on how the chosen insurance company managed the change
and therefore we cannot express if our findings is generalisable to other companies. Thus, we can assume that some phenomenon is recurring elsewhere.

The sample of interviewees was selected through the HR-department, which may have contributed to some skewness to this study, because the HR-department may have selected employees that were “suitable” for us to meet. A critical consideration is that we have not at all been in touch with employees who were off from work due to sick leave or employees who got to leave the organisation due to the organisational change. Furthermore, we have only met permanently employed individuals, which may also have had an impact on the level of engagement. Our sample of respondents is therefore not fully representing all possible views of engagement during a change process.

There is another critical aspect that needs to be taken into account when interviewing people about their experiences. First, human memory is sometimes forgetting the past. In between it was hard for some employees to remember their feelings from more than half a year ago, when the organisational change first was announced. To deal with this, we both sent a few of the interview questions in advance to the participants and also started each interview with a broad question about how they had perceived the organisational change in general. Second, what constitutes engagement can also be unconscious to an individual, meaning that some mental and emotional processes are difficult to put in words. The ability to explain how different feeling relate to each other is therefore depending on the degree of self-perception. Third, we as interviewers inevitably contribute to interactivity with the respondents. Our way of formulating questions, our tone of voice and body language are examples of interactive processes that may have had some impact on the interviewees’ way of answering the questions. Also the fact that one of us was temporarily employed at the company may have contributed to slanted descriptions. This risk was balanced against the availability to the organisation.

Overall, we felt that the respondents were willing to share their experiences and feelings. Mostly, the answers were connected to the specific themes of state engagement but sometimes the interviewees required more guidance in reaching their feelings that interested us. Very often the interviewees also seemed contradictious when trying to explain their feelings, maybe because of the complexity in the situation. We have had in mind that the respondents possibly could have been reclusive talking about negative emotions of the organisational change since they perhaps wanted to be loyal with their company, although their participation was anonymous.
In the following chapter the empirical data from our nine interviews will be presented. The empirical presentation is divided into two main sections, where the first section will answer our first research question and the second section refers to our second research question. The company will be named as “company X” in the subsequent chapters.

4.1 State engagement

This part of the empirical data will feature the employees’ own state of engagement during the organisational change process. We will reflect and describe a wide range of different feelings and experiences that have been mentioned to us regarding satisfaction, involvement, commitment, empowerment, energy and passion.

4.1.1 Satisfaction

Many of the employees who were interviewed explained that they believed the change was necessary to do, since many things needed to be “cleaned-up”. Several new managers have started to work for company X and they have implemented new concepts. In a longer perspective many employees think that many things are going to be better when the new organisation structure and the new routines have been rooted a bit. Some interviewees felt that it was exciting to follow the process and some also expressed that the situation has already been better when it comes to their work tasks or manager.

Today, I know who to turn to instead of running around, searching...

A few of the respondents expressed small facets of their state engagement during the change rather than big emotional shifting, for example they described the organisational change as a period of absence of positive or joyful feelings. Almost all of these respondents who did not mention any direct positive or negative feeling had not been very affected by the change — their work tasks were quite the same and/or their immediate manager had not been changed or the new manager seemed better that the previous manager.

However, during the time of the reorganisation, the level of overall satisfaction was mostly lower to many of the employees. A common view was that the change period resulted in more
work to do, since some work roles disappeared and duties were splitted up to other business units when company X aimed to slim the organisation. Many of the interviewees were less satisfied with their working situation at that time and/or with new working roles. Some lost part of their engagement and did not want to do “something extra”. A few also mentioned that they are still trying to find their genuine engagement, because it was lost during the reorganisation when new working roles were implemented:

\[
\text{My engagement went down, it was really boring... During the autumn, it was very tiresome, but as I mentioned before I absolutely understand why they did it. Maybe it will lead to something else that is good.}
\]

\[
\text{I cannot say that I am back to that feeling that I had before the reorganisation, when I used to come here and feel like ‘shit, how fun, now I am going to do this and that!}
\]

The majority of the employees who were interviewed expressed stronger feelings and explained the situation as demanding in several different ways. Some of the words that were used to explain emotions during this period were: ambiguity, contradictoriness, uneasiness, less focus, less joy, resignation, disappointment, alienation, sadness, lack of motivation, stress, frustration, anger and weakened confidence to leadership management. Some of the employees even considered to quit, because of these feelings.

\[
\text{I felt quite frustrated. Why not listen to the customers when they pay our salaries!}
\]

\[
\text{...and I would not say that it was any depression or anything, but absolutely lost joy to work!}
\]

\[
\text{Well, maybe it is best to quit and do something else.}
\]

Something that a few interviewees mentioned when talking about dealing with this demanding situation was that their personality may have helped them to think positively about the change and maybe even prevented them from being too unsatisfied, stressed or land up in a sick leave. These employees expressed that their positive attitude helped them to think and act optimistic during the change. One respondent also explained that she did not feel very well when she realised that she was starting to be negative about the change situation. The
engagement was decreasing and the interviewee declared that she did not like herself because of the pessimistic thinking.

4.1.2. Involvement
In general all the nine interviewees did not feel very involved in the organisational change process. The decisions were taken at the top management and the employees experienced that they could not do so much but to adjust to the change as good as possible. Some units were not very affected by the change while some units were hit harder of it. Several employees presented that they maybe did not wanted to be involved in the decision making, but they wanted to understand the reason behind some of the decisions. When many answers were not given they started to search for information themselves, but to no purpose. Some employees were trying to be involved, but the feeling inside was different during that period.

*My drive was stronger, but personally I perhaps felt a weaker drive, because I felt that I was very determined and I wanted to prepare and well... talk to everybody that I thought could be involved in this...*

When we asked the employees who expressed this kind of involvement, they named it as *frustration engagement*. This type of engagement was described as different from the genuine, joyful engagement because it was referring to uncertainty, information searching while frustrated and trying to get to know what was happening all the time. However, trying to be involved was necessary to some employees and it was the way they could show engagement. Those employees who were not very affected personally of the change did not feel the same need to find out what was going on.

*Of course this is a kind of engagement. If you did not care then it would not matter and you would just ‘buy’ the situation as it was. But at the same time it all goes over to a dwelling state in a negative sense.*

*And then of course, if it had affected me personally, now it had not, I might have felt some kind of anxiety and determination to find out what was happening.*
4.1.3 Commitment

When talking about the employees’ commitment towards company X the opinions differed among the interviewed. Some explained that their view was different today compared to the time before the change. The majority of the employees still have the same view of the company today as before the organisational change. Most of them have in common that they still like company X and link it to positive feelings, especially when the situation was stabilised a bit. They declared that they still are able to identify with the company. One opinion was that company X is an even more attractive employer nowadays and that the loyalty has been even stronger.

On the whole, yes, I am proud to say that I am working at the insurance company, it feels good. If I notice an advertisement /.../ or when people ask what you are working with, I feel pride.

There were also several of the respondents who described that their view of the company has been a little bit different in a negative way due to the organisational change. The new, more negative view of the company was much depending on the loss of a close co-worker or the general fact that some employees had to leave the company without any explanation to why they had to leave.

Well, I look at my company X with little negative eyes today, since one of my colleagues had to quit. /.../ Perhaps I cannot say that I love my employer as much as I did before the reorganisation. I am not as proud of the company as I was earlier.

I have always looked at my company as a good company, absolutely! But... the picture is rubbing a little when I felt like I did not get sympathy to my questions.

4.1.4 Empowerment

Almost all interviewees agreed that their empowerment was quite low during the organisational change. The willingness to invest some extra effort in the work or to take some extra responsibility seemed not to be a priority area due to lack of effort and power of initiative. Some employees spent some extra effort in comforting their colleagues who were concerned about their employment while others deepened in their work tasks instead of listen
to all the small talk. Again, there were also some employees who seemed unaffected of the
change.

*It was much chatting around and it took much effort.*

*I was engaged in that way that I actually tried to support the ones that was around me
and those who actually had to leave company X, maybe show some extra respect.*

*I was concentrated in my work and sometimes more absorbed in it to
avoid listen to all the small talk around, so this helped me of course.*

Several of the interviewees reported that their empowerment was too low and in the long run,
it was not very healthy. Also a few employees expressed that their overall performance was
about a normal level on the surface, but the inside feeling was that they did not perform as
they used to, because the joyfulness was missing.

*So I think that... When I try to remind myself, it was like I showed a good
level of vein at work and then I did not manage to keep up the
same vein at home so I was kind of moody.*

*I do not think that one would have been able to notice it. /.../ It was more like my own
inner feeling, that I did not perform all the way...*

### 4.1.5 Energy and passion

The organisational change has affected most of the employees’ energy level and passion in
different ways. The majority of the respondents felt that their energy went down, but to
different degrees depending on how much the change altered their work situation. The
employees who were not that much affected by the change, that is they kept the same position
and/or manager and did not lose any close co-worker, described how their energy just went a
little bit lower than usual. This was particularly due to worries and small talk concerning the
organisational change. Only one interviewee indicated that the energy went up in the initial
phase of the change. This was because of the need to figure out what was going on and sort
out the situation, but then later on as the change progressed the energy decreased.
The energy was negative, I would say. Not very much, but I lost it sometimes because when there were so many questions that circled in my head even if I felt safe.

I was totally drained of my energy just because I wanted to understand things.

I think that I always get an energy kick when I have to fight!

The employees who had to accept another working role than their present role, for example accept not to be a team-leader any more, were apparently more affected of the change. They described how their energy decreased a lot and also mentioned how the passion and joy in their work disappeared. The lost of a working role that they have enjoyed probably affected their energy level as well.

I didn’t have so much energy, whether at work or at home /.../ I didn’t go to the gym to the same degree as I usually do.

Ugh, how boring! I felt like ‘from now on it will become very boring’.

My energy level was absolutely lower! When I am stressed out I put my shoulders up and get a headache and it became worse and worse...

4.2 Important factors to stay engaged

In this section we will present the most important factors that have been mentioned by the employees themselves, in order to be able to stay as engaged as possible during the organisational change process. The factors below are either something that was important and helpful to keep up engagement or something that the employees were missing.

4.2.1 Social support

When we asked the nine employees if there were certain things that made it easier for them to deal with the reorganisation, almost all mentioned that the social support was very important to boost the level of engagement. The social support was primarily referring to support from colleagues, since they constitute like a comfort zone where anxiety could be ventilated in
agreement. Especially after the first announcement meeting about the change, the social support was particularly important.

My colleagues made me feel that it was easier for me to go to work during this period.

We were some people who stayed for about one hour after the first meeting, just to support and talked and talked... Oh, my god, what is going on here?

4.2.2 Managerial and organisational support

Another important factor to many employees was the managerial support. Because many working roles were changed, some lost their motivation and had to try to find a new platform. The manager was able to assess employee orientation, listen and support in different ways. However, some employees expressed a need to talk more about feelings to be able to stay engaged.

Well, my manager has been very good at listening when we have been sitting in this kind of conversation that we conduct once a month which I felt have been like a support from him /.../ and that he has ensured that we must try to find things in my new role today that will keep me motivated.

I have had great support from my manager /.../ but it is no one who has asked: ‘how does this feel and how is this’?

The quality of the manager support was not always enough, according to some respondents. Several employees have retold that some managers themselves probably were not sure about what was happening and therefore they were not able to give downward support.

Then, I had my manager to turn to but she was so shaky that I did not think it was much of a help.

There were a few employees who felt a need for a greater organisational support, especially some employees who was lacking social support and did not have anyone to turn to. The lack of social support was very critical and an important opinion was that the HR-department preferably could have supported more to help the ones who felt vulnerable.
I experienced that I was a lonely employee who was not included in any work group. I was very much on my own and left out. I would have preferred a better state of readiness from our HR-department in dealing with this, because I probably felt that I really needed support from the HR-department in order to get some help. I would really have appreciated if HR had contacted me directly, since I was in too a bad mood to take that initiative by myself.

4.2.3 Communication

Common for every single employee was the description of how they were spending time, in various degrees, to get information about the change and get answers to their questions that were not answered by their managers. Many employees shared a special memory that occurred during the initial time of the organisational change. It was the very first information meeting when everything was announced. During the meeting some employees discovered that their individual name was not included in the overall organisation chart. This moment was describes as a moment of surprise to many. These particular employees felt unseen, anonymous and also worried about what was happening within the organisation. Those who still were able to find their position at the chart started to support the others. Some employees were crying after the meeting. The state of engagement was very low at that time to some employees.

The uncertainty made me feel bad. It was very demanding. /../ I had, how to say, problems to relax night time, I slept poorly. Yes, it was all the time, both at work and private, so it was very chaotic to me!

During the change process, the employees experienced that many of their questions were left behind and they struggled to really understand what was going on and why certain things were happening. Some employees also expressed that their feelings maybe were repressed for a while because they struggled to make sense of the increased ambiguity and contradictoriness in information messages.

All these questions were perhaps the main thing that was circling in my head.

...like a reaction of sadness, you can be quite creative in the beginning of it, you do a lot and sort of... detach from your feelings.
To solve this problem of uncertainty every single employee mentioned that consistent information together with direct communication and straight answers throughout the change period would have been preferred. Often the employees received mixed messages from managers at different levels which were confusing and misleading. They also said that even though there were periods when not even the managers were sure about what was happening it would have been better if they had explained that instead of letting the employees keep wondering.

*Information is essential and I think that the information that came out associated with the first presentation was good but then it went silent.*

*Direct communication make me feel more confident /.../ I believe that not only I but the whole group would have been much stronger.*
5.0 Analysis

This part of the thesis will be an analysis of the empirical presentation above. In the first section, the two theories from our theoretical framework, the Job demand-resources model and attitudinal organisational commitment, will be applied to make up for possible explanations of how the state engagement was described by the interviewees. In the second section, we will only to a limited extent use theoretical support to explain the important factors that have been mentioned by the interviewees in order to be able to stay engaged during the change. Our purpose was not to fully be able to connect these factors to previous theories but to discover them and describe them.

5.1 How to understand employee state of engagement during the change?

In order to analyse employee state of engagement the different dimensions of state engagement; satisfaction, involvement, commitment and empowerment, will not be separated from each other when analysing, but treated together as an entirety. This is because we are not able to distinguish each category in the analytical tools, since the four categories of state engagement together constitute the concept.

5.1.1 Job demand-resources model

According to the JD-R model, job resources, personal resources and job demands influence work engagement, which in turn affects the level of performance. The model indicates that work engagement is dependent on access to resources and that these resources are more salient when demands are high. It also shows that the final performance is dependent on the level of engagement and that the performance outcome affects back on resources, in a circle process (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Based on the collected empirical data it is possible to say that the organisational change is perceived differently by different employees and that the change has affected the state engagement level to various extents. A few employees told that they are more satisfied today, for example they explicitly expressed that they were pleased with new routines, manager or overall organisational structure. According to the JD-R-model, one possible explanation to these positive feelings is the lack of additional demands during that period. These employees were not exposed to any extra job pressure or too high emotional demands. Instead, the
change was experienced as quite positive and lead to a greater satisfaction and clearness in job situation. Since job demands were rather absent in this case, there were enough resources to deal with the changing situation. Most important, the new changes were experienced as organisational improvements and therefore resulted in a predominantly positive state of engagement. Another aspect that might have had an effect on employees’ state engagement is their specific traits — their personality and optimistic view, which in the JD-R model act as a resource and might have contributed to a mainly positive view of state engagement.

The employees who expressed that their state engagement was not much affected at all by the change explained that they were able to work as usual. The environment neither had any strong effect on their feelings nor on the performance. When looking at the JD-R model, one can assume that these employees must have had enough resources in order to be able to keep their engagement at the same level as usual. Also the fact that these employees did not report any certain perceived job demands constitute as a contributing explanation to the reason of the maintained engagement level. Although a common view was that they were working as usual and that they were not very affected, some respondents emphasised that their energy level went down during this process. This was described as a result of spent time and effort in supporting co-workers and reflecting on unanswered questions.

The majority of the employees expressed that the organisational change have had strong impact on their state engagement. Many aspects as decreased satisfaction, less commitment, less empowerment and less energy were highlighted. Several of the interviewees reported that the genuine joyfulness and passion disappeared during the period. When using the JD-R model, there are many possible general explanations to why some respondents were experiencing the change as demanding. First, an unsatisfactory level of job resources contributes to low engagement, including state engagement. Some of the employees, who were experiencing the situation as very challenging, mentioned that neither their direct manager nor the HR-department was present and able to support them, which is important in the JD-R model. Second, a low level of personal resources, such as a lack of optimism or resilience, affect engagement negatively. However, we are not able to make a link between insufficient personal resources and low level of state engagement, since this dimension is not sufficiently visible in our empirical data.

Third, job demands play an important role in job related strain. The different types of demands, such as work pressure, emotional demands and mental demands are viewed as a source of “costs” and may lead to imbalance when they require high effort to sustain an
expected performance level. Job demands may become stressors in situations where for example extra energy and empowerment is needed. The increased work pressure has been described in several different ways by the employees as something that affected their energy level, for example. New tasks were allocated to specific work groups when certain work roles were completely removed as a consequence of the organisational change. This resulted in more duties but in the same amount of time for several of the employees. Some employees also had to accept new working roles that they did not enjoy as much as previous roles. The employees who expressed that their energy level decreased substantially in conjunction with the organisational change did mention that their willingness to put in extra effort in their work decreased as they did not have any energy to do something beyond what they really had to do. This indicates that the decreased energy level among these employees have had a negative effect on their state engagement.

When resources are low and demands are high, the situation becomes critical, according to the JD-R model. A certain strong description from one interview was that the state engagement was falling down to almost an unhealthy level when the employment was very unsafe. Insufficient lack of organisational and personal resources in combination with high demands made the employee totally lost engagement.

5.1.2 Attitudinal organisational commitment

In this section we will demonstrate how employees’ identification towards their organisation can affect the attachment and performance within the organisation. According to attitudinal organisational commitment an employee’s psychological state and attachment to the organisation is driven by the identification and involvement with the organisation. The theory claims that the greater identification an employee feels with the organisation, the better the task persistence is going to be. Thus, how much extra effort an individual is willing to invest is dependent on the extent to which he or she is emotionally involved with the organisation (Jaussi, 2007).

When looking at the presented empirical material it is clear that the ambiguous period during the organisational change has affected the commitment towards company X differently. Even though none of the interviewed expressed that they felt much involvement during this period, most of the employees told that they still feel pride of being a member of the company and that they still associate the organisation with positive feelings even after the change. One opinion was that company X is an even more attractive employer nowadays and that the loyalty has been even stronger.
The engagement of employees who still felt a quite strong commitment was not heavily affected by the organisational change. At the same time they had a strong emotional attachment towards company X from the beginning, because of their length of employment. This indicates that attitudinal commitment might be stronger when employees do not experience anxiety to a high extent. At the same time it is possible to say that when the attachment between an employee and the organisation is already strong from the beginning, the identification might not get very negatively affected during a change process.

There were also employees who described how their attachment dropped towards company X during and after the organisational change due to a new negative view of the organisation. Most of those who felt that their attachment decreased had negative thoughts and feelings toward the organisation and their state engagement was strained during the change. These employees described different aspects of job challenges that they felt during this period, such as changed duties or more work in less time, which can explain why their attitudinal commitment dropped during this period. Job challenges in combination with a negative view of the organisation possibly affect the attitudinal commitment so that these employees were less committed towards its organisation. The negative view of the company was also due to the uncertainty that some employees felt when some close co-workers had to quit without a clear explanation. This indicates how uncertainty that result in negative feelings and thoughts also can be a result of decreased attitudinal commitment.

5.2 The importance of support and communication

From our empirical data we were able to observe some factors that the interviewees mentioned as important to keep up engagement during the change. There was a clear pattern among all employees that were the most valuable factors — social support, managerial support as well as organisational support and communication. These factors are only partly described in existing theories, for example social support and supervisory coaching is named in the JD-R model. Organisational support could also be treated as a form of job resource. However, the importance of communication is explicitly missing in the theoretical framework. Since the importance of communication was mentioned by all interviewees, our analysis is that communication is very important in order for employees to be able to focus on the job and not exert too much energy in trying to find out what is going on around them — and why.
Almost all employees described the first announcement meeting as a special memory, in negative terms. Many were surprised, confused or sad after the first meeting, since the information message was experienced as a moment of surprise. This goes hand in hand with Morell, Loan-Clarke and Wilkinson (2004) who claim that a moment of surprise in an initial phase of a change process may lead to some people voluntary considering leaving the organisation, which in turn brings significant direct and indirect costs. Some of the employees we met mentioned that they had thought about quitting, but from our empirical data we are not able to express that these thoughts were connected to the specific occasion of the announcement meeting. On the other hand, we are able to express that many spent much time in trying to adjust to the situation a long time after the meeting, by searching for information, discussing with each other and supporting each other. Our analysis leads us to believe that the way the organisational change was communicated was a very critical situation to many employees and the level of state engagement can be negatively affected a long time after the meeting if many questions are not answered.

There is also another aspect of lack of communication, according to the employees. In this case the general communication was not enough during the process, according to all employees. Instead, some of the employees spent much time trying to be involved and unravel contradictory messages from the management. This kind of engagement was expressed as a kind of frustration engagement, where a lot of energy and empowerment were lost when these employees were trying to understand the reason behind different decisions and dealing with ambiguity. They were trying to counteract a lack of resources during the organisational change, in our case especially a lack of managerial support and/or information, by taking charge of the situation and engaging in a searching for information and support.


6.0 Discussion and critical reflection

In the following chapter we discuss the analysed empirical results, based on the aim and research questions of the study. We elaborate on the main contributions and implications and lift the result to a wider perspective.

The aim of this thesis was to contribute with a deeper understanding of employee engagement during an organisational change process. Throughout the literature review, engagement has been depicted almost exclusionary from the bright side, where engagement is viewed as something positive that generate benefits in terms of performance advantages primarily to the organisation. We wanted to switch focus from the organisation to the employees. By investigating the emotional state of engagement during an organisational change process, we wanted to look at the phenomenon during a period when there may be difficulties in maintaining a desired engagement level as demands will increase.

From our empirical presentation and the analysis chapter we are able to make some critical reflections. The experienced state of engagement during a change process is dependent on a range of interactive forces that is perceived differently among different employees. The theoretical variables covered in this study explaining different state of engagement are mainly job resources and demands from the JD-R model and also attitudinal commitment to the organisation. Depending on the level of support from colleagues, managers and the organisation as well as communication clarity, engagement is fluctuating among individuals. The sample of interviewees has described that the situation can be experienced as exciting, unaltered or as stressful and demanding. The degree to which an individual is emotionally affected during a change process seems to be dependent on if demands increase or not, how close he or she is to the change, if it has resulted in a less pleasant work role or not, how hard the change hits co-worker etc. These descriptions are corresponding with the view of Dent and Goldberg (1999) as well as Waddell and Sohal (1998) who explain that individuals do not resist changes per se, but may resist loss of status, loss of comfort or loss of payment etc. As some employees lost a work role that they enjoyed very much, because it was withdrawn, feelings of dissatisfaction and loss of energy arose to some interviewees. Besides these variables there are probably many others that affect the state of engagement, such as work experience, private circumstances, day mood etc, that have not been included in this study.
Our study is verifying much of what has been stated in previous literature. Many scholars point at the quantitative dominance and effective priority when planning for a change, instead of human focusing. Often, there seems to be a tension between organisational goals and individual goals, where the latter is inferior to organisational goals, especially during a re-organisation. The organisational change period at company X had been ongoing during more than six months at the time of this study. There were still many things left to solve when we met the sample of employees. Even if our empirical data is limited, our analysis of it leads us to believe that employees in an organisational change process are in need of a greater support than usual, both from colleagues, managers and HR-department. The employees want to understand what is happening and why through communication clarity. This is not always an easy task to achieve from the organisational perspective. As one interviewee expressed: “When you are involving people, the biggest challenge is to make them understand the roles and put on the ‘employer hat’ in order to be able to look at the situation from a business perspective.”

Our empirical results partly confirm both the theories used in the theoretical framework, the job demand-resources theory as well as attitudinal organisational commitment. The personal descriptions of state engagement are on the one hand about job resources that facilitate engagement and on the other hand about job demands that obstruct engagement. Thus, the JD-R model is not enough as a theory explaining engagement. The model is not including anything about the mood which dominates an individual’s performance under the surface. We have been able to touch the deeper emotional state during an organisational change. By doing that, we have found a deeper understanding of how employee engagement can be experienced, apart from what is mentioned in theory.

The descriptions from our data also make use of the attitudinal commitment theory. Many respondents explained that their commitment to the organisation was either strengthened or weakened because of the change. If the change was perceived in a deliberatively positive way, the bond to the organisation was strengthened for some individuals. If the change was perceived as something mostly negative, the bond to the employer was diminished.

Going deeper into the engagement construct, previous research is written almost entirely in positive view, stressing beneficial organisational effects of having engaged employees. We have found nearly no research that bring out and problematize the demands and uncertainty employees may be experiencing during organisational changes. Through our analysis of the empirical result we can see that it is obviously possible to feel engagement in different ways.
One way is to feel genuine passionate in the job and filled with satisfaction, commitment, involvement, empowerment and energy, which result is a certain level of performance. Another way is to feel frustrated while engaging in the job, which may result in the same performance or even higher, but the feeling inside is more negative and is not touching the soul with joyfulness. This kind of engagement is different compare to how it is depicted in the previous research. It is not always as bright and positive as the previous research indicates.

As a human being, there seems to be a deep desire to get to know what is going on and why — to be part of a context which is understandable. One can discuss whether frustrated reactions are a desired kind of engagement or not from an organisational perspective. Is it more beneficial to the organisation with employees who close off and do business as usual during a change or with those who are actively caring about what is happening? If the organisation does not fully succeed in meeting important prerequisites, another kind of engagement than the solely positive one can be expressed. In order to be able to make a knowledge contribution from this study, we believe that it is important to understand how different employees deal with uncertainty and higher demands in an emotional way. Due to these findings, we suggest that existing research and theory needs to be developed in order to separate from different kinds of engagement, because the solely positive kind of engagement and the frustrated kind of engagement need to be treated differently from a management perspective.

Figure 3. Extended version of the adjusted JD-R model during an organisational change.
We would like to make a theoretical contribution by including our introduced concept *frustration engagement* to the existing JD-R model. As can be seen from figure 3 above, the model is now extended. The original JD-R model is only showing the positive aspects of engagement and the benefits for the organisation. From our study we have discovered that demands tend to increase during an organisation change process. We have found that employees are reacting differently; some keep working as usual while others are considerable affected. The demanding forces might affect engagement to such an extent that the employees are in need of increased supportive interventions than otherwise to be able to keep up their engagement and performance. These employees are certainly experiencing engagement, but it is not a solely positive kind of engagement — it is a kind of counter engagement, which might bring negative effects for the organisation as well as for the individual. In the long run, dealing with frustration can be challenging to the employees, since it might cave much energy it is also time-consuming. In order to prevent frustration engagement and turn the feeling of disappointment and anger to a more positive state, the organisation needs to increase the job resources, for example by enlarged support and communication.
7.0 Conclusion

This chapter summarises the most important conclusions that can be drawn from this study. The discussion, together with the analysis chapter, has been the basis for the conclusions of the study. First, we make some conclusion about how state engagement was perceived among the employees and secondly, we conclude which were the most important factors affecting the engagement level and why. We end up with some own concluding remarks and suggestions to those managing people during a change.

From this study we are able to draw some main conclusions. It is possible to say that an organisational change appears to be a complex situation that may affect an employee's engagement to various extents. On the whole it has emerged that most of the employees experienced that their state engagement was affected by the organisational change at company X. The experienced state differed among the respondents according to dimensions as satisfaction, involvement and commitment, while most of the interviewees agreed that the empowerment and energy level decreased.

Some employees were satisfied with the outcome of their work situation, while the majority felt that their satisfaction level went down at some point during the change, even those who expressed that they were not that much affected by the change. Most of the employees in our study did not feel very involved in decision making, but a few employees struggled more than others in trying to be involved, but also felt frustrated at the same time. Some did not want to be very involved in the decision process, because they realised that their ability to influence was limited. The commitment to the organisation also differed between the employees. The majority did not change their commitment at all while some were either more or less committed. The empowerment was described by all employees as quite low throughout the change and their willingness to contribute with extra effort in their work was expressed as low as well. The energy was on the whole considered mostly as negative throughout the change. Almost all employees mentioned that they lost energy during the process, much because of speculations, worry or the need to support colleagues.

The most important factors to be able to stay engaged during the process were, according to the employees themselves, social support, managerial as well as organisational support and the importance of communication. Both communication and organisational support have in
general been described as lacking throughout the change. The communication factor was stressed among all employees as something that the organisation should prioritise more. A conclusion is that employees’ state engagement cannot be maintained during an organisational change, or is at least strained, if communication is insufficient from the organisational side. Due to this, the concept of frustration engagement has been introduced, which suggests that employees during a period of organisational change need additional resources, such as management support and information, to maintain their level of state engagement. We believe it is important that the employees understand the decisions taken in order to counteract anxiety and stress. As an employee expressed: “I definitely had, or certainly had, accepted that my role disappeared in a completely different way if I would had been involved and "picked out myself," or at least highlighted how we can solve it in another way.”

When a change process is all but finished and the organisational structure is technically implemented, we have found that engagement may still exist but might not only involve the positive state of engagement. If an organisation are to benefit from having satisfied, involved, committed and empowerment employees during and even after the change, our study demonstrates the importance of understanding the various spread in states that can be experienced, decide which kind of engagement that is envisaged and offer sufficient support and communication. Thus, from this study we are not able to draw any general conclusions if these factors are of the same importance for employees’ state engagement in other organisations. To be able to draw such a conclusion, further empirical research must be done.
8.0 Suggestions for future research

Finally, we share some suggestions for future research. The suggestions below are a result of the limitations in our own study.

Given the limited focus on individual experiences and differences within recent management field, we suggest that more studies should explore employee feelings, thoughts and behaviours. Quantitative studies seem also to be dominating among many scholars and we believe that more qualitative research is needed in order to be able to explore different dimensions of certain theories and models. Since this study was only studying employees at one specific company, it would have been interesting to compare our findings with similar studies within other companies, sectors, industries, cities or countries. Another way to continue exploring the engagement field among employees is to perform longitudinal studies. In such studies, both qualitative and quantitative methods preferably could be combined in order to observe how engagement is perceived sometime before and sometime after an organisational change. This is left to be explored by other interested scholars within management studies.
List of references


Appendix 1

Vill du bli intervjuad på din arbetsplats?

Hej!


INFORMATION: Vi söker dig som arbetar på företag X, är mellan 18 och 65 år och har en roll/arbetsuppgifter som på något sätt påverkas av pågående organisationsförändringar inom din enhet. Förändringen på din arbetsplats ska vara av sådan karaktär att du personligen upplever att den berör dig och din arbetsinsats. Det vi mer exakt avser att studera är hur ditt upplevda "engagemang" på arbetsplatsen påverkas av de pågående organisationsförändringarna.

SYFTE: Att öka förståelsen för hur medarbetares engagemang påverkas av organisationsförändringar. Ökad förståelse leder till ökad möjlighet för organisationen att arbeta med dessa frågor OBS! Oavsett hur pass engagerad du i grunden känner dig i ditt arbete är du en intressant intervjuperson för oss, då vi avser undersöka ditt upplevda engagemang vid tidpunkten för organisationsförändringen.

TID: Intervjuerna kommer att ske under första halvan av april månad.

PLATS: Företag X.

ÖVRIGT: Intervjuerna kommer att spelas in. Alla dina svar behandlas konfidentiellt. Du som vill delta kommer att få ytterligare ett mail inför intervjun med exempel på frågor vi kommer att ställa till dig.

Ta chansen att få en stunds reflektion över din arbetsinsats och på så sätt vara med och påverka din arbetsplats!

Meddela Jeanette Gruen om du kan delta. Vänligen ange ditt telefonnummer i mailet så att vi kan ringa dig och boka den timme som fungerar för dig.

Vi ser fram emot att träffa dig.

Med vänlig hälsning,

Sofia Beijer och Jeanette Gruen
Appendix 2

Information till intervjupersonerna innan intervjun

**Informationskravet:** Informera undersökningssedtagarna om deras uppgift som deltagande och villkoren för deras deltagande.

**Samtyckeskravet:** Informera om att deltagande är frivilligt och när som helst går att avbryta.

**Konfidentialitetskravet:** Informera om att svaren kommer att spelas in och vara anonyma. Det kommer således inte gå att härleda svaren till en enskild individ.

**Nyttjandekravet:** Informera om att de uppgifter som lämnas i samband med denna studie inte kommer att användas till något annat syfte än för vår uppsats.

**Syfte**

Vi är intresserade av hur medarbetarens engagemang påverkas av organisationsförändringar och vill skriva vår kandidatuppsats kring detta tema. Vi vill därför ta del av dina upplevelser och ditt engagemang under den period som företag X genomgått en organisationsförändring. Syftet med denna undersökning är att bidra till en ökad förståelse för hur medarbetare själva upplever att deras engagemang påverkats av organisationsförändringen, för att därmed kunna ge ledningen bättre underlag att genomföra en organisationsförändring med så engagerade medarbetare som möjligt. Vi tror att en ökad förståelse för medarbetares engagemang kan leda till en ökad möjlighet att arbeta med dessa frågor på en strategisk nivå för att kunna genomföra organisationsförändringar med så engagerade medarbetare som möjligt.

**Upplägg**


**Förtydliganden**

Det är viktigt att dina svar handlar om tiden då organisationsförändringen pågick. Vi vill även poängtera att oavsett hur pass engagerad du i grunden känner dig i ditt arbete är vi intresserade av att ta del av dina upplevelser, eftersom alla svar bidrar till en ökad förståelse för oss.

Med engagemang menar vi dina upplevda känslor kring din arbetstillförsel, din villighet att vara delaktig, din villighet att till organisatoriska åtaganden och din upplevelse av självbestämmande.
Appendix 3

Intervju guide

- Berätta kort om organisationsförändringen.
- Vilken var din inställning till organisationsförändringen från början? Vad kan det bero på?
- Hur upplevde du organisationsförändringen? Positiva/negativa aspekter?
- Vad innebar förändringen för dig, när det gäller din roll och dina arbetsuppgifter?
- Hur hanterade du de förväntningar som ställdes på dig? Känslomässigt? Beteendemässigt?
- Hur var den största utmaningen med organisationsförändringen för din del? Kan du ge exempel på något som känts särskilt utmanande? Hur kommer det sig?
- Hur påverkade organisationsförändringen din syn på din arbetsgivare?
- Vad innebär engagemang för dig?
- Beskriv ditt engagemang under denna period. Fanns det något mer som engagerade dig?
- Hur skulle dina kolleger beskriva ditt engagemang under denna period? Fanns det något du gjorde eller tänkte annorlunda under organisationsförändringen? Ex: om vi hade haft en filmkamera vid ditt skrivbord, hade vi då upptäckt något som var annorlunda?
- Berätta för oss om en kollega som du tycker var engagerad under organisationsförändringen. Om du jämför dig själv med kollegan, på vilket sätt skiljer sig ditt engagemang?
- Vad underlättade för dig att kunna vara fullt engagerad? Vad hindrade dig?
- Hur påverkade organisationsförändringen din syn på din arbetsgivare?
- Hur var din förmåga att uppleva meningsfullhet i ditt arbete?

Satisfaction

- Hur upplevde du ditt arbetes utformning?
- Hur var din förmåga att uppleva meningsfullhet i ditt arbete?

Involvement

- Hur involverad kände du dig i de organisatoriska förändringarna som Företag X stod inför?
- Hur påverkade detta dig?
- Hur var din villighet att investera kraft i ditt arbete under denna period? Vad berodde detta på?

Commitment

- Vad kände du för din arbetsgivare under denna period?
- Kunde du identifiera dig med din arbetsgivare? På vilket sätt? Varför inte?

Empowerment

- Berätta om hur du använde din initiativförmåga på arbetet. Exempel?

Energy/passion

- Upplevde du någon gång en känsla av inspiration eller passion inför ditt arbete? Berätta!
- Hur var din energinivå under denna period?
- Kände du dig någon gång fullt uppslukad i ditt arbete, så att tiden flög iväg? Berätta!
- Hur upplevde du att din förmåga att fokusera på dina arbetsuppgifter?
Övrigt

● Vad brukade ni kollegor prata om när det gällde organisationsförändringen?
● Hur tror du att rådande ledarskap påverkade din förmåga att vara engagerad? Anser du att ledningen hade kunnat göra något ytterligare för att öka ditt engagemang?

Avslutningsvis...

● Vilket är ditt starkaste minne när du idag tänker tillbaka på organisationsförändringen?
● När du pratade om ditt arbete med dina vänner eller din familj under denna period, vad brukade du då säga till dem?