UNIVERSITETET I AGDER

Change Readiness

Factors influencing employees' readiness for change within an organisation: A systematic review

REBECCA VICTORIA RIDDELL & MAREN TOFTE RØISLAND

SUPERVISOR
Jan Inge Jenssen

University of Agder, 2017
Faculty of School of Business and Law at UiA

Preface

This thesis is the final part of our master's degree program in business and administration at the University of Agder. The thesis counts for 30 credits and was completed in Spring 2017.

Completing and writing this thesis has been educational, interesting, and challenging. Despite some challenges along the way, we have gained a lot of knowledge regarding our topic, change readiness. The cooperation between both authors has been very good throughout the whole process, and we both got the opportunity to use our different strengths. We would like to thank our supervisor, Professor Jan Inge Jenssen, for good guidance and input throughout the process.

Kristiansand, June 2017
Rebecca Victoria Riddell and Maren Tofte Røisland

Abstract

External and internal factors are constantly forcing organisations to change; in order for organisations to survive and change successfully it is crucial to respond quickly. Readiness for change and actions undertaken in the implementation of change serve as key constructs for the success of a change effort. Readiness for change is well known as a tool for decreasing resistance to change, but exactly what factors will create this condition and in what order the steps must occur has been studied less extensively. The term *readiness for change* goes all the way back to Kurt Lewin's (1951) three-step model, in which the first step, unfreezing, refers to the creation of change readiness. Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder (1993) later expanded this approach by making their own model for readiness for change called the 'message'. The model is well-known in the field of readiness for change, and consist of five components; (a) discrepancy; (b) principal support; (c) self-efficacy; (d) appropriateness; and (e) personal valence. Change readiness or readiness for change can be defined as how the attitudes, beliefs, and intentions of an organisation's members recognise the need for change as well as the organisation's own capability to accomplish these changes (Armenakis et al., 1993).

We chose to conduct a systematic review using a narrative synthesis approach. Our aim was to collect various studies and articles, both qualitative and quantitative, in order to extract evidence regarding the factors that have the biggest impact on readiness for change. We started by collecting 500 articles, and after going through several exclusion processes, we ended up with 26 articles. These 26 articles were then analysed and systematised in various tables. Results show that the factors of 'the message' (especially self-efficacy), transformational leadership, development climate, participation, trust in management, organisational justice, and commitment had the greatest impact on change readiness, both directly and indirectly. These results were also supported by the literature on change readiness. Further, we constructed a model to show the most efficient way of gaining successful change readiness within an organisation.

Table of contents

List of tables

List of figures

1. Introduction

In the change management literature, we discovered that there were numerous articles about readiness for change and that this topic was highly correlated with the concept of resistance to change. According to Armenakis et al. (1993), readiness for change and resistance to change are the most discussed concepts, which represent the same phenomena from opposite perspectives. In other words, in order to avoid resistance to change, readiness should be created. Because resistance to change is one of the most frequently cited factors in describing why firms fail to implement change (Anuradha & Kelloway, 2004), we wanted to dig deeper into the topic of readiness for change. We soon discovered that there was considerable research on factors that contribute to readiness for change and strategies that could be used to effect readiness. We therefore wanted to sum up the evidence found in studies in order to inform and give advice that could be used in future endeavours. Last, we need to mention that in this paper we will interpret readiness for or to change and openness to change as the same concept because openness to change is analogous to Lewin´s (1951) stage of unfreezing and creating readiness for change. Openness to change is along with the other concepts necessary for a successful implementation of a change effort (Devos, Buelens & Bouckenooghe, 2010).

1.1 Background

External and internal factors push organisations into change, and organisations need to either respond quickly (reactive) in order to change successfully, or take proactive steps in advance of a given situation. Readiness for change and actions undertaken during the implementation of changes serve as a key construct for the success of a change effort. Managers should focus on creating readiness for change by reducing resistance and transforming employees into change agents, while at the same time crafting a change message that helps employees adopt behaviours that are essential for the change effort to be successful. Achilles Armenakis is a professor in the field of change management and is well known for his work on the subject of change readiness. He developed a model that focuses on the instruments underlying the adoption and institutionalisation of change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). The model is based on Lewin’s (1947) pioneering work and Bandura’s (1986) social learning theory. The model includes five components that should exist for change to be effective: (1) discrepancy; (2) principal support;

(3) self-efficacy; (4) appropriateness; and (5) personal valence (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999, cited in Neves, 2009).

1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to determine which factors influence employees readiness to change in an organisation. We will examine factors that impact readiness to change both directly and indirectly through various mediating factors. In the end of our study we will develop a theoretical model that will help organisations create readiness to change among their employees. The model consists of the various factors that through our research have been seen to influence change readiness the most. The goal is to provide evidence that can supplement organisations and guide them on the path to creating and sustaining change readiness within them.

2. Theory

In order to explain and describe the factors that contribute to change readiness, we feel that several terms and conditions within the field should be clarified first. We would like to begin by defining organisational change and discuss different factors that contribute to organisational change. When defining the term *change readiness*, we will also illustrate the difference between individual and organisational readiness, as this will be relevant to our further discussions. Lewin's three-step model is one of the primary reasons for this study, and therefore the model will be explained, with a focus on the first stage. We will also discuss Kotter’s eight-step model, as well as other models that include several steps related to change readiness. Further, we will discuss the change readiness theory based on Armenakis model, ‘the message’.

2.1 Organisational Change

Because of increasingly dynamic environments, organisations are constantly confronted with the need to implement changes in strategy, structure, process, and culture (Armenakis et al.,1993). Every organisation experiences change on different levels (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012). Change can arise from implementation of new technology, which can alter previous work methods. Hiring a new leader creates changes for all employees. Financial crises create new situations for whole organisations and industries. There are several definitions of the term *change*. Armenakis et al. (1993) describes change as a situation that interrupts the normal patterns of an organisation and calls for participants to enact new patterns involving a deliberate and emergent process. On a general basis, we can say that an organisational change has occurred when an organisation implies different moves at two different periods (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013).

It is normal to divide an organisational change into two dimensions (e.g., incremental and strategic or reactive and proactive) (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012; Busch, Johnsen, Valstad & Vanebo, 2007). Changes that are incremental are often small and tend to arise naturally from the environment. Incremental changes are usually perceived as a gradual process of change where the outcome of the change will be modest (Busch et al., 2007). A strategic change, on the other hand, is long-term and overarching (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012). These are often large changes that will directly affect the organisation's strategic situation (Busch et al., 2007). Proactive change refers to a change that happens in advance of an event and/or situation, and reactive change refers to change that happens after an event or situation has occurred (Kvålshaugen &Wennes, 2012). Jacobsen & Thorsvik (2013) describe proactive organisations as those that are able to anticipate changes in the environment and respond before being forced, while the opposite can be said of reactive organisations. By summarising these two dimensions, we get the typology shown in Table 1 (Nadler & Tusham, 1990, cited in Busch et al., 2007).

Table 1: Typology for organisational change

	Incremental	**Strategic**
Proactive	Tuning	Reorientation
Reactive	Adaption	Re-creation

Changes that are both incremental and proactive are referred to as tuning. These are changes that are often seen as continuous processes and are modifications to make the organisation better prepared to handle various tasks (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012; Busch et al., 2007). Incremental and reactive changes are perceived as adaption, they are small changes that occur as a result of pressure from the environment (Busch et al., 2007). Kvålshaugen & Wennes (2012) describe strategic proactive changes as a new way for an organisation to think and orientate itself. Such a change will require that both employees and management change their vision of the company's future, and it requires active participation of the employees (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012). A strategic and reactive change concerns large changes that an organisation is pressured to undertake, for instance because of new laws and regulations or a shift in consumers' needs (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012; Busch et al., 2007).

2.2 Forces behind organisational change

It is important to understand not only that organisations change but also why they change. Jacobsen (2012) presents five perspectives on forces that lead to organisational change. He uses the term 'motors' when referring to the forces effecting change. He calls first motor 'planned change – intentions as a force'. This change takes place because someone sees a problem, proposes possible solutions to the problem, and then implements a solution. It is important that such a change is intentional and that someone is leading the actions either in response to a problem or in an effort to make an improvement. The second perspective is called 'lifecycle change – growth driven'. In this perspective, change can also be intentional, but an organisation will change in a particular manner and will follow a specific development pattern. This means that all organisational change occurs because the organisation goes through a certain set of phases in its life. The lifecycle change perspective can also be seen in Henry Mintzberg's (1979) model of the organisational life cycle, which describes how an organisation develops from one stage to the next (Jacobsen, 2012). Perspective three is 'change evolution – competition for limited resources'. According to Jacobsen (2012), most organisations within this perspective are characterised by inertia, and most organisations that try to change and adjust themselves in the battle for resources will fail. Within this perspective, change does not occur because organisations change, but because new organisations enter the industry. Perspective four, 'change as a dialectical process – conflict of interest as the change force', is based on the assumption that every development within a society happens through continuous confrontation among different interests. Change is a result of different interests colliding, which eventually leads to something new. The last perspective, 'change as an anarchy – coincidences as a force of change', refers to change that can be seen as a result of coincidences. In other words, it refers to change that arises without there being a specific intention to solve a problem or as a development during a certain phase of life.

The forces behind organisational change can emerge from both external and internal forces (Jacobsen, 2012). External forces exist outside of an organisation, are beyond its control, and force the organisation to adjust. Such factors can be technological change, change in consumer demand, political change, cultural change, and so on (Jacobsen, 2012). Internal forces implies that there are factors inside an organisation that require change. Examples are conflicts, production problems, or high turnover (Jacobsen, 2012). To be able to understand the factors that contribute to change readiness within an organisation, it is essential to understand what forces lead to change, and the different types of change. For our study we have chosen to not distinguish among the different types of organisational changes. We will generalise the results – as far as it is possible – to every type of organisational change, independent of the forces behind the change.

3. Processes of organisational change

3.1 Lewin’s three-step model

Kurt Lewin is one of the most influential thinkers in organisation development (Simms, 2005). The term *change readiness* has its roots in Lewin’s (1951) model of change and is connected to the first step, unfreezing. According to Drenzky, Egold & Dick (2012, p.96) ‘a key issue for successful change management is how change agents can unfreeze the current state, or in other words, how employees’ readiness for change can be increased’. Because of this we have chosen to concentrate our thesis on Kurt Lewin’s three-step model, focusing on the first step. Based on Lewin’s three-step model (cited in Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013), other researchers have developed their own models. In the three-step models of Tichy & Devanna (1987) and Schein (2004), the steps are named differently but the underlying concept is the same. Tichy & Devanna (1987) have included two stages that can be identified as factors that create change readiness, and Schein’s (2004) model is similar to Lewin were the first step is linked to change readiness. Table 2 shows a comparison of the three models.

Table 2: Different three-step models

Lewin (1951)	Tichy & Devanna (1987)	Schein (2004)
1. Unfreezing	1. Recognizing the need for revitalisation	1. Disconfirmation Cognitive
2. Moving	2. Creating a new vision	2. Restructuring
3. Freezing	3. Institutionalising change	3. Internalizing new concepts

The first step in Lewin's model is based on the belief that in order to create change, one has to reduce the connections that stabilise a given situation. In other words, an awareness of a need for change must be established, and by doing so the organisation will start 'unfreezing' and get ready for change; this is also referred to as 'change readiness' (Kvålshaugen & Wennes 2012). It is important that motivation for change is created in the first step. By creating a perception that today's situation is on the wrong track, employees will feel concerned about what will happen if the organisation does not change (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013). According to Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2013), it is necessary that the unfreezing phase creates a psychological feeling of safety, wherein one either tries to reduce anxiety and resentment towards change or point out what is not going to change.

The next step is referred to as the change phase. This is the stage where measures of change are implemented, and new attitudes and behaviours are created through various measurers such as training, altered formal structure, new management style, and so on (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013). In other words, the organisation actually changes in the second stage before moving into a stable phase again, which Lewin refers to as 'freezing'. The last step in Lewin's model is about creating stability in the organisation again (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012). The term 'freezing' implies that that the organisation has now made the implemented change a part of its new practice, and the situation is now stabilised again (Kvålshaugen & Wennes, 2012).

Kurt Lewin's model is easy to understand, and much of the change literature is based on this model. The model is based on a theory that long periods of organisational stability are interrupted by large organisational changes, meaning that the model does not take into consideration that organisations are constantly in motion (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013).
In addition to the three-step models discussed above, other researchers and authors have been influenced by Lewin's model and have developed more detailed models with more steps. The

most famous one is John Kotter's eight-step model from 1995 (cited in Kotter, 2007). Looking at these different models we can quickly establish that they all include several steps for preparing the organisation for change. For instance, Kotter's (1995, cited in Kotter, 2007) first four phases of change deal with situations that must happen before change is implemented. Kanter (1992) and Galpin (1996) have both included five phases regarding change readiness, and Judson (1991) has included three phases. These models are compared in Table 3.

Table 3: Change models/theories

Kotter (1995)	**Kanter (1992)**	**Galipn (1996)**	**Judson (1991)**
1. Establishing a sense of urgency	1. Analyse the organisation and its need for change	1. Establishing the need to change	1. Analysing and planning the change
2. Forming a powerful guiding coalition	2. Create a shared vision and a common direction	2. Developing and disseminating a vision of a planned change	2. Communicating the change
3. Creating a vision	3. Separate from the past	3. Diagnosing and analysing the current situation	3. Gaining acceptance of new behaviours
4. Communicating the vision	4. Create a sense of urgency	4. Generating recommendations	4. Changing from the status quo to a desired state
5. Empowering others to act on the vision	5. Support a strong leader role	5. Detailing the recommendations	5. Consolidating and institutionalising the new state
6. Planning for and creating short-term wins	6. Line up political sponsorship	6. Pilot testing the recommendations	
7. Consolidating improvements and producing still more change	7. Craft an implementation plan	7. Preparing the recommendations for rollout	
8. Institutionalising new approaches	8. Develop enabling structures	8. Rolling out the recommendations	

	9. Communicate, involve people and be honest	9. Measuring, reinforcing, and refining the change	
	10. Reinforce and institutionalise change		

In addition, Fritzenchaft (2014) refers to other researchers and authors who have been influenced by Lewin’s three-step model. Likewise, Nadler, Tushman & O´Reilly (1989) identified three phases in a change project (Fritzenchaft, 2014). Roos, Krogh, Roos & Boldt-Christmas (2014) mention three other authors in addition to Lewin (1951) and Tichy & Devanna (1987) who have also included three steps in their change process, these are: Aldrich, 1979; Senge et al.,1999; and Beckhard & Harris, 1997. All of these authors have dedicated at least the first phase of their models to change readiness. Fritzenchaft (2014) also mentions that Burke (2003) identifies 5 phases in a change process, and that Doppler & Lauterburg (1994) identify 12 different steps. All these models are based on the theory of Kurt Lewin, and we see that they all included one or several phases devoted to change readiness. This illustrates how important it is to establish change readiness within an organisation.

4. Change Readiness

Change readiness, as mentioned before, can be explained by Lewin’s (1951) step of unfreezing, and it is based on organisational members’ attitudes, beliefs, and intentions about the change and the degree to which changes are needed and the organisations’ ability to implement those changes successfully. Eby, Adams, Russell & Gaby (2000, p.422, cited in Rafferty, Jimmieson & Armenakis, 2013) explains readiness at an individual level as: ‘Readiness refers to ‘an individual´s perception of a specific fact of his or her work environment - the extent to which the organisation is perceived to be ready for change’. Jones, Jimmieson & Griffiths (2005, p.362, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) further defines readiness at an individual level as:

> ‘The notice of readiness for change can be defined as the extent to which employees hold positive views about the need for organizational change (i.e., change acceptance), as well as the extent to which employees believe such changes are likely to have positive implications for themselves and the wider organization’.

Weiner (2009, p.68, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) defines readiness at an organisational level as follows: ‘Organisational readiness for change refers to organisational members ‘change commitment and self efficacy to implement organisational change’. In addition, readiness can be explained as the cognitive antecedent to the behaviours of either resistance to or support for a change event (Armenakis et al., 1993). Schein (1979, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993) has argued that many change events end with resistance or failure because an effective unfreezing process is not in place before implementing the change process. Despite the importance of readiness, it is rare that researchers have used readiness as unconnected to resistance (Coch & French, 1948; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Lawrence, 1954, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993). Creating readiness has been explained as a way to reduce resistance. Kotter & Schlesinger (1979, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993) have discussed several strategies for handling resistance, such as education, communication, participation, involvement, support and facilitation, agreement, and negotiation. These strategies are effective in reducing resistance, but only when they first create readiness. In other words, readiness has an impact on the resistance to change and whether the change event is effective (Armenakis et al., 1993).
Coch & French (1948, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993) further found in their study that in order to create readiness, a change agent needs to use proactive efforts to influence the beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviour of employees. The essential element in creating readiness for change is to change individual cognitions among a certain number of employees. However, it is important to highlight that creating readiness for organisational change is not only about individual cognitions, but also about social phenomena (Armenakis et al., 1993). Griffin (1987, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993) suggests in his social-information processing models that individual readiness for change can be influenced by the readiness of others.

The antecedents of change readiness can be divided into three main categories. The first category is an external organisational pressure that involves industry changes, technological changes, and government regulation modifications, which all result in organisational change. This category has mainly been studied regarding organisational-level change readiness. The second category of antecedents are internal context enablers, which involves change participation, communication processes, leadership processes, and so on. The third category involves an individual level of analysis, including personal characteristics, and at the collective level, group composition characteristics. Most research on change readiness has focused on internal context enablers and personal characteristics (Rafferty et al., 2013). The multilevel framework created by Rafferty et al., (2013) is presented below in figure 1.

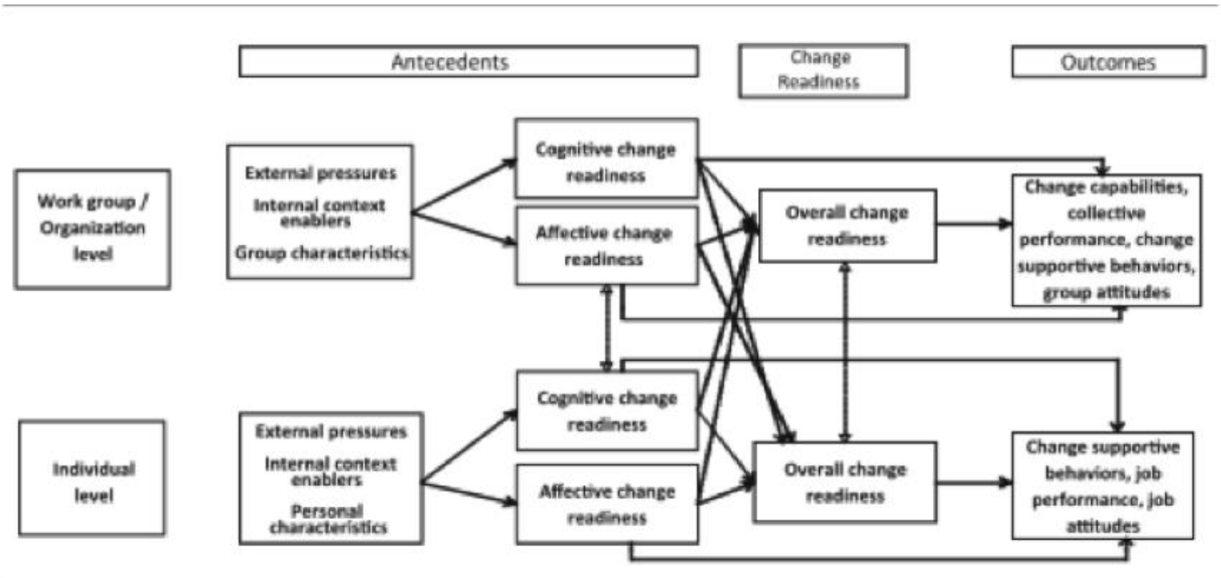

Figure 1: Multilevel Framework

4.1 Armenakis's two models for change readiness

Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) proposed two models based on previous work by Armenakis et al. (1993). The model has integrating elements from both Lewin's work and the social learning theory of American psychologist Arthur Banduras 1997 (Busch et al., 2007; Simms, 2005). The first model considers creating readiness for change so that resistance is minimised (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). Its purpose is to create a process that will reduce the organisations resistance to change (Busch et al., 2007). The logic behind both models according to Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) is to convert the constituencies affected by a change into agents of change, and that the operational mechanism underlying both models is the basic change message being conveyed. According to Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) the first model, referred to as 'the message' includes:
1. Discrepancy (i.e., we need to change)
2. Self-efficacy (i.e., we have the capability to successfully change)
3. Personal valence (i.e., it is in our best interest to change)
4. Principal support (i.e., those affected are behind the change)
5. Appropriateness (i.e., the desired change is right for the focal organisation)

The goal of the second model is to include and facilitate the adoption and institutionalisation of the desired change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Busch et al., 2007). The second model is of special interest to both change agents and change researchers, and it is the influence strategy that

Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) identifies as being useful for transmitting change messages. More explanation regarding these strategies will be provided later in the thesis.

4.2 Individual and organisational change

Creating readiness involves convincing a group of socially interacting individuals to change their attitudes, intentions, and beliefs in line with the discrepancy and efficacy aspects of the message. In order to manage this, a change agent needs to distinguish between individual and collective readiness and understand what influences the collective perception of the readiness message (Armenakis et al., 1993). The model (i.e., the message) of Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) considers the individual side of readiness, and will therefore be explained more in detail. In addition, we will elaborate on the collective side of readiness, as it has an essential impact on the individual side of readiness

4.3 Individual readiness for change – the message

Individual readiness for change can be explained as an individual attitude, beliefs, and intentions about the change. It involves the extent to which an individual recognises the need for the change, and the organisation´s ability to accomplish these changes (Armenakis et al., 1993). Armenakis & Harris (2002) enlarged the definition and explored the five beliefs of the message as mentioned before, which also emphasised an individual´s change readiness. First, Armenakis & Harris (2002) argued that a change message must create a feeling of *discrepancy*, or a belief that change is needed. Further, an individual must believe that a suggested change is an *appropriate* response to a situation. Both of these perceptions can fall under the category of ‘need for change’. The discrepancy side of the message communicates information regarding the need for change, and should correspond to relevant contextual factors such as changes in governmental regulations, economic conditions, and increased competition. Establishing the belief that change is needed demands a demonstration of how the present performance of the organisation varies from the preferred end-state (Katz & Kahn, 1978, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993). Several researchers on leadership vision stress the importance of clarifying and creating commitment to the end-state in order to justify the need for change. Therefore, the discrepancy

message involves communicating the current state of the organisation, where it wants to be, and why the end-state is relevant (Armenakis et al., 1993).
Armenakis & Harris (2002) also mentioned that a change message must create a feeling of *efficacy*, which involves an individual´s realised capacity to implement a change initiative. This can also be described as self-efficacy (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). Efficacy has been identified as the perceived ability to get control over the discrepancy, and it influences individuals through patterns, actions, and emotional feelings. Further, individuals will refrain from activities that exceed their capabilities and engage in activities they find themselves capable of doing. Therefore, in creating readiness, one needs to both communicate the notable discrepancy but also highlight the importance of efficacy among the employees in order to minimise the discrepancy (Armenakis et al., 1993). The fourth belief, *principal support*, involves an individual's belief that his or her organisation will give noticeable support for change in form of information and resources. This belief also describes an individual's feeling of efficacy regarding his or her capability to implement change. The last belief, *valence*, involves an individual's assessment of the benefits or costs of a change for his or her job and role in the organisation. If an individual does not believe in the benefits of a change, it is unlikely that he or she will have an positive overall assessment of his or her readiness for change (Rafferty et al., 2013). While Armenakis et al.'s (1993) definition of change readiness does not involve affective components of change readiness, recent studies have found that affect is an important component of the change readiness formulation. Crites, Fabringar & Petty (1994, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) explains *affect* as having separate, qualitatively different emotions such as happiness, love, hate, sadness, calmness, anger, joy, excitement, and so on. Further, Holt, Armenakis, Feild & Harris (2007, p.235) define change readiness as: 'the extent to which an individual or individuals are cognitively and emotionally inclined to accept, embrace, and adopt a particular plan to purposefully alter the status quo'.

Rafferty et al. (2013) suggest that separate emotion units that contain an individual's or a group´s positive emotions regarding a particular change event should evaluate affective change readiness. Affective responses to change may result from currently experiencing an emotion (such as hope) due to the expectations of a desirable or undesirable future event (Baumgartner, Pieters, & Bagozzi, 2008, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). Further, positive emotions can arise from imagining the experience of certain emotions in the future once certain events have taken place (Baumgartner et al., 2008, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013).

To sum up, Rafferty et al. (2013) suggest, based on the model of Armenakis et al. (1993), that individual's readiness for change is influenced by the individual´s beliefs, including the belief that change is needed, that he or she has the ability to successfully implement the change, and that the change will have positive outcomes for his or her job and role in the organisation. Further, individual readiness for change is influenced by the individual's current and future-oriented positive affective emotional reactions to a particular change.

4.4 Collective readiness for change

Some researchers have proposed that organisational initiatives involve the implementation and adoption of change initiatives at multiple organisational levels. Whelan-Barry et al. (2003, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) argues that the organisational-level change process involves both group and individual change processes. Rafferty et al. (2013) further argues that a work group’s change readiness and an organisation’s change readiness attitudes derive from the cognitions and affects of individuals. Because of social interaction processes, the individual´s cognitive and affective attitude becomes shared, and this leads to a higher-level collective phenomena: work group and organisational readiness for change. They further suggest that a work group´s change readiness and an organisation’s change readiness are influenced by shared cognitive beliefs among the work group or organisational members. First of all is the shared cognitive beliefs that change is needed, further that the work group or organisation has the capacity to tackle the change successfully, and that change will result in positive outcomes for the work group or organisation. Second, a work group’s or organisation’s change readiness are influenced by their current and future-oriented positive emotional reaction to an organisational change.

4.4.1 Work group change readiness: cognitive beliefs

Individuals in teams are found to have a range of top-down processes that create a common set of stimuli. When work group members interact with one another over time, they agree on a set of views of different events and key features of the workplace (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). George & Jones (2001, p.421, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) explains the change context in theory, explaining that organisational change involves: ‘an individual and group sense-making process taking place in a social context that is a product of constant and ongoing human production and interaction in organisational settings’. This brings us to the conclusion that the meaning of a change event is agreed upon and caused by individual and group sense-making efforts. Isabella (1990, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) further argues that in the first stage of a change process, the anticipation stage, staff uses indicators to develop an understanding of the upcoming changes, often in the form of rumours. The members of the work group share their beliefs through communication and rumours to support the changes in order to make sense of the changes.

Other researchers argue that when work groups develop collective beliefs that a change will have positive outcomes and that there is a need for change, these shared beliefs increase the chance of successful implementation of change (Rafferty et al., 2013). Mohrman (1999, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) compared work groups with successful implementation of organisational change with those who unsuccessfully implemented the change. He found that the work groups that successfully implemented organisational change were more positive regarding the outcomes that they were experiencing as a result of changes. They also felt that the changes were in their best interests as well as for the company.

4.4.2 Work group change readiness: affective responses

Sanchez-Burks & Huy (2009, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) suggest that collective emotional reactions, which involve the configuration of various shared emotions among group members, can grow as a reaction to change events. In addition, a number of theoretical processes are likely to take part in the development of shared affective reactions to change events, including emotional similarity and contagion (Barsade, 2002; Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013).

These processes indicate that individuals use two types of signals to synchronise their moods with others: self- produced signals and situational signals. Self-produced signals focus on an individual's understanding of his or her own expressive behaviours, and situational signals are based on an individual's understanding of other's expressive behaviours in a given situation. Emotional similarities take place when individuals, for example, experience organisational change, search for and use signals from other similar-minded individuals to validate one's emotional state (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013).

Barsade (2002, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) highlights emotional contagion as being important. It can be explained as a process in which a person or group have an impact on the emotions or behaviours of another person. Bartel & Saavedra (2000, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) further argue that emotional contagion takes place through behavioural imitation and synchrony, which can result in a feeling of emotional harmony with others in two ways. First, individuals have a tendency to agree upon emotions with the facial, postural, and vocal expressions they imitate. They are unaware of these expressions, and the expressions can increase emotional contagion in social settings. Second, individuals can be aware of their self-perception process and make conclusions about their own emotional condition with regard to their own expressive behaviour. When one´s emotions are weak, an individual depends on behavioural signals to deduce their own state of mind.

Several studies show that collective emotions can be affected by both external factors and group members (Mackie, Devos & Smith, 2000; Totterdell, Kellett, Briner, & Teuchmann, 1998, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). Researchers have identified several antecedents of collective emotions, including the continuousness and frequency of contact, task and social interdependence, recognition within the work group, commitment to the group, and work climate (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Mackie et al., 2002; Totterdell et al., 1998, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). Studies also show that collective emotions have an impact on several individual and work group outcomes. Barsade (2002, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) determined that contagion does occur and that a work group with positive emotional contagion experienced better task performance, cooperated better, and had limited conflict.

4.4.3 Organisational readiness for change: cognitive beliefs

Top-down processes in organisations can lead to shared beliefs about a change. Certain processes such as selection, appeal, attrition, and organisational socialisation decrease the variability in thoughts and feelings within an organisation, and enable a common understanding of the workplace and events (Schneider, 1987; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). The Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) framework indicates that these processes determine what kinds of employees are recruited and retained in an organisation, and this determines the nature of an organisation´s culture, structures, and processes. The model draws the conclusion that people choose an organisation based on their own personal characteristics and features of the organisation. Further, people are brought into organisations based on similarities of their characteristics to those within the organisation (Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013).

The attrition aspect of the model concludes that staff members who share few similar characteristics with the organisation tend to leave. However, Harrison & Carroll (1991, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) highlight that over time, staff tend to have more similar beliefs, which is also supported by the ASA model (Schneider, 1987, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). Further Rafferty et al. (2013) argue that both the ASA processes and socialisation processes create shared perceptions of key beliefs about change events and that these beliefs have an impact on employees' readiness for change. The process in which a new employee comes as an 'outsider' of the organisation or becomes an 'insider' and integrated employee can explain organisational socialisation.

4.4.4 Organisational readiness for change: affective responses

In general, shared affective responses tend to develop if employees have similar perceptions about the motive for strategic change, or if they have similar experiences in case of costs and benefits of the change (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). Herold, Caldwell & Liu (2008) and Oreg & Berson (2011, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) highlight the role of transformational and charismatic leadership in a changing process. They suggest that leaders who create a clear vision of the future, create similar perceptions or beliefs about change events. Connelly, Gaddis & Helton-Fauth (2002, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) further argue that when transformational leaders project a vision that inspires optimism and hope, they create a shared organisational positive affective reaction to change.

Dutton & Dukerich (1991, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013) suggest that employees who identify strongly with an organisation, have a greater tendency to experience emotions similar to one another's when an organisation is faced with changes that can build up or threaten the organisation´s identity. Collective organisational emotions are also impacted by the culture of the organisation because culture guides, informs, and regulates the emotions of staff in an organisation (Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989, cited in Rafferty et al., 2013). To sum up, an organisation´s leadership, identity, and culture tend to play a part in the development of steady collective affective responses to organisational change events.

4.5 Change message strategies

Bandura (1977) and Fishbein & Azjen (1975, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993) suggest two strategies a change agent can use for increasing readiness for change in the flow of social information processing among organisational members. The two strategies appropriate for influencing the individual cognitions are *persuasive communication* (both oral and written) and *active participation*. A third strategy involves the *management of external sources of information* (Armenakis et al., 1993). All of these strategies are good for delivering discrepancy and efficacy information. Persuasive communication is mainly a source of precise information considering discrepancy and efficacy. In addition, persuasive communication sends symbolic information considering the obligation to, prioritization of, and importance of the change event. Oral persuasive communication involves in-person speeches, either live or recorded. Written persuasive communication involves documents made by the organisation, such as newsletters, annual reports, and memos. Lengel & Daft (1988, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993) assert that in-person communication is the most effective medium because it creates a personal focus and allows openness for feedback. Management of external information sources outside the organisation can be used to strengthen the message sent by a change agent. A message made by more than one source, especially if it is external, gives more credibility and confirmation (Gist, 1987, cited in Armenakis et al., 1993). The news media is one type of external source that can have a positive impact on creating readiness for change. This can be explained by its objectivity, and it is therefore often persuasive in creating readiness for change. However, a change agent does not effortlessly manage this. There are two ways a change agent can manage this information. Information can be given to the external press in form of press releases, or a change agent can handle such media information by making change-relevant information available, for example, by distributing copied articles, film clips, or books to members of the organisation (Armenakis et al., 1993).

Active participation, both the persuasive communication and the management of external information, affects the direct communication of the readiness message. Change agents can also send the message indirectly by creating opportunities for members in the organisation to learn through their own activities. This approach is effective because individuals tend to have greater trust in information that they discover themselves, and is not in the explicit control of the change agent. One type of active participation is to involve individuals in activities that offer relevant information concerning potential discrepancy and efficacy messages. One example could be to involve organisational members in formalised strategic planning activities that allow them to discover the discrepancies facing the organisation themselves. Another type of active participation is vicarious learning. This approach can strengthen the confidence that new production techniques are not only being established to create a competitive advantage, but that they can be implemented in their own work place. A third form of active participation is enactive mastery. Enactive mastery involves preparing organisational members for change by taking small incremental steps. In successful small-scale efforts, this approach can generate efficacy by implementing changes needed for large- scale change (Armenakis et al., 1993). Armenakis later enlarged his framework, and added four more strategies to his model. The first is human resource management practices that involve selection, performance appraisal, compensation, and training and development programs. Second, the model suggests having symbolic activities like rites and ceremonies. Third, the model suggests creating diffusion practices, such as best-practice programs and transition teams. Fourth, formal activities that demonstrate support for change initiatives such as new organisational structures and revised job descriptions are proposed as a strategy for increasing readiness for change among employees (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999).

5. Method

As mentioned earlier, considerable research is being done to study readiness for change, and it provides a number of views on how to influence readiness for change among employees. We wanted to summarise evidence and identify patterns found in these studies to provide information and advice that could be used by leaders. For our method, we decided to use a systematic review with a narrative synthesis approach, which involves both qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research synthesis has shown to be useful in sorting out the mass of literature in the area of organisation theory and change. Therefore, the use of qualitative synthesis has begun in the field of organisational studies. Researchers have also used qualitative research synthesis to study individual and organisational strategies for change and management practices (Major & Savin- Baden, 2010). Based on the benefits of having qualitative studies in the synthesis of organisational studies, we wanted to include them in our thesis as well, together with quantitative research.

Table 4 is based on the view of Major & Savin-Baden (2010) and is adapted from Grant & Booth (2009). We considered that researchers have different explanations and views of the various methods. Booth, Sutton & Papaioannou (2016) explain systematic review as one that combines the strengths of a critical review with exhaustive search process. This approach emphasises that the aim of the method is to produce 'best evidence synthesis'. They also recommend the use of both narrative and tabular presentation, and base their analysis on what is known and provide recommendations for practice. Further, they define realist synthesis as a method that combines a large and diverse selection of literature to inform policy, design effective interventions, and identify potential interventions. In addition, they argue that the analysis is based on theory building and theory testing. Explanations of critical interpretive synthesis and meta-ethnography are quite similar among researchers (Hannes & Lockwood, 2012; Major & Savin-Baden, 2010; Booth et al. 2016). Below is an overview of the different methods we went through, before finding the most suitable method for our thesis (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p.28-30, 33.)

Table 4: Methods summary

Method	**Systematic review with narrative synthesis**	**Realist synthesis**	**Meta-ethnography (qualitative research synthesis)**	**Critical interpretive synthesis/ Meta-synthesis**
Definition	A systematic technique that sums up results of studies and presents a narrative synthesis of results.	A systematic process including a wide-ranging, iterative approach to synthesis.	Qualitative research synthesis with reinterpretation and translation of concepts. Combines primary studies into a new whole.	Meta-ethnographic approach is used, but also includes quantitative studies, especially the discussion and conclusion sections.
Aim of method	Summarise and explain findings of multiple studies.	To test theories or mechanisms.	Develop a conceptual translation, a reinterpretation of data, or development of a new theory.	Use a meta-ethnographic approach, but synthesising both qualitative and quantitative research.
Forms of	Qualitative and	Qualitative,	Qualitative only.	Qualitative and

evidence included	quantitative.	quantitative reports and grey literature.		quantitative.
Exclusion criteria	Objective exclusion criteria, often based upon quality and study relevance.	Test relevance (do the findings address theory) Test carefulness (do the findings support conclusions).	Decided by the researcher. Mainly based upon topic, research question, research methodology and findings.	Decided by the researcher.
Data collection	Findings extracted.	Theories extracted; findings extracted.	Search for studies until saturation is reached.	Complete and detailed sampling
Intends to measure	'Outcomes of intervention.'	'What works under which circumstance'.	'A comprehensive picture of findings from individual studies'.	'A comprehensive picture of findings from individual studies'.
Procedure	Studies are selected and critically assessed. They are reviewed for data. Data is analysed. Results are interpreted.	Search for relevant theories. Theories are located, categorised and developed into a framework of evidence. Research are assessed and findings extracted. Synthesising of findings and conclusions are made.	Key concepts and themes are extracted from findings, based on title, author discussions, conclusions and so on.	Key concepts and themes are extracted from findings of qualitative studies and discussion sections of quantitative studies.
Analysis	Statistical analysis; but increased use of qualitative approaches in the summarising.	Evaluate document developed based upon theories. Analysis either quantitative or qualitative, or both, depending on the hypothesis.	Standard qualitative techniques, such as coding and constant comparison.	Standard qualitative techniques, such as coding and constant comparison.
Presentation	Narrative.	Narrative.	Combination of narrative and tables or figures to represent relationships.	Narrative.

After looking through the different methods, we needed to find out which of the methods was best suited for our thesis and define the purpose of our research. Our purpose is to summarise evidence found in the literature regarding factors influencing readiness for change among employees in order to inform and provide recommendations for future practice in changing organisations. Meta-ethnography was the first method we explored because it provides a comprehensive picture of findings from individual studies, which was one goal of our thesis. We wanted to get a picture of different findings in the area of readiness for change. The method was also open for reinterpretation and translation of concepts. However, because the main purpose of the method is to reinterpret and develop a new theory, we did not find it appropriate to use. In addition, the method was only suitable for qualitative research, and we saw the need to include both qualitative and quantitative methods. We therefore went to the next method, critical interpretive synthesis, which is similar to meta-ethnography approach, but also includes quantitative research. However, the aim of this method was also to reinterpret and develop a new theory. Therefore we excluded this method as well because we wanted to summarise evidence found in the literature, not develop a new theory. We further investigated the method of realist synthesis because this method also allows for both qualitative and quantitative research. However, the purpose of this method is to test theories and mechanisms and to find out 'what works under what circumstances'. Because we did not want to test theories that were developed by researchers or explore the effect of different interventions, but rather wanted to study the outcomes of different factors and interventions, we also excluded this method. In this matter, we explored the method systematic review, which aims to measure the outcomes of interventions, summarise, and explain the findings of multiple studies. This method also allows for both qualitative and quantitative research. In addition it combines the strengths of critical review with exhaustive search process, which allows us to find the most relevant studies in the area of readiness for change. Finally, we needed to determine which approach to use with the method, and because it was possible to use narrative synthesis for both qualitative and quantitative studies it was recommended as an appropriate approach to systematic reviews, we decided to take this approach. More detailed information regarding narrative synthesis approach will follow.

5.1 Systematic Review: Narrative Synthesis Approach

All types of reviews should be systematic. A systematic review can be defined as a type of literature review with the goal of identifying all the available evidence in order to reduce the effect of bias in the review findings, and to develop a comprehensive body of knowledge on a particular topic (Booth et al., 2016). It can be seen as a relatively easy and relevant way for researchers to summarise their findings and provides reliable, up-to-date evidence about the beneficial and harmful effects of interventions (Tranfield et al., 2003, cited in Bryman, 2008). A systematic review can also be described as ‘a replicable, scientific and transparent process…that aims to minimise bias through exhaustive literature searches of published and unpublished studies by providing an audit trail of the reviewer´s decisions, procedures, and conclusions’ (Bryman, 2008, p. 85). According to Bryman (2008) the proponents of such a review are more likely to generate unbiased and comprehensive accounts of the literature, especially in fields that aim to understand whether a particular intervention has certain benefits.

The methods for implementing a systematic overview with qualitative research are used less frequently than systematic overview of quantitative studies (effect of efforts). There is also a debate over how to best approach these overviews. Some argue that qualitative research cannot be generalised, and that in merging several qualitative studies one risks contextualising the results, and drawing incorrect conclusions that the results of each study are unified. Others argue that the merging of qualitative research introduces a new area of generalised qualitative theory development and is useful for informing politics and practice. There are also differences in how to merge the studies in systematic overviews (Berg & Munthe-Kaas, 2013).

Because of the ability to use both qualitative and quantitative studies, a narrative synthesis approach was chosen to review and synthesise the literature. Popay et al. (2006) describe narrative synthesis as an approach to the systematic review and the synthesis of findings from multiple studies that relies primarily on the use of words and text to summarise and explain the findings. A narrative synthesis often involves the manipulation of statistical data. One of the main characteristics of a narrative approach is that it adopts a textual approach to the process of synthesis to ‘tell the story’ of the findings from the studies included (Popay et al., 2006). Crabtree & Miller (1999) describe narrative thinking as a way of understanding the world and ordering experience that contrasts with the prevalent positivist scientific paradigm that has characterised so much of modern research. Whereas Popay et al. (2006) describe it as a way of bringing evidence together in a way that tells a convincing story of why something needs to be done or needs to be stopped. Popay et al. (2006) identify four main elements that should be included in a narrative synthesis: (1) Developing a theory of how the intervention works, why, and for whom; (2) developing a preliminary synthesis of findings of included studies; (3) exploring relationships in the data; (4) assessing the robustness of the synthesis.

First of all, it is necessary to define the purpose of the review, so that decisions about the inclusion and exclusion of studies can be made (Bryman, 2008). The main purpose of our review is to identify factors that influence readiness for change among employees. Our review will consist of eight stages: (1) defining search words and inclusion and exclusion criteria, and determining what databases to use; (2) reading titles and abstracts, and excluding articles that do not fit with our review; (3) removing all studies and articles that are duplicates; (4) excluding all articles that do not fit because of the inclusion and exclusion criteria; (5) quality appraisal; (6) grouping and systematising the remaining studies under different categories in tabulations; (7) explaining relationships between the data, and explaining and elaborating the results; 8) making a conclusion and theoretical model based on our findings; 9) identifying gaps and limitations from the literature and throughout our thesis.

5.2 Search strategy

The main reason for doing a literature search is to identify information for our research. If the literature search is done in a systematic manner it gives a more comprehensive retrieval of literature and provides more meaningful and credible review findings. A systematic review is an exhaustive comprehensive search, and therefore we need to use several of the search techniques available. Booth et al. (2016) recommend using methods such as database searching, grey literature, reference list checking, citation searching, hand searching, contact with experts, and ongoing research. In our thesis we have chosen to use database searching with reference list checking. The reference list checking will only be done with the articles that meet our inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Booth et al. (2016) discuss five stages of literature search and techniques that should be used to make the literature search more systematic and for the search in systematic reviews to be exhaustive. These stages are: (1) scoping search; (2) conducting the search; (3) bibliographic searching; (4) verification; and (5) documenting the search.

5.2.1 Scoping Search

The focus of the scoping search is on identifying existing reviews and giving an indication of the quality and quantity primary studies relevant to the review. This scoping involves the selection of core electronic databases and grey literature sources (Booth et al., 2016). We therefore started our thesis by searching the existing literature. The crucial element when conducting a systematic review is that there in fact is enough existing literature to be able to conduct a review. Our first step before starting the review was therefore to do a brief online search of various databases to establish if there was enough literature on change readiness. When this was done, we moved on to the next step of creating the search words. Because our search is done in multidisciplinary databases, it is suggested that the scoping search go through different subject disciplines. Therefore, before conducting the scoping search, we needed to revisit the research question and list various synonyms for each concept of the question. This was done by using the Population, Intervention, Comparator, Outcomes and Context (PICOC) framework as illustrated in Table 5 (Booth et al., 2016).

Table 5: PICOC framework

Population	Individual, organisational, employee
Intervention	Organisational change, change management, strategies, factors
Comparator	Readiness, openness, willingness
Outcomes	Commitment, behaviour
Context	Not health, not nursing

The search words were used both individually and in different combinations. We conducted our systematic searches in March and April 2017 in four different databases: (1) Google Scholar; (2) Oria; (3) EBSCOhost; and (4) ISI Web of Science.

5.2.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

We limited our search to studies and articles published between 2002 and 2017, giving us a time frame of 15 years. We chose this time frame because of previous knowledge about articles from 2002 that we knew were relevant for this study, and wanted to include them in this review. In addition, having a large timeframe could increase the chance of not missing out on important and relevant articles for our thesis. However, having a large timeframe could increase the chance of including old literature, that may be out dated, and not as relevant in today´s society. We also chose to include studies written in English, Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian, but have chosen not to apply any geographical restrictions. We chose to include articles from any industry and organisation, but to exclude articles regarding health studies. We felt that it was important to include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, which gave us the opportunity to gain a broader and more varied review covering various data collection methods. Furthermore, we have only included studies that contain some type of survey and/or research, and exclude books, literature reviews, meta-synthesis, meta-analysis, and conceptual/theoretical approaches. We include only articles or studies published in journals that have been cited at least 100 times, with a 5% margin according to Google Scholar citations. In other words, we include articles with 95 citations if we think the article is highly relevant.

5.2.3 Conducting the search

Before doing the actual search it can be useful to alter the defined search strategy in each database to make it easier to search because each database operates in its own way. Booth et al. (2016) describe four ways this can be done. The first is 'free text searching'. When conducting a free text search, one needs to consider problems such as different spellings. In our thesis we choose free texting as a strategy in several of the databases, and we therefore had to consider spellings such as 'organization' or 'organisation' and 'behavior' or 'behaviour'. The second method is 'thesaurus searching', also called 'controlled vocabulary', which is a list of words made by database indexers and is used to categorise references on an electronic subject database. The third method is 'boolean, adjacency, and proximity operators'. Once you have decided on a focused question and have discovered several words for each concept within a search strategy, you can use Boolean logic to put together words appropriately. Using the Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT determines how you want the databases to combine your individual search terms together. This strategy was used in the database Oria, ISI Web of Science and EBSCOhost. The various combinations of words in the search is demonstrated in Table 6 below. The last way refers to searching the grey literature. Grey literature can be described as 'information produced on all levels of government, academics, business, and industry in electronic and print formats not controlled by commercial publishing, i.e., where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body' (Booth et al., 2016, p.120). We did not want to include grey literature, as this could harm the quality of our thesis as it is not controlled by commercial publishing.

5.2.4 Bibliographic searching

Bibliographic searching can be carried out in four different ways according to Booth et al. (2016). The first is by checking bibliographies and reference lists. Several studies highlight the importance of reference list checking for identifying studies that meet the criteria for inclusion in reviews (Brettle & Long, 2001; Greenhalgh & Peacock, 2005; McNally & Alborz, 2004; Papaiannou; Stevinson & Lawlor, 2004, et al., 2010, cited in Booth et al., 2016). Second, one can conduct citation searching. The main purpose of citation searching is to identify a chain of references that cite one or more earlier studies. Citation searching involves identifying a key article on a particular topic. The third method Booth et al. (2016) mentions is author searching. If an author is influential in a particular study area, author searching may be helpful in identifying relevant articles. The last search method is referred to as 'hand searching'. 'Hand searching of key journals in the topic area is often conducted as a supplementary search method, examining the contents pages of individual journals (electronically or in print)' (Booth et al., 2016, p.122). Hand searching is often quite time-consuming, and other methods such as reference list checking and citation searching have proved to be more fruitful and less time intensive (Booth et al., 2016). Based on these arguments and our limited time, we chose to not use hand searching, author searching and citation searching, and to focus on reference list checking. In addition, we only did reference list checking on articles that were left after the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

5.2.5 Verification

Consulting with experts can be seen as one way of verification. 'Consulting experts in your topic area (perhaps your supervisor or tutor) provides validation that relevant studies have been found and instils confidence that the efforts to identify such studies have been wide-ranging and encompassing (Ogilvie et al., 2005; Petticrew & Roberts, 2006; cited in Booth et al., 2016, p.123)'. In our review we used our supervisor, Professor Jan Inge Jenssen as our consulting expert, to help provide validation for our thesis.

5.2.6 Documenting your search

Booth et al. (2016) have determined two criteria for documenting the search: transparency and reproducibility. One needs to explain exactly which sources were searched and with which search terms, as well as to account for other techniques used to find evidence. Details to document include: '(1) the sources searched (database, and database provider, and timespan of databases); (2) search strategies used (for each database); (3) number of references found for each source or method of searching; and (4) the data searches were conducted' (Booth et al., 2016, p.123). We could then conduct our search with our predefined search words using the databases mentioned earlier. The combination of search words and databases are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Search words, combination and database

SEARCH WORDS	DATABASE
1. Readiness to change organisation	Google Scholar
2. Change readiness factors	Google Scholar
3. Change management readiness	Google Scholar
4. Organisational willingness to change	Google Scholar
5. Change commitment organization	Google Scholar
6. Individual change readiness	Google Scholar
7. Organizational change readiness	EBSCOhost
8. Change readiness and organization and behaviour	EBSCOhost
9. Change readiness and strategies	EBSCOhost
10. Change management and readiness	EBSCOhost
11. Change readiness and employee	EBSCOhost
12. Change readiness and individual and organization	EBSCOhost
13. Organisational change and readiness for change	ORIA

14. Factors readiness for change	ORIA
15. Change management	ORIA
16. Openness to organisational change	ORIA
17. (TS = (openness to change* AND readiness to change) NOT SU = Health)	ISI Web of Science
18. (TS = (readiness to change* AND strategies) NOT SU = Health)	ISI Web of Science
19. (Readiness to change* AND commitment) NOT TS = Health	ISI Web of Science

Because searching for articles and studies is a complex and time-consuming job, it was necessary to set different parameters in the search engines to narrow our search. The parameters varied from the different search engines depending on what was possible to set. Each of the authors conducted individual searches. We were responsible for two databases each, and tried to use different search words to make the search more exhaustive. We ended up with 19 different searches. For all the databases, the search was limited to material published between 2002 and 2017. In addition, the searches were narrowed down to only include articles. Articles that included qualitative and quantitative methods were a criterion, and literature reviews, meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, and conceptual/theoretical approaches were excluded. This was done in order to get the best out of the ‘primary’ research that was out there, and to make a systematic review that could inform new and future practices. In all the databases, the searches were based on the parameter of ‘relevance’, so that the most relevant articles would show first.

Furthermore, we had to decide how many articles and studies we wanted to collect from each search. Collecting every article and study that appeared when searching would be too comprehensive to complete within our timeframe. Systematic literature search techniques increase sensitivity and maximise the likelihood of finding relevant items in a search. However, a disadvantage of this approach is that while the risk of missing relevant articles is reduced, the number of irrelevant items that must be examined may increase. At the same time, when searching for a specific item, one uses different techniques that increase specificity, and this reduced the amount of time spent looking at irrelevant articles. But again, it increases the likelihood that some additional relevant ones may be missed (Booth et al., 2016). From previous knowledge we knew that the most relevant items according to the search would appear first. In addition, we have used the parameter 'relevance' on every search, to ensure that we received the most relevant articles. We therefore decided to collect the first 20 articles that appeared from each search. By choosing to collect an equal amount of articles from each search we increased the chance and possibility to collect equally relevant articles. However, there were major differences in how many relevant articles appeared in the various searches we performed. It was easy to spot the articles that were not relevant for our study at all, and we decided to not collect them. Therefore, we gathered more articles from the searches that gave us a good result with a large number of potentially relevant articles than from the searches that did not have as many relevant articles. The final criteria we had was to end up with 240 articles each, and 480 articles all together.

The first search in Google Scholar was done 21 March 2017 with the search words 'readiness to change organisation'. All searches in Google Scholar was limited between year 2002 and 2017, the first search resulted in roughly 19 300 articles. It was not possible to limit the search to Norwegian, Swedish or Danish in Google Scholar, all searches done in this database was therefore limited to articles published in English. We collected the 20 first articles from this search using the first two result pages. Each page on Google Scholar consisted of 10 articles. The next search conducted 22 March 2017 resulted in 743 000 articles, using the search words 'change readiness factors'. Likewise, to the first search, 20 articles were gathered, but here using the first four pages. The third search, 'Change management readiness' conducted 22 March 2017 gave us a result of 711 000 articles. Also here we chose to gather 20 articles from the first four pages. The next search was done using the search words 'organisational willingness to change' presenting us with 286 000 results. This search was done 28 March 2017 and, also here we chose to use twenty articles from the search, here the first three pages were used. Search number five was also conducted on 28 March 2017. The search terms "change commitment organization" was used and gave us a result of 2 810 000 articles, once again we collected twenty articles using the first four pages. Search six 'individual change readiness' presented us with roughly 779 000 articles, and was completed 29 March 2017. 20 articles were collected using the first five pages. Articles that were openly not relevant for our study, for example articles that were clearly associated with health studies were excluded already in this stage. Despite the fact that a lot of health studies were removed in this process, we did find, later in the process that some of the articles collected were related to health, and then removed later on. After these six searches in Google Scholar we ended up with 120 articles.

The next six searches were conducted in the EBSCOhost database. As it was not possible in this database either to choose Norwegian, Danish, or Swedish as a language, every search was limited to English. The searches were also limited between 2002-2017 and only articles in Journals and Academic Journals were included. The first search consisted of the search term 'organizational change readiness' and was conducted 29 March 2017. After the parameters mentioned above were used we ended with a result of 547 articles. On the first search, 25 articles was gathered using the two first pages. In EBSCOhost each page consisted of 50 articles. In the next search Boolean logic was applied and the term AND was used. The search words were 'change readiness AND organization AND behavior'. This search as well as the next four searchers was conducted on 30 March 2017. The results presented us with 155 articles, 15 articles were collected using the first page. The third search consisted of the search words 'change readiness AND strategies' and resulted in 750 articles. We gathered 22 articles from the first two pages. Further, the fourth search used the terms 'change management AND readiness' resulting in 1205 articles. On this search, 27 articles were gathered using the first two pages. Search number five used the search words 'change readiness AND employee', the results gave us 290 articles. 13 articles were collected using the first result page. The last search 'Change readiness AND individual AND organisation' resulted in 177 articles. 18 articles were collected from the first page. Searches that presented us with a larger result and what seemed to give more relevant articles resulted in more articles gathered from these search words. Likewise to the searches done in Google Scholar, articles that were noticeably related to health/nursing were excluded in the search process.

The first search in Oria database was done 23 March 2017, and all of the criteria above were included. The search word was: 'Organisational change and readiness for change'. The search gave 34 106 articles and books at first. After including only articles, we ended up with 26 900 articles. By eliminating the search between year 2002-2017 we ended up with 21 356 articles. Further, when including only English, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian we ended up with 21 098 articles. Since the results gave us several articles, we decided to only include relevant journals. The journals we included were Organization Science, Journal of Organizational Change Management, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, Journal of Global Information Management and Journal of Change Management. After this exclusion criterion, we ended up with 184 articles. Furthermore, we went through the four first pages, excluding literature reviews, meta-analysis, meta-synthesis and other conceptual/theoretical approaches. Each page in Oria contains 10 different results. In the end, we ended up with 20 articles in total.

In the second search in Oria that was done 27 March 2017, we used the search word: 'Factors readiness for change'. The search gave 79 413 articles and books. When eliminating by year 2002-2017, we had 61 923 articles and books. Further, including only English, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish we ended up with 61 256 articles and books. After including only articles we were left with 49 732 articles. Using only the first four pages, we ended up with 25 articles from this search. This search also gave several health/nursing articles that we were not able to open, and that we did not find relevant. In the third search in Oria that was done 28 March 2017, we used the search word: 'Change management'. At first, we ended up with 2 830 681 articles and books, and including only articles we ended up with 2 046 921. Further, by only including articles between 2002-2017 we ended up with 1 612 484 articles. Furthermore, by including only English, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish we ended up with 1 583 459 articles. We recognised that there was a lot of nursing/health articles in this search, and therefore decided to exclude the following journals; Nursing Standard, Nature, Journal of Nursing Management, Journal of Cleaner Production, British Journal of Nursing and Interfaces. After excluding these journals we ended up with 1 574 193 articles. Despite that we excluded nursing and health journals, there were still several articles within these areas, and we therefore ended up with only four relevant articles to use after only looking through the first two pages. The fourth search in Oria was done 06 April 2017, and the search words 'openness to organisational change' was used. The search gave 48 779 articles and books, and by excluding books we ended up with 37 923 articles. When only including articles between 2002-2017 we ended up with 30 202 articles. After including only English, Danish and Norwegian we had 29 873 articles. And by using the five first pages we ended up with 39 articles.

In the database ISI Web of Science, all of the searches were limited to year 2002-2017, relevance, articles and language from the beginning. However, one could only include English as a language. Further, we used 'Advanced search' to get the search more comprehensive and complete. The search words in this database included the term 'boolean logic', and the use of AND, OR NOT were possible to use. The first search was done 31 March 2017 and included: TS = (readiness to change* AND organisational change) NOT SU = Nursing. TS means 'topic', and SU means 'research area'. We ended up with 344 articles after this search word. Further, by excluding literature reviews, meta-synthesis, meta-analysis, conceptual/theoretical approaches, and articles we did not have access to, we ended up with 70 articles by using the nine first pages, which had 10 articles on each page. As we saw the potential of finding several relevant articles on this search, we decided to include as many articles as possible. The second search was done

03 April 2017 with the advanced search words: TS = (openness to change* AND readiness to change) NOT SU= Health. The search gave 19 articles, and we ended up with 13 articles in total. The third search was done 04 April 2017 with the search word: TS = (readiness to change* AND strategies) NOT SU= Health. After the advanced search we ended up with 374 articles. By using the 3 first relevant pages, we ended up with 17 articles. The fourth search was done 04 April 2017 as well, by using the search word: TS = (Readiness to change* AND commitment) NOT TS=Health. The search word gave 78 articles, and we ended up with 52 articles, using all of the pages from the search. With the searches in Oria and ISI Web of Science it gave us 240 articles in total.

In order to organise all the articles that were being collected we created a six-column table. The table contained the number of the article, title, author(s), keywords, database, and search words, and a link to where the article was retrieved. Using the table made it easy for us to keep track of how many articles we had, and it also made sure that we both collected the same amount of information during the first stage. Our next step was to exclude the articles and studies that were not suitable for our review.

5.3 Study selection and data extraction

After collecting the studies and articles, the next step was to select which ones should be included in our review and to extract the data. Through experience it was discovered that the most efficient way of screening studies for inclusion in a literature review is to first appraise the titles of articles from the searches. After appraising the titles, one should look at the abstracts in order to determine the relevance of the study. Finally, the full text should be appraised on the basis of the relevance of the abstract (Booth et al., 2016). Therefore, our first step was to exclude studies based on their titles and abstracts. The next step was to remove all studies that were duplicates and those that did not fit the citation criteria. After this step, we chose to conduct reference list checking in the remaining articles as mentioned before. We decided to conduct reference list checking in this stage because the timeframe would make it impossible to do this in all 480 articles collected. It therefore felt more relevant to do this only for articles that remained after the first exclusion process. We quickly found that most of the articles referenced either did not fit our criteria or were duplicates. Reference list checking collected 20 articles all together. For studies that were not excluded, the papers were screened closer and assessed in more detail against the remaining inclusion and exclusion criteria, and studies that did not fit the criteria were excluded. Despite the fact that we had the opportunity to use Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, and English studies, we ended up using only studies written in English. To show how this exclusion process was done we have chosen to use the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis (PRISMA) template flow diagram developed by Mother, Liberati, Tetzlaff & Altman (2009).

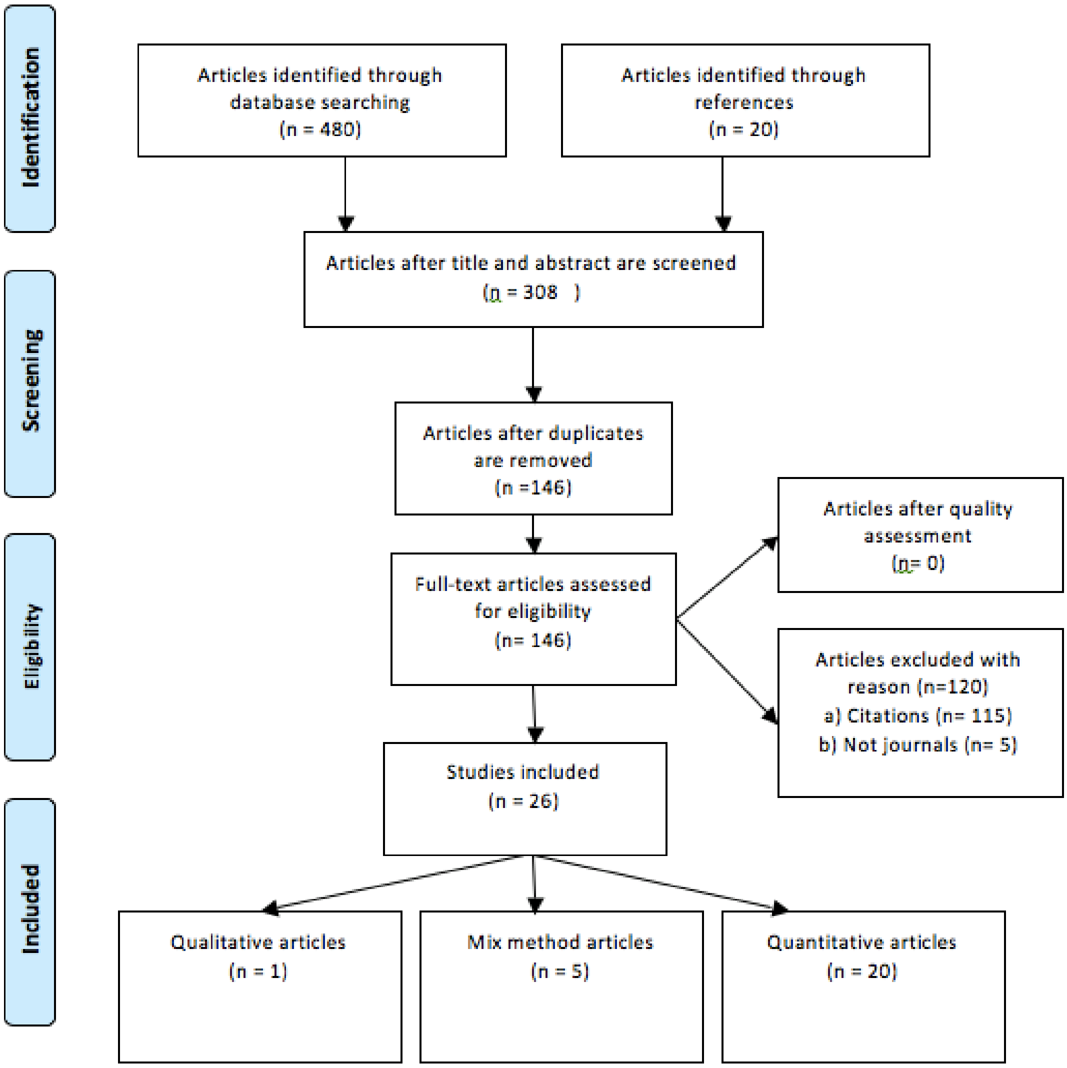

Figure 2: PRISMA flow diagram

5.4 Quality appraisal

When collecting articles and studies it is important that they possess a certain level of quality. There are several ways to conduct a quality assessment. For our study we chose to include only articles and studies from journals that were cited more than 100 times with a 5 % margin in Google Scholar as an inclusion criteria. There is some discussion regarding the benefits and disadvantages of Google Scholar. Booth et al. (2016, p.121) highlights that:

> ‘it is known to provide an inflated citation rate, due to indexing a number of non-refereed document types, including websites, and duplicates citations if they appear in different forms (for example pre-print and published journal articles). There are also technical issues when dealing with large sets of references because it is only possible to export one citation at a time. As with any type of searching you should weigh up the benefits of searching multiple sources, the time available and the potential yield of unique references’.

Because we are searching in different databases and need to consider our timeframe, we find Google Scholar citation to be a good way to assess the quality and impact of the articles, and therefore chose to use Google Scholar in this matter. In addition, we have also used the citation in ISI Web of Science as an indicator of the quality. However, the criteria for citation will be lower in ISI Web of Science because this database has higher standards and stricter criteria for the type of articles included in the database. It is important to establish that the ISI citation will only be used as an indicator of quality and not as an exclusion criterion like Google Scholar. Also, not all articles that we have chosen to include are in the ISI database, and so citations from there are not possible to show.

Using these different criteria is in itself a form of quality assurance, and it automatically raised the quality level of the articles that were collected. But we have also chosen to use the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) academic journal guide (AJG) from 2015 to assess the quality of our journals. By using the AJG as a tool we were able to assess the quality of the journals that the articles have been published in. Because of our inclusion criteria the quality level of the articles will be good enough for our purposes, but we felt that it was necessary to also assess the quality of the journals that the articles are published in. The AJG

> ‘is based on a peer review process which is informed by statistical information relating to citation. The final 'ratings' given to journals are not based purely on weighted averages of

journal metrics. Instead, the Guide is the result of peer review and consultation conducted by a Scientific Committee of subject experts with peers on the relative standing of journals in each subject area' (Chartered Association of Business Schools, 2017, 17.04). The AJG classifies the journals into four different categories from level 1-4, plus a Journal of Distinction category referred to as 4* (Chartered Association of Business Schools, 2017, 17.04):

1. The journals on this level are generally research of a recognised but modest standard in the field. Papers will be refereed relatively lightly according to accepted conventions, and only a few journals in this category carry a citation impact factor.
2. Journals in this category publish original research of an acceptable standard. Papers are fully refereed, and the citation impact factors are somewhat modest. Many excellent practitioner-oriented articles are published in 2-rated journals.
3. These journals publish original and well-executed research papers and are highly regarded. These types of journals are very selective in what they publish and are heavily refereed, but not all journals will carry a citation impact factor.
4. All journals in this category publish the most original and best-executed research. These types of journals typically have high submission and low acceptance rates. Papers are heavily refereed and have the highest citation impact factors within their field.

4*. This category includes only a small number of journals that are recognised worldwide as exemplars of excellence. Their high status is acknowledged by their inclusion in a number of well-regarded international journal quality lists.

Table 7 summarises the various journal ratings and how many citations each article has.

Table 7: Quality assessment

Journals	Articles (number)	AJG rating	Citations Google Scholar	Citations ISI
Journal of Change Management	9, 12, 20	1	103, 330, 97	#, #, #
Journal of Social Psychology	7	1	193	30
Leadership and Organizational Development	19	1	218	#
Journal of Business and Psychology	14	2	114	18

Human Resource Development review	15	2	190	#
Journal of Applied Behavioural Science	3	2	569	#
Human Resource Development Quarterly	4, 16	2	249, 99	#, 22
Journal of Organizational Change Management	6, 13	2	511, 441	78, 98
Information and Management	5	3	227	55
European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	10, 25	3	697, 188	159, 53
Journal of Applied Psychology	8, 17, 21, 22	4	283, 113, 332, 1241	69, #, 97, 297
Journal of Organizational Behavior	23, 24	4	1397, 348	306, 93
Personnel Psychology	18	4	176	33
Leadership Quarterly	26	4	307	73
Journal of Management Studies	1	4	454	117
Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology	2, 11	4	473, 237	110, 58

(# = Means that the articles were not available in the ISI Web of Science database)

We have chosen to not exclude any articles based on the journal ratings because all journals included in the AJG databases will have the sufficient amount of quality necessary for our review. The CABS states that a number 1 rating indicates that the journal meets typical scholarly standards. In total we have used articles from three journals rated at 1, five journals rated at 2, two journals rated at 3, and six journals rated at 4. This gives us a total of 16 different academic journals.

6. Data synthesis

Table 8 summarises all 26 articles that we have included in our study. The aim is to create and systematise all articles and get an overview of what the article's aim is and its main findings. We have also chosen to include how many people have participated in each study (n), their gender, and the average age of participants (when the information was provided in the study). Further, it will include what country and industry the studies were executed in. We originally decided to generalise all findings across country, organisation, and demographics, but decided to include the demographics available to see if a pattern existed among the studies.

Table 8: Article summary

Author, Year	Country, Setting, Participants	Methods	Aim	Findings/Key message
1. Jones, Jimmieson & Griffiths. (2005).	Australia n = 67 employees in a state government department T1: Male = 52% Female = 48% T2: Male = 41%, Female = 57% (2% unspecified) Average age = 37.13	Quantitative data Questionnaires were sent out at two different times, T1 and T2 (5 weeks apart)	To measure the extent to which different predictor variables (culture, capabilities, readiness for change [T1] had any effects on the change implementation success. The outcome was assessed at T2.	Reshaping capabilities, system usages are positively related to readiness for change (RFC). RFC exerts a positive effect on employee's satisfaction with the systems. Overall, importance of assessing RFC as premature implementation may not produce the intended outcomes because employees are not psychologically ready.
2. Cunningham, Woodward Shannon, Maclntosh ,Rosenbloom & Brown. (2002).	Canada n = 654 hospital staff at a Canadian teaching hospital Female = 87%, Male = 13 %	Quantitative. Questionnaire sent out at two different times, 1 year apart (same cohort of employees)	The purpose of the survey was to understand how workplace changes effect both employees and services. The questionnaire wished to measure the logistical and occupational risks of change, ability to	Employees in active positions, more control, challenging jobs, more confident, higher emotional exhaustion scores = high RFC Shift work = lower RFC

			cope with change and to solve job-related problems, social support, and readiness for organisational change.	
3. Holt, Armenakis , Field & Harris. (2007).	United States n = 900 organisational members from public and private sector.	Mix method Questionnaire, and interview	This study was designed to construct a new instrument that measures readiness at an individual level, because change activities are initiated and carried out by individuals within organisations.	RFC is influenced by beliefs among employees that (1) they are capable of implementing a proposed change; (2) the proposed change is appropriate for the organisation; (3) the leaders are committed to the proposed change; (4) the proposed change is beneficial to organisational members
4. Madsen, Miller & John. (2005).	United States n = 464 full-time employees in four different companies (hospital call centre, technological support, and health product manufacturer). Female = 47.8% Male = 49.3% Unspecified = 2.9%	Quantitative Questionnaire	The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between readiness for change and two of these possible factors: organisational commitment and social relationships in the workplace.	Significant relationship between RFC, organisational commitment, and social relationships. Also a relationship between RFC and number of children, social relationships and gender, organisation commitment and identification/job involvement/loyalty, and age, education, and gender.
5. Kwahk & Lee. (2008).	Korea n = 350 within 72 Korean organisations Average age = 29.2	Quantitative Questionnaire (field-study)	The study focused on positive attitudes towards behaviour – readiness for change – the extent to which organizational members hold positive views about the need for organisational change. As well as their belief that changes are likely to have positive implications for them and the organisation. A model was developed and tested using data collected from Enterprise	RFC had an indirect effect on behavioural intention to use an ERP system. RFC was enhanced by two factors: organisational commitment and perceived personal competence.

			Resource Planning (ERP) systems in Korea.	
6. Armenakis & Harris. (2002).	United States Multinational corporation going through a major product change	Qualitative Case study, Interviews and discussions with director and key managers	The aim of this paper is to guide and orchestrate an organisation's efforts to create readiness for a major organisational change. It will describe how these frameworks in one organisation to direct its initial readiness building efforts in preparation for a large-scale organisational change.	Conclusion is that the change message framework is highly useful and the reaction of the organisations that have been encouraged to use it has been very positive.
7. Devos, Buelens & Bouckeno oghe. (2010).	Belgium Study 1: n = 828 Male = 59% Female = 41% Average age = 32.71 Study 2: n = 835 Average age = 33.42	Quantitative Experimental simulation study (participants a randomly assigned to a scenario - total of 16 scenarios).	The authors predicted that five factors would have a positive effect on openness to change: (a) threatening character of organizational change (content related), (b) trust in executive management (context related), (c) trust in the supervisor (context related), (d) history of change (context related), and (e) participation in the change effort (process related).	Results showed a significant main and an interaction effect: Openness to change decreased dramatically only when history of change and trust in executive management were low. Study 1: High levels of control, hierarchical position, trust in management/supervisor, and opportunity to participate had a strong significant relationship with openness to change (OTC). Gender, age, and education were not significantly related to OTC. Study 2: Control level, education and hierarchical level was significantly associated with OTC. Gender and age were not significantly associated with OTC.
8. Van Dam, Oreg & Schyns. (2007).	Netherlands Participants were employees of a large housing corporation in the Netherlands. n = 235 Male = 54% Female = 46%	Quantitative Questionnaire	The study examined how the characteristics of the daily work context related to employees' resistance to change through aspects of the change process.	Information, participation, trust in management reduced resistance to change. 2 individual characteristics – openness to job changes and organisational tenure – significant relationship with resistance to change.

	Average age = 39.9			
9. Neves. (2009).	Portugal n = 88, full-time employees of a public university Female = 74% Male = 26%	Quantitative Questionnaire	The study tests part of the readiness for change model during the implementation of a new performance appraisal system in a public institution. In particular, the goal of this study is to analyse how change-related self-efficacy and change appropriateness influence the impact of change on employees' work behaviours and turnover intentions, through its relationship with affective commitment towards change.	In sum, the positive relationship between change appropriateness and the level of individual change was fully mediated by affective commitment to change. Likewise, the negative relationship between change appropriateness and turnover intentions was also fully mediated by affective commitment to change. Self-efficacy did not present a significant relationship with affective commitment to change and the level of individual change, but held a significant negative relationship with turnover intentions.
10. Oreg, (2004).	Israel Interview: n = 17 (company managers) Questionnaire: n = 177 in the defence industry Male = 88% male Female = 12% Average age = 45	Mix method Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews	The article proposed and testsed a model of resistance to organisational change. The relationships among resistance components and employees' personalities, the organisational context, and several work-related outcomes were examined. Three outcome and three process variables were selected: power and prestige, job security, and intrinsic rewards were the three outcome factors, and trust in management, social influence, and information about the change were the three process factors.	Lack of trust and information showed significant relevance with resistance to change.

11. Meyer, Srinivas & Topolnytsky. (2007).	Canada and India Study 1: Survey 1, n = 699 Survey 2, n = 640 Male = 33 % Female = 67 % Study 2: Survey 1, n = 379 Survey 2, n = 129 Average age = 42 years	Quantitative Questionnaire, longitudinal study - 8 months between Study 1 and 2.	They conducted two studies to replicate and extend findings pertaining to Herscovitch and Meyer's three-component model of commitment to an organisational change.	It was found that commitment to a change accounts for more variance in support for the change than does commitment to the organisation.
12. Lines. (2006).	Norway Telecommunication company n = 241	Quantitative Questionnaires	This article uses data from a major strategic reorientation of a national telecommunications firm in order to assess the outcomes of participation in strategic change process.	Findings indicate a strong positive relationship between participation and goal achievement and organisational commitment, and a strong negative relationship with resistance.
13. Pillai & Williams. (2004).	United States Local Fire Department, Fire department Headquarters n = 271	Mix method: Interviews(not included), Observations, Questionnaire	Aim of this study focuses on the processes that may explain how transformational leadership affects outcomes of change in the context of a fire department.	Transformational leadership was related to perceptions of unit performance and commitment through self-efficacy and cohesiveness.
14. Rafferty & Simons .(2006).	Australia Administrative, finance, and human resource sections of five organisations including two public sector utilities and three public sector agencies. n = 311 Female = 53% Male = 46% Average age = 32.4	Quantitative Questionnaires (Two versions of survey: Fine-tuning change and Corporate transformation change)	This study examined employee readiness for fine-tuning changes and for corporate transformation changes. It was proposed that employees would report different degrees of readiness for these two types of change and that different variables would be associated with readiness for the two types of change.	Fine-tuning changes, self-efficacy for change, trust in peers, participation, logistics and systems support, and trust in senior organisational leaders was significantly positively correlated with RFC. Highest correlation obtained was between trust in peers under fine-tuning changes, and trust in peers under corporate transformation changes.

15. Bernerth. (2004).	Unites States Manufacturing company n = 115	Mixed method: Questionnaire with one open end question and case study(qualitative)	A case study is provided to display the need to communicate each of the message components in the five-message component model of Armenakis, Harris & Feild.	Results shows that the five message components prior to change adoption would have helped organisation prepare employees to change and is needed for the change implementation to be successful.
16. Foster. (2010).	US Three US bases Organisations 1 Biotechnology organisation, 1 manufacturing division of a large Fortune 500 organisation, and 1 health care system consisting of three hospitals and three outpatient clinics n = 218 Female = 66% Male = 34% Average age = 41	Quantitative method: Questionnaire	The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of individual response to organisational change and to learn more about what components of change implementation relate to successful organisation change. By examining the relationships between resistance, justice, and commitment to change, this study also contributed to the theoretical knowledge of individual response to change.	Results demonstrated that organisational justice was strongly associated with commitment to organisational change, the strongest relationship being between procedural justice and affective commitment to change. In addition, resistance to change was not significantly related to justice or commitment to change.
17. Fischer & Smith. (2006).	UK and Germany Various organisations in UK and Germany with employees working full-time n = 334 Female = 51%, Male =	Quantitative method: Questionnaire	The study draws on Schwartz's (1992, 1996) universal theory of values to determine the relationships between organisational	It was found that employees from British and German organisations who endorsed Schwartz´s (1992) openness to change values were more influenced in their organisational commitment by the absence of perceived justice than those who do not endorse

	49% UK average age = 32.18 German average age = 39.46		justice, and organisational commitment in a change process.	openness values.
18. Oreg & Berson. (2011).	Israel Public School n = 75 school principals n = 586 teachers Principals: Female = 59%, Male = 39%, Unspecified = 2% Average age = 48.77 years Teachers: Female = 72%, Male = 12%, Unspecified = 16% Average age = 40.50	Quantitative method: Questionnaire	The focus in this study was on leaders and their employees' reactions to a large-scale organisational change.	Teachers' intentions to resist the organisational change were negatively related to their principals' openness to change values and transformational leadership behaviours, and positively related to their principals' dispositional resistance to change. Principals' transformational leadership behaviours moderated the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance and intentions to resist the change. Leaders' traits, values, and behaviours are reflected in their followers' reactions to an organisational change.
19. Anuradha & Kelloway. (2004).	Canada Two organizations that had recently undergone a merger n = 164 Male = 47.70 %, Female = 52.30% Average age = 43.93	Quantitative method: Questionnaire	This study focussed on the direct effects of communication, participation, and job security on trust and openness to change and their indirect effects on turnover intentions and neglect (change). The study also investigated the mediating role of perceptions of procedural justice during organisational change.	Communication and job security predicted openness and trust both directly and indirectly, via procedural justice. Participation predicted trust directly and indirectly, but predicted openness to change only indirectly (via procedural justice). Turnover intentions were negatively predicted by openness and trust. Finally, turnover intentions predicted neglect.
20. Todnem.	UK	Mixed method: Semi-structured	Provides a critical	Some factors identified as reasons for unsuccessful

(2007).	Managers in the Tourism industry Senior and middle managers representing ten of the top 100 UK visitor attractions n = 27	telephone Interviews Because the study was exploratory in nature the grounded theory approach to analysis was employed. This implied the use of the constant comparative method.	evaluation of Armenakis and his colleagues change readiness framework.	implementation of a change event were lack of communication, experience, support and resources.
21. Herold, Fedor & Caldwell. (2007).	United States 25 organisations representing a wide variety of industry sectors, including finance, manufacturing, education, consumer products, and high technology. n = 553 Male = 69%, Female = 31% Average age between 36 – 45	Quantitative method: Questionnaire (In total, 287 Personal Change Surveys and 266 Organisational Change Surveys were completed)	The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the need to broaden current approaches towards the study of organisational change. The study discovered the extent to which attitudes toward organisational changes may be affected by contextual factors.	The positive relationship between self-efficacy and commitment to the change was stronger as the amount of simultaneous and overlapping change in the surroundings increased.
22. Herscovitch & Meyer. (2002).	Study 1: n = 224 University Students Male = 33% Female = 66%, Average age = 22 Study 2: n = 157 Hospital nurses Female = 99% Male = 1% Average age = 54	Quantitative Questionnaire	Three studies were conducted to test the application of a three-component model towards workplace commitment, in the context of employee commitment to organisational change.	Provided further support for the validity of the three Commitment to Change Scales, and demonstrated that (1) commitment to a change is a better predictor of behavioural support for a change than is organisational commitment; (2) affective and normative commitment to a change are associated with higher levels of support than is continuance commitment; and (3) the components of commitment combine to predict behaviour.

				Affective and normative commitment strongly correlate with support, more than continuance.
23. Avolio Zhu, Koh & Bhatia. (2004).	Singapore. n = 520 staff nurses in a public hospital. Female = 99% Male = 1% Average age = 31.25	Quantitative method: Questionnaire.	The study examined whether psychological empowerment mediated the effects of transformational leadership on followers' organisational commitment. It also examined how structural distance (direct and indirect leadership) between leaders and followers impact the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment.	Results from HLM analyses showed that psychological empowerment mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment. Similarly, structural distance between the leader and follower moderated the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment.
24. Bommer, Rich & Rubin. (2005).	United States 3 privately owned manufacturing firms (textile manufacturer, electronics refurbisher, machined metal manufacturer) n = 372	Quantitative method: Questionnaire. (Longitudinal data, 9 months apart)	This research is an empirical assessment of individual-level change within an organisation. Specifically, strategies used by change implementers were operationalised as six transformational leader behaviours, and then hypothesised to influence employees’	Transformational leader behaviours (TLB) generally were associated with lower employee CAOC.

			cynicism about organisational change.	
25. Martin, Jones & Callan. (2005).	Australia Study 1: n = 799 public hospital employees Female = 70% Male = 62% n = 877 public sector employees Female = 53% Male = 47%	Quantitative Questionnaire	This research tested a theoretical model of employee adjustment during an organisational change based on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) cognitive-phenomeno-logical framework. The model hypothesized that psychological climate variables would act as coping resources and predict improved adjustment during a change.	Results showed that employees whose perceptions of the organisation and environment in which they were working (i.e., psychological climate) were more positive, were more likely to appraise change favourably and report better adjustment in terms of higher job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and organisational commitment, and lower absenteeism and turnover intentions.
26. Nemanich & Keller. (2007).	United States Employees of a large multinational firm. The resulting sampling frame included sales, research and development, customer service, and finance departments N = 919	Quantitative Questionnaires	This field study investigated employees involved in a major acquisition integration. It addressed the relationships that leadership and climate had with subordinate acquisition acceptance, performance, and job satisfaction in	Transformational leadership was positively related to acquisition acceptance, supervisor-rated performance, and job satisfaction. Support for creative thinking fully mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and acquisition acceptance.

			an uncertain environment.	

After going through the articles carefully, we can see that they have some common variables. First, many of the studies have the same geographical location. Most of the articles have its origin from the US, approximately 9 out of 26 articles. Next, 4 articles are from Canada, 3 articles from Australia, 2 articles from UK, and 2 articles from Israel. Further, many of the articles are from same sectors like; finance, manufacturing, health/nursing and education. In addition, a lot of the research is done in large organisations, and the average age of the participants in the studies are mostly between 30-50 years. Female representatives are also a little bit higher than male representatives in the studies. However, as we do not distinguish between geographical location, industries, gender and age of participants, we will not discuss this any further in our analysis.

In order to analyse the findings in our synthesis, some concepts need to be explained first. The first concepts are process, context, and content. These concepts and the factors belonging to the concepts originate from various theories and models from different authors through several decades of research. For instance Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burke, 1994; Burke & Litwin, 1992; Vollman 1996 (cited in Devos & Buelens, 2003) are behind several content models. The different contextual factors have been mentioned by authors such as Armenakis et al., 1993; Chonko, Jones, Roberts, & Dubinsky, 2002; Eby et al., 2000; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy; Jones, Jimmieson, & Griffiths, 2005; Schneider et al., 1996 (cited in Devos et al., 2010). Process factors and different models describing different phases of a change implementation referred to as the *change process* have been described by researchers such as Armenakis, Field and Harris 1999; Galpin, 1996; Isabella, 1990; Judson, 1991; Jaffe, Scott and Tobe, 1994; Kotter, 1995 (cited in Devos & Buelens, 2003).

Process includes three factors: information, trust in management, and participation (Devos et al., 2010). Providing employees with information about the change will reduce uncertainty and can ultimately contribute to creating openness towards the change (Stanley et al., 2005; Wanberg & Banas, 2000, cited in Devos et al., 2010). According to Bordia et al. (2004) and Sagie & Koslowsky (1996, cited in Van Dam et al., 2007) employee participation is an important tool for reducing feelings of uncertainty and fears about how changes will affect them. It gives employees the opportunity to have an impact on the change (Van Dam et al., 2007). Trust in management is considered a prerequisite for employee cooperation with the change (Kotter, 1995, cited in Devos et al.. 2010), and it is a critical element for an organisation’s success (Devos et al., 2010). According to Li (2005, cited in Devos et al., 2010) it is a necessity that employees have confidence in the management reliability and integrity. The next step, context, involves two main factors: leader-member exchange (LMX) and perceived development climate (Devos et al., 2010). According to LMX theory, employees in high-quality LMX relationships develop less resistance to change than employees in low-quality relationships. Having a climate that fosters continuous development affects the ways in which the organisation, leaders, and employees support the change, and the fundamental culture of the organisation directs and motivates employee efforts (Devos, et al., 2010; Van Dam et al., 2007). Job rotation, assignments to special projects, training, support for development, and flexibility are all factors according to McCauley & Hezlett (2001, cited in Devos et al., 2010) that will enhance adaptability to the organisation and the employees’ attitudes towards change. The last concept, content of change, refers to the type or substance of the change. The different types of organisational changes have different impacts on the employees’ attitudes towards the change (Devos et al., 2010). Several of the factors that are found to contribute to change readiness in the findings exist within these three concepts. However, content is not as elaborated on as the other concepts in the studies.

The next concept that needs to be defined is ‘transformational leadership’. Transformational leaders are able to influence their followers by inspiring and creating a vision of the future, and they motivate their followers to get more involved in their work, which results in higher levels of organisational commitment (Oreg & Berson 2011; Avolio, Zhu, Koh & Bhatia, 2004). Transformational leadership is associated with increased employee satisfaction and commitment (Bommer, Rich & Rubin, 2005). In other words, a transformational leader creates a relationship between leader and follower based on motivational inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Nemanich & Keller, 2007). We have chosen to include transformational leadership under the concept of context. Because it is a leadership style, we feel that it fits in together with development climate and leader-member exchange. We therefore believe that transformational leadership can be suitable as a factor within the concept context.

Because several of the studies distinguish between three different types of organisational commitment (i.e., affective, normative, and continuance) it is also necessary to explain the difference among them. Commitment in general can be defined as a mindset that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance (Meyer & Allen, 1991, cited in Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Meyer & Allen (1991) state that this mind-set takes different forms: desire to remain (affective commitment), perceived cost of leaving (continuance commitment), or perceived obligation to remain (normative commitment) (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Herscovitch & Meyer (2002) states that employees who want to remain (affective commitment) are likely to attend work regularly, perform assigned tasks to their best ability, and do extra to help out. Those who remain out of obligation (normative commitment) may do likewise if they see it as part of their duty. Employees who remain primarily to avoid costs (continuance commitment) may do little more than what is required.

6.1 Analysis of findings

Earlier in the paper we discussed Armenakis's et al. (1993, 1999) model referred to as 'the message'. Evidence in articles collected shows that the message framework plays an important role in creating readiness for change among employees. Articles 6 and 15 show evidence of the success that the message has had on readiness to change. Article 6 states that the framework has been seen to be highly useful, and has shown positive outcomes in organisations that have used it. Further, article 15 provides evidence that the five components in the message have had a big impact on creating readiness for change within the organisation. Because both articles discussed the factors in the message together and not individually, we conclude that the factors in the message need to be present together in order to have an impact on readiness for change. Hence, the message model yields readiness for change. Article 6 also highlights the importance of communicating the message and supports the three strategies made by Armenakis et al. (1993, 1999) to create a successful communication of the message. However, there are also some factors that show a distinct impact alone. For example, self-efficacy was cited in articles 1, 2, 5, and 14. Hence, self-efficacy will have an impact towards readiness for change.

Further, some of the studies have shown that factors in the message will affect readiness to change through a mediator. For instance in article 9, we discovered that 'appropriateness' had an impact on 'commitment to the organisation' which then had an impact on readiness to change, which gives us that: appropriateness impacts commitment, that again will impact readiness for change. Article 21 shows that self-efficacy affects readiness to change through the variable organisational commitment: self-efficacy affects commitment, which further has an impact towards readiness for change. Article 13 also asserts that self-efficacy has an impact on organisational commitment, and so self-efficacy affects commitment. In addition, article 21 discovered that there was a positive relationship between self-efficacy and commitment to the change when the changes in the surroundings increased.

Article 3 shows the importance of content, process, and context prior to implementation of the message and further readiness for change. Article 7 concludes that the content, context, and process factors will increase and create a positive attitude towards change within an organisation. As mentioned, the process involves participation, trust in management, and information. Several of the articles mentioned that these factors have both a direct and indirect impact on employees' readiness to change. Article 14 provides evidence of that participation alone affects readiness to change, so participation has an impact towards readiness for change. Participation alone has an impact on commitment, trust in management, and organisational justice. This is shown in articles 12 and 19, giving us: participation impacts commitment, participation impacts justice which again will impact trust, participation impacts justice that will have an impact towards readiness for change.

As seen above, trust works as a mediator between participation and readiness for change, but also as an outcome of participation and justice. Trust in management has a direct impact on readiness for change according to the findings in article 7 and 14, hence, trust directly impacts readiness for change. Article 19 indicates that trust in management will affect organisational justice before making an impact on readiness to change, so trust affects justice, that then will affect readiness for change. Article 14 also implies that trust in management and trust in employees both creates readiness for change. Article 7 states that trust in management together with previous positive associations to changes in the organisation will have an impact on readiness for change. Hence, trust together with positive change history will have an impact towards readiness for change. A positive track record of past changes can be seen to be a part of the development climate existing within the organisation, this is a mentioned as part of the next concept, context. Article 10, on the other hand, discusses how trust in management has a negative relationship with resistance. The last factor included in the process, information, was not listed as an individual factor contributing to change readiness in any of the studies, although article 10 did provide evidence that more information would reduce resistance to the change.

The factor organisational justice, on the other hand, was mentioned in articles 16, 17, and 19 as a contributor to change readiness. Foster (2010) defines organisational justice as an individual perception of fairness within the organisation. Article 19 concludes that organisational justice can be seen as a mediator between both communication and participation in order to gain change readiness. Hence, communication affects justice which then will affect readiness for change, and participation affects justice which also will affect readiness for change. Article 16 explains how organisational justice affects organisational affective commitment, so justice impacts (affective) commitment. Article 17 states that organisational justice also has an impact on the employees' behaviour, which means justice affects behaviour. As mentioned, article 19 also explains that trust in management has a significant effect on organisational justice, but it also says that organisational justice will have an effect on employees trust in management. Hence, trust impacts justice, and justice will impact trust. None of the articles have included organisational justice as part of the process. We, on the other hand, feel that organisational justice could – and should – be included in this concept. It plays, according to the three studies analysed above, an important role in creating change readiness, and it also matches the other three factors in the process. This is because organisation justice, like participation and trust in management, all have an impact on each other. This is supported by Herold, Fedor & Caldwell (2007) who states that procedural fairness is part of the process leading to openness to change.

Another variable that was mentioned in some of the articles is transformational leadership, which as explained earlier is included in the second concept of context. Articles 13 and 25 state that transformational leaders increase self-efficacy and that they have a positive impact on the employee's commitment. Therefore transformational leaders impacts self-efficacy that impacts commitment. Article 23 also says that transformational leaders increase commitment, but that they do this by establishing psychological empowerment, hence, transformational leaders affects the psychological empowerment that has an impact towards commitment. The researchers in article 24 conclude that transformational leadership reduces cynicism among employees towards organisational change. Cynicism can be perceived as an attitude, which gives us transformational leadership impacts attitudes. Furthermore, the results in article 10 show that attitudes among employees have an effect on organisational commitment; therefore attitudes will have an impact towards commitment. Article 26 is the last study that discusses transformational leadership. The researchers here, first of all, concluded that transformational leadership has a direct impact on readiness for change, so transformational leadership impacts readiness for change. They also argued that transformational leadership will contribute to creating goal clarity and will support creative thinking, job satisfaction and performance. This can also be seen in the relationship between the concept of context and a development climate. Article 26 emphasises that transformational leadership increases creative thinking, which then impacts the employees' readiness for change. Therefore transformational leadership increases support for creative thinking, which will have an impact towards readiness for change. Further, article 18 shows evidence that transformational leadership helps reduce resistance among employees. A common denominator from the studies is that transformational leaders have a positive impact on organisational commitment among employees.

Article 25 relates to creating a perceived development climate, which is included in the context. The research here showed that a positive psychological climate creates a more positive attitude to change, this will also increase employees' job satisfaction, which has a positive effect on their commitment to the organisation, so development climate will affect the attitudes that impacts commitment. The second factor included in context, leader-member exchange, is discussed in article 8. The researchers found evidence that leader-member exchange has a significant impact on the change process and towards resistance within the organisation. The third concept, content, was not mentioned as a direct variable for creating change readiness.

As seen in this chapter, organisational commitment to the organisation is one of most frequently discussed factors. This is the variable that seems to be the biggest mediator in order to gain readiness to change. As mentioned, self-efficacy, organisational justice, participation, transformational leadership, and attitudes all have a significant impact on commitment. Articles 11, 17, and 22 also enhance how the different types of commitment will have different outcomes. Article 11 concluded that affective and normative commitment has a positive effect on the employees' behavioural support, so affective commitment, normative commitment increases support. They also stated that continuance commitment would *not* increase employees' support. The findings in article 11 shows that changes in commitment relate to changes in the level of behavioural support. This is supported by the researchers in article 22 who only discussed how affective and normative commitment have a significant positive effect on employees' support. Article 17 also discusses the role of affective commitment and how it will impact change readiness. In addition, article 20 argues how the lack of communication is a reason for unsuccessful implementation. Not all studies that discuss commitment distinguish among the three different types of commitment (e.g., articles 13, 25, 23, and 12). But in the articles that do (11, 16, 17, 22), we can see that affective commitment is the factor that has the greatest impact on change readiness. Commitment therefore, according to the studies, impacts change readiness both alone and as a mediator between other factors.

Above, we analysed the impact of the most commonly factors identified as having an influence on readiness for change. However, there are other factors that the different articles have highlighted as influencers towards readiness for change. For example, article 1 mention that strong human relation values have a significant impact on readiness for change. Article 2 asserts that employees with active jobs, who have an active approach to the job and take control over challenging tasks, show a higher degree of change readiness and are more likely to participate in the change process. The evidence from the research in article 21 says that turbulence within the organisation has an impact on organisational justice, and that job impact will have a negative effect on self-efficacy. Researchers from article 7 also found evidence that education and hierarchy level would have a positive effect on employees' openness to change. Furthermore, article 4 concluded that employees with more children had a greater capacity for change readiness, and that older employees tend to be more committed to the change. Article 7, on the other hand, found evidence of that age has no impact on change readiness. Article 4 also stated that good social relations within the company lead to a higher degree of organisational commitment.

In Table 9, we have categorised the various factors analysed above. We have chosen to use only the factors that have been cited most frequently. The horizontal row presents the factors, and their impact on the factors on the vertical column is indicated with an X. (TM = The message, SE = Self-efficacy, APP = Appropriateness, PP = Participation, TL = Transformational Leadership, AT = Attitudes, DC = Development Climate, CM = Commitment).

Table 9: Relationship between factors

Factors	TM	SE	APP	PP	Trust	Justice	TL	AT	DC	CM
SE							X			
Trust						X				
Justice				X	X					
TL										
AT							X		X	
DC							X			
CM		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
RFC	X	X		X	X		X		X	X

A few of the factors are also supported by the theory mentioned earlier in the thesis.
For example, Armenakis et al. (1993) mentions participation, attitudes and leadership processes as factors that have a positive impact on a change readiness process. Further, Rafferty et al. (2013) highlights the importance of transformational leadership and charismatic leadership in a changing process. In addition, Armenakis et al. (1993) highlights the importance of creating commitment to the end-state, and efficacy among employees to create a successfully change message. Further, Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) established different strategies for creating a developing climate and increasing readiness for change among employees. The first one, human resource management practices, involves selection, performance appraisal, compensation and training and development programs. The second one suggests having activities like rites and ceremonies. The third one, suggest creating diffusion practices, such as best-practice programs and transition teams. The last one, suggest having formal activities that demonstrate support for change initiatives. These strategies are part of creating a development climate, and support our findings that development climate has an impact on readiness for change.

6.2 Discussion

We have shown that the main findings from the various articles are relevant for our synthesis. However, it is important that we do not generalise the findings too much. We must consider that a number of studies have researched readiness to change in addition to other variables, and therefore we must take the aim of these studies into consideration. In other words, the results will not be focused exclusively on change readiness, but on other factors as well. Further, there is a wide variation on the kinds of change and the kinds of organisations the articles have studied. Although we have previously stated that we wanted to generalise our findings independently of demographics, change type, and organisation, it is important to acknowledge that there are differences, and we must consider their impact on our study.

For instance, articles 8, 16, 19, and 25 studied companies going through mergers, and article 26 focused on a company undertaking an acquisition. Article 16 investigated and collected information from three different organisations. In addition to the company going through a merger (a biotechnology organisation), the researchers also looked at a Fortune 500 organisation implementing a new performance system and a health care system going through ownership changes. Article 9 studies an organisation that is implementing a new performance system. The articles examine how using readiness for change during implementation affects commitment to the change.

Many of the studies researched several organisations simultaneously. For example, article 21 sent out surveys to 25 different organisations, and article 24 investigated 3 different privately owned companies. Article 4 did research on four different companies, article 3 looked into several companies from the public and private sector, and article 5 collected data from 72 Korean organisations. Articles 11 and 17 collected data from various companies in different countries. Article 11 covered research done in Canada and India, and article 17 covered organisations in Great Britain and Germany. The authors of article 14 also investigated two different types of changes in their study: fine-tuning changes and corporate transformation changes.

As mentioned, several of the studies had different aims. For instance, articles number 13, 18, 23, and 26 have discussed and collected data on how transformational leadership affects employee behaviour before implementing and going through a change process. Other studies have focused more on commitment (11, 19, 22), the link between justice and commitment (16), which components relate to successful organisational change, how to test readiness for change models (5), how to use ‘the message’ in an organisation (6, 15), the outcomes of participation in strategic change (12), the impact change has on behaviour (9), resistance (8,10,13), and so on.

Although the studies have some variables in common, there are also some differences.
For example in the number of participants in each study and in the types of organisations. The organisations include hospitals; public, private, and government sectors; schools/universities; manufacturing companies; a fire department; technology; a call centre; a housing corporation; telecommunications; finance; industry; and consumer products. Although most of the articles focus on the employees within the organisation, some include managers and leaders (6, 10, 18, and 20). Another aspect that should be taken into consideration is cultural differences. Because the studies were done in different countries, culture may have a significant impact on the result.

The term ‘readiness for change’ appears in many of the studies just as a ‘bi’ variable that contributes to the actual aim of the study. Only articles 2, 3, and 4 directly and singularly focused on readiness for change. Despite the fact that many of the articles have different aims, focus on various change types, and examine different organisations, it can be seen as an advantage to our study to include all of them. Because we want to generalise and make suggestions and offer advice that could be used in future practices in all types of organisations, it is an advantage for us that the studies are diverse. We discovered that several of the studies agree on how variables relate to one another and how they affect each other despite differences in aim, change types, and organisations. For instance, we see that articles 6 and 15 agree that the message will have an impact on readiness for change. Four articles (1, 2, 5, 14) agree that self-efficacy will increase readiness for change. We also see that articles 7 and 14 both recognise that trust will impact readiness for change, and articles 13 and 15 imply that transformational leadership will increase self-efficacy. Articles 11 and 22 acknowledge how affective and normative commitment impact behavioural support.

We also have to consider if there is a reason these factors appeared so frequently compared to the others. Is it because they are the factors that actually do have the most impact on each other, or are they simply the ‘easiest’ factors to study? If the latter is the case, there could be gaps in the literature. Since all of the chosen studies are so different in terms of aim and demographics it seems to be highly unlikely that the findings are examined and found because they are the simplest to research. We therefore argue that because of the diversity of the studies and the fact that a lot of the same factors are mentioned across the studies, we can use the findings to generalise and come to a conclusion. Instead of using the different demographics to establish a pattern between the studies, we have used the demographics to establish the diversity between the studies, which, as mentioned is a crucial element for us when wanting to generalise the results.

7. Conclusion

Based on our findings we can conclude that the ‘the message’ (particularly self-efficacy), transformational leadership, development climate, participation, trust in management, organisational justice, and organisational commitment are the factors that have the greatest impact on creating readiness for change within an organisation. We also see that these are some of the factors that have been mentioned in the change readiness literature.

To make it easier for organisations to understand which factors need to be present to create readiness for change, we have chosen to categorise the factors into different concepts. First of all we have chosen to keep ‘the message’ created by Armenakis et al. (1993) as one concept, even though studies shows that self-efficacy appears to have the most significant impact. We have chosen to use ‘context’ and have added transformational leadership to this category as mentioned earlier. Further, we also use the ‘process’, and will also here add organisational justice as discussed above. Although ‘information’ has not been mentioned as a factor except in terms of reducing resistance, we see that according to the literature it is an important factor. Accordingly, we chose to keep it as part of the process and to acknowledge its importance.

As mentioned, the two concepts “context and process” originate from several different authors and models. Our model is therefore based on both Armenakis’s and other researchers models, but is altered and modified on behalf of the findings in the various studies. For instance we have added the factors transformational leadership and organisational justice. We have also arranged how these factors and concepts seem to impact each other. Previous studies and articles made by Armenakis and the other researchers have not (to our knowledge) discussed how the concepts ‘context, process and content’ affect and play an impact on ‘the message’, but have discussed these concepts individually. However, a few of them have discussed some of the concepts together, but not all four simultaneously. Our findings have shown us that the context, process and 'the message', relate to each other, and will in fact have a positive impact on each other, and towards readiness for change. This is partially confirmed by Armenakis et al. (1993), who states that participation and information could be used as strategies for communicating 'the message', which in our study is part of the process. In addition, the main findings also show that these factors have an impact on 'the message'. Our model for obtaining readiness for change is illustrated in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Readiness for change model

Our model is based on the principle that to gain high levels among the factors in 'process' and 'the message', it is advantageous to have the 'context' present. This means that having a development climate, transformational leadership, and a leader-member exchange will have a positive impact on the process. It will secure that information is given, employees will have the opportunity to participate, trust in management will increase, and at the same time the perceived feeling of organisational justice will increase. It is also important to mention that the four factors within the process will also have an impact on one another. Secondly, having a high level of information, participation, trust in management and organisational justice will have a positive effect on the message. We therefore conclude that when all three of these concepts are achieved, an organisation will have a good opportunity to successfully achieve readiness for change.

However, it is important to note that the three concepts can independently achieve readiness for change, but having all of them together increases the chance of a successful implementation.

In addition, we have also chosen to include ‘commitment’ in the model. This is because commitment was mentioned frequently as both a mediator to gain change readiness and as a direct variable. We have therefore illustrated that all three of the concepts will have an impact on the commitment level, and that commitment in itself will have a positive impact on readiness for change. Finally, it is important to mention that the concept of ‘content’, which refers to the type of change, will potentially impact employees’ readiness for change (Rafferty & Simons, 2006), and so it will affect the three concepts included in the model. However, it was not within the scope of our study to distinguish between types of change, so the concept is not included in our model. It is important to mention that our model is not in any way a blueprint or solution to how readiness for change is achieved, but a guideline to how and what factors will contribute to gain readiness for change. In other words, our model illustrates the factors that need/should be present - on behalf of various studies - to possibly and most successfully gain readiness for change within the organisation.

7.1 Limitations

Despite the advantage of having diversity in our studies, we need to consider the limitations in each study as well. Even if the studies we found seem to give valid results, we need to look at the limitations of each one to see if there could be factors that influenced the end-results and conclusions, or perhaps has given incorrect findings.

First of all, we can see that several of the articles mention the existence of common source method in their research (10, 11, 12, 14, 17) and the use of self-report measures of behaviour (11, 16, 19, 22) as limitations. In addition, some of the articles criticise the use of cross-sectional design because causality cannot be inferred (13, 22, 23, 25). Most of the articles highlight the number of participants and organisations (4, 5, 8, 9,10, 11, 17, 23, 24, 26) as limitations, which could lead to difficulties in the generalisation of the findings. However, because our thesis covers articles with studies from different industries and organisations, it is easier for us to generalise the results in our study. In addition, even if the articles mentioned the use of common source method as a limitation, several tested to see if it had any impact on their results, and the majority of the articles showed that this was not the case. We can therefore conclude that the limitations found in the articles will not have any significant impact on our thesis.

However, it is important to highlight that there are still some limitations that can be found in our study. First of all, we can not guarantee that all the articles we found cover all the research in the field of readiness for change. Because we have limited the search to various search words and databases, research that have used different variables and factors and therefore have different findings and results, could have been missed. In addition, we do not distinguish between type of change and industry, which again could have affected the results. Further, the dimensions of commitment are incorporated under a one-scale measure, which again should have been divided into the three dimensions: affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. However, because some of the studies did not distinguish between the three dimensions, it was difficult for us to do anything with this limitation. In addition, the choice of method could also be criticised. As we wanted to include a method that gave us the chance of having both qualitative, quantitative and mix methods, our thesis should have ended up with a spread of the methods. However, in our study we ended up with only one qualitative study, five mix methods, and 20 quantitative studies. Some could have argued that we should have chosen a method for only quantitative studies, but we did, in the beginning of the searches have a lot of qualitative studies and mix methods. It was not until after the exclusion process we noticed the limited number of qualitative studies and mix methods studies. The six studies included in our thesis have seen to be quite relevant and have contributed to our findings. We therefore believe that this method was the right method to use for our thesis.

To conclude, there are limitations to our study as many other studies, but we still think our thesis will be helpful for researchers and practitioners seeking a better understanding of factors that contribute to readiness for change among employees, and how to best approach this term in future practice.

7.2 Future research

As mentioned our model is not in any way a blueprint or solution for how readiness for change can be achieved, but a guideline of how and what factors will contribute to readiness for change. We therefore recommend further research on the factors that we have discovered to have the biggest impact on readiness for change, but also to examine the other factors that have not been mentioned as frequently.

As stated in several of the articles in the studies, there is a need for further research on other variables in the change readiness field than the ones that have already been examined. Considerable research has already been done on transformational leadership and its impact on commitment. Further, much research on commitment and its impact on readiness for change exist. In addition, several studies regarding 'self efficacy', trust, participation, and justice and its impact on readiness for change have been conducted. In other words, several of the studies focus on internal context enablers like: change participation, leadership processes, and so on. In addition, most of the articles focus on the individual level. More research should be done on external organisational pressures, and at the collective level. Further, what about communication as a factor to create readiness for change? Or the impact of training and development programs (i.e., management support) on readiness for change? Further, what impact do internal and external information have on readiness for change among employees? These aspects could be interesting and important areas for future research. In addition, future research comparing different industries in the field of change readiness could be useful in order to see if it is actually possible to generalise the findings from multiple studies involving different industries and organisations. In this matter, it could also be useful to discover if the size of a firm have an impact, culture, age of employees, gender, years of employment and job position. In addition, the impact of type of change on readiness for change could be useful to study in the future.

8. References

Anuradha, C., & Kelloway, K.E. (2004). Predicting openness and commitment to change. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25(6), 485-498. doi: 10.1108/01437730410556734

Armenakis, A.A., Harris, S.G., & Mossholder, K.W. (1993). Creating readiness for organisational change. *Human Relations,* 46(6), 681-704. Retrieved from: http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001872679304600601

Armenakis, A.A., & Bedeian, G. H. (1999). Organizational Change: A Review of Theory and Research in the 1990s. *Journal of Management*, 25(3), 293-315. doi: 10.1016/S0149-2063(99)00004-5

Armenakis A. A., & Harris, S. G. (2002). Crafting a change message to create transformational readiness. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 15(2), 169-183.
doi: 10.1108/09534810210423080

Avolio, B. J., Zhu, W., Koh, W., & Bhatia, P. (2004). Transformational leadership and organizational commitment: Mediating role of psychological empowerment and moderating role of structural distance. *Jorunal of Organizational Behavior,* 25(8), 951-968. doi: 10.1002/job.283

Berg, C. R., & Munthe-Kaas, H. (2013). Systematiske oversikter og kvalitativ forskning. *Norsk epidemiologi*, 23 (2), 131-139. Retrieved from http://www.ntnu.no/ojs/index.php/norepid/article/view/1634

Bernerth, J. (2004). Expanding Our Understanding of the Change Message. *Human Resource Development Review*, 3(1). 36-52. doi: 10.1177/1534484303261230

Bommer, W. H., Rich, G. A., & Rubin, R. S. (2005). Changing attitudes about change:

Longitudinal effects of transformational leader behavior on employee cynicism about organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(7), 733-753. doi: 10.1002/job.342

Booth, A., Sutton, A., & Papaioannou, D. (2016). *Systematic approaches to a successful literature review* (2th ed.). Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC, Melbourne: Sage.

Bryman, A. (2008). *Social Research Methods* (3th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press

Busch, T., Johnsen, E., Valstad, J. S., & Vanebo, J. O. (2007). *Endringsledelse i et strategisk perspektiv* (3th ed.). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget

Chartered Association of Business Schools, (17.04.2017). Retrieved from https://charteredabs.org/

Chawla, A., & Kelloway, K.E. (2004). Predicting openness and commitment to change. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25(6), 485-498. doi: 10.1108/01437730410556734

Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1999). *Doing Qualitative research* (2th ed.). Thousand Oaks: California

Cunningham, E. C., Woodward, A. C., Shannon, S. H., Maclntosh, B. L., Rosenbloom, D., & Brown, J. (2002). Readiness for organizational change: A longitudinal study of workplace, psychological and behavioural correlates. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75(4), 377-392. doi: 10.1348/096317902321119637

Devos, G., & Buelens, M. (2003). Openness to organizational change: The contribution of content, context, and process. Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b67a/f9e19061c9b9c9f8cb6e1a538162601851de.pdf

Devos, G., Buelens, M., & Bouckenooghe, D. (2010). Contribution of content, context, and process to understanding openness to organizational change: two experimental simulation studies. *Journal of Social Psychology,* 147(6), 607-629. doi: 10.3200/SOCP.147.6.607-630

Drenzky, F., Egold, W. N., & Dick, V. R. (2012). Ready for a Change? A Longitudinal Study of Antecedents, Consequences and Contingencies of Readiness for Change. *Journal of Change Management,* 12(1), 95-111. doi: 10.1080/14697017.2011.652377

Fischer, R., & Smith, P.B. (2006). Who Cares about Justice? The Moderating Effect of Values on the Link between Organisational Justice and Work Behaviour. *Applied Psychology,* 55(4), 541-562. doi:10.1111/j.1464-0597.2006.00243.x

Foster, Rex D. (2010). Resistance, Justice, and Commitment to Change. *Human Resource Development Quarterly,* 21(1), 3-39. doi: 10.1002/hrdq.20035

Fritzenchaft, T. (2014). *Critical Success Factors of Change Management: An Empirical Research in German Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises*. Retrieved from http://www.springer.com/cn/book/9783658045487

Galpin, T. J. (1996). *The human side of change.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hannes, K., & Lockwood, C. (2012). *Synthesizing Qualitative Research*. UK: BMJ Books

Herold, D. M., Fedor, D.B., & Caldwell, S.D. (2007). Beyond Change Management: A Multilevel Investigation of Contextual and Personal Influences on Employees' Commitment to Change. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 92(4), 942-951. doi: 10.1080/14697010701265249

Herscovitch, L., & Meyer, J. P. (2002). Commitment to organizational change: Extension of a three-component model. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 87(3), 474-487. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.474

Holt, T. D., Armenakis, A. A., Field, S. H., & Harris, G. S. (2007). Readiness for Organizational Change: The systematic development of a scale. *The Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, 43(2), 232-255. doi: 10.1177/0021886306295295

Jacobsen, D. I. (2012). *Organisasjonsendringer og endringsledelse* (2th ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget

Jacobsen, D. I., & Thorsvik, J. (2013). *Hvordan organisasjonen fungerer* (4th ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget

Jones, A. R., Jimmieson, L. N., & Griffiths, A. (2005). The Impact of Organizational Culture and Reshaping Capabilities on Change Implementation Success: The Mediating Role of Readiness for Change. *Journal of management studies*, 42(2), 361-386. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2005.00500.x

Judson, S. A. (1991). *Changing Behavior in Organizations: Minimizing Resistance.* Cambridge, Mass., USA : B. Blackwell Business

Kanter, R. M., Stein, B.A., & Jick. T.D. (1992). The Challenge of Organizational Change: How Companies Experience It and Leaders Guide It. *American Sociological Association*, 22(5), 718-719. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2074647

Kotter, J.P. (2007). Leading change: Why Transformation Efforts fail. *Harvard Business Review*, 96(8). Retrieved from: http://www.gsbcolorado.org/uploads/general/PreSessionReadingLeadingChange-John_Kotter.pdf

Kvålshaugen, R., & Wennes, G. (2012). *Organisere og lede, dilemmaer i praksis.* Bergen: Fagbokforlaget

Kwahk, K., & Lee. J. (2008). The role of readiness for change in ERP implementation: Theoretical bases and empirical validation. *Information and Management*, 45(7), 474-481. doi: 10.1016/j.im.2008.07.002

Lewin, K.(1951). *Field theory in social science : selected theoretical papers* (1st ed.). New York: Harper & Row

Lines, R. (2006). Influence of participation in strategic change: resistance, organizational commitment and change goal achievement. *Journal of Change Management*, 4(3), 193-215. doi: 10.1080/1469701042000221696

Madsen, R. S., Miller, D., & John, R. C. (2005) Readiness for organizational change: Do organizational commitment and social relationships in the workplace make a difference? *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 16(2), 213-234. doi: 10.1002/hrdq.1134

Major, C.H., & Savin-Baden, M. (2010). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research Synthesis*. London, New York: Routledge

Martin, A. J., Jones, E. S., & Callan, V. J. (2005). The role of psychological climate in facilitating employee adjustment during organizational change. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 14(3), 263-289. doi:10.1080/13594320500141228

Meyer, B. C., & Stensaker, G. I. (2011). *Endringskapasitet.* Bergen: Fagbokforlaget

Meyer, P. J., Srinivas, S. E., Lal, B. J., & Topolnytsky, L. (2007). Employee commitment and support for an organizational change: Test of the three-component model in two cultures. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology,* 80(2), 185-211. doi: 10.1348/096317906X118685

Mother, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., & Altman, D.G. (2009). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement. Retrieved from: http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1000097

Nemanich, L. A., & Keller, R. T. (2007). Transformational leadership in an acquisition: A field study of employees. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 18(1), 49-68. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2006.11.003

Neves, P. (2009). Readiness for Change: Contributions for Employee's Level of Individual

Change and Turnover Intentions. *Journal of Change Management*, 9(2), 215-231. doi: 10.1080/14697010902879178

Oreg, S. (2004). Personality, context, and resistance to organizational change. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 15(1), 73-101. doi: 10.1080/13594320500451247

Oreg, S., & Berson, Y. (2011). Leadership and employees´reactions to change: The role of leaders´personal attributes and transformational leadership style. *Personnel Psychology*, 64(3), 627-659. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2011.01221.x

Pillai, R., & Williams, A. E. (2004). Transformational leadership, self- efficacy, group cohesiveness, commitment, and performance. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 17(2), 144-159. doi: 10.1108/09534810410530584

Popay, J., Roberts, H., Sowden, A., Petticrew, M., Arai, L., Rodgers, M., Britten, N., Roen, K., & Duffy, S. (2006). Guidance on the Conduct of Narrative Synthesis in Systematic Reviews: A product from the ESRC Methods Programme. *Lancaster University.* doi: 10.13140/2.1.1018.4643.

Rafferty, A., & Simons, R. (2006). An examination of the antedecents of readiness for fine-tuning and corporate transformation changes. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 20(3), 325-350. doi: 10.1007/s10869-005-9013-2

Rafferty A. E., Jimmieson N. L., & Armenakis A. A. (2013). Change readiness: a multilevel review. *Journal of Management*, 39(1), 110-135. doi: 10.1177/0149206312457417

Roos, G., Krogh, V. G., Roos, J., & Boldt-Christmas, L. (2014). *Strategi - en innføring* (6th ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget

Shein, E.H. (2004). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (3th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Simms, H. (2005). *Organisational Behaviour and Change Management.* Retrieved from:

https://books.google.no/books?id=CkXp1poaxqIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=no&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Tichy, N.M., & Devanna, M.A. (1987). Review: The Transformational Leader. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 1(1), 74-76. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/4164725.pdf

Todnem, R.B. (2007). Ready or Not...*Journal of Change Management*, 7(1), 3-11. doi: 10.1080/14697010701265249

Van Dam, K., Oreg, S., & Schyns, B. (2007). Daily Work Contexts and Resistance to Organisational Change: The Role of Leader–Member Exchange, Development Climate, and Change Process Characteristics. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 57(2), 313-334. Doi: 10.1111/j.1464-0597.2007.00311.x

Appendix

Appendix 1: Overview over used articles

NUMBER	TITLE	AUTHORS	DATA BASE /SEARCH WORDS	JOURNAL
1	The Impact of Organizational Culture and Reshaping Capabilities on Change Implementation Success: The Mediating Role of Readiness for Change	Jones, Jimmieson & Griffiths (2005)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Journal of management studies
2	Readiness for organizational change: A longitudinal study of workplace, psychological and behavioural correlates	. Cunningham, Woodward, Shannon, MacIntosh, Lendrum, Rosenbloom & Brown (2002)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Journal of occupational and organizational psychology
3	Readiness for Organizational Change The Systematic Development of a Scale	Holt,. Armenakis, Feild & Harris (2007)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Journal of Applied Behavioral Science
4	Readiness for organizational change: Do organizational commitment and social relationships in the workplace make a difference?	Madsen, Miller & John (2005)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Human Resource Development Quarterly
5		Kwahk &	Google Scholar	Information and

	The role of readiness for change in ERP implementation: Theoretical bases and empirical validation	Lee (2008)	Readiness to change organisation	Management
6	Crafting a change message to create transformational readiness	Armenakis & Harris (2002)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Journal of Organizational Change Management
7	Contribution of Content, Context, and Process to Understanding Openness to Organizational Change: Two Experimental Simulation Studies	Devos, Buelens & Bouckenoo ghe (2010)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Journal of Social Psychology
8	Daily Work Contexts and Resistance to Organisational Change: The Role of Leader–Member Exchange, Development Climate, and Change Process Characteristics	Van Dam, Oreg & Schyns (2007)	Google Scholar Readiness to change organisation	Applied psychology
9	Readiness for Change: Contributions for Employee's Level of Individual Change and Turnover Intentions	Neves (2009)	Google Scholar Change management readiness	Journal of Change Management
10	Personality, context, and resistance to organizational	Oreg (2004)	Google Scholar Organisational willingness to change	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology

	change			
11	Employee commitment and support for an organizational change: Test of the three-component model in two cultures	Meyer, Srinivas & Topolnytsky (2007)	Google Scholar Organisational willingness to change	Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology
12	Influence of participation in strategic change: resistance, organizational commitment and change goal achievement	Lines (2006)	Google Scholar Organisational willingness to change	Journal of change management
13	Transformational leadership, self-efficacy, group cohesiveness, commitment, and performance	Pillai & Williams (2004)	Google Scholar Change commitment organization	Journal of Organizational Change Management
14	An examination of the antecedents of readiness for fine-tuning and corporate transformational changes	Rafferty & Simons (2006)	EBSCOhost Change readiness AND organization AND behavior	Journal of Business and Psychology
15	Expanding Our Understanding of the Change Message	Bernerth (2004)	Google Scholar Change commitment organization	Human Resource Development Review
16	Resistance, Justice, and Commitment to Change	Foster (2010)	ISI Web of Science Readiness to change AND commitment (NOT TS = Health)	Human Resource Development Quarterly
17	Who Cares about Justice? The Moderating Effect of Values on the	Fisher & Smith (2006)	ORIA Opennes to organisational change	Applied Psychology

	Link between Organisational Justice and Work Behaviour			
18	Leadership and employees reactions to change: The role of leaders personal attributes and transformational leadership style	Oreg & Berson (2011)	ORIA Opennes to organisational change	Personnel Psychology
19	Predicting openness and commitment to change	Anuradha & Kelloway (2004)	ORIA Opennes to organisational change	Leadership and Organizational Development
20	Ready or Not	Todnem (2007)	ORIA Organisational change and readiness for change*	Journal of Change Management
21	Beyond change management: A multilevel investigation of contextual and personal influences on employees' commitment to change	Herold, Fedor & Caldwell (2007)	Reference from article 1	Journal of Applied Psychology
22	Commitment to organizational change: Extension of a three-component model	Herscovitc & Meyer (2002)	Reference from article 1	Journal of Applied Psychology
23	Transformational leadership and organizational commitment: Mediating role of psychological empowerment and moderating role of structural distance	Avolio, Zhu, Koh & Bhatia (2004)	Reference from article 7	Journal of Organizational Behavior
24	Changing attitudes about change:	Bommer, Rich &	Reference from article 7	Journal of Organizational Behavior

	Longitudinal effects of transformational leader behavior on employee cynicism about organizational change	Rubin (2005)		
25	The role of psychological climate in facilitating employee adjustment during organizational change	Martin, Jones & Callan (2005)	Reference from article 7	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology
26	Transformational leadership in an acquisition: A field study of employees	Nemanich & Keller (2007)	Reference from article 7	The Leadership Quarterly

Appendix 2: Reflection note 1

Rebecca Victoria Riddell

1. Summary of thesis and main findings

The topic of our thesis is to investigate what factors have the biggest influence on employee's readiness to change within an organisation. Organisations today operate in a constant and rapidly changing environment. They experience both external and internal forces driving them to change, and for them to survive change is an essential key. Readiness for change originates from Kurt Lewin's (1951) three-step model, where the first step "unfreezing" refers to creating change readiness among employees and within the organisation. Readiness for change serves as a key construct for the success of a change effort, and is one of the reasons behind our choice of topic.

For our thesis we decided to conduct a systematic review with a narrative synthesis approach. We chose this method as it suited the criterions and goals for out thesis. Summarised, a systematic review allows us to use both qualitative and quantitative research. It also allows us to summarise and explain the findings from multiple studies in order to measure outcomes for interventions. A narrative approach was recommended to use together with a systematic review, and made the approach choice quite simple. Every step in our process was carefully described and explained throughout our thesis in order to gain transparency, as this is an important part of conducting a systematic review. Our main goal was to collect as many relevant articles as possible, summarise the findings, and provide evidence that can supplement organisations in creating and sustaining change readiness.

As part of a systematic review we had to determine what search words and databases to use, exclusion and inclusion criteria's, and what search strategies to use, before searching and collecting articles. We decided in advance that we wanted to collect 480 articles (120 articles per author). After gathering in the articles we had to start excluding them. The exclusion process left us with 26 articles, 1 qualitative, 5 with mix methods, and 20 quantitative studies. As one of our inclusion criteria was that the articles had to be published in journals, we conducted a quality assessment on the journals our remaining articles were published in. Further, we extracted data and findings from all 26 articles, and summarised the articles in a table. After a carful analysis of all findings, we determined what factors appeared to have the biggest impact, both indirectly and directly towards readiness for change. Our main conclusion was that the factors: 'the message' (particularly self-efficacy), transformational leadership, development climate, participation, trust in management, organisational justice, and commitment have the greatest impact on creating readiness for change within an organisation. Further, we also recognised that some of these factors were supported by the change readiness literature. Based on our findings we created a model. Our model illustrates the factors that need/should be present, to possibly and most successfully gain readiness for change within an organisation. The goal was to create a model that can give guidance to organisations in order to create and sustain change readiness, and should therefore not be perceived as a 'fixed solution' on how an organisation *will* gain change readiness.

2. Internationalisation

As technology has increased the world has become more connected - globalised. Every organisation, regardless of what country/countries they operate in will experience change. And as mentioned, readiness for change is a crucial element in the change process. Our topic is therefore relevant in every country and every organisation. Our goal was to generalise our findings, and not distinguish between country, and/or type of organisation. By doing so we wanted to create a model that can be applied anywhere. The biggest issue our topic will have regarding internationalisation is the difference in culture and international forces. Difference in culture and the content of change (type of change), will differentiate highly between countries, and will have a big impact on how the organisation changes, why it has to change, and if it succeeds in changing. Particularly the external forces will differentiate between countries. External forces such as demands, policies, laws and regulations, demographic characteristics, economy, and consumer needs will be different and have a big impact on the change. Also internal forces, (e.g. employee attitudes and management style) will differentiate between different countries, and their effect on a change process can be extensive. Further, organisations operating in several countries will experience that how they conduct a change process and create change readiness in one country, cannot be executed in the same manner in another country.

3. Innovation

The term *innovation* can be characterised as having the capacity to improve, solve problems, and create competitive advantages for organisations. Further, innovation can be characterised as an approach to generate new ideas. In other words, in order to innovate an organisation must change. The term innovation is therefore highly correlated with our topic of change. Innovation can be seen as a process for organisations to continually stay updated, and remain relevant within their market. Since readiness for change is an important step in a change process, it will also be essential when an organisation is trying to innovate.

Further, one of the reasons for us to choose this topic and method was because we saw that there was a gap in the literature. We knew that there existed a lot of literature regarding change readiness, but did not find any articles summarising these different findings or creating a model on behalf of the different findings. Our goal was therefore to summarise all relevant findings, and create this model that can be perceived as 'innovation' within the field of change readiness. However, we know that our findings have limitations, and that there are gaps in the literature. There are a lot of factors that we feel should be researched more on, and we also see that there is a need in the research for comparing various industries regarding change readiness. Having more research within this field would make it easier to generalise future findings.

4. Responsibility

Paying attention to ethics and social responsibility is an important part of an organisations lifecycle. Customers and stakeholders will often pay close intention to a company's ethics and social responsibility. It is therefore essential that an organisation know whom they are doing business with, how they are conducting their business, and why they are doing business. Several of the studies used in our thesis focused on changes in an organisation when going through an acquisition and merger process. Especially when companies decide to start operating in other countries (e.g. by acquisition, mergers, green field) there are a lot of ethical and social problems that can arise. For example in emerging markets problems with corruption are quite common. Further, operating in countries where child labour is frequent, or where the general labour conditions are poor, companies should take precautions regarding how they stand and what actions they will take against this. In general, an organisation is responsible for behaving ethical towards their employees, customers, stakeholders and society.

To behave in an ethical manner is both a necessity and an important part of organisations activities. Companies going through change therefore need to consider their ethical and social responsibility every step of the way, during a change process.

Appendix 3: Reflection note 2

Maren Tofte Røisland

Introduction

This reflective note will shortly present the main theme and findings of the thesis, and then continue by identifying how the thesis topic relates to broader international trends, innovation and responsibility.

Summary of thesis findings

External factors push organisations into change, and organisations need to respond quickly to successfully change. Readiness for change and actions undertaken in the implementation, serve as a key construct for the successfulness of a change effort. Managers should focus on creating readiness for change by reducing resistance, transforming employees into change agents, while at the same time craft a change message that helps employees adopt behaviours that are essential for the change effort to be successful. Achilles Armenakis is a professor in the field of change management and is well known for his work in the field of change readiness. He developed a model that focuses on the instruments underlying the adoption and institutionalization of change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). The model is based upon Lewin's (1947) pioneering work and Bandura's (1986) social learning theory. The model includes five components that should exist for the change to be effective: (a) discrepancy; (b) principal support; (c) self-efficacy; (d) appropriateness; and (e) personal valence (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; cited in Neves, 2009).

The aim of the study is to investigate what factors that will influence employee's readiness to change in an organisation. By doing so, we will find factors that will impact readiness to change both directly and indirectly through different mediating factors. On behalf of the result in our study we wish to develop a theoretical model that will help organisations create readiness to change among their employees. The model will consist of the different factors that throughout our research have seen to influence change readiness the most. The goal is to provide evidence that can supplement organisations and guide them on their path to creating and sustaining change readiness within the organisation.

Based on our findings we can conclude that the 'the message' (especially self-efficacy), transformational leadership, development climate, participation, trust in management, organisational justice and commitment to the organisation are the factors that will have the most impact on creating readiness for change within the organisation. We also see that these are some of the factors that have been mentioned most frequently in the change readiness literature. Based on the studies found, we were also able to make a new theoretical framework within readiness for change.

With organising our findings in a model, it is more accessible for organisations to understand what factors need to be present to create readiness for change. We have therefore chosen to categorise the factors into different concepts. First, we have chosen to keep ‘the message’ made by Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder (1993) as one concept, even though studies show that it is self-efficacy that occurs to have the most significant impact. We have chosen to use the “context” and have added transformational leadership to this concept. Further we use the “process”, and will add organisational justice to this concept. Although “information” has not been mentioned as a factor except for reducing resistance, we see that according to the literature regarding change readiness that is an important factor and choose to keep this as part of the process, and acknowledge its importance. The two concepts “context and process” originates from both Armenakis’s, and other researcher’s models, but is altered and modified on behalf of the findings in the various studies. For instance, we have arranged how these factors and concepts seem to impact each other. Previous studies and articles made by Armenakis and the other researchers have not discussed how the concepts ‘context, process and content’ effect and play an impact on ‘the message’, but have discussed these concepts individually. Our findings have shown us that the concepts relate to each other and will in fact have a positive impact on each other, and towards readiness for change.

Internationalization

Our thesis serves as a guideline for future employees and leaders, and as a useful tool in *internationalisation*. As there is a raise of international firms around the world, it is important that leaders are familiar with leading employees from different countries and cultures. Our thesis is not limited to any specific country or culture, and therefore serves as a guide for all employees and leaders around the world undergoing a change. Dynamic changes and external factors push organisations to change, and our thesis is therefore highly relevant and helpful in international trends. International forces increase competition, and the transfer of information and knowledge makes the pressure even bigger on organisations operating in the world today. International forces like demographic shifts also put a pressure on organisations, as they need to consider the age and population of the country they are operating in. Further, innovation and new technology is growing rapidly, and organisations must be up to date to survive and succeed in the market. Market forces like new competitors and mergers & acquisitions, also pressure organisations to change. Economic forces leading to recession in the market, pressure organisations to downsize on employees and change to survive in the market place. Readiness for change is therefore a highly relevant topic as international forces constantly pressure organisations to change.

Innovation

The thesis also has an impact on *innovation*. It gives a new sight on the area of readiness for change in the change management field. As it sums up evidence found in research from the last 15 years, it has identified gaps in the literature that needs to be more elaborated on in the future, and provides a new theoretical framework that can help leaders to successfully undergo a change. Several of the previous studies focus on internal context enablers like: change participati on, leadership processes, and so on. In addition, most of the articles focus on the individual level. More research should be done on external organisational pressures, and at the collective level. Other gaps found in the thesis is the lack of research on the effect of internal and external information on readiness for change among employees. As there is an increasingly flow of information in traditional and social media in the world today, it could be useful to get a picture of how the views and meanings of others effect employees, especially if there are organisations undergoing a similar change. Further, there is a lack of research on the effect of training and development programs on an employee readiness for change. Maybe it could be useful to hire change agents that is involved during the whole change process? Furthermore, communication as a tool for creating readiness for change, is also missed in the literature. In addition, future research comparing different industries in the field of change readiness could also be useful. This to see if it could be possible to generalise the findings from multiple studies involving different industries and organisations. In this matter, it could also be useful to discover if the size of a firm has an impact, culture, age of employees, gender, years of employment and job position. Last, impact of type of change on readiness for change is also a topic that could be useful to study in the future.

Responsibility

It is our *responsibility* to transfer knowledge and expertise gained in the field of business administration to others, and contribute to new research and knowledge in the field. In addition, there is ethical issues to consider in the field of change management. Downsizing of employees is an ethical consideration, and often present in changing organisations. A leader needs to consider when, who and how to fire employees, and this needs to be done carefully. Both in terms of years of employment, age and job position of the employees, and the relations between each other. A downsizing could also lead to reduced trust and commitment among employees, and a leader therefore needs to consider the different options faced. In addition, if a change requires new partners to cooperate with, a leader must choose the ones with good reputation and that can reflect the values of their own organisation. Further, if choosing partners in emerging economies, one needs to consider issues like corruption, child work and bad work conditions. New systems, product lines and the way of operating in the organisation could also have ethical issues considering the environment. What could be done in terms of accountability in the change management field is that leaders are open about the changes to their employees and society, and choose decisions based on justice, and not what is of their best interest. Despite that leaders needs to react fast, and take quick decisions, they have accountability to the organisation, and the society. All organisations need to think of how their choices affect others around, both in terms of stakeholders, the environment, and economic surroundings. Having this in mind, it is more likely that there will be a growing number of sustainable organisations that will survive in the competitive market place that we are part of now.