REBUILDING TRUST TOWARDS LEADERS

A case study in an international expert organization

Helena Mustajärvi
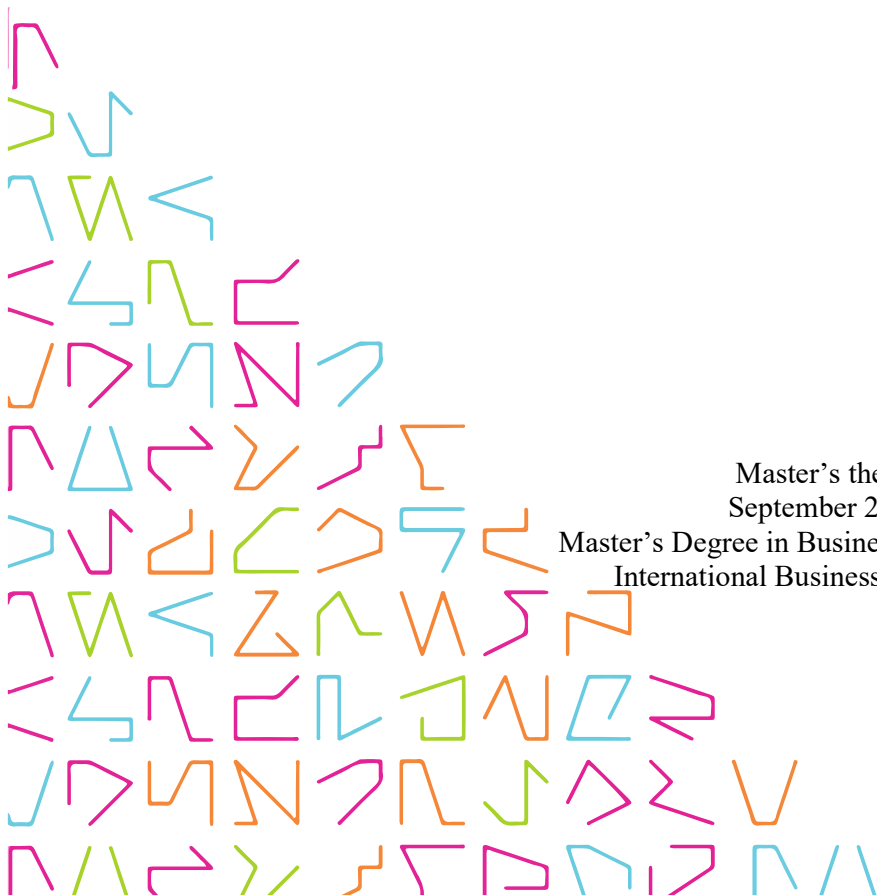
ABSTRACT

MUSTAJÄRVI, HELENA:
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This research focused on leadership and especially on how to rebuild trust once it has been breached. The background came from an extensive development process conducted in an international team of experts on multinational, listed company X. The case study aimed to document the starting point of the team, steps taken to improve the situation and to research if change had happened in a period of one year. Another objective was to document the main points from both outside viewers' and personnel's point-of-view that were incremental in rebuilding the trust.

As the situation in this study was unique for one team in one company, closely related to organizational behavior and examining change, therefore the chosen research strategy was a case study. For same reasons, mainly qualitative data collection methods were used utilizing partly quantitative data collection. Quantitative method was used in form of anonymous personnel survey to document the situation in the beginning and the change in the team with same questions a year later. In addition to the quantitative data, more in-depth data on the reasons for change were gathered with qualitative methods like interviews for outside viewers and open-ended questionnaire to the personnel.

In this case study, rebuilding trust towards management and reducing the negativity in the team was successful. From both results, anonymous questionnaire from the team and the interviews with outside viewers, significant change towards more positive work atmosphere and rebuilt trust towards management was visible. Some division in terms of trust and negativity inside minority of the team was visible in the results and a worry about this became evident also from the comments in both interviews and questionnaire.

Since this research was done as a case study for company X and a certain team situation, therefore the validity of this research is limited to the case company and to the team situation discussed. Suggestions, results and conclusions cannot be directly transferred to other case studies or teams in similar situations, as each organization's situation, root causes for mistrust and improvement needs must be individually evaluated and analyzed. Although, both the theories presented and the results of this study offer generalizations, further knowledge, helpful ideas and recommendations for managers in similar situations.

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CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

Building trust as a tool for leadership is very topical at the moment. Trust as a concept is not a new thing and it has been researched a lot; what is the impact of mistrust in an organization and how to rebuild the trust after it has been breached is less discussed in literature. What is anyhow known, is that high trust in organizations can bring major benefits even in monetary terms and vice versa, distrust can have a destroying impact.

> "Trust is an old idea, and it has come back again. We believed that proper management and information systems, a correctly designed organizational structure, and well-oiled processes will solve our problems and facilitate us to attain our objectives. We were wrong, because we forgot people's deep psychological need for trust and fear of mistrust." (Harisalo & Stenvall, 2004, 51)

This thesis focuses on leadership and more precisely on how to rebuild trust from managers perspective once it has been breached. The background for the case study comes from extensive development process conducted in an international team of experts on multinational, listed company X. The author has operated as manager of the team together with colleague during the process. The concepts reviewed in this thesis are of personal interest of the author and will be useful for personal development as a leader as well.

The case study starts from the point of spring 2017, when personnel survey was conducted. The studied team's results were extremely low. From that point on, more extensive process was started for finding out the root causes. Lack of trust towards management, as well as a negative circle amongst the team were identified as main causes for the situation. Since then, several steps were taken to improve the situation.

This case study aims to document the starting point of the team, steps taken to improve the situation and to research if change has happened in a period of one year. Another objective is to research what were the main points from both outside viewers' and personnel's point-of-view that were incremental in rebuilding the trust. As a result, it is expected to have a record of observations and actions that might be utilized as helpful tips

in similar situations, although all situations involving low or breached trust and the reasons behind may vary.

1.1. Research objective and questions

This research concentrates on discussing how rebuilding trust in an organizational context can be achieved after it has been breached. The objective is to establish sufficient knowledge on theoretical background of the main concepts related to trust and mistrust in an organizational context as well as on trust rebuilding. The goal is to combine this information with practical case study in international team of experts in company X.

In order to support the research to meet its research objectives the following three research questions have to be answered:

1) What kind of benefits trust towards management can create and what kind of impact mistrust can have in an organization?
2) What are the key principles impacting organizational trust and mistrust in an organization?
3) How to rebuild trust towards management in an international expert team in case X?

The following sub-questions have been formulated to help to answer the third research question presented above:

1) How the personnel engagement and trust has developed during one year's process in the international expert team in case X?
2) In case of improved trust towards the management can be documented in case X, which issues have been incremental in rebuilding trust from the point of view of team members and outside viewers?
3) What kind of lessons can be learned from case X and possibly utilized in similar situations?

1.2. Research structure

The research will be structured as follows to provide the reader with a better understanding of the research process:

The current chapter one is an introduction to the study. It provides an overview of the topic, the research problem, questions and structure chosen for this case study, as well as the relevance of the topic and why it has been chosen.

Chapter two covers the theoretical part of this research. It will introduce the key principles of transformational leadership and the impact of trust or mistrust in global organization context. This chapter aims at answering the first and second research questions: 1) What kind of benefits trust towards management can create and what kind of impact mistrust can have in an organization? and 2) What are the key principles impacting organizational trust and mistrust in an organization?

Chapter three provides an overview of the research methodology and data collection. This includes an introduction to the research method chosen, the research scope and additionally contains details of how the research data was collected and analyzed.

Chapter four delivers an insight into the case study conducted. This chapter will present the starting point of the team, the steps taken to rebuild trust, how well these objectives have been met and what were the main points that were incremental in rebuilding the trust. This chapter aims at answering the third research question and its sub-questions: 3) How to rebuild trust towards management in an international expert team in case X?

Chapter five focuses on major findings, the discussion of the research results and ends with the conclusions. It also contains recommendations in form of helpful ideas and tips for managers in similar situations.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Leadership, together with trust and mistrust are wide area topics. Covering every point would exceed the dimensions of this research. This research therefore provides only an overview of these concepts to create a baseline understanding required before the actual case study is conducted. Due to the wideness of the topics, the theoretical framework is focused around concepts of transformational leadership as well as trust and mistrust in organizational framework, especially in global organizations whenever literature was available.

The terms "manager" and "leader" as well as "subordinates", "employees" or "direct reports" are not separated in this research and are used as synonyms to each other due to similarities in other researches and organizational context in company X.

2.1. Transformational leadership and trust

The idea of transformational leadership was first presented by James MacGregor Burns in 1978. Since then, the concept has been developed and researched further by several authors. Burns made a distinction between transformational and transactional leadership; transactional being a give and take relationship, when transformational is more based on leader's personality, traits and capability to make changes through vision and goals. The concept of transformational leadership was later widened into an idea of four I's by Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio:

1. Individualized consideration; knowing the followers needs, capabilities, aspirations and developing them.
2. Intellectual stimulation; challenging follower's basic thinking, assumptions and models.
3. Inspirational motivation; articulating appealing and inspiring vision to followers.
4. Idealized Influence / Charisma; providing communal design of vision and purpose.

(Goethals, Sorenson & Burns, 2004, 1558-1565.)

Bass defines transformational leadership as way of leadership that creates value and positive change in followers through transforming people to help each other and look out for the organization as whole, from self-interest to the good of the group. As any leadership style, neither transformational leadership is without a flaw. The idealization and charismatic leadership was criticized to be often present in dictatorships and cults; this lead for further discussion and refining Bass's message later towards socialized charisma, which means that the leader cares about his or her people's collective interest. (Goethals, Sorenson & Burns, 2004, 1558-1565.)

Transformational leadership and its relation to trust has been researched a lot. Connell, Ferres and Travaglione (2003, 571; 583) discuss that trust is a central concept between transformational leaders and their followers and this leads to positive organizational outcomes. They conclude that even when trust can be built in several ways, transformational leadership is one of the most important predictors for it in contemporary business. Their model of trust in manager is shown in Figure 1 below. The model presents transformational leadership as one of the predictors of trust in managers. (Connell & al., 2003, 571; 583) Also Dirks and Ferrin (2002, 614) state that trust has been perhaps most frequently cited in the literature of transformational leadership and that transformational leaders gain trust of their followers through their actions and these in turn result into desirable outcomes. For this reason, this study is focusing on transformational leadership in relation to trust instead of generally exploring leadership theories.
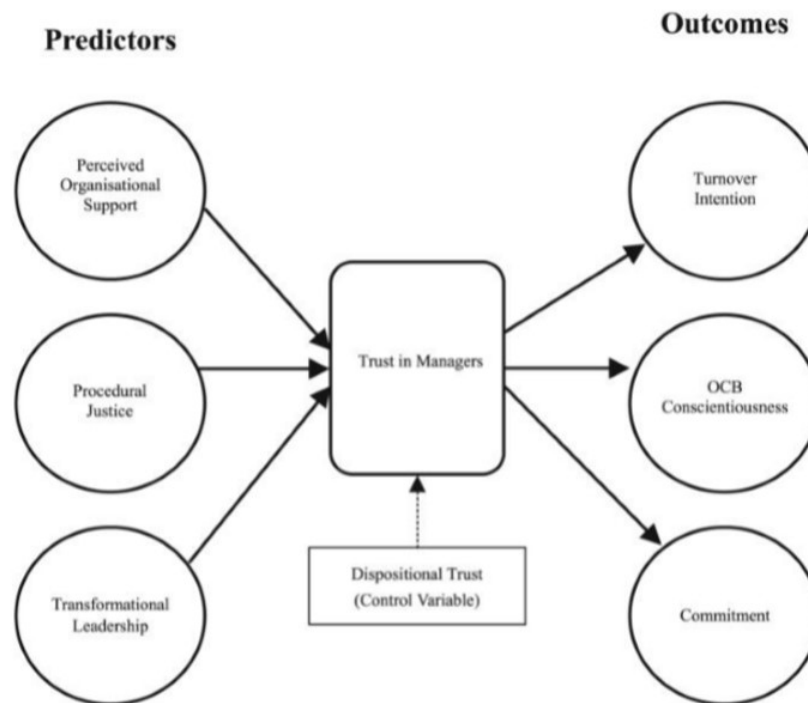
FIGURE 1. A proposed model of trust in managers by Connell and al. (2003, 575).

Barine and Minja (2012, 40) suggest that transformational leadership is important for organizations, since according to several studies it significantly increases organizational performance, is positively linked to market share and customer satisfaction, generates higher commitment to the organization from its employees, increases employee trust to-wards management, enhances employee job satisfaction, and reduces employee stress and increases wellbeing. All mentioned impacts are very positive from organizational per-spective, but can they be reached in virtual organizations? Kelloway and al (2003, 169-170) studied the use of transformational leadership remotely and concluded that transfor-mational leadership utilized remotely can still have the same positive impact on perfor-mance and attitudes than through face-to-face contact. This supports the use of transfor-mational leadership also in global and remote environments.

This chapter has presented some key principles related to transformational leadership and its relation to trust towards managers in organizations and to this study. Principles of transformational leadership can provide tools for managers to build and maintain trust in their teams and through it, yield better performance and commitment. Next chapters will focus in more detail to concepts of trust and mistrust and their impact in an organization.

2.2. Concept of trust in organizational context

In English Oxford dictionary, the noun *trust* is defined as "Firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something." (https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/trust). Defining trust in organizational context and especially between manager or leader and direct reports becomes more complicated.

Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995, 709-734) presented a model of trust, which includes three factors of perceived trustworthiness: Ability, benevolence and integrity. These factors together with the trustor's propensity, i.e. general willingness to trust others build the trust. Moreover, mutual willingness to take risks in the relationship has an impact on outcomes and trust itself. In this model, ability refers to skills, competences and characteristics within certain area, for example specific technological skills whereas benevolence refers to perceived positiveness and helpfulness from trustee towards trustor, especially without special rewards. Last, integrity in the model relates to trustees following common set of principles that trustor accepts, for example, having strong sense of justice. Mayer et al (1995) present that all these factors are usually required in order to have a high-trust relationship, although the level of each factor may differ by situation and depending on trustor's propensity. The proposed model is presented in Figure 2 below. In addition to the model, the authors present following propositions regarding trust:

1. The higher the trustor's propensity to trust, the higher the trust for trustee prior to availability of information about the trustee.
2. Trust for a trustee will be a function of the trustee's perceived ability, benevolence, and integrity and of the trustor's propensity to trust.
3. The effect of integrity on trust will be most salient early in the relationship prior to the development of meaningful benevolence data.
4. The effect of perceived benevolence on trust will increase over time as the relationship between the parties develops.
5. Risk taking in a relationship is a function of trust and the perceived risk of the trusting behavior (e.g. empowerment of a subordinate).
   (Mayer & al. 1995, 709-734.)
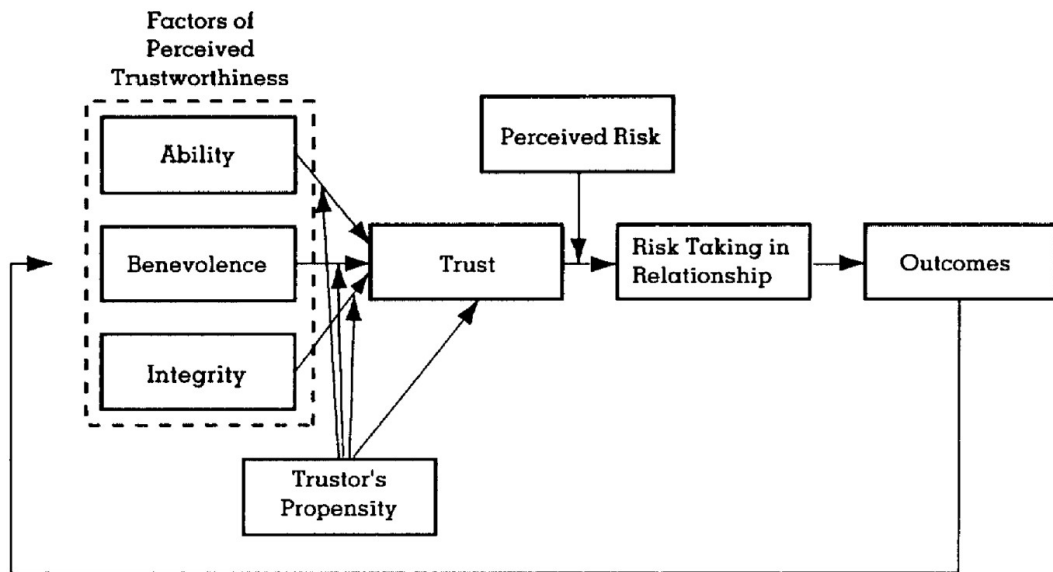
FIGURE 2. Proposed model of trust by Mayer and al (1995, 715).

Dirks and Ferrin (2002, 611-624) aimed at combining research regarding leadership and trust from past four decades. As a result, they developed the framework presented in Figure 3 below. The framework includes three antecedents for building trust in leader; leader's actions and practices and how they are viewed, follower's propensity to trust and length of relationship. Leader's actions and practices can have either positive or negative impact on trust. Dirks and Ferrin also included in the framework outcomes, attitudes and other correlating factors. They also split their conclusions on trust towards direct leader and organizational leadership, i.e. more senior management. Part of the hypotheses presented in this research conclude that trust in direct leader will have largest correlation with job attitudes, the second largest with organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) and the smallest with job performance. (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002, 611-624.)
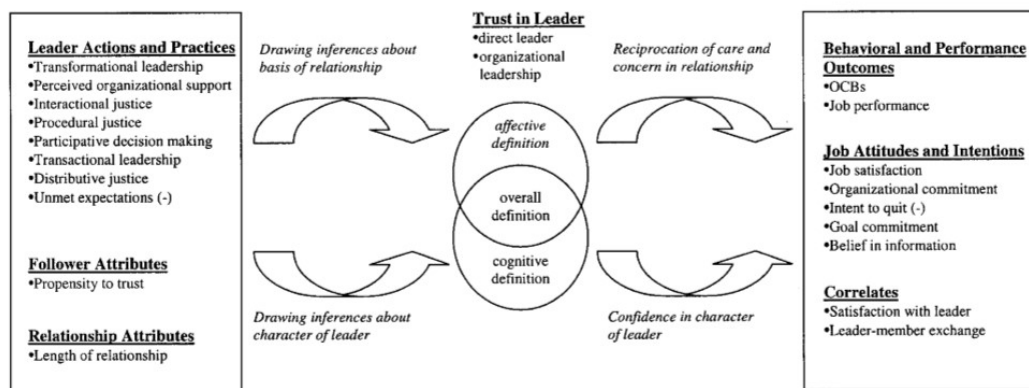
FIGURE 3. Framework for trust in leadership by Dirks and Ferrin (2002, 613).

Harisalo and Stenvall (2004, 51-75) hypothesize that people measure their mutual trust by three dimensions: promises, commitments and contracts. These are concrete human behaviors that can be seen every day in organizations. Promises are the small and several commitments people give each other every day, such as "I will take care of this by noon", and if they are not kept, mistrust may develop quickly. Commitment refers to dedication towards common causes in long-term relationships, following the values, principles and guidelines of their organization. According to Harisalo and Stenvall, commitment is a two-way process fueled by trust and undermined by mistrust. Third dimension, contracts, can be perceived as written or unwritten and should be followed both to the letter and spirit to gain and strengthen trust. One example of such contract can be psychological contract, which relates to employee's expectations towards the organization and leader. (Harisalo & Stenvall, 2004, 51-75.)

In addition to above presented three dimensions, Harisalo and Stenvall (2004, 51-75) present five behavioral traits for organizations to build and maintain trust: integrity, responsibility, appreciation, competence and reciprocal support. Integrity is related to honesty and willingness to be sincere; it is the primary determinant for leader's or colleague's trustworthiness and is related to both, keeping promises and commitments. Responsibility is related to accountability in social interactions, for example, taking responsibility of own mistakes. Appreciation implies trust; it empowers, draws and keeps people together. Competence is necessary for trust, it relates to leader's capability and effectiveness in handling responsibilities; maintaining and developing competences of its people is the real problem for an organization. Reciprocal, i.e. mutual support is required from both leaders and employees in order to earn each other's trust. It can be seen as encouragement, guidance, listening and openness to each other and it is significant in rapidly changing environments. (Harisalo & Stenvall, 2004, 51-75.)

This chapter has presented three different ways or models on defining or presenting trust in organizations and especially between leader or manager and direct subordinates or employees. Similarities can be found in all of them; all models build on surprisingly similar activity-based or behavioral factors on leader, which implicate the perceived trustworthiness to others. All models also recognize that trust is a two-way street as well as a continuous process, it requires the willingness to trust from the trustor as well as (positive) outcomes from both ways.

Although the above presented models themselves are not directly related to global organizations, common features can be seen in all of them regardless of the country of origin. When international aspect is inserted in the mix, it can be assumed that complexity increases due to cultural differences, language barriers and physical distance. Mukherjee and al. (2012, 266) propose that the existing of previous relationships, effective ICT-enabled communication and shared organizational values can enhance trust towards trustor in virtual organizations.

Due to its easy interpretation to daily operations and practical examples, the concept of trust presented by Harisalo and Stenvall (2004, 51-75) has been discussed as a basis for common understanding of trust with the team in question in this case study.

2.3. Concept of mistrust in organizational context

Concepts of mistrust or distrust in organizations or towards management are far less discussed in the literature and most often as a side note in research regarding trust. One could argue that mistrust is "the opposite or lack of trust", but it is not that simple. The damage mistrust can do for an organization is not easily presented in tangible values, but reaches far beyond soft values. Most often distrust is described in behavior as suspiciousness, unreliability, anger, dissociation, solitude and results in internal conflicts, as Peperzak (2013, 13-14) describes it.

Glaser (2014, 8-10) approaches the concepts of trust and distrust through neuroscience. In recent studies, it has been discovered that trust is centered in prefrontal cortex whereas distrust is centered in amygdala. Prefrontal cortex is the newest part of human brain; the executive brain which allows, for example, strategical thinking and handling difficult conversations. Amygdala on the other hand is the primitive part of human brain, which is responsible for our survival instincts like reactions of fight, flight or freezing. These are shown in Figure 4 below. Glaser claims that activating amygdala part of brain dissolves the ability of treating other people with empathy and understanding, at the same time closing the person from outside influence. (Glaser, 2014, 8-10.)
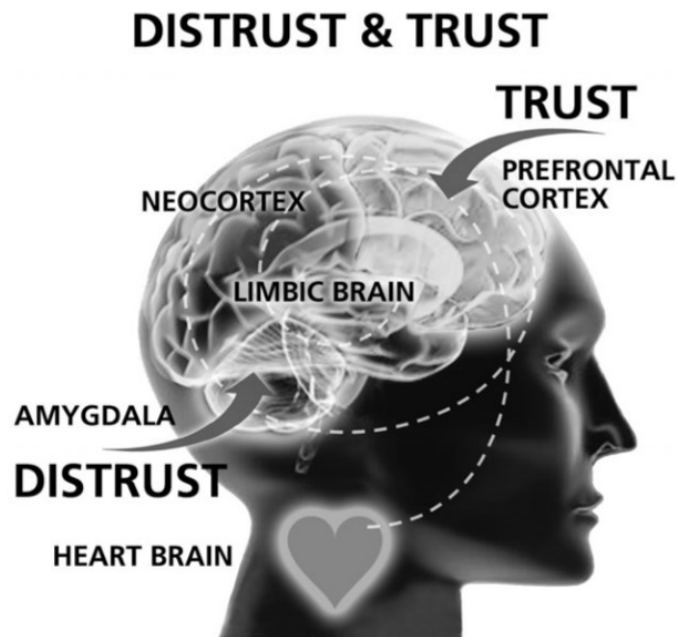
FIGURE 4. Our primitive and executive brains compared with trust and distrust by Glaser (2014, 27).

Glaser (2014, 158-160) also presents an idea that trust and distrust have an impact on person's mindset and view on reality. In distrust, reality is seen through threats and fears; assuming the worst, closing down on influence and with a very short-sighted mindset. In situations involving trust, reality is seen more clearly and with openness to engage; assuming the best outcomes, telling the truth and with long-range mindset. These views are presented in Figure 5 below. (Glaser, 2014, 158-160.)
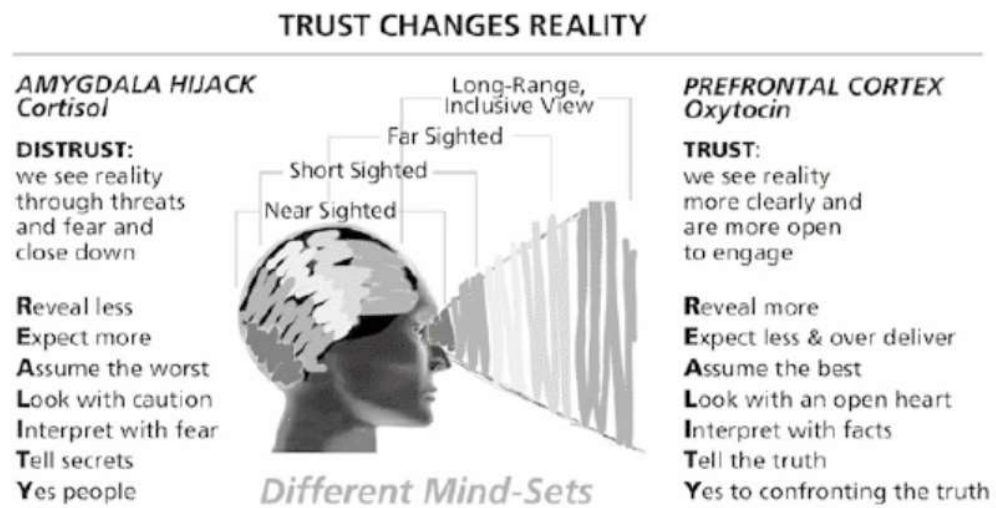
FIGURE 5. Views of reality through trust and distrust by Glaser (2014, 159).

Lewicki, Elgoibar and Euwema (2016, 112-113) identify two types of trust and mistrust: calculus-based and identification-based. Calculus-based is based on transactions between the parties, and identification-based more to emotional and value-based connectiveness, creating more personal and deeper relationships. The latter type can serve as very deep bond and be difficult to rebuild once broken. Lewicki and al. conclude that trust and mistrust are separate and distinct issues, but at the same time they go hand in hand in long-term relationships, such as between manager and direct reports. These parties can both trust and distrust each other in different phases of relationship. (Lewicki & al., 2016, 112-113.)

Harisalo and Stenvall (2014, 72-75) present examples of different factors that have led to distrust in organizations. These factors from two separate studies were:

- Inconsistency between words and deeds
- Favoritism
- Lack of openness
- A sense of injustice
- Speaking and spreading rumors behind people's back
- Harmful competition between departments
- Avoidance of responsibility
- Dishonesty and empty promises
- Inequality between people in different positions
- Management has the attitude of "being always right"

All in all, organizations are different and the factors leading to mistrust vary from situation to situation. Despite this fact, according to Harisalo and Stenvall, trust will turn to mistrust when promises are clearly broken, commitments evaded and contracts purposefully violated. Person's reaction to mistrust can vary from stagnation and avoidance to even revenge fantasies and confrontation. In organization, distrust decreases motivation, creates inefficiency and passiveness, declines willingness to cooperate, endangers communication and results in growing dissatisfaction with management and work conditions. Due to these facts it will have an impact on organization's innovation capability and financial base too. (Harisalo & Stenvall, 2014, 72-75.)

As communication can be seen as major factor impacting creation of either trust or mistrust inside organizations, the importance of communication in virtual global organizations is even higher. Brotheridge, Neufeld, and Dyck (2015, 909) contemplate that virtual teams and remote working environments create additional challenges to manager-employee relationship and effective communications in it. According to their study, socialization and relationship-building must be continuous in virtual organizations and are even more important in maintaining trust and feeling of belonging. (Brotheridge, Neufeld & Dyck 2015, 909; 920-921.)

Regardless of the angle towards mistrust or distrust in organization, it is a harmful and destroying force for different relationships in an organization, between management and direct reports or within a team. Distrust and the reaction it provokes is affected by personal qualities of an individual, but evolved in a group situation it does have serious impact to the well-being and cooperation of the individuals, as well as the organization's profitability. The next chapter focuses more on the positive and negative impacts trust and mistrust can have in an organization.

2.4. Impact of trust and mistrust in an organization

Alfes, Shantz and Alahakone (2016, 1323-1339) studied person-organization fit and organizational trust as drivers for personnel engagement. They started from the hypothesis that both person-organization fit and organizational trust are independently and positively related to engagement. As the work continued, they noticed that interaction between these two exists in a way that engagement is highest when employees perceive high levels of both, person-organization fit and organizational trust. Further developed, engagement is also significantly related to task performance. As a conclusion for their study, person's fit to the organization's values and trust towards the organization can have major impact on both engagement and through it, job performance of the individual. (Alfes & al. 2016, 1323-1339.)

One of the recent studies show remarkable differences between high-trust organizations and low-trust organizations. According to Zak (2017, 86-87), people in high-trust organizations report:

- 74 % less stress

- 106 % more energy at work

- 50 % higher productivity

- 13 % fewer sick days

- 76 % more engagement

- 29 % more satisfaction with their lives

- 40 % less burnout

Zak's research is based on a decade long study in the field of neuroscience and on survey conducted in several thousands of companies. One of his conclusions was that trust improves performance and engagement significantly, and on top of this, it has major impact on employee loyalty and the way people treat each other, increasing empathy and sense of accomplishment. All of this also benefits the employee; high-trust companies on the highest quartile can pay 17 % more for their employees compared to the companies in the lowest quartile. Zak considers this a result of improved productivity and innovativeness in high-trust companies. (Zak, 2017, 84-90.)

Zak's (2017, 15-25) research could link releasing brain chemical oxytocin as a cause of trust and to prove this theory universally. Oxytocin also increases levels of empathy and "trust begets trust", i.e. trust releases more oxytocin. The best performance is created through engagement and joy at work, and both trust and having a purpose are relevant to reach this. The links are shown in Figure 6 below. On the other hand, oxytocin release can be inhibited with some factors, like high levels of stress hormones and testosterone and on the other hand, boosted with continuous, small, positive social contacts. (Zak, 2017, 15-25.)
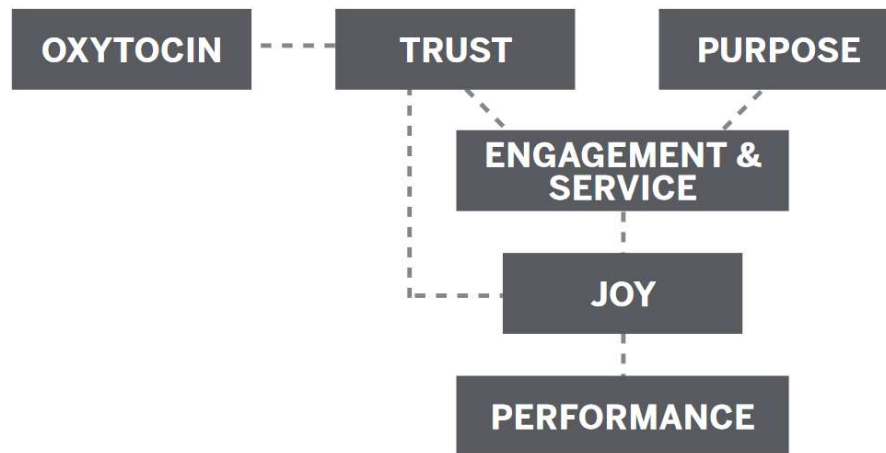
FIGURE 6. How oxytoxin creates trust and improves mood and organizational performance by Zak (2017, 23).

Glaser (2014, 40) also recognizes the impact of stress hormones, testosterone and oxytocin in relation to distrust and trust, but from another angle; signals of distrust and trust producing certain hormones and behavior linked to them, as shown in Figure 7 below.

Distrust	Trust
Distrust: When we are picking up any of the signals of distrust, our neurochemistry shifts. More likely than not, distrust produces:	**Trust:** When we are picking up any of the signals of trust our neurochemistry shifts. More likely than not, trust produces:
• Higher levels of cortisol and the presence of catecholamine, which closes down our prefrontal cortex, where new ideas, creative thinking, empathy, and good judgment reside • Changes in the dACC (dorsal anterior cingulate cortex), a part of the brain that is sensitive to conflict; this center responds by sending signals to the amygdala to take over and protect • Higher levels of testosterone, which makes us more aggressive and induces us to fight to protect our territory • Higher levels of norepinephrine, which cause us to want to think more negative thoughts and want to fight	• Higher levels of dopamine—happy hormone—which gives us a positive outlook (cup half full) and assigns good feelings to our interactions; we have more positive memories to look back on and more positive views of the future • Higher levels of oxytocin—a bonding hormone—which makes us feel closer to others and want to be with them and be open with them • Higher levels of dopamine, which makes us feel good, and feel more talkative and excited • Higher levels of serotonin, which also makes us feel good

FIGURE 7. Outcomes of trust and distrust in brain chemistry by Glaser (2014, 40).

This chapter has presented different perspectives towards what kind of impact trust and mistrust can have in an organization. Trust is not seen as sole, but major contributor to both personnel's and organization's engagement and performance, capability to innovate, happiness at work and productivity. All of these are issues that will have also monetary impact to the bottom line of a company as Harisalo and Stenvall (2004, 73) suggested. Significantly lower amounts of stress, fewer sick days and burnouts in high-trust companies according to Zak's research (2017, 86-87) can also produce organizations remarkable savings.

Based on the studies made, it seems evident that as humans are complex creatures, such soft issues like trust or mistrust need to be approached from different angles and determining the impact in organizational context is not easy. Neuroscientific studies have brought interesting new information to the field that explains some of the reasons for behaviors and give new ideas for managers how they can impact creation of trust more efficiently in the future. The next chapter will discuss some of these theories, concentrating on building and especially rebuilding trust once it has been broken.

2.5. Rebuilding trust in an organization

As presented in chapter 2.3, identification-based trust in long-term relationships such as between manager and direct reports can vary in different phases of the relationship. Lewicki and al. (2016) are discussing rebuilding of such a relationship as difficult, sometimes even impossible process due to high emotional investment by parties in this kind of relationship. Anyhow in organizational context, a working relationship must be established if the parties must continue working together. To achieve this, three steps are suggested. First, acknowledging and sharing information about the perceived violation of trust between the two sides is required. This can be done with using social dialogue methods and one very important part is an effective apology from the violating partner, with open discussion on intent behind the violation. Second, the victim of perceived violation must be willing to forgive and work on trust rebuilding instead of engaging into retribution, escalation or refusal to engage further. The victim's response is as critical as violator's, both must be willing and committed to work for repairing the trust. Lastly, both

parties must affirm similar goals, values, interest, actions and intent to make the relationship work in the future, as well as avoid similar mistakes or miscommunications done in the past. (Lewicki & al., 2016, 110-112.)

Regarding repairing long-term relationships and in case of trust breaches being more severe, Lewicki and al. (2016) imply that repairing trust will take significantly longer period of time. In this kind of situations, efforts are required on three levels: on cognitive, emotional and behavioral levels. The next six ways are suggested to solve a situation like this:

1. Agreeing on rules and procedures to get negotiations back on track.
2. Reducing tension and synchronizing de-escalation.
3. Improving the accuracy of communication.
4. Controlling the number of issues under discussion.
5. Establishing common ground.
6. Using third parties.

(Lewicki & al., 2016, 110-112.)

Ajmal, Helo and Kassem (2017, 1108-1109) have developed a model on how culture effects the trust-building process in international environment and what should be done to establish trust among stakeholders with different cultural backgrounds. This model is presented in Figure 8 below.

> "It is believed that all the factors listed feed into building trust between the project and stakeholders in the culturally similar environment, and achieving these factors feeds into the building of trust and creates a positive atmosphere in which more efficient project execution is manifested." (Ajmal & al., 2017, 1108.)

Furthermore, Ajmal and al. (2017, 1109-1110) suggest that national culture and organizational culture are significant factors in building trust among global project stakeholders, and both play a major role in international project success. Cultural differences can cause conflict, misunderstanding, and poor performance. At the same time, the influence of cultural traits and norms on people's perceptions, beliefs, values and behaviors are problematic for trust building. Even though the model by Ajman and al is developed for international project environment and discussed mainly regarding project teams, most probably similar impact can be seen in international teams in general.
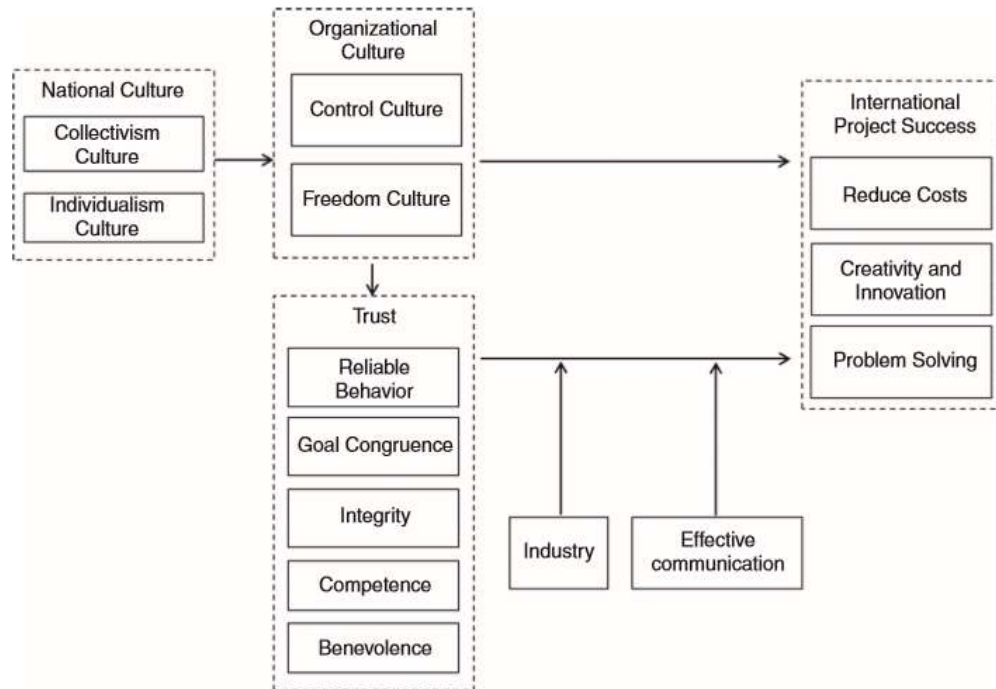
FIGURE 8. Trust building with cultural perspective for successful operations by Ajmal and al. (2017, 1109).

Some authors have presented practical tips for managers on how to build trust among their teams. Glaser (2014, 45-47) presents five steps based on TRUST model (Transparency, Relationship, Understanding, Shared Success and Testing Assumptions & Telling the Truth). In this model *transparency* stands for open discussion regarding threats and fears standing in the way of building trust, *relationship* for connecting and engaging in building relationships and extending trust, *understanding* to talking openly about the needs and aspirations of other people, *shared success* on building a mutual understanding on what success is and how it should be measured, and finally *testing assumptions and telling the truth* points into seeing the world from each other's shoes and honestly and empathically communicating about this. (Glaser, 2014, 45-47). Zak (2017, 85-88) presents eight management behaviors that foster increased trust in others. These are:

- recognizing excellence personally and publicly,
- inducing challenge stress in form of attainable, challenging and concrete goals,
- giving people discretion on how they work and greater autonomy,
- enabling job crafting and self-organizing,
- sharing information openly and broadly about company goals, strategies and game plans,

- building relationships intentionally and using social-bonding events to enhance caring and empathy,
- facilitating whole person growth in developing talents, and
- showing vulnerability and asking for help when necessary.

(Zak, 2017, 85-88.)

Sabatier (2014, 4-5) presents seven tips for managers to build or rebuild trust; taking an inventory on own trustworthy behaviors as a leader, acting with integrity even when no one is watching, admitting mistakes and taking responsibility over them, talking straight without forgetting empathy, being approachable and taking suggestions into actions, righting wrongs and taking necessary actions beyond apology, and holding people accountable for their actions and results. All authors discussed are emphasizing the importance of open and honest communications, integrity and taking responsibility in own actions as a leader, showing vulnerability and empathy, as well as demanding correct behavior and attaining goals.

This chapter has discussed building and rebuilding trust from cultural perspective, in situations where trust has evolved into distrust and from practical management behavior perspective. When discussing building trust in a situation where trust in some level already exists, certain behaviors and actions by management will foster and grow trust much more easily than in situation where trust has been breached. Cultural differences have their own impact into trust building too, which can be lessened through strong organizational culture (Ajmal & al. 2017, 1109-1110). In case of distrust or breaching of trust has already occurred, rebuilding will require much more time and concrete actions to solve the situation. For this, for example, open and honest communications of the situation is required, as well as acknowledgment and willingness from both sides to work towards rebuilding trust. Most probably the same management behaviors presented above that foster trust in others will also work in a situation of distrust, but might not be enough to solve the situation and turn distrust into trust without additional actions.

3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and data collection. It includes an introduction to the research method chosen, the research scope and additionally contains details of how the research data was collected and analyzed.

3.1.   Research method

Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010, 67-68) discuss case study as an approach or strategy, that can be utilized in individual ways to research setting in question, utilizing either qualitative or quantitative data or even combination of both. Case studies are especially suitable for trying to understand inner dynamics of a unit and social phenomena in business management. Mills and al. also discuss that understanding and explaining organizational behavior is so complex task that sometimes only a case study can offer adequate foundation for it. The researcher and research object are in continuous interaction in case studies and due to this, researcher's own consideration, prior knowledge and concepts will always influence the outcome. This means that research findings will always be subjective to some extent. Nevertheless, case study can provide hypotheses and research ideas for future studies. (Mills & al., 2010, 67-68; 72.) Case study was chosen as reasonable research strategy for this thesis, because the situation to be analyzed is unique for one team in one company, closely related to organizational behavior and examining change.

Kothari (2004, 5) describes the difference of quantitative approach and qualitative approach to data gathering followingly: Quantitative approach usually means survey research or observation of certain sample of population and which results can be generalized to the rest of the population, whereas qualitative approach is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, behavior and opinions and thus the research is a function of researcher's insights and opinions. Due to previously mentioned reasons, mainly qualitative data collection methods were used utilizing partly quantitative data collection. Quantitative method was used in form of anonymous personnel survey to document the situation in the beginning and the change in the team with the same questions a year later. In addition to the quantitative data, more in-depth data on the reasons for change were gathered with qualitative methods like interviews and open-ended questionnaire.

Due to the author operating also as the manager of the team, research objectivity and the openness of personnel needs to be carefully considered. As both Mills and al. and Kothari state above, researcher's insights and opinions will always have an influence on the outcome of the research. Thus, the approach was to use anonymous questionnaire with both open-ended and closed questions to document the personnel's point-of-view to make sure that everyone can give their answers openly and honestly. Afterwards, the results of anonymous questionnaire were also discussed together with the team and some observations from this discussion are included in the results. The qualitative data was also complemented with interviews of the second manager of the team, manager's manager and some other representatives, who have been closely related to the process and whose observations were useful to the research.

3.2.   Data collection and analysis

Data for the research is often collected in different ways and from various sources. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), the data is divided into two different sources; primary data and secondary data. The main difference between primary and secondary data is what purposes the data is collected for. Primary data is collected for the specific research in question and secondary data is collected for other purposes. Secondary data often includes data for both research methods, qualitative and quantitative. (Saunders & al., 2009.)

Primary data for this research was collected from different sources; the personnel surveys, open-ended questionnaires and interviews. Also, the observations done by the author as manager of the team were used where applicable or necessary. Only the personnel surveys can be considered as quantitative data, as open-ended questionnaires, observations and interviews are clearly qualitative data. The most important secondary data for this research is literature in forms of books, articles, academic researches, internet pages and other study materials presented in references. These are considered as qualitative data.

Mills and al. (2010, 71-72) state that case study data analysis does not aim at generalization, but to understanding and interpreting the individual cases thoroughly in their own special context. The analysis of the data should be done in iterative manner; gathered and

evaluated at the same time. Data should first be sorted out around themes or questions, after which the data suitability for these categories is examined more carefully. Categories may even change after and during the analysis. Theoretical frame and conceptual foundation are important elements to the data analysis and these should link together. (Mills & al. 2010, 71-72.)

This study in general and team related data to be used were discussed and agreed with both the team members in question as well as with the outside viewers (interviewees) beforehand and everyone consented to being part of the study. At the same time, it was agreed that the study results would be discussed only on team level phenomena and any possible personal events would be left out. For ensuring confidentiality also details regarding the company and the team have been carefully considered. All the team members and interviewees were given the possibility to read and comment on the thesis.

The next parts explain in detail the process of gathering data and analyzing it during the case study. In addition to the questionnaire and interviews described below, author's own notes made during the process have been used where applicable. These notes were always written during the situation at hand and labeled with exact dates. These notes were utilized mostly as a basis for the process description in chapter 4.2.

3.2.1 Anonymous questionnaire used

In order to document the success of rebuilding trust and reducing negativity in the team, anonymous questionnaire was used in April-May 2018. This questionnaire included two parts. First part included selected questions from Company X's personnel survey normally conducted biannually. The personnel survey had been conducted in the beginning of 2017 and the negative results of this team's survey were the ones that started the whole trust rebuilding process. After a year's process, the same questions were used to document the changes in the team. The personnel survey was not conducted in full, but with selected questions related especially to personnel engagement and some of the pain points identified in the team. These questions can be seen in the questionnaire form in Appendix 1. For this part, no additional analysis was done by the author except relating to the change between results of spring 2017 and 2018.

The second part of the questionnaire was created by the author and the objective was to measure if rebuilding trust had been successful on both team and individual level and which issues had helped the most in rebuilding it. This part included few close-ended questions to measure the change, actions and estimated level of trust numerically and several open-ended questions to provide insights and opinions on matters discussed in the questionnaire. These questions were drafted by the author and they were revised and tested in total three times to ensure the best outcome. The revisions were commented by the thesis supervisor, the second manager of the team and a person assisting with the practical online research programme.

Since the author of this study also operates as one of the managers of the team, an anonymous questionnaire was chosen over interviews to gather the team's perspective. This was done to ensure that everyone in the team would dare to voice their opinions as openly as possible. The anonymity was ensured by utilizing an external person to help with collecting the data from the questionnaire. This way it was ensured that the author would not have the possibility to see who had answered what. The questionnaire was transferred into an online research programme by an external person, who also handled sending the links to the team and finally provided the raw data of the results in an anonymous form to the author. The questionnaire was open in the online programme for almost three weeks between 26.4.-15.5.2018 and three notifications were sent for the team during this period. Eight from nine team members answered, one answer was left out due to longer absence. The managers of the team did not respond to the survey.

After processing the raw data from the questionnaire, the author arranged a half-day team discussion on the results on 24.5.2018. In this discussion, the results were presented to the team by the author and some pre-designed discussion points were held with the help of post-it notes and flipcharts arranged in a way that the author would not see individual responses by each person. After a round of personal commenting via post-its, each topic was discussed and analysed together. All the above described measures were taken to ensure anonymity of the answers and at the same time, to increase objectivity of the author regarding the results. The results of the questionnaire and the discussion will be more precisely presented and analysed in chapter 4.3.

3.2.2 Interviews conducted

This study includes five interviews. The interviewees were selected based on their role in relation to the team or the trust building process. For the management and outside view of the situation to be as complete as possible, the interviews with only few open-ended questions were selected. All the requested interviewees agreed on the interview. The interviewees were the second manager of the team, manager's manager, external consultant that has worked with the team as part of the process, internal consultant that has worked with the team as part of the process and a HR representative. Where needed, the results or quotes to the interviews are presented confidentially only by names of Interviewee 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 with no relation to the order presented in previous sentence. All the interviews were recorded and in addition, notes were written. The conducted interviews are listed on Figure 9 below.

Conducted interviews		
Name	**Date**	**Length**
Interviewee 1	2.5.2018	62 minutes
Interviewee 2	8.5.2018	45 minutes
Interviewee 3	11.5.2018	35 minutes
Interviewee 4	16.5.2018	23 minutes
Interviewee 5	21.5.2018	26 minutes

FIGURE 9. Conducted interviews

The interviews were started with a brief explanation on the thesis process and an agreement on the confidentiality on the topics discussed and recordings made. Due to the confidential and personal nature of the information discussed in the interviews, written transcriptions of interviews will not be attached to this thesis. The interview questions presented were designed as open-ended as possible and only to guide the discussion when necessary. Some additional clarifications were asked during the interviews, but otherwise the interviewer did not take part in the discussion before the end of interview. None of the interviewed persons had seen the results of the team questionnaire prior to the interviews. The interview questions can be found from Appendix 2.

The interview results were analyzed with the concept presented by Mills and al. (2010). First, data was formulated and analyzed around the interview questions, number of similar responses calculated and arranged into order of most similar answers. After this, common

and different themes with the team questionnaire results were looked for. These were then linked to theoretical framework presented in chapter 2. The results are presented thoroughly in chapters 4.3 and 4.4.

This chapter has presented in detail the research process, methodology, practical choices done in it and the reasoning behind them. The next chapter will focus on the practical case study conducted; the beginning of the process with the team, trust rebuilding actions and the results of the survey and interviews done a year later.

4 PRACTICAL CASE STUDY IN AN INTERNATIONAL EXPERT ORGANI-ZATION

This chapter focuses on describing the starting point of the team, the steps taken to rebuild trust, how well these objectives have been met and what were the main points that were incremental in rebuilding the trust from the point-of-view of team members and outside viewers. This chapter also includes detailed analysis on the results of questionnaires and interviews conducted as part of this case study.

4.1. Overview on Company X and the team

Company X is a global developer and supplier of technologies and services in several industries and has over 12 000 employees worldwide. The business in question is operated as project business with project sizes ranging from few hundred thousand euros projects to global mega projects sized over ~100 million euros. Projects are often structured with several legal contracts, different organizations, legal entities, cultures and locations involved globally. The team in question is providing expert services for different organizations internally, from sales to projects and management.

The team that this case study focuses on is a combination of two teams, which have recently been split from one entity and for this historical reason they have been considered as one team in this development project and the case study. The team is multicultural and consists of nine direct subordinates located in two countries and three locations, and even in the main location team members' seating arrangements are scattered by the business they work most with, not by the team. In addition to their own line organization, most of team members have also matrix organization responsibility with business management or with other areas company X executes projects in. The structure of the team is presented in Figure 9 below.
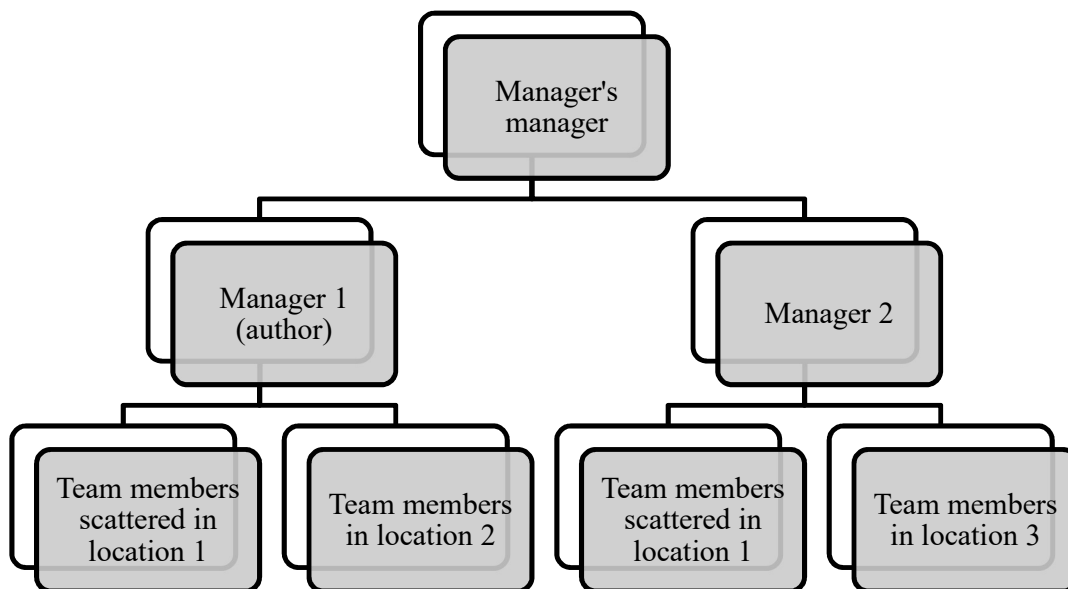
FIGURE 9. The organizational structure of the team in question.

The team investigated in this study has gone through several changes during the last few years; large organizational structure changes, changes in management on levels of direct managers and manager's managers, personnel changes inside the team, changes in roles and job descriptions, as well as high workload situation due to scarce and reduced resources. When looking back, it is easy to understand that the team's trust towards management can become very vulnerable in situations like this.

4.1.1 The starting point

The starting point of this process was in spring 2017, when personnel survey results for the team were acquired. These results included alarming signs of the situation, such as low engagement, unsatisfactory cooperation, resistance towards change and high workload. For example, 71 % of respondents *disagreed* with a question "I rarely think about looking for a new job with another company." when only 14 % agreed, thus indicating wide desire to leave the team. At the same time, 43 % of the respondents *strongly disagreed* with a question "I am able to manage my work responsibilities in a way that allows me to maintain a healthy balance between work and home." when another 43 % agreed, thus indicating unbalanced division of work responsibilities. At the same time, only 14 % of respondents *agreed* with questions "I believe that positive change will happen as a result of this survey." and "Company X supports me in my efforts to adapt to changes in

the organization." indicating strong resistance for change. These questions are only presented as examples and the change with the same questions will be shown in more detail in chapter 4.3.1. (Personnel survey results, 2017.)

When the results for the team were given to managers, it was clear that outside help would be required to solve the situation, to find out the reasons behind and to change the course. As this was the starting point, a discussion was set-up with a consultant outside of the company and a plan was made on how to proceed the first steps. These, and the steps taken afterwards are presented more thoroughly in next chapter 4.2.

4.2. The development process and actions taken

The process as described here and evaluated in this research lasted a course of little over a year, from presenting the personnel survey results for the team in April 2017 to presenting and discussing the results of this research with the team in May 2018. After this point in time, the author has not been in contact with the team during writing this paper and the evaluations and discussions are based on the period specified. The process itself included several steps and actions overlapping each other, from starting the process with external consultant to continuing it with internal one and all the time continuing with daily managerial and leadership work with new ways of working. There are a number of smaller encounters and actions taken during the process and this paper can only describe the main issues in general level in order to both ensure confidentiality and readability. The overall process is shown in Figure 10 below.

Personnel survey results / April 2017

External consultant process

Internal team trainings

Monthly or weekly one-on-one meetings

Increased amount of team meetings

Workload management

Emphasis on open communication and feedback
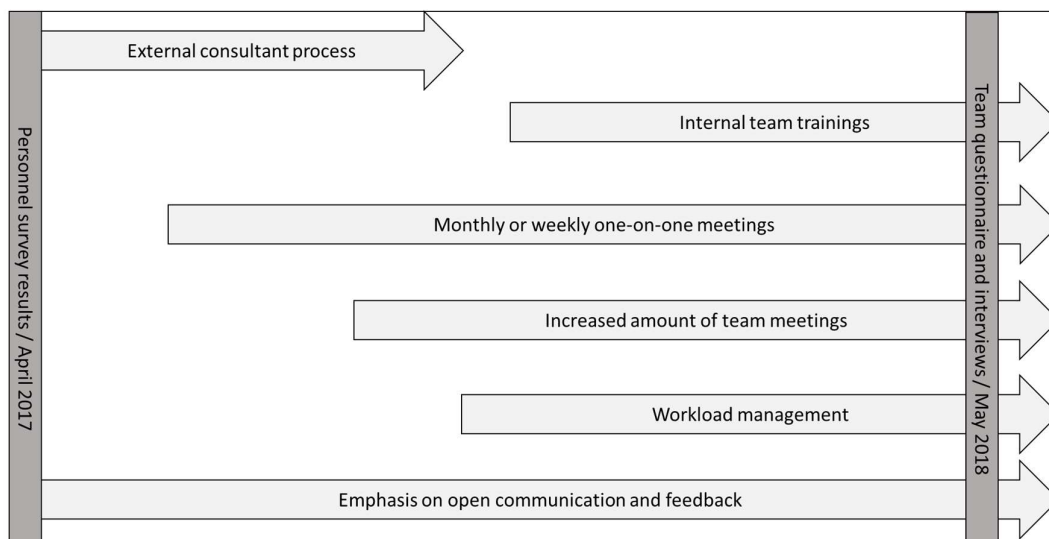
Team questionnaire and interviews / May 2018

FIGURE 10. The overall process presented.

Next chapters aim at describing the development process in the team and more specific actions taken at the time. The team was asked to evaluate the importance and value of these actions in relation to building trust in the anonymous questionnaire. The process and actions are described from manager's point-of-view and are relatively subjective in nature.

4.2.1 External consultant

The development process started with group discussion led by an external consultant in April 2017, where the personnel survey results were shown and some development ideas discussed with the team. With the group situation being quite inflamed, a change of course in action was decided. During summer 2017 each of the team members managers included had three separate individual coaching sessions with the external consultant for personal discussion and development purposes. These were kept strictly confidential and at the end of the process, everyone gave written feedback to be discussed with their own manager. This research will not go into details of these feedbacks or any of the latter personal processes of team members.

After all the personal discussions were conducted, the consultant drafted general insights of the team situation and the reasons leading to it. These were presented for the team and managers in September 2017 in a group setting. The results described here are based on

author's own notes from the date as well as the written report from the consultant. According to the views of the consultant, the psychological contract between the employees and employer had been damaged due to previous changes in the team and certain actions by management (Report on team situation, 2017).

Lewicki and al (2016, 140) defined psychological contract as "The perceptions of both parties to the employment relationship, organization and individual, of the reciprocal promises and obligations implied in the relationship". The distinct of psychological contract from contract of employment is usually seen as spoken or unspoken promises, explicit or implicit expectations towards the employer and employee by the other party, and often related to the individual rather than collectively. As unwritten ones, psychological contracts rely on high trust and breaching one can lead to lower organizational commitment, lower job satisfaction and higher intention to leave. (Lewicki & al. 2016, 140-142.)

In this case, the damage made to the psychological contract had led to negative schemas in the team affecting the work atmosphere, and to severe distrust towards the management, both direct managers and manager's manager levels. The team was suffering from strong pull to negativity and channelling this towards the management, separating the team and the managers to different sides of a chasm. On individual level, this was very stressful and burdensome work environment and together with high workload a very risky situation. (Report on team situation, 2017.)

After the results were presented, the team and both levels of managers discussed them together. The points presented were agreed upon and for the first time, distrust and the reasons leading to it were laid on the table and openly discussed. This discussion can be seen as the first time when the issues were admitted, agreed upon and common ground for changing the situation started to form. It was also discussed that solving this kind of situation will require genuine input and a choice to change it from each and every team member, a different attitude going forward and building the team together.

4.2.2 Internal team trainings

Half-day team trainings were agreed with an internal consultant to continue the work that had been started with the external consultant. These trainings were held in October, November, February and May, all with different agendas. The first one in October was related to trust, defining and understanding it and discussing rebuilding it in the team. The second one in November was focused on building a shared, common vision for the team and the steps how to reach it; rebuilding trust being one of the steps. The third training in February was aiming at opening new ways of thinking with "six thinking hats" and discussions regarding positive psychological capital. The training in May was arranged around personality testing, where each team member made personality tests beforehand and the results were discussed in an individual and team level in the training, especially focusing on how to work with different kind of personalities in the team.

Each of the trainings was led by the internal consultant, with providing information, challenging and using a lot of different pair or group work techniques to get everyone involved in the discussions, feedback giving and assignments. Throughout the trainings, improvement in team building and spirit was obvious. All team members and managers were taking part in the assignments and from the manager's perspective having a person outside of the team holding the meetings was fruitful.

4.2.3 Regular one-on-one sessions and feedback

As part of actions, monthly one-on-one meetings between manager and each direct report were taken into action in June 2017. For some team members, shorter meetings were agreed on weekly basis. These meetings have been used for discussing personal issues, work issues, development plans, as informal chats, especially for giving and receiving feedback, in such a way that the subordinate is expected to bring the unofficial agenda or topics for the discussion, at least for the most part. This practice has been ongoing since and has been greatly valued by everyone. From the manager perspective, these meetings give a chance for regular open discussions and checking that everything is going as it should with the team. Similar meetings have been held between managers and manager's manager as well, providing especially regular mentoring and support for leadership questions as well as with other issues.

Giving and receiving feedback has been very important in the process. These regular meetings have been only one, although important, way to achieve that. Rehearsing feedback giving and receiving has been important part of the team trainings and other team meetings too, as well as with electronic feedback channels taken in use.

4.2.4 Team meetings

Part of the team vision and the steps towards reaching it included spending more time together as a team. With the team members scattered in different locations and even scattered seating inside the main location, meeting each other face-to-face was not occurring naturally. To create possibilities for this, several official and unofficial team meeting and communication arrangements were made. These included biweekly team meetings via video or Skype, once a month for smaller teams under each manager and once a month for everyone together. Weekly unofficial coffee meetings were held in the biggest location, these were also tested via video but were not seen as a working concept. Electronic group chatrooms were established to discuss lunch or coffee dates as well as more serious work issues. One to two-day face-to-face workshops with different development topics and unofficial evening programmes were held several times in a year and agreed to be continued at least twice a year in the future. Even though there had been different kinds of team meetings held also earlier, the increase in the time and effort towards spending time together during the process was significant.

4.2.5 Open communications and engagement in decision making

Openness in communication, or the lack of it, was the most crucial point the team was bringing up in the discussions. Thus, this point was given special attention in the process. Open communications need to be a two-way street and forming the trust to achieve it takes time. From managers and manager's manager levels a lot of focus and effort was put into this and openness was to be used in all the matters that it was possible. This included informing the team earlier and even without complete information about possible upcoming changes and discussing the changes required in several different occasions. One good example regarding this was the process of adjusting roles and responsibilities

within the team, which was planned and discussed together in several workshops and meetings, involving everyone from the team. This was also an important way to engage the team in decision making and change, even if everyone was not excited with all the changes made.

The amount of communication was easily increased through increased amount of different kinds of meetings, as described in previous chapter. Special effort was put towards transparency, for example discussing the confidentiality of the matters; even that certain issues were not known or confided even for the managers yet, or could not be spoken about. For establishing a two-way street, regular one-on-one meetings were important, as first they were the ones where open discussion could take place safely. Later, openness in both directions started expanding to the team meetings too, especially with the help of internal and external consultant.

4.2.6 Workload management

Unbalanced division of workload in the team had developed through longer period and from very natural reasons, for some people only knowing certain systems and through several organizational changes, when no time had been taken to sit back and assess the situation thoroughly. Huge amounts of manual work were conducted in the team, partly from historical reasons and partly for lack of proper tools. Also, a bigger change had been happening for some time, shifting the strategical value and aim of the team, thus changing the ways of working and especially cooperating with internal customers significantly.

Efforts to solve workload issues started with discussions with the team members on everyone's personal workload situation and responsibility areas. These were followed with workshops together with the team, gathering ideas on what each of the roles should include, how to ensure back-ups for each team member, what to centralize, what possibly to push out of the team and so forth. From these, the managers gathered proposition with which slightly changed and partly new roles and responsibilities were adjusted with. This was followed by taking these into practice.

In addition, more resources were gained for the team at year end and new tools developed, as well as important shorter and longer processes were adjusted with LEAN methodology

to reduce the manual work. Job descriptions for everyone were updated and proper back-ups established on paper. Solving the workload problem was not simple and the work continues, together with discussions on personal ways of working and adjusting those. Adjusting attitudes and for example, people to trust each other as back-ups in time of sickness will take time to reach.

4.3. Practical research conducted

This part focuses on presenting the results of the practical research conducted. It is divided into three chapters, the first and the second ones open the team's perspective through results of anonymous questionnaire and notes from the team discussion that was held after receiving the results. The third part focuses on interview results, shifting the focus on outside viewer's perspective. Combining the results together and discussing the success of rebuilding trust will be done in chapter 4.4.

4.3.1 Team's perspective: Anonymous questionnaire results

The team answered to the questions anonymously online in April-May 2018. Eight out of nine team members answered to the questionnaire, one answer was left out due to longer leave of absence. For this reason, eight answers are presented as 100 % in the results. The aim was to understand from team perspective, if trust towards management has been re-build, on which level it is estimated currently and how different actions have been seen impacting the change.
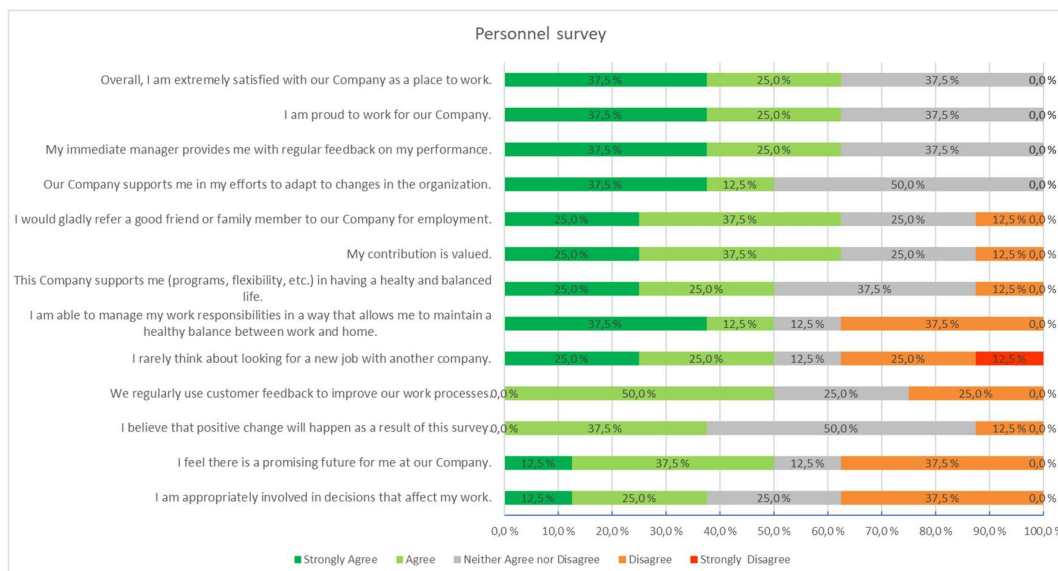
FIGURE 11. Personnel survey results in May 2018.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of selected personnel survey questions to compare change in the team for previous year's results. These results are presented in detail in Figure 11 and the comparison of favourable answers in 2018 and 2017 are presented in Table 1. The favourable answers include the sum of *strongly agree* and *agree* percentages. Table 1 also includes calculated engagement index, the average value of favourable percentages of four questions marked with asterisk.

TABLE 1. Comparison of personnel survey results in 2018 and 2017.

Personnel survey	2018 Favorable %	2017 Previous favorable %
I am appropriately involved in decisions that affect my work.	38 %	14 %
I feel there is a promising future for me at our Company.	50 %	14 %
I believe that positive change will happen as a result of this survey.	38 %	14 %
We regularly use customer feedback to improve our work processes.	50 %	0 %
*I rarely think about looking for a new job with another company.	50 %	14 %
I am able to manage my work responsibilities in a way that allows me to maintain a healthy balance between work and home.	50 %	43 %
This Company supports me (programs, flexibility, etc.) in having a healty and balanced life.	50 %	14 %
My contribution is valued.	63 %	29 %
*I would gladly refer a good friend or family member to our Company for employment.	63 %	57 %
Our Company supports me in my efforts to adapt to changes in the organization.	50 %	14 %
My immediate manager provides me with regular feedback on my performance.	63 %	14 %
*I am proud to work for our Company.	63 %	57 %
*Overall, I am extremely satisfied with our Company as a place to work.	63 %	29 %
* Engagement index	59 %	39 %

There can be seen positive development in all the personnel survey questions, with most significant 50 %-point increase in favourable options in both questions measuring feedback; "We regularly use customer feedback to improve our processes." and "My immediate manager provides me with regular feedback on my performance.". For the latter, all the answers are either favourable or neutral, as in 2017 58 % were in two lowest scores. This indicates that regular feedback discussions and effort put into the topic has been noticed by the team.

Questions indicating the desire to leave the team have improved significantly as well, with 36 %-points more favourable answers in questions "I feel there is a promising future for me at our Company." and "I rarely think about looking for a new job with another company.", although there are still worrying 25 % *disagreeing* and 12,5 % *strongly disagreeing* in the latter question. Compared to 2017 results related to that question, positive change is anyhow significant with 50 % *strongly agreeing* or *agreeing* towards 14 % in 2017, and only 37,5 % *disagreeing* or *strongly disagreeing* compared to 71 % in 2017. This would indicate that situation in the team is improving, but the opinions inside the team are divided into two.

The team views support regarding change with an improvement of 36 %-point in favourable options in question "Our Company supports me in my efforts to adapt to changes in the organization." and with 24 %-point improvement in question "I believe that positive change will happen as a result of this survey.". These questions also had significant shift from two lowest scores to neutral ones, with 29 %-point and 45 %-point increases in neutral answers. Even though the change in these questions is very positive, the overall scores are still low.

One of the most worrying results in 2017 about workload management was in question "I am able to manage my work responsibilities in a way that allows me to maintain a healthy balance between work and home.", with 43 % of the team *strongly disagreeing* and 43 % *agreeing*. In the new results, 37,5 % are *strongly agreeing*, 12,5 % *agreeing* and only 37,5 % *disagreeing,* indicating improvement in the situation, although some unbalance of responsibilities still existing. This can be seen quite natural, since getting through practical changes in roles and responsibilities takes time, together with training the new responsible people and changing processes.

All in all, the most positive responses in personnel survey questions were given to "Overall, I am extremely satisfied with our Company as a place to work.", "I am proud to work for our Company.", "My immediate manager provides me with regular feedback on my performance.", "I would gladly refer a good friend or family member to our Company for employment." and "My contribution is valued.". All these questions had 63 % of favourable options and mostly the rest as neutral responses, except 12,5 % *disagreeing* options in "I would gladly refer a good friend or family member to our Company for employment." and "My contribution is valued.". The engagement index, calculated as average from questions marked with asterisk in Table 1, increased significantly by 20 %-points to 59 %. The engagement index is still at lower level than the company level, 67 % in 2017. A significant change towards more positive and healthier work environment in a course of year is visible in the personnel survey results. Anyhow, the results are still below average both in the company and the global norm levels from 2017, indicating that there is still work to be done.
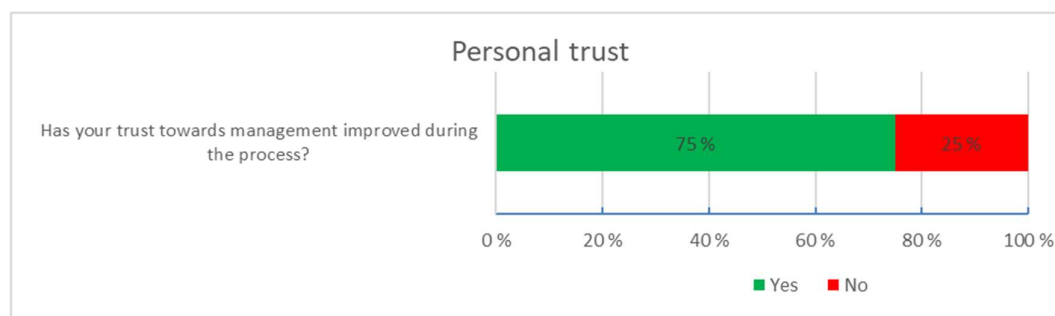
FIGURE 12. Personal trust.

The second part of the questionnaire was related to measuring change in trust and negativity of the team and the importance of different actions in the process. All questions included the possibility to give open comments. The first question in this part was measuring the change in personal trust, where 75 % of the team answered yes, their own trust towards the management has improved during the process, as shown in Figure 12. Open comments on the question highlight openness regarding the problems, concrete management actions towards healthier atmosphere and open communication, which have significantly improved the situation and created more trustworthy environment. The 25 %, or two persons answering *no* did not give any explanation for the answer. This was one of the points discussed in the team discussion, which results are presented in chapter 4.3.2.

FIGURE 13. Team level trust and negativity

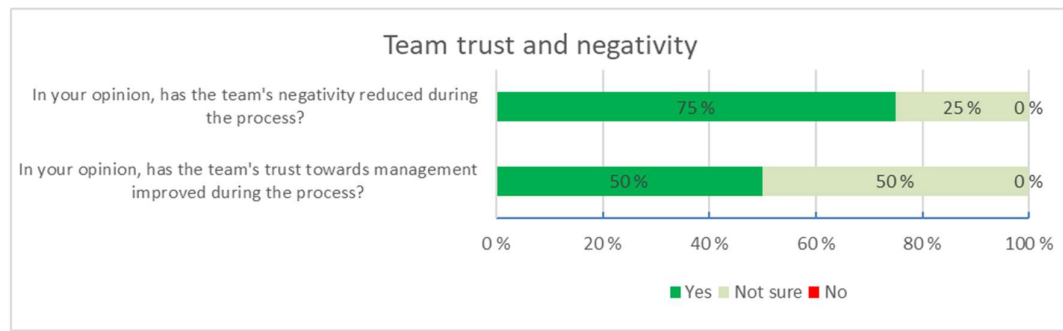The second question "In your opinion, has the team's trust towards management improved during the process?" split the answers to 50 % *yes* and 50 % *not sure,* as presented in Figure 13. This is explained in open comments with situation overall improving, but at the same time with worry of team dividing into two; the ones who trust and the ones who do not. More surety is seen in reduced negativity inside the team, with 75 % of respondents saying *yes* and 25 % *not sure* to question "In your opinion, has the team's negativity reduced during the process?". Open comments highlight the same problem in this question as the previous one, team having dispersion in the matter. Also, high workload is given as a reason for negativity.

FIGURE 14. Trust in numerical analysis
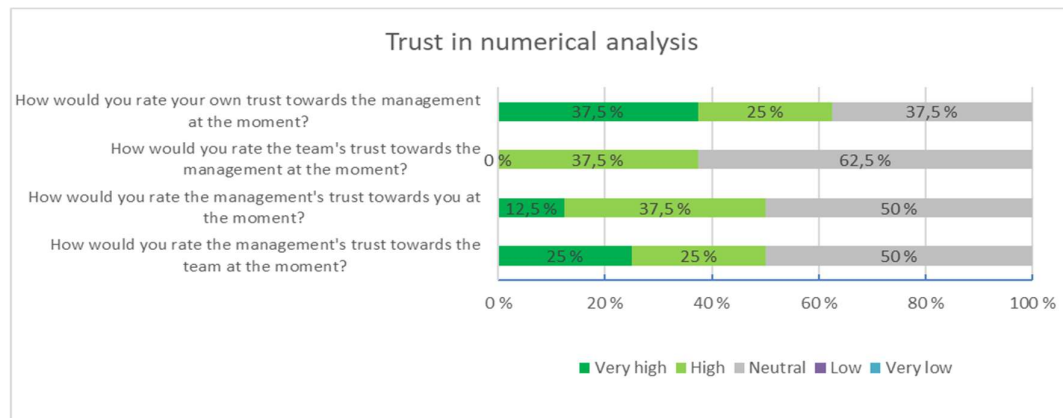
Trust was measured also numerically, with results shown in Figure 14. The team members were asked to rate their own trust towards management, the team's trust towards management as well as management's trust towards them and the team with 5-level scale from very low to very high. Similar scale was used in rating the usefulness of different actions in the process, as presented in Figure 15.

In the numerical analysis of trust, low or very low scales were not used at all, which is very positive. The strongest opinions were presented from own perspective, with 37,5 % estimating their own trust towards the management *very high*, 25 % *high* and the rest *neutral*. Team's trust towards management seems harder to evaluate, with 37,5 % indicating *high* and the rest *neutral*. The management's trust towards the team is seen stronger than the other way around, with 25 % indicating *very high* and 25 % *high*, 50 % *neutral*. Management's trust towards team members personally is seen split to *very high* 12,5 %, *high* 37,5 % and *neutral* 50 %, with lower scores than the other way around. The open comments regarding these questions indicate historical issues still weighting and reducing the trust, as well as some team members feel being left out of decision making, when on the other hand some team members comment on everyone having a chance to be heard, everyone's efforts being valued by the management and receiving both independence and guidance when required.
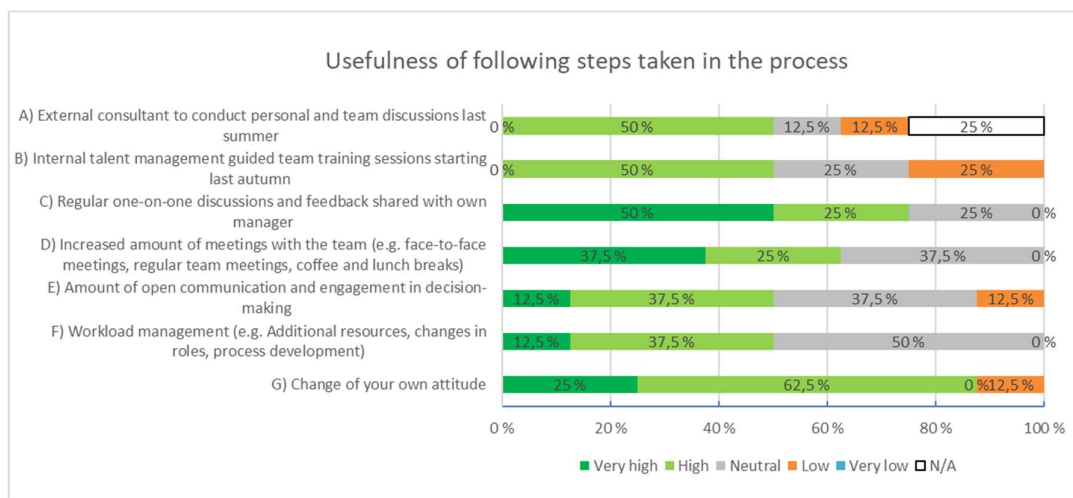
FIGURE 15. Usefulness of following steps taken in the process

The team was also asked to rate the usefulness of different steps taken in the process, especially in rebuilding trust. The results are shown in Figure 15. Two persons of the team were not included in the process with external consultant, which is indicated with answer N/A in part A. Overall in the results, regular one-on-one discussions and shared feedback with own manager were the most important actions with 50 % *very high* and 25 % *high* scores, together with changing own attitude receiving the most of combined *high* and *very high* 87,5 % scores and as third action, increased amount of team gatherings with 37,5 % *very high* and 25 % of *high* scores. Open communications and workload management were seen equally as important. Team discussions guided by external parties divided

opinions to *high* and *low* scores. The amount of open communications is rated surprisingly low compared to open comments highlighting it in several questions, but on the other hand, engagement in decision making was not seen as successful by some team members and might take this score down.

The open comments regarding the external consultant process state that the consultant found a lot of relevant issues regarding the team situation, which were discussed and this was a good start to the healing process and allowed real development to start. Trainings with internal consultant were commented as a good way to learn new things about colleagues, bringing new approaches for work and team work and including useful and fruitful discussions. On the other hand, comments were also given on not relevant topics for the team in all training sessions, as well as more active participation during sessions would have been more useful.

Regular one-on-one discussions were described as a way for healthy communication and open discussion, a chance to change feedback and ideas, as well as a tool for increasing trust and crucially important also in the future. Comments regarding increased amount of team meetings highlighted building team spirit, getting to know each other better and increased amount of communication and face-to-face time as positive outcomes.

According to the comments from the team, open communication and engagement in decision making are heading towards right direction. Especially openness in communications has increased, at the same time providing team the possibility to understand reasons behind decisions and giving the opportunity to point any challenges in the process. On the other hand, criticism is given that the engagement in decision making has not increased, and some decisions are still taken purely by the management without discussion. It was also commented that although the situation is getting better, starting point was "close to zero".

The open comments regarding workload management suggested it as more of way to increase team spirit than trust. On the other hand, when people have more time to focus on the task at hand they are fresher to execute the assigned tasks, it probably will increase also trust. There are a few comments about good progress and actions, but also about tasks that are hard to delegate and thus difficult to ever equally divide the workload. Some

offer an explanation to their neutral answer, as their workload is and has been in good balance all the time.

As conscious change of each and everyone's attitude in the team was earlier discussed as a prerequisite for rebuilding trust, measuring its importance in this research was valid, regardless of the subjectivity of this kind of matter. In addition to high favourable scores, open comments highlight the importance of attitude; without the right attitude outside activities are useless. They also discuss that attitude is very hard thing to influence on behalf of others, since it has to genuinely come from the person him/herself. There were also several comments regarding trying to stay positive and enhance positive atmosphere.

TABLE 2. Most helpful issues on rebuilding trust, mentioned by team members

Most helpful issues on rebuilding trust	Answers
Open communication, feedback and reacting to it	7
More frequent team meetings	5
One-on-one meetings	2
Cooperation in decision-making	2
Efforts to solve workload management	2
Positive and appreciative atmosphere	2
Personnel changes in management	1
Change of attitude	1
Emphasis on the state of the team	1

As the last question, the team was asked to nominate three issues or changes implemented in the process that have helped the most in rebuilding trust towards the management. These answers were put into open box, and the results are shown in Table 2. In this question, open communication, feedback and reacting to it was the clear winner with 7 similar answers. The second is more frequent team meetings with 5 similar answers. The third place is more divided, with several issues having two answers. One-on-one meetings, which had clearly the highest scores in analysis of usefulness of the steps, is mentioned only twice here. On the other hand, it could be argued to be grouped with open communication and feedback as important means for practical implementation of those. Other issues mentioned in the third place are cooperation in decision making, positive and appreciative atmosphere and efforts to solve workload management.

As a summary, the team results from the anonymous questionnaire indicate a highly positive change in a course of a year, with engagement index increased by 20 %-points, 75 % of the team indicating that their trust towards the management has increased, and at the

same time 62,5 % indicating their trust on either *very high* or *high* level. From the team perspective, the most important actions in the process have been increased open communication and feedback sharing especially through one-on-one discussions with manager, the increased amount of team meetings and the importance of changing own attitude. All in all, all actions taken received mostly favourable and neutral scores, with none seen of *very low* importance. Unfortunately, a worry of some team members not being able to let go of the past and embrace the change and new, more positive atmosphere is evident through both the results and from the open comments.

4.3.2 Team discussion on results

After processing the data from the questionnaire, the author arranged a half-day team discussion on the results on May 2018. In this discussion, the results were presented to the team by the author and pre-designed discussion points were held. This chapter presents the summaries of discussions on each discussion point to provide further information on the answers of the anonymous questionnaire.

The first discussion point, "How to get everyone involved?" was presented after showing the results of 75 % saying *yes* and 25 % *no* to the question "Has your trust towards management improved during the process?". Discussion included several comments about keeping up the open communication and discussion in a consistent manner and "time might heal on its own". Other wishes presented were that managers would be more present at the office and that the root causes for distrust should be visited once more and discussed, what might be the problem for the people answering *no* to the original question.

The second discussion point was "How can we as a team increase the positivity and trust even more?". Suggestions to this point involved active participation in all team events and creating different possibilities for these, laughing together, discussing also matters outside work, having more lunch and coffee breaks together and so on. With this point, a discussion evolved around seating arrangements and should the team be scattered or not. The issue was anyhow resolved as to be kept as it is, although positive outcomes would be seen in sitting more closely together. Understanding and accepting different personalities inside the team, as well as bringing up openly any possible problems were also wished for.

The third discussion point was related to engagement in decision making: "How to improve in decision making processes?". One-on-one discussions were seen as important tool for this, where opinions can be expressed. Own activity from team members and more speaking up their thoughts was also brought up. Earlier involvement of the team or members that change might be affecting were also requested. Openly communicating issues as early as possible, especially when related to personal changes, and taking into consideration practical restrictions when changing processes were seen as important. From manager's point-of-view it is not always possible to communicate issues to the team early or at all, especially if they are related to someone's personal issues. This point was also discussed with the team to increase understanding on both sides.

The last discussion point was related to way forward, on which issues the team wishes to focus in the future. The wishes were mostly related to keeping up the good work and open communication, keeping up the one-on-one discussions, focusing on continuous control of workload and spending time together outside work environment. There were also couple of wishes presented to start focusing on practical work issues instead of development processes.

4.3.3   Outside-view: Interview results

Five interviews were done on May 2018. Interviews focused around questions on how the interviewees saw the team's situation a year ago and a year later in May 2018, do they believe that trust towards management has improved and why, do they believe that negativity in the team has reduced and why, and finally, which three issues they believe had the most impact to the changes in the team. All interviewed persons were outside viewers who had been taking part on the team's process in some way. This chapter presents the interview results and offers some direct quotes from the interviews, translated by the author.

The team's situation a year ago was described in surprisingly similar manner in all interviews. Four interviewees raised up extremely negative atmosphere, awkward group situations where "no one smiles" or talks without being forced to and visible cliques between team members. Three interviewees described the team as problematic, in crisis, situation

inflamed with severe distrust towards managers visible through historical grudges together with high workload and mental exhaustion. Also, "clearly change resistant team" and "non-welcoming" or "cold atmosphere" were mentioned in two interviews.

> *"Situation was inflamed and included division inside the team"*
> Interviewee no 5

> *"Results told about lack of trust towards the managers, not that much as persons, but as their status in organization"*
> Interviewee no 3

> *"They were so reserved and I was left with very icy feeling from the welcoming meeting"*
> Interviewee no 1

When asked about the current situation, all interviewees unanimously stated that the situation had clearly improved, openness and positivity increased with more relaxed atmosphere. Team situations were described with open and conversational atmosphere, and increased number of smiles and humour. Interviewee no 4 stated that *"There has been a complete turnaround in atmosphere"* and Interviewee no 1 *"Atmosphere is much more relaxed, no longer tense".* Three of the interviewees expressed opinions that some cliques inside the team still do exist, but they are different ones than earlier, which is a positive change. One of the interviewees even described the team moving from crisis to a normal, functioning team. Interviewee no 2 described the team situations more equal: *"At first, there was clearly manager, or two managers, who were targeted with negative issues. Now there is present clearly a team, where managers are not separate but everyone belongs to the same group".*

About the trust in the team, and if the trust towards management had been successfully rebuild, all interviewees unanimously agreed that from their viewpoint, trust between the team and management had been rebuilt. Although, there were also some interviewees, who suspected that building trust with the minority of the team members had not yet been successful, but this had been their own choice in the matter. This was described by the Interviewee no 4: *"Differences in persons inside the team surely exist, but everyone has*

had the same chance to become part of the new team and decide themselves to trust or not to".

When asked why they believed that trust had been rebuilt, the most important reason was mentioned by all interviewees; open discussion on the situation (lack of trust) and the reasons leading to it, team's view being heard. Another important reason mentioned by four interviewees was openness by the managers and lot of discussions both one-on-one and on group settings. One reason mentioned by three interviewees was regarding promises; what had been promised, had been kept. Other reasons mentioned by two interviewees were successful workload management, interference to negativity and incorrect behaviour by managers and finally the visible trust, same goals and example shown between the group of both managers and manager's manager. Especially the support from manager's manager shown towards the managers was believed to have had major impact.

> *"Issues have been discussed at least in a relatively direct manner, most probably trust has been built through reclaiming promises, doing things together, solving workload,……, Actions have confirmed that this is not just talk."*
> Interviewee no 2

All the interviewees believed that negativity inside the team had been reduced. Reasons for this were more scattered, but two issues were mentioned by four interviewees. These were new persons, who have brought more positive attitude with them and changed the group dynamics. Negativity in the team had not been allowed anymore, but thoughts had actively been guided to new directions. Open discussion about difficult things was mentioned by three interviewees. Other mentioned issues by two interviewees were successful workload management, increased number of meetings and spending time together, and increased trust towards the management, which would reduce the need to dwell in history and negativity. Also, everyone's change of attitude and attempts to reduce negativity was mentioned.

> *"Lessening of it* (negativity) *is tangible, earlier there was clear hostility in the air"*
> Interviewee no 5

"Some persons from the team have bravely raised up issues like someone's behavior is not constructive and kind of sucking all our energy around them, this tells about trust and that people have started to recognize the negativity inside the team and wish it to change."
Interviewee no 4

TABLE 3. Three issues that had most impact to the changes visible in the team, mentioned by interviewees.

Issues that had most impact to the changes visible in the team	Answers
Manager's role in the process	5
Systematic work towards reducing and balancing workload	4
Personnel changes changing the group dynamics	3
Team building, group work and spending time together	2
External, neutral and objective actor to help	2

All the interviewees were asked "Which three issues you believe have had most impact to the changes visible in the team?". The results are presented in Table 3. The role of managers was raised up by all interviewees; openness, courage, attitude, positivity and showing trust towards the team, taking difficult things to discussion and systematically changing them, at the same time opening themselves up for change. Interviewee no 5 stated that *"It is not easy for a manager to open yourself up and start working towards changing openly hostile atmosphere, it requires a lot of courage.",* when Interviewee no 3 discussed *"Real changes have been made .... Things have been taken to the finish line. It has required investment, willingness, right attitude and determination from the managers.".* Systematic work towards reducing and balancing workload in the team was raised up by four interviewees. Personnel changes in both manager's manager level and new resources to the team, both changing the team dynamics were seen important by three interviewees. Interviewee no 1 stated *"Change in manager's manager level created the foundation where managers could start building the change".* Long-term work towards changing the situation through team building, group works and spending time together as well as external, neutral and objective actor helping to open up the issues and discuss them through in the beginning were mentioned by two interviewees. Interviewee no 3 described it as *"Neutral actor, who could come, hear and see from people what is going on and what could be done".*

Throughout all the interviews, surprisingly similar views on the situation were expressed, as well as reasons leading to it. All the interviewees agreed that trust towards the management had clearly increased and negativity in the team had significantly reduced, although some doubts were raised that minority of the team might not be involved in the change as enthusiastically as the others. When year ago, the atmosphere was described as "cold, icy and even openly hostile", a year later it was described as "open, conversational, humorous and equal, managers seen as part of the team". According to the interviews, the most important issues that had impact to the changes in the team were the role of the managers in the process, work towards reducing and balancing the workload and personnel changes changing the group dynamics.

4.4. Discussion on results: Rebuilding trust in the studied team

In this study, significant change towards more positive work atmosphere and rebuilt trust towards management was visible both from the team's and outside viewer's perspective. In team's results, the engagement index increased by 20 %-points, 75 % of the team indicated that their trust towards the management had increased, and at the same time 62,5 % indicated their trust on either *very high* or *high* level. Also 75 % of the team estimated that negativity had reduced. Alfes and al (2016) concluded that a person's fit to the organization's values and trust towards the organization can have major impact on both engagement and through it, job performance of the individual. This would also indicate success in rebuilding trust through increased engagement. From five interviewees, all unanimously agreed that trust towards management had clearly increased and the negativity in the team had significantly been reduced. Regardless of the positivity in both results, from open comments in the team's questionnaire and from some of the interviews, a worry was raised that minority of the team was not involved in the change, from their own choice. This was also visible in personnel survey questions, where part of the team was still indicating a desire to leave the company and feeling of not having a future in it.

When comparing the actions or issues that were estimated as most important by the team and the outside viewers, open communication and feedback sharing with own manager, especially in one-on-one meetings was clearly most important. In the interviews, this raised more from the manager's role perspective; as the openness, guidance and possibilities for change created by the managers. From the team's perspective, the increased

amount of team meetings was the second most important action. Building possibilities for small, continuous positive social contacts within the team had most probably boosted the positive oxytocin hormone production related to trust building, as was described by Zak (2017).

In the interviews, work towards reducing and balancing workload was raised second. It was also mentioned in team actions, on divided third place. As third point, team indicated changing own attitude very important, and this was also mentioned in the interviews. The outside viewers raised personnel changes in the team and manager's manager level changing team dynamics as the third most important issue. All in all, from the team's perspective, all actions taken received mostly favourable and neutral scores, with none seen of *very low* importance. In both open comments from the team and in the interviews, external, neutral and objective actor helping to open up the issues and discuss them through in the beginning was mentioned. This was discussed as an important step to get the process started and locks opened, paving the way for other actions to have an impact.

To reach the success in this case, several different actions were taken in a course of a year. As first step, external consultant was used to get the process started, to discuss and share information on the violation of trust, as was suggested by Lewicki and al. (2016). It was then discussed, that each and everyone in the team, managers included, must forgive, let go of the past and change the attitude, decide to move forward for the process to succeed. Willingness to forgive and commitment to start rebuilding trust must be mutual, or otherwise such processes cannot succeed (Lewicki & al., 2016, 110-112). Also Mayer and al (1995, 709-734) stated that trustor's propensity, i.e. willingness to trust is required in order to build trust. Unfortunately, through the dividing of the team into two, it seemed that in this case the state of forgiving had not been successfully reached with each and everyone in the team. The third step in the process was building together a common goal and a vision for the team and a way to reach it, where rebuilding trust was one of the steps. This was another step discussed as necessary by Lewicki and al (2016), together with avoiding similar mistakes or miscommunications that had led to the situation at first.

Strengthening and building leadership capabilities of the managers through transformational leadership, mentoring and continuous support from manager's manager level and other actors involved in the process was crucial for success. Manager's role was also

highlighted in the interviews as the most important factor driving the change in the situation. Connell and al (2003) stated that even when trust can be built in several ways, transformational leadership is one of the most important predictors for it. Dirks and Ferrin (2002) presented leader's actions and practices as one of three antecedents for building trust in a leader, together with follower's propensity to trust and the length of relationship. Answers in both interviews and open comments also highlighted that "what has been said, has been done", i.e. the promises had been kept. This was considered as an important prerequisite for building trust by Harisalo and Stenvall (2004). Manager's role and trustworthiness in rebuilding trust was considered extremely important by several authors, as discussed in chapter 2.2. All authors discussed also emphasized the importance of open and honest communication, integrity and taking responsibility in own actions as a leader, showing vulnerability and empathy, as well as demanding correct behavior and attaining goals. All these issues were raised up in the interviews.

Even though this research was conducted in an international team, the aspect of cultures or different languages was not raised up in any of the interviews nor the comments from the team. The physical distance though was discussed several times, but more in relation to itself than any of the cultural issues; even inside the same location and culture. In this kind of situation, more frequent face-to-face meetings and video discussions were seen profitable in building trust. Ajmal & al. (2017, 1109-1110) did contemplate that cultural issues can be lessened through strong organizational culture and common values, which perhaps was the key issue in this team.

Earlier the atmosphere in group meetings was described as cold, icy and even openly hostile, now year later it was described as open, conversational, humorous and equal, managers seen as part of the team. According to Zak (2017), the best performance is created through engagement and joy at work, and both trust and having a purpose are relevant to reach this. Even though the process of rebuilding trust in this team had only been ongoing for a year, it seemed that higher levels of engagement and joy at work had already been reached. Continuous work towards building trust will be required from everyone involved, and the situation with the minority of the team must still be solved.

5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research focused on leadership and especially on how to rebuild trust once it has been breached. The background came from extensive development process conducted in an international team of experts on multinational, listed company X. Trust as a concept is not a new thing and it has been researched a lot; what is the impact of mistrust in an organization and how to rebuild the trust after it has been broken was less discussed in literature.

This case study started from the point of spring 2017, when personnel survey took place and the studied team's results were extremely low. From that point on, more extensive process was started for finding out the root causes. Lack of trust towards management, as well as negative circle amongst the team were identified as the main causes for the situation. Since then, several steps were taken to improve the situation, and these are described in more detail in chapter 4.2.

While extensive sources for concepts of transformational leadership and trust were available, finding literature regarding impact of mistrust in organizations and rebuilding trust once it has been breached was much harder. Most of the literature in these cases was focused on personal relationships instead of organizational context, although one could argue that most of the same principles can be applied in work-life scenery as well. Due to this fact, the literature framework for these parts is relatively scarce and main findings were done in the case study section.

The research questions for this thesis were:
1) What kind of benefits trust towards management can create and what kind of impact mistrust can have in an organization?
2) What are the key principles impacting organizational trust and mistrust in an organization?
3) How to rebuild trust towards management in an international expert team in case X?

The key principles impacting organizational trust and mistrust are presented thoroughly in theory section in chapters 2.2 and 2.3. Studying the different models presented in literature regarding trust and its antecedents showed similarities in all of them; all models built on surprisingly similar, activity-based or behavioral factors of a leader, which implicate the perceived trustworthiness to others. All models also recognized that trust is a two-way street as well as a continuous process that requires the willingness to trust from the trustor as well as positive outcomes from both ways. Although the presented models themselves were not directly related to global organizations, common features could be seen in all of them regardless of the country of origin. When international aspect is inserted in the mix, it can be assumed that complexity increases due to cultural differences, language barriers and physical distance. The questionnaires and interviews brought up similar issues that were discussed in the literature. Manager's role and certain traits in them was raised as most important in the process, together with open communication.

The benefits that high trust can create and mistrust have in organizational context are presented more thoroughly in chapter 2.4. Regardless of the angle towards mistrust in an organization, it is a harmful and destroying force for different relationships in an organization. Mistrust and the reaction it provokes is affected by personal qualities of an individual, but evolved in a group situation it does have serious impact to the well-being and cooperation of the individuals, as well as the organization's profitability. Trust is not seen as a sole, but major contributor to both personnel's and organization's engagement and performance, capability to innovate, happiness at work and productivity. These are issues that will have also monetary impact on the bottom line of a company. New studies in the field of trust and neuroscience even suggest significantly lower amounts of stress, fewer sick days and burnouts in high-trust companies. Based on the studies made, it seems evident that as humans are complex creatures, such soft issues like trust or mistrust need to be approached from different angles and determining the impact in organizational context is not easy. Neuroscientific studies have brought interesting new information to the field that explains some of the reasons for behaviors and give new ideas for managers how they can impact creation of trust more efficiently in the future. The impact of mistrust and later rebuilt trust in the team in question in this study was very tangible. In the beginning, team's engagement was very low and the atmosphere was described even hostile. In the end, engagement index had increased by 20 %-points and the atmosphere was described as open, discussing and humorous.

Rebuilding trust from literature point-of-view is presented in chapter 2.5. When discussing building trust in a situation where trust in some level already exists, certain behaviors and actions by management will foster and grow trust much more easily than in situation where trust has been breached. In case of distrust or breaching of trust has already occurred, rebuilding will require much more time and concrete actions to solve the situation. For this, for example, open and honest communication of the situation is required, as well as acknowledgment and willingness from both sides to work towards rebuilding trust. Most probably the same management behaviors that foster trust in others will also work in a situation of distrust, but might not be enough to solve the situation and turn distrust into trust without additional actions.

In the team discussed in this thesis, rebuilding trust towards management and reducing the negativity was successful. From both results, anonymous questionnaire from the team and the interviews with outside viewers, significant change towards more positive work atmosphere and rebuilt trust towards management was visible. These results are more thoroughly discussed in chapters 4.3. and 4.4. Work towards rebuilding trust is continuous, daily work and especially the past mistakes should not be repeated, or risk of situation sliding back to what it was increases. The real change in the team will most probably be measured only if bigger changes occur sometime in the future, but at least the managers are more prepared to handle the situations with care.

5.1.   Recommendations for managers

In a situation, where trust has already been breached, laying things out in the open is important. To acknowledge and agree on the fact, and discussing the reasons that have led to it is crucial to start healing. Based on this study, strong recommendation to use external, objective actor outside the organization for this phase can be made. When the situation is inflamed, trying to discuss the issues without mediator might make them even worse. In this team, group discussions with external consultant were not successful at first and an alternative course of individual discussions was taken. It proved the right choice and later group settings were possible to utilize again.

As also previous research states, rebuilding trust is not possible without mutual agreement, willingness to trust and forgiveness. This kind of process requires a lot of work,

change of attitude from everyone involved and empathy towards each other. If one or the other side is not willing to take this step, any outside activities may prove useless. With some discussion, a scarcely working relationship might be established, but all the possibilities and positive outcomes of high trust relationship probably will not be reached. In some cases, it might be the best solution to walk away or to disperse the non-functioning organization.

Once the first two steps have been successfully reached, investments into (transformational) leadership and building natural ways for increased number of social events, open communications and common goals will prove useful. Of course, taking real action on issues that were leading to distrust will be required. Changing the group dynamics by adding or changing persons to it, if possible, can help. In this case study, open discussions and sharing feedback especially through regular one-on-one meetings between the managers and subordinates were seen crucial by all parties involved. This is something that every manager can utilize in their work and most probably will benefit in both low and high trust relationships.

From manager's perspective, another crucial issue for this process to be successful was the support, trust and help received from colleagues and own manager. Sharing the same goals and someone supporting you is important in a situation, where negative issues are thrown your way, regardless of guilty or not. The recommendation for any manager in a similar situation is not to be left alone, but to seek for help and support from either internal or external parties.

5.2. Recommendations for future study

Since this research was done as a case study for company X and in a certain team situation, the validity of this research is limited only to the case company and to the team situation discussed. Suggestions, results and conclusions cannot be directly transferred to other case studies or teams in similar situations, as each organization's situation, root causes for mistrust and improvement needs must be individually evaluated and analyzed. Although, both the results of this study and the theoretical models offer some generalizations, helpful ideas and recommendations for managers in similar situations, as well as ideas for future studies.

As for future studies, it would be very interesting to find out ways to measure the impact of trust and especially the case of rebuilding it on monetary values for the company. Some researchers have already established points on how trust can impact the bottom line of a company. For example, the significantly lower amounts of stress, fewer sick days and burnouts in high-trust companies according to Zak's research (2017, 86-87) can also produce organizations remarkable savings. In a smaller organization, most probably the impact into profitability and productivity of the personnel could be measured in an easier way. It would be very interesting to see, what kind of impact this kind of development process could have had in monetary terms, but unfortunately was out of reach for this case study.

5.3. Personal reflections

From manager's point-of-view, this kind of process is heavy, time-consuming and stressful, but also extremely rewarding when situations start to solve and a more positive environment is becoming evident. Looking back, the contrast of first group meetings with the external consultant and the last group meeting with internal consultant before finishing the study in spring 2018 was enormous. In the last one, people were willingly giving each other positive feedback, laughing and crying of joy; a complete change from the group a year earlier.

This kind of process surely is not for everyone. A lot of hard, hands-on work and capability to discuss and take up difficult topics is necessary. This kind of process will not succeed without changing and shaking the attitudes and beliefs you have developed over the years. Personally, the process has brought up a lot of positive feelings, but at the same time a lot of frustration, tiredness and even sometimes anger. If I had known a year ago what was ahead, would I have walked away? I might have. But knowing the end results, probably not.

This kind of process requires willingness to put yourself out in the open, to learn quickly and to take hits and it is not a shame to decide not to. Especially, if there is too much baggage from the history that might make it difficult to forgive and forget in either side.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Anonymous team questionnaire   1 (5)

Part 1. Personnel survey questions

Answer options:
5 = Strongly Agree
4 = Agree
3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

1.1: Overall, I am extremely satisfied with our Company as a place to work.

1.2: I would gladly refer a good friend or family member to our Company for employment.

1.3: I rarely think about looking for a new job with another company.

1.4: I am proud to work for our Company.

1.5: We regularly use customer feedback to improve our work processes.

1.6: This Company supports me (programs, flexibility, etc.) in having a healty and balanced life.

1.7: My immediate manager provides me with regular feedback on my performance.

1.8: Our Company supports me in my efforts to adapt to changes in the organization.

1.9: I am appropriately involved in decisions that affect my work.

1.10: I believe that positive change will happen as a result of this survey.

1.11: My contribution is valued.

1.12: I am able to manage my work responsibilities in a way that allows me to maintain a healthy balance between work and home.

1.13: I feel there is a promising future for me at our Company.

Part 2. Thesis questionnaire

Management in following questions refers to levels of own manager and manager's manager. Unless otherwise stated, time period to be considered is the last 12 months after team development process was started. The team referred in the questions is a combination of two teams included in the process as one.

1. Has your trust towards management improved during the process?

-Yes

-No

-If you answered No, can you please explain the main reason behind? (open box)

Open comments: (open box)

2. In your opinion, has the team's trust towards management improved during the process?

-Yes

-Not sure

-No

-If you answered Not sure or No, can you please explain the main reason behind? (open box)

Open comments: (open box)

3. In your opinion, has the team's negativity reduced during the process?

-Yes

-Not sure

-No

-If you answered Not sure or No, can you please explain the main reason behind? (open box)

Open comments: (open box)

4. How would you rate your own trust towards the management at the moment?

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

5. How would you rate the team's trust towards the management at the moment?

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

6. How would you rate the management's trust towards you at the moment?

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

7. How would you rate the management's trust towards the team at the moment?

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

8. How would you rate the usefulness of following steps taken in the process, especially in building trust?

A. External consultant to conduct personal and team discussions last summer

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

- N/A was not included in the process

Open comments: (open box)

B. Internal talent management guided team training sessions starting last autumn

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

- N/A was not included in the process

Open comments: (open box)

C. Regular one-on-one discussions and feedback shared with own manager

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

D. Increased amount of meetings with the team (e.g. face-to-face meetings, regular team meetings, coffee and lunch breaks)

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

E. Amount of open communication and engagement in decision-making

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

F. Workload management (e.g. Additional resources, changes in roles, process development)

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

G. Change of your own attitude

-5 very high

-4 high

-3 neutral

-2 low

-1 very low

Open comments: (open box)

9. From your perspective, which three issues or changes implemented in the process have helped the most in building trust towards the management? (you are free to refer to other issues than the ones presented in question 7)

open box

10. Any other insights, feedback, comments or questions?

open box

Interview / open questions for management and external observers

1. How did you see the team's situation a year ago or when you started working with the team?

2. How do you see the team's situation at the moment?

3. Do you believe that the trust towards management has improved in the team, and why?

4. Do you believe that the negativity in the team has reduced, and why?

5. Which three issues you believe have had most impact to the changes visible in the team?