Implications of change management

A Case study of Cramo AB's change strategies

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Abstract

Title: The implications of change management - A Case study of Cramo AB's change strategies

Key words: Change management, change process, Shape 2020, Shape & Share

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how Cramo AB works with change management and if they succeed or not, by using Kotter's model as an analytic tool and other theoretical perspectives of change management.

Methodology: The research is conducted as a case study of explorative nature. Data was collected at two different semi-structured interviews. One for the managers at Cramo AB and another one for the employees further down in the organisational structure. Seven interviews were performed with respondents from Cramo AB's top management group and four interviews were conducted with employees from the depots. The collected data was analysed with pattern coding.

Theoretical perspectives: Previous research consists of numerous models for change management shows that it is a complex subject. This study will therefore aim to contribute to existing literature by investigating how Kotter's eight step model for leading change and other selected theoretical perspectives can be analysed against a real case to clarify how and why a company works with changes.

Empirical foundation: Cramo AB is an interesting company to investigate, since they currently are working extensively with a change program called Shape 2020. Throughout the years the company implemented many large change processes that have affected the whole organisation. However, employees express some issues today regarding the change processes.

Conclusions: This study reached the conclusion that Cramo AB have both successful and failed with change processes. The success rate seems to heavily rely on how well the change and implementation has been communicated as well as how the good or bad the attitude towards change in general is. The comparison between literature and a real case also suggests that literature does not acknowledge the complexity of communication in a real case.

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Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Theoretical background

Today, countless researchers point out change processes as an increasingly important theme and mean that all organisations need to adapt to the constantly growing global business environment (e.g. Kotter, 2012; Ströh & Jaatinen, 2002; By, 2005; Burnes, 2009; Haddad & Kotnour, 2015). Researchers argue that the change process today is an open, ongoing and unpredictable process without any start nor end (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007). According to Bareil, Savoie and Meunier (2007), 46 percent of all organisations are constantly undergoing three or more complex changes at a time. However, it is estimated that 75 percent of them deemed to become successful actually fail to achieve their initially intended goal and 70 percent of the change initiatives fail completely (Beer & Nohria, 2000).

According to Sidorko (2008), many academics and practitioners have tried to explain why change efforts fail. One of the first change management models was presented by Henry Lewin in 1951 and since then, countless models have been created . Even though change management is a widely discussed subject, it remains a difficult issue for many organisations. Many authors refer to their models as the successful way of implementing change processes in organisations, and that any other approach would be suboptimal (Burnes, 1996). However, Sidorko (2008) means that there will never be a model that sufficiently can describe the depth of human reactions during change processes.

There is also a distinction between planned change and ad hoc change. A planned change has a clear process from thought to action (Kotter, 1995; 2012) while an ad hoc change pictures change as a pattern in a stream of decisions (Mintzberg, 1978). Furthermore, change management is known as the planned perspective of change (Burnes, 1996). Since the aim is to put these concepts together, change management will from now on be the key concept of our discussion, in other words planning and leading change process. Change process will furthermore be used when referring to the change implementation.

As change management remains a complex subject, the goal with this thesis is to provide insights of change management by applying Kotter's eight steps and other perspectives on a large organisation, Cramo AB.

1.2. Practical background

Cramo AB is a Swedish rental equipment company that supports both the construction industry, trade industry, public sector as well as private customers as a full rental services supplier (Cramo AB, 2017). The company has a revenue of 2,9 billion Swedish crowns (Annual Report Cramo AB, 2016), which is almost 800 million more than their biggest Swedish competitor Ramirent (Annual report Ramirent AB, 2016). Moreover, Cramo AB is the Swedish part of the large Cramo Group, also called Cramo OYJ, that is the 11th biggest rental equipment group in the world with over 320 depots in 14 countries (IRN100, 2016).

Throughout the years, Cramo AB has been undergoing numerous change processes, both on company level as well as on a local depot level. For instance, the company has introduced a new bonus system, a new pricing model, and merged and acquired a lot of smaller companies (Entreprenad, 2014; Hela Gotland 2015). These are all examples of change processes that have affected Cramo AB on a company level, which will be the main focus in this case study.

In 2015, a new strategy called Shape & Share was introduced. The vision with the strategy is to "share resources simplified" (Cramo Group, 2017), both within the company, but also with the customers, as Cramo views the services they provide, as a possibility to share resources instead of buying them. In order to align the company further with the new strategy and vision, Cramo AB has developed an extensive change program called Shape 2020, consisting of numerous change processes that will impact the whole organisation. Shape 2020 was taken into action in 2017 and will be described in detail in section 4.3.1 together with Shape & Share (Cramo Group, 2017).

Due to the importance of managing change processes within the company, Cramo AB is a good match for our research of change management strategies and an interesting company to study and learn from. Our goal is to understand Cramo AB's underlying reasons and goals with their strategies for change, how they implement changes and also what implications it has on the

organisation. A more thorough description of Cramo AB will be found in section 4.1. About Cramo AB.

1.3. Purpose and research question

This study aims to investigate how the aspects from some existing theory of change management corresponds with a real case. In particular we aim to investigate how Cramo AB works with change management and for what reasons. The thesis will address the following research question:

- *How well does Cramo AB succeed with change management and what are the implications for the organisation?*

In order to address the research question the following sub question will be investigated:

- *How well does the existing research within change management correspond with a real case?*

As a result of investigating how the company works with change processes, the intention is to present managerial advices to the top managers at Cramo AB. The aim is also to contribute to the current research with experiences from a real company. However, this would not necessarily mean that the study would provide a general model applicable on other companies and all change processes.

In the following section a review of relevant theories are presented. The second section aims to describe the methodology that was used in this thesis. In the last and third section the authors presents the empirical findings from the collected data. This follows with an analysis, conclusion and finally managerial implications.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review begins with an explanation of the change process and change management. Thereafter Kotter's eight step model for leading change (1995; 2012) is presented. Later on the model is used to analyse Cramo AB's organisational change strategies. Additionally, performance management (Asplund, Bolander & Werr, 2017) and other perspectives of change management are presented to support and criticize certain parts of Kotter's model.

2.1. The implications of change and change management; the why and how

Organisational change is becoming a process where organisations continuously are trying adapt to an ever-changing environment. Organisations are changing on a daily basis as a result of many reasons, such as actions and decisions made by individuals (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007). Additional factors that lead to change in organisations are driving forces, external as well as internal. According to Child (2005), external driving forces could for example be of political, technological and financial character, or due to changes within the industry. When the society is developing faster, an urge arises for some industries to change in order to avoid the risk of being outperformed by more innovative companies. Some organisations choose to be proactive with changes by being driving and innovative, while others choose to be reactive by doing changes when they need to (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007).

As previously mentioned, changes can be either planned or ad hoc. In planned changes, considerations of the top management team is more central in comparison to the employees. On the contrary, thoughts and ideas of employees outside the top management team is also of importance in ad hoc changes (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007).

Additionally, change processes can be evolutionary as well as revolutionary. Evolutionary changes only affect some parts of the organisation, while revolutionary changes affect multiple organisational conditions simultaneously such as the structure, leadership and steering. Revolutionary changes often occur when the market is mature and the economic growth declines (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007), and an example of one is a merger (Burke, 2002). Modification of existing products or recruiting of new staff are examples of evolutionary changes. Revolutionary

changes often occur during delimited periods while evolutionary changes occur more frequently (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007).

Change management became its own formal field of study around 70 years ago and has since then become known as the perspective of planned change. Even though change management is a widely discussed subject, it remains a difficult issue for academics and organisations in general. Many academics and practitioners have tried to explain why organisational change efforts fail. Consequently, there are numerous models for facilitating change processes (Sidorko, 2008). Many authors refer to their models as the successful way of implementing change in organisations, and that any other approach would be suboptimal (Burnes, 1996). Additionally, organisational leaders often adopt so-called best practices in an attempt to succeed with change processes in the same way as other organisations have (Sanwal, 2008). One of the first change management models was presented by Lewin in 1951. The model consists of three steps; unfreeze, change and refreeze. The activities related to the first step, unfreeze, includes teamwork, education or/and an inspiring speech from a manager at the organisation. In short, the first step, is about making everyone involved in the change and believe there is a need for change. The second step refers to the change process that eventually will lead to reaching the organisational purpose with the change. The last step, refreeze, refers to recreate stabilization in the organisation (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007). Lewin's three-step model of change can be seen as the building blocks for planned change (Burnes, 1996). Since the publication of Lewin's model, countless change models have been created. Many of the models share common features, such as developing a shared vision, communication, embedding change and identification of the problem. According to Sidorko (2008), the countless amount of models is a response to the need of a unique approach of different change processes since two change processes cannot be exactly alike given the extensive amount of variables that needs to be considered. Burnes (1996) further means that the reason for the countless models is that change management is a very complex subject. At the same time as more change management models are being published, more studies show that the majority of all organisations fails to perform a successful change (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007). In line with this, Sidorko (2008) means that the human response to change is the most significant variable, however there will never be a model so sufficient it could describe the depth of human reactions during change.

Alvesson and Sveningsson (2007) argue that it can be important to plan the changes based on fixed models in advance. However using them in practice might be hard and could lead to undesirable consequences and result in more work for the organisation. The authors suggest that it is preferable to focus on the experiences, emotions and interpretations of the individuals which are affected of the change, while in the change process.

According to Mintzberg, Quinn and Ghoshal (2003), change management also implies an ability to recognize when a shift of a strategic nature is possible, desirable and necessary, and then to put the change into action. Managing change processes are generally difficult since it often implies that people must give up their previous pattern of behavior and develop a new behavior and attitude. Moving from a familiar domain into an uncertain future where many of the old rules no longer are valid can create uncertainty. Mintzberg et al. (2003) also states that every change process is unique and demands a different management approach. The distinction between top-down and bottom-up change is also of importance. Top-down change implies a predetermined and leader-driven process which is the most common approach. Bottom-up change implies an explorative process where small changes within the organisation drive the overall change process (Mintzberg et al., 2003).

Below, Kotter's change management model for facilitating change processes is presented; the eight step process for leading change. The eight steps will later on be used as an analytical tool.

2.2. A simplification of change management by Kotter

In 1995, John P. Kotter published the first version of his change management model. For over a decade, Kotter had studied more than 100 companies in their attempt to become significantly better competitors. During this period Kotter identified some success factors and combined them into a methodology (Appelbaum, Habashy, Malo & Shafiq 2012). The result became an 8-Step process for leading change which explains why transformation efforts fail (Kotter, 1995). The following year, he published the model with further detail in his book *Leading Change* which became a classic and "the best-selling book ever of its kind" (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Unlike the article, the book has numerous examples of what seems to work and what does not, and is therefore more hands-on and practical. The book is presented in academic textbooks today and has been cited

more than 4000 times in Google Scholar. The change management model is based on Kotter's personal empirical research without references to external sources, which is not typical of an academical work. In fact, the book completely lack footnotes and references. Despite the fact that the model lacks rigorous fundamentals, it remains a key reference in the field of change management (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

The first four steps in Kotter's (2012) change management model implies defrosting a persistent status quo which Kotter means demands a lot of effort. Step five to seven include new practices and the last step refers to implementing the changes permanently into the corporate culture. The first four steps can be seen as the warm up, and if those are disregarded, there is no sufficient base on which to proceed (Kotter, 2012).

Below, Kotter's' eight steps for leading change are compiled:
1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Form a powerful guiding coalition
3. Form a strategic vision
4. Communicate the vision
5. Empowering others to act on the vision
6. Generate short-term wins
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change
8. Anchor the new approaches in the corporate culture

The first step in the model is about establishing a sense of urgency to make everyone within the organisation understand why there is a need for change. This is done through a clear opportunity statement that communicates the importance of acting immediately. For a change to really happen, Kotter (2012) means that everyone within the organisation needs to feel the urge for it. If the urgency is not made visible enough, people will not believe there is a problem. Kotter means that in order for a change to be successful, a majority of around 75 percent of the management need to believe that the change is essential. This first step requires aggressive cooperation of many individuals in order to get the change process started. The step requires significant time and energy before considering moving to the next step. Jumping into the next step too early without proper

preparation could result in vulnerability. Without motivation the effort goes nowhere since people will not have the urge to contribute without it. Therefore this step is not that easy (Kotter, 2012). In fact, over 50 percent of the companies Kotter studied actually failed in the first phase of change (Harper, 2011).

The second step is to form a powerful guiding coalition. This implies creating a change coalition of effective people to guide, coordinate and communicate the process and its activities. By doing this, people become convinced that change is crucial. Once the coalition is formed, it needs to work as a team, continuing to build the momentum around the need for change. Executing strong leadership is crucial and so is a visible support for the key people within the organisation. Hence, the true leaders and key stakeholders have to be identified in order to align and inspire everyone involved to follow the vision (Kotter, 2012).

The third step is to form a strategic vision to help direct the change process. That implies clarifying in what way the future will be different from the past and how that future becomes reality through initiatives linked directly to the vision. A clear vision helps everyone involved to understand why they are asked to do something. When people can see for themselves what you are trying to achieve and how, the directives make more sense. Hence, a clear vision and strategy aligns, empowers and inspires action (Kotter, 2012).

In the fourth step the vision should be communicated in any possible way since a great vision is worthless if not communicated. In some of the more successful change processes, executives use all existing communication channels in order to broadcast their vision, for instance by turning boring unread company letters into passionate articles about the vision. Additional examples of efficient communication tools are stories, metaphors, multiple media, repetition and simplicity. Large-scale change only occurs when a massive number of employees are engaged and willing to make sacrifices. Moreover, managers have to communicate the expected behavior. They have to walk-the-talk and demonstrate expected behaviour from everyone involved. Employees will not make sacrifices if they are unhappy with the circumstances, only if they believe that useful change is possible (Kotter, 2012).

The fifth step regards empowering others to act on the vision. If this point is reached in the change process, Kotter (2012) means that the vision has been successfully communicated in all levels of the organization. Thereafter it is important to examine if there are any obstacles to change and eliminate them. Formal structures, past values, lack of skills and old systems are some examples of potential obstacles that undermine the vision. Removing hierarchies and inefficient processes that could undermine the vision helps eliminating obstacles and provide the freedom necessary to be able to generate real impact. It is also important to identify if anyone is resisting the change.

The sixth step implies planning for and creating short-term wins. The short-term wins must be identified, collected and communicated in order to track the process and energize the volunteers to endure. They help maintain the belief and support for change which is crucial, and at the same time it keeps the critics at bay. Kotter (2012) further means that nothing motivates employees more than success that you want to show your staff some visible performance improvements. These short-term wins need to be unambiguous, visible and clearly related to the change process. Kotter (2012) also means that the employees should be given the taste of victory within a short time frame, this could be within a month or a year, depending of the form of change process. Otherwise there might appear critics that hurt the progress.

The seventh step implies consolidating gains and producing more change. At this point, Kotter (2012) means that the process can start going backwards, and therefore the sense of urgency cannot decline. After the first success, press harder. The increasing abilities can help improving policies, structures and systems that do not fit the vision. It is crucial to initiate change after change, until the vision becomes reality. Kotter (2012) recommends to start slowly with a few smaller projects until this point when it is time to push further with up to 20 change projects at the same time. The ”quick wins” can be seen only as the beginning of what needs to be done to achieve a long-term change. Many companies fail because victory is declared too early in the change process, and therefore one should continue looking for improvements. To reach real success it needs to run deep (Kotter, 2012) and it is important to understand that renewal efforts can take not only months, but years (Kotter, 1995).

The eighth and last step implies anchoring the new approaches in the corporate culture. The link between organisational success and the new behaviours and processes has to be mediated. This connection should be articulated until it is strong enough to replace old habits. The new values, behaviors and beliefs must become a core part of the organization and its culture to be persistent, since the corporate culture often rules what is getting done. Therefore, the values behind the vision must be shown in the day-to-day work. Kotter (2012) means that continuous efforts can make the change visible in every aspect of the organization and contribute to making the change firmly rooted in the corporate culture.

In conclusion, Kotter (2012) means that change is always more complex than expected, that it requires constant and never ending improvements to insure it stays, otherwise there is a risk that the system defaults back to old patterns of behavior. But for every error that is reduced in the process, the chance to succeed with the organisational change increases (Kotter, 1995). However, even if Kotter's change management model has had significant impact there are some issues that impact on its universal acceptance.

2.3. Critics on Kotter's change management model

Supported by numerous studies of change management that has been published during the 15 years after Kotter's model was first published, Appelbaum et al. (2012) review the validation of Kotter's eight steps. According to the article, all the steps appear to be as significant in 2011 as in 1996. However, some critics have highlighted some unique issues with some of the steps. For instance Kotter describe, in his second step, the importance of having a strong guiding coalition. Authors such as Sidorko (2008) rather emphasize the need for building multiple guiding coalitions to deal with different occasions and aspects of the process, rather than just one. Something which Kotter does not acknowledge in the second step.

Regarding the sixth step, Kotter emphasises the importance of reporting short-term wins but according to Boga and Ensari (2009) long-term wins might be equally important, even if it could be complex to find the right balance between short-term and long-term wins.

Appelbaum et al. (2012) also highlight some general issues with the eight step model. Firstly, the eight-step model was developed to address "fundamental changes in how the business is conducted in order to help cope with a new, more challenging market environment" (Kotter, 1995). This implicates that the model might not be applicable to all types of changes (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

Secondly, Kotter argues that the steps are dependent of one another and have to be followed sequentially, otherwise it will compromise success. This linear approach indicates that not following the first step obstructs or even makes it impossible to implement the rest of the steps. (Appelbaum et al., 2012). According to Burnes (1996), such a customary approach does not correlate well with studies suggesting that organisations prefer approaches to change that derives from their corporate culture and thus cannot easily be amended or replaced (Burnes, 1996).

Thirdly, Appelbaum et al. (2012) argue that some steps might not be relevant in certain contexts. Many changes are irreversible, which might make steps seven and eight irrelevant. One example of such could be a replacement of software used to process organisational operations. There are also some cases when changes need to be executed with secrecy, which undermines steps one and four.

In conclusion, Kotter's steps can be a good starting point for implementing change to improve the chances to succeed, although one should not presume that following the steps guarantees success. Appelbaum et al. (2012) states that it might be useful for managers to take the model into account in practice when formulating the change management strategy. However, the model should be combined with other leading change models and theories within change management. According to Todnem By (2009), the best change management strategy might be a mix based on the organisation and the certain change being implemented.

2.4. Other perspectives of change management

2.4.1 Aligning employees through performance management

Asplund et al. (2017) argue that structural organisational change far from always lead to behavioral and attitudinal change. Therefore, they argue that the role of performance management could be a

tool of great importance for implementing change since it implicates aligning employees' individual behavior with the organisational objectives. The authors mean that "while redrawing organizational charts or rewriting organizational routines is relatively straight-forward, changing employees' mindsets and behavior accordingly is often more challenging". (Asplund et al., 2017 p. 250). By using performance management as a communication tool, Asplund et al. (2017) means that organisations can ease the experienced threat and clarify the directions and goals of the undergoing change. This is also emphasized by Chenhall (2005), who sees performance management as a language that organisations can use to help individuals in the organisations see how parts of the organisations builds the whole. Moreover, performance management can facilitate the change by rewarding desired behaviors, for example by bonus programs that reward achievements reached in implemented changes. This facilitation of change is done by measuring employee performance, which sends clear signals to the employees of what should be done while also enhancing the right behaviour with rewards. The authors discuss three different ways performance measurements can facilitate individual-level change. Firstly, it can be used as a communication tool to explain the direction and objectives of the change. Secondly, it can motivate employees to change the way they work by tie rewards to behavior that is in line with the new strategy. Thirdly, it can serve as a feedback loop where employees continuously can get information about how to adjust their work behavior in order to align with the strategy (Asplund et al. 2017).

2.4.2 Communication and involvement of employees

As previously mentioned, communication plays an important role in change management. Ströh and Jaatinen (2002) goes even further in their explanation of the role communication has for successful change. They discuss the importance of communication in change management and states that by involving staff in change management decisions, organisations can create debate and criticism in an earlier phase of the change process than when only top management is involved in the process. This debate and criticism can in turn lead to greater innovation and further change. This is strengthened in Sidorkos (2008) argument about having multiple guiding coalitions presented above. Furthermore, the involvement of employees in decision making can result in that employees commit more, since they might invest emotionally in the change process (Ströh and

Jaatinen, 2002). However, for this to happen it is necessary to establish trust and good relations between all different parts and individuals within the organisation.

2.4.3 Is having a strategy for change management even important?

Moreover, the importance of even having a strategy for change management, in other words planning changes, can be discussed. Henry Mintzberg's (1978) interpretation of strategy is rather as a pattern of a stream of decisions. He means that even if strategies may be planned and explicit, there are also many processes that are considered to be clear strategies afterwards, but by time they occurred was just a sequence of decisions. When researching strategy, this definition is an important reminder that historical strategies might be something that has been planned by organisations, but may sometimes just be successful reactions to circumstances that in retrospect might look like consciously developed strategies.

Burnes (1996) further argues that there is no such thing as "one best way" to manage organisational change. He adds that it might be preferable sometimes to replace the best practises models with an ad hoc approach. Sidorko (2008) concludes that the best method for implementing changes in organisations is to use the change models as an aid, either prescriptively or adaptively. Sidorko (2008) means that instead of following modeles slavishly organisations should focus on leadership. The author presents three essential aspects of leadership and argues that they should complement the existing change models. Sidorko adds that if an organisation solely are following a sequential model for change the result could be more adversely because the model might not fit the organisational needs.

2.5. Summary of literature review

To sum up, there are many different approaches of change processes and numerous models for change management. Kotter's (1995;2012) eight step process for leading change is just one of those, and can be a good introduction when implementing change processes, however, it does not guarantee success (Appelbaum et al, 2012; Burnes, 1996; Sidorko, 2008). In line with Kotter, Asplund et al. (2017) argues that performance management can facilitate change processes through

aligning employees, and Ströh and Jaatinen (2002) further emphasizes the importance of the communication.

3. METHODOLOGY

Presented in the following section is the choices the authors has taken regarding research approach and research design. The selection of the sample and research instrument is also motivated. In addition to this, i is outlined how the data from this sample has been collected. Finally, the trustworthiness and delimitations of the research is taken into consideration.

3.1. Research approach

For this thesis an inductive approach was used since the authors executed the observations with an open mindset and without any preconceptions. This gave the research an opportunity to avoid deciding on a predetermined narrow research question in advance. According to Bryman and Bell (2013), a narrow research question can lead to an oblique position of the social context in the study. The research was therefore narrowed throughout the development of the thesis. The inductive method is strengthened by the fact that the research is of explorative nature. According to Bryman and Bell (2011) using an inductive approach will allow the researchers to complement existing theory with own studies of empirical data. Nevertheless, in spite of this some of our research is based on already existing theories of change management and therefore it's also a bit deductive.

Through systematic combining inductive and deductive, moving back and forth between collected empirical data and theory, the authors are able to understand the observed phenomena as well as the theory applied. This is a useful aspect since the authors on beforehand are not able to predict what will emerge from the interviews that are performed in the research. In this way the theoretical framework is constantly parallely evolving and expanding beside the collection of data (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

3.2. Research design

3.2.1. Qualitative research design

A qualitative research design is adopted to this thesis. Unlike quantitative research, a qualitative research collects data through documents, observations and/or interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Due to the complexity of the phenomena of change management, this study was carried out

as a qualitative case study. The qualitative approach also helped the authors to better grasp the unique character and context of the chosen company and identify its success and faults in their strategic change process.

3.3.2. Case study design

The research design took form as a case study, where a detailed analysis of the change process at our chosen company, Cramo AB, were given. When aiming to understand a phenomena within a specific context and how these interact, in-depth case studies are most suitable (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). The basic case study involves an intensive analysis of a specific single case such as an organisation, an event or even a person (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In this case study an analysis of a specific organisation is presented. According to Bryman and Bell (2011) it is difficult to determine whether it is a cross-sectional design or a basic case study when the case is based only on qualitative research. The difference between a cross-sectional design and a basic case study is that the first one focuses on general findings whereas the latter focuses to find unique features of a particular case (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As the study aims to research the change processes at Cramo AB, general solutions that could be applied on other companies cannot not be guaranteed, and therefore a case study was deemed suitable.

3.3. Selection of sample

3.3.1. Selection of company

The authors decided to target Cramo AB as a case study for several reasons. However, one of the main reasons was that, as mentioned above, one of the authors has experience as a depot employee at Cramo AB. The author thereby had some general knowledge regarding the organisation and its structure and change projects. Since the research subject is change management, the company became interesting due to its complex organisational structure with many small units and 800 employees, to study how decisions on top management level are made and then communicated to the rest of the organisation. Additionally, the company has done a lot of larger changes that has affected the whole organisation, which makes it a great match for the case study. Moreover, the authors got to know early on in the research process that the company sees itself as a leader in change and therefore assumed that they have experience in change management which is crucial

in order to contribute with a new perspective of change management. One of the author's previous experiences within the company also facilitated the process of contacting respondents who wanted to contribute to the result, which further enhanced the opportunity of getting extensive perspectives of how Cramo AB work with large change processes. The other side of having an author with previous experiences is that the author might influence the data with subjectivity, which was discussed in length during the whole process of the study to ensure objectivity.

3.3.2. Selection of respondents

In this thesis a purposive method was used during the interviews since the sample was attended to consist of respondents relevant to the research question (Bryman & Bell, 2011). All the chosen respondents served a purpose in this research since they all either have experience in performing changes or have been a part of a conducted change processes.

The selection of respondents for the interviews was made by using a combination of snowball and convenience sampling. Snowball sampling is when the first respondent refer you to the second, and so on, until you find the respondent that you need for the interview. Convenience sampling is instead when the authors of the research have easy access the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2011). For the first interview, convenience sampling was used since the respondent is a relative of one of the authors to this thesis. The following interview was sampled through snowball sampling since during the interview another respondent was recommended who gave the authors a different perspective on how Cramo AB works with change processes. Thereafter, convenience sampling was used for the rest of the top managers. Since one of the authors has previously worked as a depot salesperson and still have contacts at depots in Såne, convenience sampling was also used for the depot employees.

The first phase of interviews were conducted with the top management at Cramo AB to gain a solid base of how the company perform change management. Since almost all of the change processes are developed by the top managers, it was argued to be necessary to start by interview them. All of the chosen respondents were in leading positions at Cramo AB and had therefore according to us the sufficient experience and knowledge needed to provide a good empirical material.

In order to provide a contrasting perspective, four employees at various depots of Cramo AB were selected and interviewed for the second phase of interviews. Two of them were depot managers and the other two were depot employees. Since the study were restricted by time, four respondents were evaluated to be manageable and enough to provide fair picture of how employees further down in the hierarchy perceives the changes at Cramo AB. These interview helped gain a general picture of the top management experiences before comparing them with the employees further down of the hierarchy.

3.4. Research instruments

Qualitative data were gathered through in total ten semi-structured interviews. Five of the top managers from the headquarters in Stockholm were interviewed followed by the regional manager in the south of Sweden. The last interview was held with two depot managers. The chosen representatives were expected to give in-depth understanding of how the change processes work at Cramo AB. The interviews were semi-structured since the different top managers at Cramo AB have different knowledge and experiences of change processes within the organisation, which the authors wanted to capture. The semi-structured interviews provided answers on the chosen topics, however also the opportunity to ask follow-up questions in specific areas that the respondent possessed more knowledge of or experience in. Hence, the reason for choosing semi-structured interviews were that it would allow clear guidelines to ensure consistency as well as flexibility to give as much valuable data as possible from every interview (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The anticipation with these interviews was to hold an open and light dialogue with the representatives and to give them the chance to go deeper into the areas that they were especially engaged in. To reduce the risk of misunderstandings and to eliminate unnecessary or leading questions a test-interview with the first respondent were performed (Yin, 2009).

Upon interviewing the top management another interview with the employees further down in the organisational structure was made. These were also conducted as semi-structured interviews and the questions were based on the answers collected from the interviews with the top managers. By interviewing top management as well as other employees provided a fairer and more critical perspective of how the employees at Cramo AB had experienced the changes that had been made.

The latter interviews were expected to give empirical data on how changes coming from the headquarters had been implemented and received on a local level.

The theory was collected through secondary data such as articles, literature and information published on Cramo AB's webpage.

3.4.1. Anonymity and informed consent

Together with Cramo AB the authors agreed on keeping the company name visible for the purpose of transparency, and according to Walford (2005) it is nearly impossible to ensure complete anonymity in qualitative researches. Therefore it was decided on transparency in order to give the reader an opportunity to interpret the thesis independently. Fortunately, the CEO at Cramo AB was very positive and eager towards the research and therefore he asked all the affected employees at Cramo AB to take time to participate in our research. However, in order to guarantee truthful answers from the employees all the the respondent's names were translated into pseudonyms for anonymization. Hence, the authors are convinced that the respondents answered truthfully during the interviews. Furthermore, neither the interview questions nor the research question were of a personally sensitive nature which strengthen the argumentation that the respondents were not biased in their answers. Although, to eliminate the risk of creating friction within the organisation this was another reason to anonymize.

As for the interviews with the employees of the depots, anonymity was given also due to their more vulnerable position as subordinated to the management. This enhanced the opportunity of getting honest answers and thereby a more fair picture also in these interviews.

In Table 1. all respondents from the semi-structured interviews of the managers are listed. The list is divided into the respondent's position, the date of the interview and what type of interview it was to give the reader comprehension of how the data was collected.

Table 1. Interview objects

Position of respondent	Date of interview	Type of interview
Top Manager - Andersson	November 17th	Face-to-face interview
Top Manager - Carlsson	November 30th	Skype interview
Top Manager - Eriksson	November 30th	Face-to-face interview
Top Manager - Davidsson	November 30th	Skype interview
Top Manager - Fransson	December 8th	Skype interview
Top Manager - Berg	December 1th	Skype interview
Depot manager - Granath	December 11th	Skype interview
Depot manager - Hansson	December 15th	Skype interview
Depot salesperson - Isaksson	December 15th	Skype interview
Depot salesperson - Johansson	December 15th	Skype interview

3.5. Collection of data

As mentioned, one of the authors previously worked at Cramo AB and is a relative to a member of the top management, which gave the research group insight into Cramo AB's organisation and how they work with change processes. This situation gave the research a valuable foundation of information to start with. Beyond this, it gave the study an advantageous opportunity and contacts

to gain access into the organisation and its top management. According to Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013) it is recommended to have basic knowledge of how the company works before collecting primary data in order to reduce subjectivity.

The interview questions, (appendix 1) was built on the literature review. A first pilot interview were performed to test if the questions were appropriate and thereafter some small changes in the interview guide for the rest of the interviews were made. The interviews were held by either one or two of the authors. In the beginning of every interview, permission to record the respondents during the interview was given. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), this facilitates the analysis process. The authors signed a confidential agreement provided by the company before collecting the data in order to assure that the information would not be used in a harmful way for Cramo AB.

The interviews were initiated through a short introduction of the main research objectives in order to avoid misinterpretations regarding the purpose of the interview. Since the headquarter is based in Stockholm, the opportunity of face-to-face interviews with all respondents was limited since all the authors were located in Lund. The first interview was held at the headquarter, but the rest of them were held through a video call on Skype. After the interviews, contact with the respondents were held by email for the opportunity to ask additional questions, add or change the given information.

Additionally, some secondary data was used in the result which was collected from Cramo AB's webpage and their annual report.

3.6. Method for data analysis

The method used for analysing the data was firstly to transcribe all the interviews. A first-level coding was made, using a sort of marginal remark and highlighting essential parts and by writing comments in the marginal (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Thereafter, pattern codes were used to create a clear structure in order for to understand Cramo AB's change management (Miles & Huberman 1994). Pattern coding allowed a grouping of the first-level codes into smaller parts to facilitate a better control of the data. Therefore, the essential parts were divided into six different boxes, each representing an important phenomenon in change management. To guarantee a non-

biased coding process check-coding were used in this process, which is recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994). It means that two researchers code the data in their opinion followed by discussion before conclusions are made and translated into a result. As all the interviews were held in Swedish, quotes were translated into English which was done lastly to avoid losing underlying meanings of the respondents in the translation.

After coding and analysing the collected data the authors chose to present the findings in a model which will be presented after the analysis in figure 3. Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that a model can illustrate diverse results deriving from various variables in a more clear way.

3.7. Trustworthiness

Even though reliability and validity are two important terms to take into account when conducting a qualitative research, many researchers claim that these terms are improper. According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982) these terms are more associated with quantitative research methods. Bryman and Bell (2011) instead suggest to use the term trustworthiness which consists of four different divisions: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

An issue of credibility could be that the employees did not have the confidence to tell the truth during the interviews. Due to that fact, the CEO of Cramo AB wanted a presentation of the research when completed, wich was known by the respondents. To minimise the risk of getting untruthful answers all respondents were offered anonymity. Also taken into consideration was that the current CEO was recently employed (December 2016) which could make the respondents perspective differ in relation to the more experienced members in the top management.

Another issue of credibility was that one of the authors is a relative to one of the top managers. This could also create untruthful answers by the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2011). On the other hand this author did only participate in interviews were the authors thought it would be preferable. However there could be negative consequences with this decisions as well but without the authors contacts at Cramo AB it could have been hard to get access to all the respondents.

To ensure the confirmability of the study, the authors acted objectively through the whole process. This have been done by avoid letting personal values affect the questions asked during the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011). To avoid further personal biases an objective discussion between the four authors were continuously held about the interviews, raw data, analysis and result.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1986) transferability, which refers to if or how the research can be replicated, is commonly critiqued in qualitative researches. It is believed that this thesis could be replicated but the outcome might not be the same. However in this research the aim was not to search for statistical generalisation.

3.8. Delimitations of the study

For this study the authors focused on the Swedish part of the Cramo group, Cramo AB, as the unit is of manageable size to analyze for this research. Additionally, Cramo AB has an interesting history of changes. As the largest company within the group they are often a part of implementation of group changes and creating visions for the group. That, in combination with the large focus they have today on change processes, the authors feel that the geographical delimitations of Cramo AB coincides with the most interesting part of the Cramo Group for this research. Since Cramo AB is the largest unit of the group, the authors argued that the delimitation does not impair the quality of the research.

The study will also delimitate to the last five years of Cramo AB's history. While this excludes studying large mergers and other historical changes, it gives the authors the possibility to study focus on some large organisational changes that has occurred during the past decade in depth.

4. RESULTS

The first section of the results will present the history of Cramo AB as well as their organisational structure. The second part consists of the result of interviews that is divided into six themes that are all relevant for analysing Cramo AB's change processes, which will be explained in detail later on.

4.1. About Cramo AB

Cramo AB is a rental equipment company with a long history in Sweden, originating in its first forms in 1953. The company was initially named Kramo, from the Swedish words for crane and mounting. Cramo AB supports both the construction industry, trade industry, public sector as well as private customers as a full rental services supplier (Cramo AB, 2017). This essentially means that Cramo AB offers everything from the smallest drill hammer to modular spaces and full services of logistics and equipment on the building site. Throughout the years, Cramo AB has gone through several extensive change processes. They have merged with other rental companies, been acquired by bigger companies and they have also acquired a lot of smaller rental companies. However in 2006, the Finnish rental company Rakentajain acquired Cramo AB, that at the time had business in not only Sweden but also in Norway, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland and the Netherlands. In the merger with the new Finnish owner, the Rakentajain took the name Cramo Oyj. Cramo Oyj is the finnish limited company whereas Cramo AB is the swedish limited company. Today, the Cramo Oyj is the 11th biggest rental equipment group in the world (IRN100, 2016), with over 320 depots in 14 countries.

Cramo AB's operational activities start in the depots, where most of the meetings with the customers take place. Here the employees supply the customers with machines and equipment, perform functional testings, services and cleaning of equipment and machinery. The depot managers are each responsible for approximately one to four depots. The different districts consist of a group of geographically close depots which are managed by a district manager. Moreover, the regions consist of several districts where the eastern region includes the two districts Stockholm, Östergötland and Mälardalen. The regional managers are also a part of the top management

together with the CEO, CFO and HR manager and other top managers. Below the structure of Cramo AB is illustrated (Cramo AB, 2017).
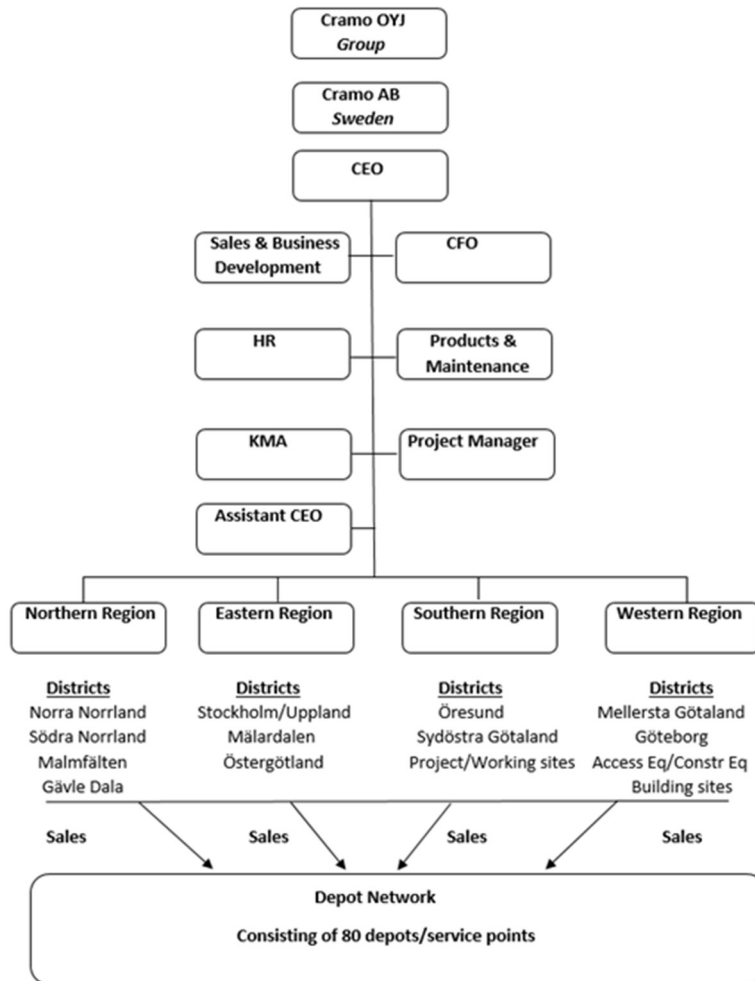
Figure 1. Distributed from management team Cramo AB

As illustrated in the chart above, the structure consists of a top management team with supporting staff and a line of managers that goes down to the operational business. Essentially, there are three steps from the management team down to the employees at the depots:

Figure 2. Simplified scheme of the managerial decision and communicative line at Cramo AB

Due to the organisational structure, the communication goes through several managers before the information reaches the depot employees, referred to as "the line" by the employees themselves. "The line" describes how information is passed down in the organisation. When a decision has been made among the top managers, it is communicated through the three steps illustrated above. Below in the result of interviews, "the line" will be further described. Since Cramo AB's operational business is divided into many units and branches, the company's organisational structure can be defined as a tall organisation (Carzo & Yanouzas, 1969).

Since the merger with Rakentajain in 2006, Cramo AB has been undergoing various change processes both on individual employee level and on organisational level. A new bonus program, pricing system and new opening hours are three examples of extensive changes that has been implemented at Cramo AB, which will be further described and discussed later on.

Cramo AB is also currently undergoing a process of trying to increase revenues and the operating margin. The aim is to be the best company within the rental industry and to be in the front line when it comes to being a sharing economy. These goals have resulted the extensive change program called Shape 2020 which will be described in detail in the the result of interviews. Sharing is also an important feature within the company, with focus on sharing equipment and machines between depots, in order to reach the common financial goals. It is also because of the fact that the bonus system has changed in the past two years, from rewarding revenue and sales at each depots to rewarding revenue at company level instead.

4.2. Result of interviews

Below in Table 2, six themes are presented with a short description, representing important phenomenons of change processes and change management at Cramo AB. All of the themes are

equally important no matter the order which they are presented in. The collected data from the interviews is subdivided into the different themes and will be compared to the theories later on in the analysis that follows. The answers to the themes are divided into three subgroups, corresponding to the three different types of employees that have been interviewed. Firstly, the answers from the top managers will be presented, followed by the answers from the depot managers and lastly from the depot employees. In order to respect the respondents' anonymity, the authors have used pseudonyms instead of their actual names.

Table 2. Overview of themes

Themes	Description of the themes
Change processes at Cramo AB	A description of vision, strategy and three large change processes at Cramo AB.
The purpose and vision of the changes at Cramo AB	Why change happens and when it occurs. The strength of the purposes and visions and how/if they are being communicated to all employees.
The communication	How Cramo AB communicate changes and faults with the communication discussed by the employees.
Leading change at Cramo AB	The management of the change processes.
The complications within changes at Cramo AB	The complications that occur during the changes and suggestions on how these can be solved, presented by the employees.
The motivation of changes	How Cramo motivate their employees during the changes.

4.2.1. Change processes at Cramo AB

Shape & Share

Shape & Share is the collective vision and strategy of the Cramo Group. It is developed for all companies within the group and therefore it is formulated in a general way. The vision is "shared resources simplified" with the purpose to drive the sharing economy, sharing resources both between customers and depots. The strategy is divided into categories such as "stretch and scale up business models" and "capture potentials in our markets" (Cramo Group, 2017). From this general vision and strategy, each company within the group has to develop a more specific strategy that can enable the company to reach the collective group goals. In Cramo AB this strategy has the name Shape 2020.

Shape 2020

Shape 2020 is Cramo AB´s way to concretize Shape & Share and at this point the company is in the middle of the change project. The idea behind the new project started in 2015. Thereafter, the idea was developed and modified through strategic planning within the top management. It was further developed with workshops involving district and depot managers, employees and customers. In the beginning of 2017 the project was taken into action. The purpose with Shape 2020 is to address and modify the company, both on depot level and management level. As the one of the top managers putted it:

> "Today the revenue is at 3 billion. To make it 5 tomorrow, we need to change the way we work."

The program consists of numerous sub change processes that will impact the whole organisation. The concrete goal is to reach four billion Swedish crowns in revenue, four percent better operating margin and to be number one in every business they are active in today until year 2020. A member of the top management recently got appointed as project manager and thereby has an overall responsibility for coordinating the different activities within the project and to make sure they are not performing any activities that contradicts each other. Another top manager, Davidsson, stated that the base for the change program has been done much more thoroughly than previous projects. According to Davidsson, the outcome of Shape 2020 is so far unpredictable since the project is in

the starting process and barely none of the changes has yet been completed and shown result. Additionally, all changes have still not been defined which makes it impossible to predict their exact result. Eriksson further pointed out that the project group does not have all questions concerning the strategy for Shape 2020 answered yet. When talking about the future with Shape 2020, Eriksson said:

"I think the process is long, but we are aiming high and far ahead."

The new bonus system

The implementation of a new bonus system occurred in 2016 and changed the employee incentive plan completely. Before, the bonuses were based on individual performance. As top manager Andersson described, they had a lot of administrative troubles with the previous system since disputes among employees easily could arise when comparing the individual bonus between colleagues. Therefore, the new bonus system was implemented, conditions are the same for all employees. Even though the shares varies with the employee's position everyone's bonus is measured on the same numbers. Since the goal of both Shape & Share and Shape 2020 is to increase in revenue and size, growth in revenue is now the only conditions for the bonuses. If the company succeeds to reach 60% of the goals set for the period, all employees receive a bonus, Andersson explained. Every month, the results of Cramo AB is presented in a powerpoint that is sent to all employees which makes it easy for them to know how close they are to receive a bonus, and what aspects that can be improved in order to reach the goals for the quarter. Andersson said that the implementation of it was simple and very successful, which has been proved in the annual employee surveys where the majority of the employees shows high satisfaction with the new bonus system. Andersson further explained that it has unified the company. The top managers also have the possibility to change the goals each year, to reward desired behaviours and facilitate implementation of changes.

The pricing system

The change process of the pricing system occurred in 2014 and had a large impact on the depots and the daily routines. In short, it is a system that rewards customers for planning their work. When renting a machine for a longer period they get discount, as well as rewarding customer loyalty.

Hence, the longer rent, the greater discount they can receive. This allows Cramo AB to help their customers with planning as well as rewarding their loyalty more immediate rather than a two year agreement with pre-decided discounts. When the pricing system was implemented, there was a focus on workshops with all employees to make sure that everyone understood both the reasons behind it as well as how it worked. This also gave the employees the opportunity to ask questions to the people responsible for the development and implementation of the system, which in turn made the implementation easy at the depots.

New opening hours

Another example of a change process that recently was implemented was two hours longer opening hours the day before Swedish public holidays, until 16.00 instead of 14.00 CET. As one of the top managers described, the depot employees were not very happy with this. From their perspective, the change did not make sense at all, since all their customers finished after lunch since many leave early before the holiday, and they usually did not have anything to do after that anyways. This change was implemented without details, and depot employees seemed to have no idea what the purpose with the change actually was. After the implementation of this change process, the management received negative feedback regarding the change through an online survey. The respondent itself that mentioned this change process, did not knew the reason behind it either, just that it was decided. However, another depot manager confirmed that the purpose of the change was to give the customers better service, which never reached the depot employees.

Generally about change processes

Cramo AB is described as a propulsive company where changes happen continuously, both on an organisational as well as on an individual level. The company always has developed in many different ways to improve and simplify organisational processes. The majority of the top managers mean that the company can be seen as very ambitious since they always have been engaged in continuous change through several smaller projects, such as continuous improvements of daily routines at the depots. Today, they are maximizing the way they work. However, the ambitiousness may cause that they have too many projects simultaneously. That can lead to that the workload becomes too much and they do not have the energy to reach through with everything they do. Since the construction industry is in change, Cramo AB needs to adapt because they will not survive

with the structure they have today. Consequently, new change projects are implemented frequently, Andersson explained.

Even if the top management always has been engaged in several change processes, Andersson claimed that they do not have a general strategy for managing large changes. However, Davidsson and Fransson's perspective was that they do have some kind of strategy. Fransson described it as as a three phase process; installment, implementation and establishment. The first phase refers to for example introducing and installing a new computer system. In the implementation phase you make sure that the system works while establishment is to ensure that the system generates an output. According to Fransson, they often succeed with the first two phases but fails in the establishment phase. The respondent said this might derive from an absence of measuring the expected result when the changes are first formulated.

Eriksson mentioned that the company is composed of several smaller units with local differences. According to the respondent, the incorporated way to work at the depots differs due to the local markets' different customers and demands. This has to be taken into consideration when designing the organisation into one, where the challenge lies in creating one unified organisation while tending to all different demands.

Eriksson concluded that all top managers have noticed an acceleration of the change processes lately due to Shape 2020. It as lead to that the top management are looking towards the future to see how the company could stay profitable.

Communication of the vision

According to Andersson, Cramo AB has a clear goal and vision formulated for the Shape 2020 program:

"Our vision is to reach 4 billion SEK in revenue, reach 4 percent better operating margin and to be the number one in every business that we are on today."

However, Eriksson thought the communication of the overall vision and for each change should be improved. Both Berg and Fransson mentioned that the top management always has been good at communicating the vision to each other, but not to the rest of the organisation. Everyone involved knows about the changing industry, but as the amount of change processes increase, Eriksson thought that they need to communicate the vision better and go into detail even more on the reasons behind certain changes. Andersson argued that all change processes today are positive since the company is "on a journey of growth" but need to find new ways to work and clearly communicate this to the employees.

Carlsson agreed that the main vision is communicated to the first part of the managerial line but doubted that it is communicated to the rest of the organisation. The respondent said:

> "What is Cramo AB's vision? That question I do not think you will get an answer on. Maybe from the regional directors, but it is doubtful if you even get it from the depot directors."

4.2.2. The purpose and vision of the changes at Cramo AB

Top Managers

To spur the company to reach new levels and move forward, the driving forces of change mainly comes from within, according to Carlsson. Andersson added that it is important to constantly ask each other: Can we do something better? Can we do something different? Does anyone have an idea of how? This helps thinking outside the box to see how a "new" Cramo AB could look like. Moreover, Andersson and Berg concluded that the forces of change mainly have been internal through their own initiatives and that the innovative atmosphere has been appreciated among the employees. Beyond the internal pressure, there is an increasing external pressure on the company. Carlsson mentioned that the pressure mainly comes from the customers and are of qualitative, environmental and working-environment character. It could also be due to an increasing need for change in the society. This external pressure is also driven by an increasing demand from customers wanting help and guidance within this area. Carlsson conclude that they mainly have external pressure to change from legislatures, administrative authorities and customers and the

changing industry. According to Eriksson, the changing industry is the main cause of change in the company today:

> "The process of change we are in right now is based on an assumed change of the industry ahead."

In line with this, Eriksson said:

> "I have been in the rental industry a long time, but the construction industry has not changed during the last 40 years, not even the last five years. But it will change gradually in the future, and obviously we will need new tools in order to adapt to it."

Andersson claimed that the main internal purpose of change today is to make the organisational structure and depots more effective in order to increase profits ahead. This has resulted in the ongoing change project Shape 2020. However, Eriksson argued that a risk of this ongoing change processes is if they appear to change faster than their customers.

According to Carlsson, Carlsson and Berg, the vision for Shape 2020, that leads all change processes, is good, that it communicates how Cramo AB will look after the implementation of the change. However, it the vision for each change might not have been clearly communicated down "the line". Even the district managers might not have the exact same interpretation. Berg and Carlsson stated that the top managers have discussed how to put more effort into the communication plan and are having a kick-off in January 2018 to discuss this. Fransson further stated that the top management is not good at defining the desired effect of each change already in the beginning of a change process, which makes it difficult to measure if the changes even has been finished or not. At the same time, Carlsson said that they have been hiding parts of planning of Shape 2020 in order to scale down the consequences of the changes and keep everyone calm. However, this has led to some anxiety between employees, not knowing how they will be personally affected. But the top managers argue that it is crucial that all of them have the same interpretation before communicating it to the rest.

Moreover, Carlsson also brought up a kick-off they had including the whole organisation concerning the attitude of change processes at Cramo AB. The purpose of the kick-off was to communicate that the top management decisions are not only decided, but also executed, in order to discourage a prevailed mentality within the organisation that changes were not taken seriously. Carlsson said:

> "We had a kick-off we named "It does not blow over". It was to clarify that the decisions we make in the top management should be executed, they should be implemented in the organisation. We cannot simply make a lot of decisions that we then just wait for to blow over and meanwhile bury our heads in the sand."

Depot managers

Disregarding the top managers' apprehensions, both Granath and Hansson could answer the question "what is Cramo AB's vision?". They did not only answer with words but also with specific financial goals in line with the CEO's statement. They both seemed to have a clear picture of where Cramo AB is today, where the company aims to be tomorrow and what has to be done to get from point A to point B. Furthermore, Granath also mentioned that the kick-off "It does not blow over" improved the overall attitude to change.

Employees at the depots

Neither of the two interviewed employees, could distinguish Cramo AB's strategy and vision from one another. When sales employees at the depots were questioned about the strategy and vision they answered similar, both talked about Shape 2020, but they could not specify it in financial goals. Isaksson stated this in following quote:

> "Well, our goal is to be the best company in the industry, we are supposed to be role models for the rental industry"

4.2.3. The communication

Top Managers

All respondents from the top management agreed on that they have not communicated the implications of each change process sufficiently. Berg stated:

"I do not think we are good enough at communicating and visualizing the changes."

According to Andersson, "the line" is an important communication tool for controlling the change processes and for receiving feedback. However the respondent said that the top management fails with communicating all changes all the way down to the bottom of the organisation. As Andersson formulated its function:

"In order to succeed with "the line", employees need to hear it from their manager to reassure the message is not received as something only coming from the headquarter."

Davidsson also pushed on the importance of following the report system in "the line" for everyone to know who they should listen to and follow. When the communication goes downward, thus from the top management, the lower managers have to agree and understand the information from the top management before they pass it on to their coworkers. This is also where the communication has been defective which has created unnecessary confusion and irritation, Davidsson and Berg mentioned. Eriksson seemed to agree and further described "the line" as a slow system and that a lot of information gets lost when passed on from the regional management down to the district and depot managers which results in that everyone do not get the same message. Furthermore, Andersson mentioned that sometimes even the top managers can have different interpretations of how to proceed and what to communicate. Andersson emphasized the importance of an aligned interpretation of how to communicate the change within the top management, before passing it down "the line". Otherwise, problems will arise as soon as the change process is communicated which can result in misunderstandings and that important information gets lost, according to Andersson. The respondent also stated that:

"When taking a decision it has to be fully implemented, because if any top manager is not prepared to align with the change fully, the decision should not be taken."

However, Andersson mentioned that with the new structure that comes with Shape 2020 it will be easier to secure follow up and make sure that projects are finished and closed but adds that the program has an inherent difficulty with communication since it is an ongoing project were not all parts are completely developed yet. Andersson claimed that the uncertainty among employees could arise when development and implementation occurs paralleled, which makes it impossible to fully inform every employee about what is going on at every given time.

Eriksson further mentioned that the faults with communication falls back on that the top management takes on too many projects and therefore lacks the ability to follow through with all change processes. Fransson also emphasized that many descriptions of change processes can be of a very technical character today, but that it is more important to emphasize how to execute the changes, rather than what to change.

Moreover, Andersson mentioned employee surveys as an important tool for communication and feedback at Cramo AB. Every two years the survey called "A great place to work" is carried out that involves questions on areas like communication, leadership and information. The purpose of the survey is to give the top management an apprehension of how to improve. Andersson added that the survey is a great tool since it can help avoid insecurities and reactions about changes that are being implemented at Cramo AB.

As conclusion, Berg suggested that the company should improve their communication skills, and make them better suited for the receiver. The respondent argued that the top management needs to get a better understanding of how the communication should be carried out practically in order to reach all the way down in the organisation.

Depot managers

Both the depot managers mentioned that they get information about changes through "the line" from their respective district manager. However, both argued that they do not always answer all of their questions. However, in case of any doubts both Granath and Hansson expressed that they can contact anyone within the company to get a better comprehension of the information passed down to them. Granath said:

"If I can't get an answer on my questions I go further up "the line" until I get the whole picture, otherwise it's impossible for me to pass down information to my employees. But that is of course not the ideal way of communication, not everyone dares to make that call and ask those questions."

When questioned on how they communicate with their own employees, their answers differed. Granath regarded him/herself as a good communicator and delivers both weekly meetings and email info letters every other week to pass down the last updates of important organisational activities. Hansson expressed a personal possibility for improvement at passing down information since Hansson currently only use the weekly meetings as a tool of communication.

Employees at the depots

Their answers were also coherent as to how they receive information about change processes. They both prefered communication through weekly meetings, instead of updates on the website. Both of them also appreciate the monthly newsletter from the CEO. However, regarding the weekly meetings, they had different opinions regarding their respective depot manager. Isaksson was very satisfied with the depot manager, whereas Hansson said:

"Not all information comes from our manager. On occasions the manager forgets to update us and instead it comes as a surprise if you happen to read the news on our intraweb."

Their opinions regarding how to give feedback differed. Isaksson is using the designated report system and felt that when using the system his feedback is recognized and he is delivered answers or improvements. Hansson claimed to not use the report system, even though he knows that he should do it:

"I often send an email instead, to the IT-department, for example, and very rarely get any comments or solution back, only the information that they have received my errand"

4.2.4. The leaders of change at Cramo AB

Top Managers

Even though Cramo AB has executed numerous change processes, the majority of the top managers stated that they have not always been well structured. As a result, a project manager for Shape 2020 has been appointed and since then, the respondents indicated on that the structure of the change processes has improved. Andersson, Eriksson and Berg also felt that the whole organisation as well as their customers have been more involved in the changes since then.

Half of the respondents from the top management mentioned that most of the large change processes are driven from the top management. Sometimes they are formulated locally, but all of them need to get approved by the majority of the top management before they can be executed. Davidsson further explained how large changes are defined in this case:

> "When I am talking about changes here, I'm not referring to changes like moving a bin from one corner to the other at the depot. I mean large changes that affect everyone involved".

However, Berg and Eriksson mentioned that the top management do not execute all changes alone. Sometimes they include employees with special skills further down in the organisation. However, Carlsson argued that it is always the same people that gets involved in all change processes, which the respondent sees as a disadvantage. On the other hand, Carlsson also mentioned that they do succeed with choosing knowledgeable people.

All top managers at Cramo AB agreed on that the top management is strongly united. However, Carlsson, Berg and Eriksson experienced difficulties to focus on the individual goal of each change since there are too many goals to achieve at the same time. Eriksson argued that it is utterly important to be a united group where all managers support every decision in order to avoid misinterpretations of the purpose of the change. This is especially important since the change is being communicated through "the line". If some top managers are not on board with the change, he or she will not be capable of communicating the need for the change further down "the line". This issue also gets more complicated when there are several changes occurring simultaneously,

Eriksson continued. The top managers all agreed on that the problem does not lie in the big change projects controlled by the project manager, but rather in the small changes involving only some departments.

Depot Managers

Regarding leaders of change and coalitions of employees to work with change, Granath claimed to be involved frequently. The respondent expressed an interest of being involved and therefore has taken lot of initiatives to be a part of them. Hansson had not been involved. However, they both see the possibility for being involved as something positive. Sometimes they also include depot employees with useful knowledge regarding the specific change, Hansson added.

Employees at the depots

Both depot employees recognized that depot managers have had the opportunity of being involved but not employees below the depot managers. They both agreed on that involvement of depot employees could have improved and solved many problems with historical changes before their implementations.

4.2.5. The complications within changes at Cramo AB

Top Managers

When questioned about complications within change processes the answers were divided in two subgroups of complications; implementation and communicative complications. The first one is often, as several members in top management putted it, due to not "pushing through the whole project". Many of top managers felt they are great at starting projects and being visionary. However, they often declare a project finished before having ensured that everything is working as it should at depot level, or that the desired effects of the project have been seen.

Fransson claimed that problems that arise during the implementation might originate from very busy depots and the fact that Cramo AB is, and have been, showing impressive economic strength for several years. This in turn leads to a sense of being too busy for questioning change at all, when the company already is performing at a high level. This is a problematic mindset, according to the same respondent, as change is about ensuring profitability tomorrow as well.

The other subgroup of complications, the communicative problems, originates from employees lacking information about the visions and goals of each change process. All top managers mentioned that the company is facing troubles with the communication. Eriksson expressed that the change purpose and visions are clear on a group level and in the top management team. However, Fransson claimed that the top management has not been good enough at dividing the vision into how each change practically involves the depot employees and thus it is hard to communicate the importance of a change thoroughly to everyone involved. Carlsson mentioned the change of opening hours, the was previously described, that might have resulted in some complications due to a lack of communication. Carlsson was of the opinion that this could have been avoided if the reason, to give the customers better service, had been communicated.

However, all members of the management team expressed that even though improvements regarding implementation and communication could be done, they have already improved much since they appointed a project manager for Shape 2020.

Depot Managers

The depot managers both discussed the challenges with implementation of changes and perhaps the impossibility of avoiding any complications. Granath was of similar opinion as the top managers, that there has been an improvement the last couple of years, that everyone is working harder with change and dealing with complications as they arise.

Employees at the depots

Both employees at the depots answered that the they felt like including more people from the depots in the coalitions, instead of only managers, could reduce complications in the implementation of changes. Hansson also felt that an improved feedback system would reduce complications.

4.2.6. The motivation of changes

Top Managers

All of the respondents expressed that it is highly important to report short-term profits during the process of change. However, a majority of the top managers thought that they are currently not doing it at all, while two top managers expressed that it exists but that it is in need of an improvement. Currently Cramo AB aims to celebrate profits when a good deal has been completed. All of the top managers suggested that they should become better on celebrating the small steps in a change process. This is illustrated by the following quotes by Eriksson and Carlsson:

> "I think it's very important to report the successes. I need to hear from someone that I have done a good job and my guys need to hear that as well, and on the depots etc. We need to do it through the whole organisation."

> "We need to divide the changes into smaller wins and then tell our employees what we have achieved and celebrate a bit, I think that would be good for the organisation."

Davidsson, Andersson and Berg argued that they were better celebrating success, but that it unfortunately easily gets forgotten. However, there has be external lectures about positive feedback recently for all employees, and several top managers suggested that they need to include it in the communication plan in the future.

Depot managers

Regarding motivation, both managers expressed that the bonus system is a great system. However, none of the depot managers could think of any occasion when the company somehow has celebrated small victories. Regarding the overall motivation, Granath added that the company and top management has worked hard with the attitude towards change within the company. Granath felt that, in the past, change was looked upon as something talked about at high levels but of little real importance. This has, according to Granth changed, thanks to the hard work with attitudes, today change is something that every employee knows is there to stay and works with continuously, much thanks to the kick-off "It does not blow over".

Employees at the depots

Regarding motivation the, depot employees agreed that the current bonus system is good, however, neither of them have noticed any celebrations of short-term-wins. However, Isaksson remembered a kick-off that was held for the whole company, where everyone were able to really understand the upcoming change, really motivated him. He added this to give an example of ways of work that could motivate, rather than bonuses and celebrating short-term wins.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, the purpose with this case study is to investigate how Cramo AB works with change management, and for what reasons. When analysing the collected data, the first step is to clarify the reasons for change at Cramo AB. With the desire to give the reader a linear process of thought, even when change management might deviate from such straight path, Kotter's eight steps for leading change (1995, 2012) is thereafter used as a tool for interpreting and analysing the empirical findings. Since the interviews early indicated that Cramo AB does not have a clear general strategy for change nor a sequential change process, Kotter's steps are not strictly followed. The remaining theory is intertwined with Kotter's steps to get an extensive understanding of Cramo AB's change management processes.

Reasons for change at Cramo AB

From the interviews with the top management of Cramo AB it seems reasonable to establish that many of their implemented and current changes come from external driving forces, but that most changes seem to derive from an urge to maintain a competitive position. As we have seen in the literature review, this urge could also be described as an important external drive (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007). In line with Child's (2005) examples of external driving forces, financial factors have driven change at Cramo AB, for example the new bonus system and pricing model. Since Cramo AB lease machines and other products that needs to be updated in order to stay attractive for their customers, technologic factors and an accelerating changing industry are probably other important external driving forces in line with Child's (2005) examples. With a vision like Cramo AB's, "to be number one in the industry they are active within" these external driving forces probably become of great importance. In this sense, the company can be seen as being proactive with their changes since they intend to be driven and innovative in relation to their competitors (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007).

The empirical findings further indicate that both evolutionary and revolutionary changes occur at Cramo AB. Changes like a new pricing model, new opening hours and new bonus system can be seen as evolutionary, since they only affected some parts of the organisation and were modifications of existing systems (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007). However, the change program Shape 2020 that leads most of the changes at Cramo AB today, can be seen as a revolutionary

process since it eventually will affect multiple organisational conditions such as the structure, revenues and as well as the way they work (Burke, 2002). However, the changes within the Shape 2020 program could be seen as evolutionary since they will occur frequently. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2007) further explain that revolutionary changes occur when the market is mature. Since the company currently has a strong position against their competitors, one can at least assume that the extensive change program could be a result of a somewhat mature market. In its current form, the top managers have deemed it possible to grow further and in order to do this, a revolutionary change was deemed necessary. Furthermore, most changes in this study at Cramo AB are top-down, since they are pursued by the top management. However, the smaller ad hoc changes on individual levels that also occur, are rather bottom-up changes. These bottom up changes can also be positive since they can help driving the overall change processes according to Mintzberg et al. (2003).

In conclusion, the large change program Shape 2020 is of revolutionary and evolutionary character and is due to external driving forces. Although, mainly a result of the company's aspiration to be leaders within their industry.

As we have seen in the literature review, there are countless change management models that has developed since Lewin's three step model from 1951, that all share similar features. Still, change management remains a complex subject. In order to interpret the change processes at Cramo AB further, after having defined their main characteristics, Kotter's eight steps for leading change will be used as a tool below.

Establishing a sense of urgency

The impression is that Cramo AB's need for change is driven by both internal and external driving forces, which have resulted in the Shape 2020 program. The empirical findings indicate that the main urge for change has been understood among the employees since both the top management, depot managers and depot employees mentioned being number one is the main goal. Furthermore the weekly meetings can be a tool for communicating the need for change, involving many employees, in line with Kotter's (2012) suggestion.

However, it seems like the urgency for every individual change has been less communicated. One example is when the top management decided to change the opening hours. The depot employees showed strong dissatisfaction since they did not understand the need for the change, they just saw a two hours longer working day. In order to successfully engage employees in every change, Kotter means the urgency has to be visible, otherwise people will not believe there is a problem.

Kotter (2012) further argues that jumping into the next step too early is risky. However, Kotter's linear approach might not always fit the organisational needs (Sidorko, 2008). Thereby, the importance of start with creating a sense of urgency might depend on the type of change process. The urgency for Shape 2020 seems to have been communicated, that it is due to the changing industry ahead and the goal being leaders within their industry. However, since the program has already started, the experienced secrecy between the top managers about certain processes has created uncertainty amongst the employees. In line with Kotter's theory (2012), this uncertainty can lead to decreased commitment among employees. It could be of importance to align employees with the individual objectives for each change within Shape 2020 to find motivation to contribute, which Asplund et al. (2017) emphasize. In the same time, the extent of creating this urgency from start might differ. When implementing the new bonus system, it might have been of higher importance than when changing the pricing model, since that affected the employees on a more personal level.

Forming a powerful guiding coalition

In the extent of Kotter's (2012) definition, the company creates guiding coalitions for large change processes, consisting mostly of the top management and the Shape 2020 project leader, but also depot managers and sometimes depot employees with special skills. On the other hand, many of the respondents expressed shortages with the coalitions, meaning they always consist of the same people and would rather prefer to see more diverse coalitions. Both depot employees did not know any depot employees that had been involved. This could be a sign that this opportunity of being involved as has not been communicated well to all employees and that the main impression is that the guiding coalitions are narrow today. As Ströh and Jaatinen (2002) argues, by involving employees in change management decisions, debates and criticism can arise earlier which can lead to greater innovation and change. This could lead to a better base for the change processes, since

perspectives from all levels of the organisation are taken into consideration. Furthermore, the implementation of the bonus system and pricing model could be examples of effective guidance and coordination of change processes since workshops and continuous follow ups were performed in order to clearly communicate their implications.

Additionally, three top managers expressed a need for increased focus on the individual goal of each change. One can assume that with such a large change program like Shape 2020, with numerous goals to achieve at the same time, having one guiding coalition for all organisational changes might be too narrow and inefficient, in line with Sidorko's (2009) argument to have multiple guiding coalitions. Hence, the overall apprehension is that Cramo AB has a guiding coalition as Kotter (2012) suggests, but that it usually consists of the same people, which might be inefficient in a larger change program like Shape 2020.

Moreover, one top manager pointed out the importance that top managers are aligned when communicating the change, which is not always the case today, with many changes occurring simultaneously. This further complicates guiding the change processes since misinterpretations of the purpose of the change can arise. If the top managers have different interpretations, it will escalate in the next steps in "the line", and when the information finally reaches the depot employees, they might not understand at all what is going to happen. In that case, the coalition might not appear as strong. However, as the top managers expressed, this is mainly a problem in the smaller changes involving only some departments.

Form a strategic vision

Furthermore, Kotter means a strategic vision can help direct the change process. In line with his argument, Cramo AB has thoroughly worked with their overall vision called Shape & Share that highlights the importance of sharing between co-workers and departments as well as with the customers. Regarding the bonus system, its strategic vision seems to have been exactly in line with the Shape & Share vision. Everyone seems to have understood that the goal with the new bonus system is that everyone should work towards the same goal, instead of focusing on the individual ones. In line with Kotter's (2012) argument, this might have been one of the reasons for its successful implementation, having a clear and easily understood vision for the bonus system.

Today, the Shape 2020 program directs all larger changes at Cramo AB. The vision with Shape 2020 seems to be clear; "to reach 4 billion SEK, 4 percent better operating margin and to be the number one in every business that we are on today", as the CEO expressed, clarifying in what way the future will be different from the past, in line with Kotter's (2012) argument. However, in order to inspire action, initiatives linked to the vision has to be communicated according to Kotter, which seems to have been done less successfully. Thereby, without defining the desired effect of each change within Shape 2020 in the beginning of the process, it becomes difficult to measure if the changes even had the desired effect and if the project has been finished or not. This can be essential for Cramo AB in order to empower the employees further and inspire action, as Kotter (2012) puts it. In line with this Asplund et al (2017) mean alignment among everyone is of high importance in order to succeed with change processes. Thereby, the fact that even the top managers are not always aligned, can probably cause further troubles communicating what result the certain change should lead to. Moreover, to clarify how the future will be different from the past is probably applicable on all changes.

Communication of the vision

As Kotter (2012) argues, executives need to use all existing communication channels to broadcast their vision successfully. The vision for Shape 2020 seems to have been successfully communicated since all employees seem to understand the financial goals that are to be achieved until year 2020. However, the communication of each change process seems to be less successful in some cases. Firstly, there are some uncertainties among employees regarding how Shape 2020 will affect them personally, which indicates on poor guidance of the change processes so far. On the other hand, it is understandable that some parts need to be executed in secrecy, which complicates this step (Appelbaum et al, 2012). Secrecy can lead to further uncertainty and rumors which complicates motivating the employees to contribute. Secondly, the vision for each change sometimes do not seem to reach further than to regional level, not even to the depot managers, as for example the vision for the opening hours. This is a clear example where the vision, of offering better customer service, was not communicated at all through "the line" which led to dissatisfaction among the depot employees who had no idea why the change was performed.

Moreover, the result of the interviews show that Cramo AB have some communication tools, some very effective, and some not. For example, "the line" can be seen as a tool how to pass information

down in the organisation. As mentioned, there are some inefficiencies in that process that results in information getting lost. The weekly meetings is another tool that generate continuous updates to all employees with ongoing change processes. These meetings seem to communicate simplicity and repetition, as Kotter (2012) suggests. But even if both respondents from the depot management did execute these meetings, some top managers had the impression that not all of them do.

Performance management can act as a communication tool in two ways according to Asplund et al. (2017). One way is by rewarding desired behaviors. The bonus system can therefore be seen as a type of performance management tool. The monthly reports contribute to communicating the direction the result is developing in, which is one of the main goals with Shape 2020; to increase profits. These reports thereby clearly communicate the financial goals, and if they are reached, the employees will be rewarded with a bonus. Hence, the bonus system might help align the individuals with the organisational objectives through constantly communicating its objectives, and is one example of performance management according to Asplund et al. (2017). It sends clear signals to employees of what should be done while also enhancing the right behaviour through rewards. In line with Kotter's (2012) perspective, this communication tool also seems to have been effective for spreading the vision for the change, which could be another reason for its success. The other way is having a feedback loop where employees continuously can get information about how to adjust their work behavior in order to align with the strategy. Some examples of this could be conferences and workshops. The conference "It does not blow over" seems to have increased the overall change effort among the employees, and the workshops in connection with the new pricing system seemed to decrease the risk for doubts, and helped all employees understand the system's purpose and implications. Having these kinds of feedback tool is not something that Kotter acknowledge. Cramo AB does not seem to have used these tools sufficiently, otherwise there would be no uncertainties regarding the vision and implications of some changes, for example regarding the new opening hours. Asplund et al. (2017) further suggest that performance management can ease the experienced threat and clarify the directions and goals of the undergoing change, which is also emphasized by Chenhall (2005), who means performance management can help employees to see how parts of the organisations builds the whole. This might be utterly relevant for Cramo AB, to show how all changes within Shape 2020 builds on its main purpose.

To sum up, Cramo AB seem to have succeeded with communicating the vision and implications of change processes in some cases. However, they could be used in a much larger extent as for the new opening hours, the change was just delegated, without any involvement of the depot employees. In that case, the depot employees' inputs could have been very useful, since their apprehension is that all their customers leave early those days as well, and therefore the depot employees have nothing to do those hours. If the top management had involved some of them in this decision process, it might have had another result.

Moreover, it seems like the trouble arises when there are many changes occurring in the same time since that leads to less engagement in the communication process. The communication therefore seems to be the largest problem for the company today. The bonus system and the pricing model are two examples where they succeed with the communication. However, depot employees and top managers have expressed that the communication needs some significant improvements regarding all processes occurring from this day and forward.

Additionally, this step in Kotter's model could so far be intertwined with all previous steps of his model. Without communicating urgency, vision, purpose and implications of the changes, the employees will not commit. And in those cases when this is communicated, as in the implementation of the bonus system and pricing model, the process is smooth and the employees are satisfied and engaged in the process.

In conclusion, all top managers agreed on that they have not communicated and visualized the implications of each change process sufficiently. They might have communicated it well to each other, but not to the rest of the organisation, and therefore have failed with this step many times. As Kotter (2012) argues, large-scale change only occurs when a massive number of employees are engaged and willing to make sacrifices.

Empower others to act on the vision

Kotter (2012) argues that if this point in the change process is reached, the vision has been communicated successfully in all levels of the organisation. The step partly implies eliminating obstacles for change. One type of obstacle Kotter (1995) describes is past values. One depot manager mentioned that the attitude to change was a big issue earlier due to that employees did

not put effort into implementing changes, because they knew they would not last. Therefore, this step was not reached regarding those changes. However, the depot manager said that this attitude has been improved after the conference "It does not blow over" was held. Therefore, one can assume that obstacle has been eliminated, or at least scaled down, and that resistance to change among employees has generally decreased.

Since Shape 2020 will include some restructuring of the organisation, it can be seen as removal of another type of obstacle Kotter describes; the formal structure. However, Asplund *et al* (2017) argue that structural change far from always lead to behavioral and attitudinal change. The bonus system could be an example of another type of obstacle in form of old systems. The bonus system that was implemented is more in line with the new vision, Shape & Share, that departments and employees should share resources and work towards the same goal, rather than for themselves. All respondents that talked about the bonus systems, depot employees as well as top managers together with employee surveys, all indicated that the change was a successful one. However, a general pattern of when obstacles at Cramo AB has been removed has not been detected. For example the planned reconstruction of the organisation has rather been planned since the beginning of the Shape 2020 program, not when the implementation already had started.

Therefore, Kotter's suggestion that these steps needs to be followed sequentially is not always applicable. It is also of great importance to acknowledge that even if this step is not reached, change processes can probably be implemented. As for example, forced systems that are irreversible, like installing a new software, can be implemented even if the vision has not clearly been communicated. In that kind of change process, a vision might not even be necessary. Therefore, this step could be unsuitable as something general for all types of change processes. Additionally, there is not enough evidence from the empirical findings to prove that changes that has met obstacles have failed being implemented completely in the corporate culture, which is the last step of Kotter's model. This further contradicts the importance of following the steps sequentially. This issue with Kotter's (2012) fifth step in the process for leading change will be further discussed later on.

Generating short-term wins

This step is, according to Kotter, crucial to maintain the support and belief of the change. The empirical findings indicates that short term wins for specific changes are not defined nor celebrated at Cramo AB, even though it is recognized as an important motivation tool by the top management. However, Boga and Ensari (2009) criticizes Kotter's focus on only short-term wins and states that long-term wins might be equally important, even though the balance between those can be complex. The empirical findings suggest that the current bonus system also is a tool for celebrating long-term wins, in line with the financial goals for Shape 2020. Its long term goals of increased profitability and unifying the company can serve as motivational factors. However, there has not been any suggestions of how to celebrate these long-term goals when the Shape 2020 program is finalized. Even though the respondents meant that no short term wins are celebrated, the bonus system could play that role. With the new system, the employees can follow the financial goals through the monthly reports. If the goals are reached to 60% or more, they all receive a quarterly bonus. The concrete incentive for commiting to the company is therefore clear and leads to rewards. However, its reward might be too abstract to act as a motivation for all changes within Shape 2020.

In conclusion, some of the top managers suggested that Cramo AB should be better at celebrating their prosperities. In line with Alvesson and Sveningsson (2007), a focus on the experiences, emotions and interpretations of the employees affected of the change is also of great importance, rather than just focusing on the financial performance. This is also a positive effect of using performance management according to Asplund et al. (2017), that it can motivate employees to change the way they work by tying rewards to behavior that is in line with the new strategy. As Asplund et al. (2017) also means, performance management can serve as a feedback loop where employees continuously can get information about how to adjust their work behavior in order to align with the strategy. This is something that might be helpful for Cramo AB, to continuously follow up how the employees can adapt to the changing organisational conditions.

Consolidate gains and produce more change

At this point in the change process, Kotter means more change should be produced in order to avoid change processes start going backwards. In that way, Shape 2020 can be seen as an eminent tool to keep producing more change since it was created to track all sub changes in the bigger

change project. With the change program and its project leader, it might become easier to detect when a shift of a strategic nature is possible, desirable and necessary, which Mintzberg et al. (2003) describe as an important implication of change management.

In line with Kotter's (1995) suggestions, Shape 2020 can also be seen as a system that fits the vision; that the amount of changes will accelerate in order to work against the main financial goals. Additionally, the conference "It does not blow over" might have helped everyone involved to understand that change after change will be initiated until the vision becomes reality. As Kotter (2012) suggests, Cramo AB seem to have started slowly with some smaller projects, with bigger visions for the future change processes. The Shape 2020 program launched in 2015 but still, no large changes has yet shown result which indicates that they are taking it slowly in the beginning as Kotter suggests. However, what contradicts Kotter is that this also has created uncertainties regarding the future among employees which might affect their attitude to the upcoming projects.

The bonus system is here once again proved to be a tool for aligning the long term goal of both Shape & Share and Shape 2020: high profits and unified company in the future. The bonus system can therefore be a constant reminder that more change needs to be produced in order to reach these goals. The top managers also specify new goals every year for the bonus system, which creates the opportunity to engage employees further in change processes. As Kotter (2012) suggests, the efforts can take not only months, but years, and in that sense, the bonus system serve as an effective tool for producing more change.

Anchor the new approaches in the corporate culture

According to Kotter (2012), the new values, behaviors and beliefs have to be anchored in the organisation and its culture to be persistent. The Shape & Share and Shape 2020 vision could be contributing with creating a corporate culture where change is a part of the everyday work. This focus can help creating a culture where change can thrive and where employees can see the need for change in a larger picture, rather than creating urgency for specific changes. The goal of being a proactive and growing company seems to be known at all levels of the organisation, and therefore the managers seem to have succeeded with making employees aware of the need for change. As Sidorko (2008) argues, the human response to the changes is the most significant variable. Asplund

(2017) further emphasizes the importance of aligning all employees' individual behaviour with the organisational objectives, and this seems to be a sign of alignment regarding the overall attitude to change.

The main issue seems to be to anchor all specific changes completely into the corporate culture. As previously mentioned, the depot employees did not commit to all new change processes, but their attitude has improved a lot since the conference"It does not blow over". This indicates that the top management has done some continuous efforts to improve the attitude to change and to make it visible in every aspect of the organization, which Kotter (1995) mentions is important. However, it is once again important to acknowledge that is might not be important for all changes to be anchored in the corporate culture. Some changes that are irreversible might be forced on the employees, and does not demand an attitudinal change among them.

5.1. Summary of the analysis

After having studied researchers' view of change management, and Cramo AB's change processes in depth, it is possible to summarize the key parts of the analysis. First of all, most large change processes today at Cramo AB seem to be planned and driven by both internal motivation of being number one in their industry and external driving forces, such as the changing industry. The majority of all large change processes have also been proved to be of top-down character (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2007).

Secondly, the general impression is that there seems to be an alignment between organisational objectives and change processes to some extent at Cramo AB today. As for example we have seen that vision of Shape & Share, the bonus system and the goals of Shape 2020 all have the objective of unifying the company and reach higher profits.

Thirdly, there seems to be some faults with the communication of each change, that affect the whole change processes instead of only some parts, which Kotter (2012) does not acknowledge. We have also seen that Cramo AB has succeeded with larger change processes like the pricing model and bonus system which proves that they have experience and competence among the leaders to manage change processes successfully.

Lastly some parts of the change management research seemed to be more crucial than others. Asplund et al. (2017) and Ströh and Jaatinen (2002) helped clarifying that communication seems to be the most crucial part of all change processes. Motivating employees through short term wins, or through long-term wins and performance management, is also proved to be important (Kotter, 2012; Boga and Ensari, 2009; Asplund et al., 2017). The only way that Cramo AB are celebrating short term wins today is through the bonus system, and is therefore something they might need to focus more on in the future.

By using Kotter's eight steps for leading change as an analytical tool, it became clear that Cramo AB does not have a general strategy for change process nor a sequential change process that always is followed. This contradicts that Kotter's model can be directly applied on a real company. In line with this, (Appelbaum et al, 2012; Burnes, 1996; Sidorko, 2008) all claim that following any change management model can facilitate the process, but does not guarantee success. However, with an accelerating amount of extensive change processes coming with Shape 2020, a focus on each change must be improved to get a good start of the change program in order for the employees' attitude to stay positive and wanting to be a part of this exciting process.

6. CONCLUSION

In this thesis we have been able to reach some conclusions. Firstly, it becomes clear that change management is a complex subject and that even if companies implement many changes, the majority actually fail. The answer to the study's research question, how Cramo AB implements change and if they succeed with it, will hopefully give some clarity to what a company can do to avoid failing with change. Learning about the different approaches of change processes from the literature also helped us to get a better understanding of Cramo AB's change processes. Which made it possible to provide answers to the research question.

The way Cramo AB implements changes seem to have differed between the examples within the scope of this research. Therefore we can conclude that there is no general strategy for how they implement change processes. Thereby, Kotter's linear approach of change management not be applied completely on Cramo AB. However, some key concepts from Kotter's eight steps for leading change and the other perspectives can facilitate their change processes. For instance, multiple and diverse guiding coalitions with employees from every affected department is one feature that both the literature and employees at Cramo AB suggests. It also seems clear that in those change processes that seem to have succeeded, the communication has been clear, both of the specific purpose and the more practical information about how the implementation will be done. The most successful change processes have also had conferences and workshops where information has been given to the employees as well as answers to questions from everyone affected. This seems to be a crucial ingredient to successful change since it gives all employees an understanding of what is to come.

What is perhaps even more important is the work with attitudes towards change that Cramo AB has done. When compared to the literature, this may be a better way to work with culture than to ensure that every single change becomes a part of the company culture. To give an example, a company may change its entire computer system, which would be a major change and affect everyone. Is it of interest that the new computer system becomes an integrated part of the company culture? Probably not. It is however crucial that all employees embrace the change process and do not react negatively to it. Therefore it may be more reasonable to enable a culture that embraces

change and development. In this way, working with culture integration with every specific change becomes excessive.

When unraveling Kotter's eight steps to what truly is essential in his model it becomes clear that the focus lies on communication. Communication has, as previously mentioned, been an important feature of successful change at Cramo AB as well and one of the primarily reasons for less successful changes when they have lacked in communication. The knowledge and acknowledgement that communication is important is also coherent in both the empirical findings and the literature review. Although, the theory seems to lack an understanding of the extensive complexity of communication in a real case. The empirical findings imply that even if the top management sees the importance of communication it becomes hard to execute at smallest dissension in the top management and of course increases in difficulty the more disagreements that arises in "the line". But as we have learned, change management is not easy, and according to Beer & Nohria (2000), generally 70 percent of all change initiatives fail completely.

We can also see that even if Cramo AB have not followed Kotter's eight steps, they have been able to successfully implement change. The implementation of several more successful changes have also differed when compared to each other. Which means that this study have found no evidence of some sort of best practise for change management, but rather, important features for successful management of change.

In conclusion, the relevant aspects of the studied company case is that Cramo AB has worked a lot with change processes, both bigger and smaller ones as well as being in the middle of the project Shape 2020. By studying their change processes, the authors have been able to compare practice with theory within change management and from that draw conclusions regarding how this case and the theory can benefit from each other. This study concludes that theory hardly can deliver a best practice for how to implement change and that it may lack a deeper understanding of the complexity of communication in a real company. On the other hand, the literature review provide an understanding of how Cramo AB could improve their work with guiding coalitions and to motivate the employees to work with change through celebration of short term wins. Using a change management model as a tool also proved that it helped us, with little earlier experience of

Cramo AB and change management, to get a deeper understanding of their change processes and what parts that are the most crucial ones. Thereby, it might be as helpful for the company itself in order to see the whole picture of the extensive Shape 2020 program and what to focus in order to succeed with the implementation of change processes.

6.1 Limitations of the study and suggestion for future study

As interviews were chosen for data collection, we were aware of the limitations in objectivity due to the personal experiences, memory, emotions and possible selfish motives of the respondents. However we have done our best through extensive research to be objective. For future studies, even more extensive studies of change management could be done to enhance the opportunity for statistical generalisation.

Another limitation was that a part of the Cramo Group (i.e. Cramo OYJ), Cramo AB is listed on Nasdaq Nordic, which the authors had some concern about when initiating the study. However, during the course of the study it became clear that the scope of the study does not rely on nonpublic information but rather historical changes, values and goals, which the company already had made public. However, it still might have been a lack of available data such as information regarding the change strategies at Cramo AB that is classified or not known by the public. The research were thought to be more reliable if the case company was shown but this could be a possibility for future studies where the research could be completely anonymous.

The sample size of the respondents from the depots was also a limitation. Due to that there were limited time we did not have the possibility to interview more respondents. If the sample size were bigger we might had found different results.

Our suggestions for future studies that could further develop the research within the subject, is to make a multiple case study within the industry, to investigate if Cramo is one of a kind or if our results are applicable on a whole industry. A future study would also benefit from a greater sample size from the depots, which could give a clearer picture regarding how change is perceived by all employees and would also give the possibility to investigate bottom-up change processes.

6.2. Managerial Implications

Based on the result of this research, there are some aspects of change management that we have come to believe should be highlighted in order to avoid unsuccessful change processes. Foremost, the case study shows that strategies for change processes are complex and different changes need different approaches. It is important for managers to know that one model does not fit all changes and is just helpful as a tool, not to use in practice throughout each change process. In order to conclude the findings, what has been done well and what aspects of their change processes that need to be improved has to be highlighted. These findings have been compared to Kotter's eight steps for leading change and the other change management perspectives in order to highlight which parts that are of highest importance to consider.

6.2.1 What Cramo AB does well
- Guiding coalitions, to the extent that they exist and is often used when managing change
- Communication works well when change is implemented with conferences
- Manage change in a structured way, through a project manager
- Works with attitudes towards change

6.2.1 What Cramo AB needs to improve
- There should be more than one guiding coalition which should include a greater diversity of employees
- Communication from top management needs to be consistent on a high level
- The structured tool for feedback needs to be implemented to the extent that everyone is using it, not only knows about it
- Motivate employees with short term wins

As mentioned, more diverse and multiple guiding coalitions could enhance the planning of each change and give new perspectives of certain aspects. Cramo AB also need to take advantage of those communication tools that have been appreciated, like the weekly meetings, and also investigate how to make the communication through the line more effective in order for the vision and purpose of each change to reach all the way down in the organisation. Also, feedback through surveys has proved to highlight dissatisfactions within certain processes which should be used in

a larger extent in order to detect resistance against change processes in an early stage. A suggestion would be to ask for specific feedback directly after a change has been implemented, rather through general surveys and have as a routine to ask one depot employee how the change process seems to be interpreted at the depots. All of this can enhance employees' motivation for being a part of change processes at Cramo AB. Together with the bonus system the motivation can further be improved through celebrating more short-term wins than only financial goals. For example, celebrating with a cake and champagne, but first when the implementation is proved implemented and appreciated by everyone involved. That in itself could if of importance, how to measure that the change is actually implemented completely. Instead of measuring that in the culture as Kotter suggests, Cramo AB could measure that through employee happiness with the change process through the feedback system.

As proved, Cramo Ab also need a different approach depending on the change process. But one thing to consider regarding all changes, even those that do not have to be anchored in the corporate culture is as Kotter (2012) states: "leading change competently is the only answer".

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1. Interview guide in English

● Please tell us if you perceive that there is a pattern in the organisational change that occurs at Cramo?

- Have changes occurred frequently or have it been radical during certain periods, if so when?

● When changes occur at the company, what are the factors that drive the company to these changes.

- Could there be any external pressure from for instance; a specific section of the firm, new laws, or from society that drives the change or is it Cramo's own initiative?

● Does Cramo have a specific strategy of the process for their organisational changes?   - If yes, how can typical process of change appear?

- Does Cramo have different strategies for different changes?

● How do Cramo communicate the changes to the different departments of the organisation, for example from the headquarters to the region offices and depots?

- Are you experiencing that a clear purpose/vision of the change is being communicated to all involved in the change?

- Are you experiencing that there is a clear guiding coalition who have the responsibility and who is guiding the change?

● How has the changes been meet by the different departments of the organisation and how do Cramo collect the information of how the employees think about the changes?

- According to theories if might be good to report short-term wins of the changes in order to motivate the employees, do you experience that Cramo do that?

- Has there ever occured a complication during the change process, and if so, how did Cramo process it?

- Are you experiencing that the changes at Cramo often succeed and that the get implemented well that they becomes a part of the culture at Cramo?

● Can you please tell us about the most significant changes that has been made and that have affected the whole company?

● Is there anything you want to add about changes and the change process at carmo

APPENDIX 2. Interview guide in Swedish

● Berätta gärna hur du upplever att förändringsarbetet på Cramo sett ut över tid?

- Har förändringar skett kontinuerligt över tiden eller har det varit intensivare under vissa perioder, i så fall när?

● Generellt sett, vad är det som leder till en förändring på Cramo? - Kan det finnas några externa påtryckningar från exempelvis en specifik avdelning, nya lagar, eller samhället att utföra en förändring eller är det Cramos egna initiativ?

● Upplever du att Cramo har en generell strategi för hur ni utför ert förändringsarbete?

- Om ja, berätta gärna om denna strategi

- Har Cramo olika strategier beroende på vilken typ av förändring det är?

● Hur kommunicerar Cramo förändringar till de olika avdelningarna av organisationen, exempelvis från huvudkontoren till regionkontor och depåer?

- Upplevde du att det kommuniceras ett tydligt syfte/behov med förändringen till alla inblandade?

- Upplevde du att det finns en tydlig styrande koalition/grupp som har ansvar och styr förändringen och dess aktiviteter?

● Hur har förändringar bemötts på de olika avdelningarna av organisationen? På vilket sätt får ni reda på vad de anställda tycker om förändringar?

- Enligt teorier kan det vara bra att redovisa kortsiktiga framgångar med förändringen för att motivera anställda, upplevde du att det finns en sådan?

- Har det uppstått någon krock eller komplikation någon gång och i så fall hur bemötte Cramo den?

- Upplever du att Cramos förändringar ofta blir lyckade och att de blir så pass implementerad att de blir en del av företagskulturen, att den syns i dagliga arbetet?

● Vilka är de största och mest betydelsefulla förändringarna som har skett och som påverkade hela företaget?

● Finns det någonting ni vill tillägga om Cramos förändringsarbete?

APPENDIX 3. Interview guide for depot managers and depot personal in English

● Please tell us if you perceive that there is a pattern in the organisational change that occurs at Cramo?

- Have changes occurred frequently or have it been radical during certain periods, if so when?

● Do you feel like Cramo has a clear Vision?

● Do you feel like Cramo has a clear strategy?

- Is there also at strategy for change?

● How do Cramo communicate changes to you?

- Did you feel that a clear purpose/need was communicated to everyone involved?

● Have you or any of your colleagues been involved in a coalition that has worked with change?

● Do you feel like you have the possibility to give feedback when changes occur?

- Do you know how and to whom you are supposed to communicate such feedback?

● If complications arise, how is it handled?

● Do you feel motivated by the company to work with the changes implemented?

APPENDIX 4. Interview guide for depot managers and depot personal in Swedish

● Berätta gärna hur du upplever att förändringsarbetet på Cramo sett ut över tid?

- Har förändringar skett kontinuerligt över tiden eller har det varit intensivare under vissa perioder, i så fall när?

● Upplever du att Cramo har en tydlig vision?

● Upplever du att det finns en tydlig strategi?

- Finns det också en strategi bakom förändringsarbeten som utförs?

● Hur kommunicerar Cramo förändringar till dig?

- Upplevde du att det kommuniceras ett tydligt syfte/behov med förändringen till alla inblandade?

● Har du eller någon kollega nära dig varit inblandad i en koalition som arbetat med förändringar?

● Känner du att du kan ge feedback på förändringar som sker, vet du hur och till vem du kan kommunicera med om sådant?

● Om komplikationer uppstår, hur hanteras det?

● Känner du att företaget försöker motivera er när nya förändringar sker?