Middle Leaders?
A study of the middle management’s role in the public sector

Master Thesis in Business Administration
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Abstract

Problem: Leadership studies have mostly concerned top management. However, as many researchers suggest, middle management has a great impact on the success of an organization, especially in change when they need to take on the role as a leader. Successful leaders motivate employees, and within the public sector they need to use non-financial means. In addition, the public sector’s management is perceived to be insufficient.

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to describe the middle managers role in a public sector organization and how they motivate their employees.

Method: In order to answer our purpose, we have chosen to use a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews with six middle managers and six employees at three different local offices of Arbetsförmedlingen, in Jönköping County. Interviewing about leadership may cause discomfort providing honest answers, why full anonymity to all respondents has been applied.

Result: In this thesis we have come to the conclusions that the middle management at AF should be named middle leaders as they use their leadership skills rather than management skills to achieve the organization’s goals. They motivate their employees by providing continuous feedback and recognition, and providing autonomy and a sense of importance through empowerment. We have further found that middle leaders are a vital resource for any organization, especially during change.
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1 Background

In this chapter the background of the topic in this thesis is discussed. The problem statement is formulated and the purpose is presented. The limitations are explained in the delimitations part.

“Leadership is the most studied and least understood topic of any in the social sciences” (Bennis & Nanus, 2003 p.19)

The police seek it, parents have lost it and business researchers from all over the world try to understand it. We have all experienced leadership, but our knowledge about the concept is still rather confused. Bass (1990) states that there are almost as many definitions of what leadership is, as there are persons who have tried to define it. This is supported by Bennis & Nanus (2003) who claim that no universal truth of what separates leaders from non-leaders exists. Still, researchers agree upon the fact that leaders are necessary to achieve the organization’s goals.

However, most studies concerning leadership are focusing on top management, which according to Frohman (2000 p.6) is an insufficient approach as middle managers “drive change in what gets done and how it gets done”. Dauphinais (1996) is of the same opinion, arguing that smart companies see their middle managers as the stabilizers who make enduring change possible. Thus, one could argue that middle managers are of vital importance for an organization’s ability to achieve change.

What we see as even more important though, is that Nelson (2005) argues that managers are expected to lead their employees, that is, to motivate them to achieve the organization’s goals. Mai & Akerson (2003) argue that these goals can never be achieved without motivation.

In line with these researchers and Maddock & Fulton (1998) – who argue that the very substance of leadership is motivation – we believe that the ability to motivate followers is a critical skill for middle managers. This is supported by Antonioni (2000) who claims that the roles of middle managers include managing, leading and coaching. The author further states that the last two, in which motivation is included, has been somewhat bypassed in the literature.

What we have also noticed from literature is that management and leadership research is heavily focused on private firms, but as Schartau (1993) certifies, little has been written about middle managers in the public sector. We find this a bit odd since the public sector employs approximately 33% of the workforce in Sweden (Swedish statistics), meaning that many people are affected by middle managers in this sector.

1.1 Problem discussion

As seen from the background, middle managers may be the driving force behind change. Sethi (1999) makes a vital point when he explains that changing business climate requires middle managers to take on the leadership role, which in turn means that they have to motivate their employees. Schartau (1993) argues that this is the case in the public sector as well, since there has been a tendency for decentralization of the sector during the last decades.
However, as public sector organizations are funded by taxes, we believe they have less possibilities of utilizing financial rewards, thus its managers need to use other means to motivate their employees. Motivating without financial rewards certainly requires more effort and dedication from the leader. However, Thomas (1999) states that the public sector is facing a crisis in management, as it has problems to attract and retain good managers. This is supported by Holmberg & Henning (2003) who claim that the leadership practiced within the public sector in Sweden is unsatisfactory. Hence, the public sector in Sweden is changing but in order to do so successfully, we argue in line with Frohman (2000) that competent middle managers are needed.

Therefore, the aim with this thesis is to investigate the middle management in the public sector, focusing on the “new” middle manager as a leader and how he/she motivates the personnel. This will be done by using a public sector organization, Arbetsförmedlingen (AF) which is currently changing due to the political regime shift in Sweden the fall of 2006.

1.2 Purpose
The purpose of this thesis is to describe the middle managers role in a public sector organization and how they motivate their employees.

1.3 Delimitations
Even though Arbetsförmedlingen was chosen due to the re-organization it is currently implementing, the focus of the thesis is on the middle manager’s role and how they motivate their personnel. Hence, no theories concerning change management will be discussed as these are not vital for the purpose. Moreover, even though the company of choice operates in the public sector, it will be hard to draw conclusions for the whole sector based solely on one organization. In addition, only AF offices in Jönköping County is a part of the study. As a consequence, the aim is to give an explanation of the middle management in this organization and a general overview of the management in the public sector.

2 Frame of reference
2.1 Management in the public sector

The public sector consists of various governmental organizations that deliver goods and services to the public, including education, social welfare, and military defence (Schartau, 1993). Characteristically for these public sector organizations, we believe, are that the management’s possibilities of motivating its employees with monetary rewards are limited, as the organizations funding derives from tax. We argue that because the funding does not come from profit, it is more difficult for public sector organizations to use financial rewards in order to motivate the employees.

Most of the literature concerning middle management (MM), leadership and motivation has been developed with the private sector in mind. We must therefore ask ourselves whether these references are applicable to the public sector, in which the investigated organization operates.

Although several attempts have been made to differentiate public managers from their private colleagues, they appear to be quite similar and not two disparate types (Gerding/Sevenhuijsen, 1987 in Schartau 1993). Furthermore, due to increased savings – along with a need for productivity development in the public sector – the private and public managers are becoming more alike (Lane, 1987 in Schartau 1993).

However, this opinion is not shared by everyone. Tullberg (in Holmberg & Henning, 2003) claims that management in the private sector is different from the management in the public one, as the prior are greater risk-takers and more flexible. Moreover, people in the public sector are generally less satisfied with their managers than the ones in the private sector (Ibid).

Schartau (1993) argues that, in general, the public organizations are more hierarchical and the decision-making process more regulated than in the private sector, resulting in more administrative work. As a result, private organizations are more flexible than the public ones. Hence, according to the author, public managers spend more time interpreting and ensuring that the rules given are followed. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the public sector can not be seen as homogeneous, as it includes many different kinds of organizations (Ibid).

Holmberg & Henning (2003) claim that unlike the private company which has fairly clear goals, the public company has numerous needs to consider. This in turn brings a leadership which is characterized by conflicts and an unclear role (Tollgerdt-Andersson, 1995 in Holmberg & Henning, 2003).

To sum up we can conclude that researchers believe a difference in the management of the public and private sector exist, due to factors such as inflexibility, an unclear role of the manager and a heavy focus on procedures. However, as Schartau (1993) argues, a frame of reference concerning public managers has not been created.

We have been unable to locate any specific theories on how a middle management in the public sector should act to be successful. We argue, though, that motivation theories are vital for the public sector as well, as people ought to be motivated by somewhat the same
means, regardless of which sector they operate in. Furthermore, the discussion concerning
the middle manager as a leader should also be valid for the public sector as organizations
tend to be downsized in this sector as well (Schartau, 1993).

2.2 Leadership

"Leadership is like the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but
who is nowhere to be seen." (Bennis & Nanus, 2003 P.19)

In order not to loose the reader in the jungle that is leadership theories, we aim to give a
relatively brief explanation of the concept.

One of the first acknowledged books about leadership was written back in 1513 by Nicolo
Machiavelli who basically claims that a leader should rule and divide. Even though the
ideas presented by Machiavelli still are practised by leaders around the world, much has
happened in the research since then.

A common way to explain leadership in the early days, was that leaders were born, not
made through the so called "trait approach". As this notion failed to explain leadership, it
was replaced by the belief that extraordinary events created leaders, referred to as the "Big
Bang" idea (Bennis & Nanus, 2003).

During the 1980’s, situational leadership gained increased attention and one of the most ac-
knowledge theories was the contingency theory (Kleim, 2004). In essence, the theory is
proposing that a leader can adjust his/her leadership style in order to fit a specific situation.
From empirical findings, Fiedler (1967) argues that task-oriented leaders perform best in a
situation where they have much control, whereas a relationship-oriented leader functions
best in moderate control situations.

The situational leadership can be said to concern transactional leaders, which are mostly fo-
cused on guiding their followers to specific goals. This form of leadership may make the or-
ganization achieve its goals, but it will rarely exceed expectations (Burns, 1978).

Burns (1978) claims that the transactional leader is at one side of a spectrum while the
transformational leader is on the other. The latter is superior as both leaders and follower
has something to offer each other, and if this is done successfully, it will bring increased
motivation to both. Bass & Avolio (1994) claim that a transformational leader shall,
through intellectual stimulation, make sure that the old ways of performing a task is ques-
tioned. Hence, he/she should convince all the employees about the importance of new re-
alities and structures, as everyone in the organization must learn to restructure their mind
in order to abandon old assumptions and truths, which hold the organization back.

The transformational leadership is closely related to the charismatic leadership, another
heavily discussed theory on leadership. Bennis & Nanus (2003) believe that success requires
the leader to communicate a desired state of affairs, a picture that motivates and induces
commitment in others. Moreover, the leader needs to stay the course, i.e. show consistency
to that goal. Hence, it is not enough to communicate what should be done; the leader
should also work as a role model. This is in line with what Walton (2003) name a “strategic
story”. The author argues that in today’s business climate you can not force anyone to do
something; rather people have to believe in you if they are to follow you. This is done by
planting a picture, or vision, in the minds of the followers as a leader is more likely to get
what he/she wants if the followers can imagine a future that they want.
Kleim (2004) makes a vital point by stating that leaders may be skilled in communicating their views, but fail at one essential point, i.e. listening. The leader feels as if he/she knows all the answers and is therefore not open to other viewpoints. This is supported by Lewis (2003) who argues that (incompetent) leaders often resist information which has an impact on their set course of direction.

We believe that the idea of the transformational leader sounds good in theory, but does it work in practice? Research has found that transformational leadership can improve an organization’s productivity and efficiency. Peters & Waterman (1990) strongly argue that such a relationship exists and Bass & Riggio (2005) agree, even though they realize that it is difficult to measure leadership and leadership outcomes.

As stated, numerous of definitions of what leadership is and how it should be practiced exist. However, from the above discussion along with our personal experience, we believe that Northouse’s (2004, p.3) definition of leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” captures the essence of leadership and thus fill the function as a definition for this thesis. However, as stated in the background, most research concerning leadership focus on top management while our aim is to see whether middle management should take on the leadership role as well. In order to do so theories concerning middle management will now be presented.

### 2.3 Middle management

Like with leadership, the definition of what a middle manager is differs depending on which researcher one turns to. Reed (1989) states that middle managers are the product of organisational differentiation, which developed due to increased complexity of the internal division of labour. According to Dopson, Risk, & Stewart (1992) middle managers are the ones above first-level supervision and below the group of strategic top management. This fits with the traditional view of middle management proposed by Thompson (1967), claiming that middle managers are the ones communicating information upwards and downwards in the organization. Brennan (1991) defines them as general operational managers, thus being responsible for operational decisions and progress of the department, and Breen (1984) agrees, arguing that middle managers are responsible for keeping the wheels of industry rolling. Even though they do not necessarily make the big decisions, the quantity of smaller decisions made in their day to day activities, could both harm and help the organisation.

Hence, one can conclude that middle manager is a wide concept, as it generally includes all managers but the top management of an organization. Due to this fact, one needs to understand that the role of the manager, along with the tasks performed, vary depending on which level of the hierarchy the manager operates (Mintzberg, 1983). It is also likely that the status of the middle manager varies among different organizations (Denham, Ackers, & Travers, 1997).

What can also be seen is that middle managers often feel “stuck in the middle” as they have to take both the top management and the followers’ opinions into account. Denham, et al. (1997, p. 147) argue that “middle managers are seen as the agents of senior management who must introduce new policies to a cynical workforce while facing fears of redundancy and loss of power.”
This might seem a bit harsh but the claim that middle managers are caught in the middle is supported by several researchers. Nilson (1998) for example argues that middle managers need to serve several interests, including both top management and the followers.

Perhaps this is one explanation to the fact that, according to a study performed by Accenture, middle managers around the globe are generally frustrated and unsatisfied. Furthermore, 30% describe their organization as mismanaged. This, we claim, is a vital point as we question how middle managers are supposed to motivate their followers if they are not motivated themselves? Quite possible, one reason for the low motivation among middle managers might be explained by the change many of them have experienced lately.

### 2.3.1 Changing role for middle management

Researchers tend to agree upon the fact that middle managers have experienced a significant change during the last two decades. Due to globalization and changes in corporate culture, along with downsizing, the role of middle management has transformed.

Already back in 1991 Horton & Reid argued that nothing will ever be the same for middle managers again. The same goes for Spreitzer & Quinn (1996) who claim that middle managers are fighting for their survival in today’s business organizations as information technology makes it easier for top management to monitor and control the personnel, hence skipping the filter of middle management. Engel (1997 p.22) support this claim, arguing that “businesses do not need middle management as much as in the past” as flatter organizations, IT introduction, cost savings and a change in the economic environment have hit middle management hard.

Quentin (2001) argues that many organizations were changed into a team based environment in the 1970s, in order to downsize the organizations and reduce the number of middle managers. Furthermore, as most companies today try to empower their employees, meaning that people get more control over their jobs and are able to make decisions on their own, the need for middle management is further reduced (Engel 1997). As a consequence, many researchers question whether middle management should exist at all.

The latter opinion is supported by Peters (1992) who claims that middle managers hinder the growth of a company and are therefore not needed. This approach was particularly discussed during the 80s in which the dominant theme of management literature was change. Organizations should be flat and middle management was under heavy attack from the ones arguing that the hierarchy as an organization form was dying (Thomas & Dunkerley, 1999). However, Quentin (2001) argues that even though organizations were made flatter, this did not increase productivity. Rather, the author argues that the most productive infrastructure is hierarchy which is build around the middle managers.

Thus, Quentin (2001) argues that MM is a vital asset for an organization, which is supported by Dopson, Risk, & Stewart, (1992). The authors found that when an organization is experiencing rapid change, the role of the middle managers is getting increasingly important. Furthermore, even though downsizing will continue to put pressure on middle management, it plays a critical role for the success of an organization (Sethi, 1999). This is supported by Brandt (1994) who states that in the past, middle managers were occupied with the day-to-day managing but that they are now executing the very plans that drive the business.
From another study performed by Thomas & Dunkerley (1999) it was found that middle managers in downsized organization experienced heavy increase in working hours. However, this also made the managers feel less “stuck in the middle” as the number of hierarchical levels decreased. Interestingly enough, the study found that managers within the public sector were more critical to the changes than in the private sector. They explained problems with resources constrains, long working hour, stress and vulnerability to work loss. Furthermore, the morale was affected as the managers claimed to be under increased pressure but had received no rewards for their growing workload.

One can conclude that researchers are divided when it comes to the importance of middle management, but most of them acknowledge that the role of MM has changed. According to Nelson (2005), middle management is a critical resource for an organization, not merely as a supervisor, but as a leader. A manager has four main functions, i.e. planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Out of these, we argue that leading is the most neglected which will be described more in detail later. Leading is to motivate employees to achieve the organization’s goals, implementing the organization’s vision into everyone’s mind. Nelson (2005) believes this to be the most important ingredient for a manager’s success, as a great leader can inspire people to do extraordinary things, accomplishing extraordinary goals.

We argue that since the middle manager is the one supposed to communicate top management’s strategic plans to the co-worker, he/she also has the most contact with the co-workers. Hence, it is up to the middle manager to convey the organization’s goals into a meaningful idea for the personnel to be motivated by. We argue that this is done by using leadership skills, which means that the middle manager should transform into a middle leader.

2.3.2 Middle leaders

“Leadership is about inspiring others to produce desirable results, because they want to, not because they have to” (Antonioni, 2000 p. 28)

Many researchers argue that the role and necessity of the middle management has shrunk, but the ones that survived the downsizing must realize that they have to change in order to thrive. Engel (1997) argues that “old-style” middle managers were hieratical and military in their approach to leading and orders. However, as times change, so does the middle management, transforming into what Engel calls “non-managers” as they ask questions, listen to their employees and coach them. Furthermore, the non-managers shares information, change the organization structure to get the job done and invite others in the decision making. Moreover, as Lewis (2001) states, one of the most important characteristics for the new type of manager is that he/she is proactive, as opposed to reactive. Instead of reacting to change or to things that have not gone as planned, a manager should anticipate issues that could go wrong, so that counter measures can be taken quicker, recovering from the obstacle.

Sethi (1999) is of the same opinion and argues that the new role of the middle manager is a leadership paradox. As before, leadership was mostly concerned with top management as they made the major decisions concerning the organization. Today this is about to change as changing business climates often requires middle managers to take on the leadership role, which in turn means that they have to acquire new skills. These include, among others, relationship skills/emotional competence and advance communication, coaching and influencing skills (Ibid). Frohman (2000) agrees, arguing that top leadership, at its best, can be
described as powerful and visionary, while middle management focuses more on immediate problems and opportunities. As a consequence of the peer relationship that middle management often engage with the co-workers, the middle leader is more likely to engage and enroll people. The author further claims that this power to influence comes from their expertise and relationship skills. This is supported by Nilson (1998 p.21) who claims that “middle management today is about coaching, mentoring, developing teams and inspiring people to be active participants in change”.

There are a number of things a manager needs to do if he/she wants to lead. Antonioni (2000) states that the leader should foster a commitment among followers, thus create a shared vision of the right things to do. Furthermore, the leader should implement change, not merely as a manager, who is mostly focused on problem solving, but lead change in a long-term perspective.

Another factor that is important to take into account is the risk-taking, which Antonioni (2000) argues separates the managers from the leaders. Since leading and induce change is risky, the ones that are confident enough to do this and understand that failure equals learning are likely to attain followers. Moreover, a successful middle leader should be able to communicate the “big picture” or the vision to the followers. When this is done effectively, everyone in the group should know its goals and the importance of these (Ibid).

Antonioni (2000) claims that middle managers often are hired due to their focus on details, which is not a vital part of what a successful manager should do. As a consequence, the focus on operational details hinders the middle manager from taking on the role as a leader, i.e. communicating the big picture, coaching and motivating. This is in line with what Bennis & Nanus (2003, p. 20) arguing as failing organizations “tend to be overmanaged and underled”. The authors further claim that there is a difference between a leader and a manager as “managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right things” (Bennis & Nanus, 2003 p.20).

Lewis (2003) agrees, arguing that a manager is mostly concerned with the administration of budgets, scheduling etc, while a leader gets people along to achieve goals. It is important that managers start to lead, especially when the manager has lots of responsibilities but little authority. Antonioni (2000) agrees with this statement as his study concluded that managers in general only spend about 5 % of their time leading and 15 % coaching, while managing occupies 75 % of their time. This is an unfortunate fact as Antonioni (2002) corresponds to Bennis & Nanus (2003) in the claim that organizations need more leaders and fewer managers. However, Mintzberg (1979) joins the researchers who believe that a separation between a manager and leader can not be done as leadership basically is one of the many functions of a manager.

We argue against Mintzberg in the sense that we believe a differentiation between a manager and a leader can be made. As previously stated, we believe that leadership is about getting people to achieve a common goal and this is done by, motivating and coaching the co-workers, hence the task of a leader. Therefore we believe – in line with several researchers – that a good middle manager could also be said to be a middle leader.

Furthermore, we believe that the point argued by Maddock & Fulton (1998 p.7) that even though many skills are needed for a manager to lead, “motivation is the key to leadership and leadership is the key to effective motivation”
Hence, we argue that motivation of the co-workers is one of the most important tasks a middle leader has to perform and will therefore describe relevant theories concerning motivation in the next section.

2.4 Motivation

“Leadership is motivation” (Maddock & Fulton, 1998, p. 7)

Quite natural, business organizations did for a long time center their attention on customers and clients, in order to enhance sales and increase revenue. However, as Lowe (1999) argues, businesses nowadays tend to pay more attention to the people side of their business. This implies that organizations increasingly recognize the importance of their employees, and we claim that this is valid also for public organizations.

There is no doubt that motivated employees can make powerful contributions to an organization’s profits and success (Wiley, 1997), which also means that those organizations paying effort to motivating their employees, will succeed sooner than their competitors (Amar, 2004). As a result, managers need to understand what motivates their employees and that by finding this; the effectiveness of the organization may be increased.

Maddock & Fulton (1998) argue that the literature on motivation has been very limited and overall simplified. However, there is no lack of researchers who have tried to understand the concept. Adair & Thomas (2004) state that motivation makes a person want to move forward, achieve a goal and make progress. Other qualities that a motivated person displays include: energy, commitment and a willingness to work. Adair & Thomas (2004 p. 59) further state that motivating others means to “provide an incentive for them to do something, to initiate their behavior and to stimulate them into activity.” We argue that this could be a definition of leadership as well. Furthermore, Denny (2005) argues that motivation “is getting somebody to do something because they want to do it”. As seen, this is closely related to Antonioni’s (2002) definition of leadership, which makes us agree with Maddock & Fulton (1998) in their claim that leadership is motivation.

The question, though, is how motivation is achieved. Field & Keller (2005) argue that this is done when the leader provide the team with clear objectives, the right tools and keep it well informed. Dinsmore (2005) claims that people are motivated if they get what they want, ranging from recognition to the opportunity to lead. Orr (2004) discusses delegation, meaning that people should feel that they contribute to the success of the organization, not just doing what they are told.

The thoughts presented above are shared by several other researchers. However, in order to make a valid study, we need to dig deeper into the field of motivation which is why we will now turn to motivation theories.

2.4.1 Motivation theories

Arguable, two of the most acknowledged theories concerning motivation are Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and Hertzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory. We claim that, even though both theories all have been criticized, they are of importance for our understanding of motivation.
2.4.1.1 Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

One could not conduct a study on motivation without mention who many believe to be the father of motivation theory, Abraham Maslow. Maslow wrote the classic article “A Theory of Human Motivation” in 1943 (Lewis, 2001). He grouped the human needs into five categories; physiological, security and safety, belongingness, self-esteem and recognition, and finally self-actualization or achievement, seen in the model below.

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](image)

The needs are classified into deficiency and growth categories, of which the first three belongs to deficiency and self-esteem and self-actualization are classified as growth needs. The deficiency needs, we argue, have similarities with Herzberg’s hygiene factors, described below, as their common denominator is related to the structure of the organization. For instance, physiological needs are related to safe working conditions and safety how easily one can loose one’s job, thus these covers the basic needs.

A leader must focus to satisfy the growth needs in order to make the employee want to do what the manager asks. According to Maslow, a need influences a person’s activities until it is satisfied, and the lower-level needs, such as food and security, have to be satisfied before the higher-level needs, such as self-fulfilment (Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003).

However critique to Maslow’s hierarchy model has been presented. Whaba & Bridwell (in Porter et al, 2003) recognize that Maslow’s theories are widely accepted, although they believe it is a paradox as there is little research evidence to support it. Their research found no clear evidence supporting that the human needs can be classified into five distinct categories, nor that one has to satisfy the low-level needs before the higher-level needs. This is supported by Maddock & Fulton (1998) who claim that the theory does not explain motivation. Porter et al (2003) on the other hand, states that Maslow’s theories provide helpful guidance to managers how to enhance motivation. If one assumes the deficiency needs are satisfied, managers can focus on the growth needs.

2.4.1.2 Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Frederick Herzberg influenced many scholars and managers by his motivation research in the 1950s and 1960s. Herzberg aimed to answer the question “What do people want from their jobs?” in order to identify what leads to a person’s success or failure at work. Herzberg found that motivation came from intrinsic factors, or motivators, such as achievement, rec-
ognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement or growth. On the other hand, dissatisfaction was created by extrinsic, or *hygiene*, factors e.g. supervision, interpersonal relations and administration.

![Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory](image)

Figure 2:2 Herzberg’s Motivation Hygiene Theory (Herzberg, 2003)

Arguable the most important conclusion from Herzberg’s study was that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not seen as opposites, rather the opposite of satisfaction is “no satisfaction”. This in turn means that the factors Herzberg refer to as hygiene may cause dissatisfaction when absent or poor, but does not motivate when improved. Instead, in order for a person to be motivated the intrinsic factors have to be fulfilled (Lewis, 2001).

In Herzberg’s article *One More Time: How do you motivate employees?* (2003), he defines motivation as something that comes from *within* the person, “One wants to do it” (Herzberg, 2003, p. 50). This is the opposite of how, he states, many managers motivate their staff. They tend to use various extrinsic means which Herzberg refers to as positive KITA (kick in the …), such as increased salary or fringes, which both might temporarily change people, but do not motivate them. Thus, the organization needs to create an environment that fosters motivation, and managers need to make use of the motivators so the individual will perform.

### 2.4.2 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivators

There are many ways of how to motivate, generally divided into the categories extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Frey & Osterloh, 2002; Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000). Extrinsic motivation most often is the means to an end (Frey & Osterloh, 2002), paying for the holiday or buying new furniture, and not an end in itself. A job is merely a tool by which one can satisfy the individual’s actual needs by the salary it pays. Intrinsic motivation on the other hand, is where the activity, the work task itself, is motivating. Intrinsic motivation is the inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to explore and to learn.

Frey & Osterloh (2002) state that it has long been assumed that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation have been independent of each other. Socio-psychological experiments have, however, shown that under certain circumstances there is a trade-off between the two. Some re-
searchers argue that rewards can pose a long-lasting problem as they may undermine the willingness to perform at work (Ryan & Deci, in Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000). When an activity is started with solely intrinsic motivation and then a monetary reward is offered for the same work, there is a loss of intrinsic motivation as the worker next time will expect to get paid or rewarded again. An example outlined by Frey & Osterloh (2002) is a dedicated saleswoman whose prime motivation is her sense of achievement through customer satisfaction. A bonus system is introduced so the saleswoman feels her dedication of satisfying customers is no longer measured and rewarded but only the results it brings. As such, she becomes more interested in the financial reward than customer satisfaction, thus her intrinsic motivation has been diminished.

Another way to understand the intrinsic motivation is by looking at small children who are inquisitive and curious without specific rewards. However, this inherent motivation is somewhat lost as we grow, thus it needs to be supported to be present again. (Ryan 1995, in Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003). Social and environmental factors affect intrinsic motivation as these factors can both undermine and facilitate it, which means that in the right circumstances it will flourish (Deci and Ryan in Porter et. al, 2003).

Feedback is an example of such social-contextual event that can enhance or diminish intrinsic motivation. Whereas positive feedback can enhance it, negative feedback diminishes it, and thus affects the workers perceived competence (Vallerand & Reid (1984), in Porter, et al, 2003). However, feelings of competence will not in itself enhance intrinsic motivation as it needs to be combined with a sense of autonomy. Porter et al (2003) argue that people must not only feel competent, but also that their behaviour is self-determined. In other words, people must believe that the good work they performed is due to their own abilities and efforts.

When it comes to intrinsic motivation, researchers stress that most studies concerning environmental events has focused on autonomy versus control. Field studies (Deci, Nezlek, & Sheinman, 1981; Ryan & Grolnick, 1986) have shown that teachers which are autonomy supportive, in contrast to controlling, induce greater intrinsic motivation, curiosity, and desire for challenges in their students. However, Porter et al (2003) emphasize that people will only be intrinsically motivated to activities that have appeal of novelty, challenge, or creative value.

Leaders can create an encouraging environment in which the employees want to do their best (Herzberg, 2003; Nelson, 2005) and motivate them so their contribution is enhanced. New functions Nelson (2005) argues for are to energize, empower, support, and to communicate with the employees.

By providing the employees with tools and the authority necessary to complete their tasks a manager empowers them. Nelson (2005) states that empowering does not mean the manager gives away all his or her power, but effective management is done by leverage the team’s efforts to a common goal. Thus, empowerment unleashes their creativity and commitment.

### 2.4.3 Empowerment

Empowering refers to managers sharing decision-making authority and responsibility to employees or group members (DuBrin, 2000). The manager allows group members to participate in decisions and allows them work relatively freely, thus sharing responsibility. An example could be allowing a larger budget of which the employees are accountable, or let
them contribute to the goals of a project. Twyla (1993) states that to empower means to give power and authority, whereas DuBrin (2000) argues that almost any form of participative management, shared decision-making or delegation can be considered empowerment.

There are certain attitudes or behaviours a manager needs to adopt in order for empowerment to work. DuBrin (2000) claims that a manager should believe that employees are likely to be creative problem-solvers, have a willingness to share adequate information and tools to solve problems and share the organization’s, maybe financial, situation. The manager also needs to devote time to the team, listen to it and realize that mistakes should be seen as investments in their learning.

Empowerment has four psychological dimensions; meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Meaning is the value of work, meeting the individual’s ideals or standards. Competence is the belief in one’s capability to perform well. Self-determination is the feeling of having a choice in initiating and regulating the work, and impact refers to the extent to which the worker can influence the organization’s goals or results. DuBrin (2000) believes all these dimensions are fulfilled when empowerment is implemented successfully.

Twyla’s (1993) definition of empowerment, to enable employees to judge, act and command, are key words for the manager what needs to be done to empower her subordinates. Before one can make judgement one needs proper information, with this at hand actions can be taken. The third key word, command, concerns responses to obstacles and new situations, to command and allocate resources needed to deal with the problem. Twyla describes this as a learning process, where the manager is the teacher. He, like DuBrin (2000), stresses the importance of the manager dedicating time in order for the team member to learn properly and to retain the knowledge, otherwise the effects of empowerment will not last.

According to DuBrin (2000), by giving away power, the manager gains power. As the team members are delegated with more responsibilities, the manager can focus on activities that add more value to the organization. Team members with more responsibilities are more motivated, thus they will accomplish more and thereby the team’s efforts will result in more power to the manager, seen from her managers.

2.4.4 How to motivate in real life

Even though we recognize that the theories described above are the foundation on which motivation research often rely, we need to grasp somewhat more hands-on theories in order to answer our purpose. Adair & Thomas (2004) state that there are seven strategies that a leader should consider and put in practice in order to get the best out of the employees. Denny (2005) present similar ideas and we aim to present these two authors five most appropriate strategies for our study.

Be motivated yourself

The basic rule of motivation is that in order to motivate others, the leader has to be motivated herself (Denny, 2005). The manager should be a role model and hence there is a need to set a good example for the followers by being enthusiastic and committed to the organization (Adair & Thomas, 2004).

There is also a need to be what Denny (2005) names a “progressive thinker” as the leader always should strive to develop him/herself.
Treat each person as an individual

As each person is unique, the leader needs to spend time with each individual in order to find what motivates a specific person (Adair & Thomas, 2005). When the needs are identified, the next step is to provide the employees with the right tools to fulfill these. Denny (2005) claims that training and developing of skills is an underestimated way of getting the personal motivated as studies have shown that giving people the opportunity to enhance their skills, is conducive towards staff retention.

Moreover, in order to gain the confidence of the individual, the leader needs to be a good and trustworthy listener and be able to encourage good behavior (Denny, 2005).

Motivation requires a goal

Even though Denny (2005) claims that this fact may be obvious, he states that this is not commonly recognized in many organizations, but one of the most important things for a leader is to understand the organizations aims and purposes (Adair & Thomas, 2004).

The goals should be specific, clear and time bound (Adair & Thomas, 2004) which in turn means that they can not be too long-term as these goals have no immediate effect (Denny, 2005). Furthermore, the objective should be realistic but yet challenging as people tend to be motivated by challenges.

Motivation requires recognition

According to Denny (2005) this is one of the most powerful insights on motivation as without recognition, people will no be motivated. People are willing to go far in order to receive recognition (Adair & Thomas, 2004) which is supported by Hertzberg (2003) who rated recognition highly as a factor for job satisfaction.

To give recognition is hence a powerful, but yet simple way to motivated people as a quick “thank you” or you are doing a great job might be enough. Most importantly, though, as in all leadership practice is to be sincere (Adair & Thomas, 2004).

Progress motivates

When people feel that they are moving forward or progressing, a sense of motivation is achieved. On the other hand, when people feel that they are not developing, the consequence is a demotivated employee (Denny, 2005). This in turn means that the leader has to provide feedback, because without feedback people will not know whether they make progress or not (Adair & Thomas, 2004).

Providing feedback and information on progress increase motivation levels, which means that by receiving praise, people strengthen and prosper. Hence, the leader should find an area of activity where progress has been made and highlight this, rather than dwelling on negative results (Denny, 2005). However, constructive criticism when correctly handled helps to maintain performance levels (Adair & Thomas, 2004).

This discussion ends our frame of reference in which relevant theories for answering our purpose have been presented. The most important findings are presented in the summary below.
2.5 Frame of reference summary

Researchers believe that inflexibility, unclear roles and a heavy focus on procedures are factors differentiating management in the public sector from the private sector. However, the literature does not present any specific theories concerning middle management in the public sector, therefore we will use leadership, management and motivation theories created for the private sector but claim that these are valid for our study as well.

We have found that research has been unable to identify a universal definition of leadership, even though the field has been greatly researched, but we feel that “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” by Northouse (2004, p.3) is a good attempt.

Due to top management’s increased possibilities to control the organization, downsizing and flatter organizations some researchers (Horton & Reid, 1991; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996; Engel, 1997) argue the need for middle managers is questioned. Yet others (Quinn, 2001; Sethi, 1999; Thomas & Dunkerley, 1999; Brandt, 1994) argue downsizing and change in general increases the need as uncertainty within the organizations grows. In addition, middle managers are executing the top management’s plans for the business. We can conclude that researchers differs in their opinion regarding middle management as some claim that they are a great resource to a firm, while other believe they are not needed at all.

Several researchers (Nelson, 2005; Antonioni, 2000; Luthans, 1998; Nilson, 1998) agree that the middle management should take on the role as leader. This in turn means that they should learn how to motivate others. As times are changing, so should middle management, and Engel (1997), among others, argues that middle management is about much more than just managing, they should coach, listen and inspire their co-workers.

The management literature (Nelson, 2005; Maddock & Fulton, 1998; Wiley, 1997; Amar, 2004) reveals that the ability to motivate employees is one of the most crucial skills a leader must possess, which is why motivation theories are a big part of the frame of reference. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is arguable the most groundbreaking work within the field of motivation and works well as an introduction to the topic. However, our focus lies with the intrinsic motivators, as extrinsic motivators are limited in the public sector organizations, so the leader’s within this sector need to be very skilled in motivating employees by intrinsic means.

Whereas extrinsic motivators lead to a desire for more money, intrinsic motivation is where the activity is motivating in itself. Intrinsic motivation is affected by social, (Valleran & Reid, 1984; Porter, 2003) and environmental (Deci, 1975, Deci, Nezlek & Sheinman, 1981; Ryan & Grolnick, 1986) factors, such as feedback and sense of autonomy respectively. We visualize this in the figure 2:1 below.
Intrinsic motivation is closely linked with empowerment, as empowered employees are less controlled. By informing employees about the goals, involving them when making decisions, sharing responsibility, and letting them work more freely within boundaries (DuBrin, 2000; Twyla, 1993), managers are empowering their staff. Since empowered employees are more motivated, they become more efficient. Thereby the middle manager will attain more power as the department produces more (DuBrin, 2000). We argue that by doing this, middle managers are transformed into middle leaders. Figure 2:2 provides a clear overview of this and the benefits it brings to the organization.

![Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation diagram](image)

Figure 2:4 Shared power increases power. (Own model)
3 Research questions

In this chapter the research questions are presented.

The findings from our theoretical research show that the middle manager should be a middle leader, due to the importance the leadership plays in the middle manager’s role. However, we first need to verify that the role of middle manager or middle leader is in fact important, because if it is not, then the question what the role should be called becomes insignificant. Furthermore, we have shown that leadership is strongly related to motivation, in fact, good leadership is determined by how well the leader motivates employees. These finding are then to be tested empirically, and thus, we will attempt to answer:

- Why is the role of middle manager important?
- To what extent can AF’s middle managers be said to be middle leaders?
- How are the employees motivated?
4 Methodology

This chapter presents different research methods and designs, and indicates how data can be collected. It also explains why each is the most appropriate and how they are used.

4.1 Hermeneutic research philosophy

The research philosophy concerns how the researchers think about the development of knowledge, which Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2003), argues shapes how the research is done. This makes it important to discuss, in order to understand what underlying assumptions we as authors build our study upon. Researchers discuss two major scientific approaches, or schools of thoughts, how knowledge should or could be generated, positivism and hermeneutic (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1994; Saunders et al, 2003; Widerberg, 2002).

Positivism holds an objective viewpoint where the researcher does not affect nor is dependent of the researched subject (Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998). Patel & Davidsson (2003) argue that the positivism supporters believe in an absolute truth. Alvesson & Sköldberg (1994) further explains positivism where all data and knowledge are measurable and the researcher is in control and keeping his/her distance to the study.

Hermeneutic research philosophy, on the other hand, deals with interpretations and understanding of the area studied. It involves a qualitative understanding in which the researcher engages in an open role which is more subjective (Thurén 2002). Patel & Davidson (2003) discuss that through the hermeneutic approach one can interpret what humans want to say through their actions along with the written and spoken language. In the hermeneutic view, the questions and information produced, are influenced by the researchers, hence, an idea of what is to be researched is gained before it is conducted. The process of the research is an ongoing comparison between the studied part and the whole. Thus, hermeneutics are strongly related to qualitative studies and is commonly used in social sciences (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001).

As we are focusing on gaining a deeper understanding of how middle managers in the public sector lead and motivate their employees, we will interpret the gathered data, thereby influence the result and, thus, in this thesis we have a hermeneutic philosophy.

4.2 Inductive and deductive research approach

The above discussion was concerned with the research philosophy, or the big picture, of the thesis. This in turn leads down to the research approach used, which Saunders et. al, (2003) argue is important to discuss as it influence the way in which data is collected and analyzed.

Damer and Freytag (1992) explain that there are two different approaches when searching for empirical data; deductive and inductive. The inductive, discovering, approach begins with the collection of data and as the research continues the choice of suiting theory and models is made. The deductive, also referred to as the proving, approach is used when the empirical data is structured and planned according to the present theoretical models.

Numerous university courses have presented theories about management, leadership and how these concepts should be conducted in order to have a successful outcome. We thus chose to discover more about these concepts to make a more detailed study, focusing on middle managers. As our theoretical framework proceeded new questions developed, to which we structured our interviews accordingly.
Our approach thus leans towards both inductive and deductive since we have utilized our gained knowledge throughout our studies, then developed new knowledge and structured our interviews based on our theoretical findings.

### 4.3 Qualitative research method

When determining how to conduct research, two major methods; qualitative and quantitative are available. These methods can be used either separately or combined, but one should always use the method that is most suited to the purpose of the thesis in order to get the most accurate result (Cantzler, 1992).

The two approaches mainly vary when it come to gathering and evaluating of data. Quantitative method is mainly focused on statistical instruments and how to prove correlations between different variables (Morse & Richards, 2002). One definition of this is as an empirical process of creating an objective test to support or refuse a claim (Mertens & McLaughlin, 1995). Thietart (2001) claims that the quantitative approach is used to focus on numbers, which make it more structured and formalised than the qualitative approach. This is supported by Jarlbro (2000) who claims that systematic and structured observations often are used when collecting empirical data using the quantitative method.

If the quantitative method is characterized by an unbiased study which focuses on numbers and statistical instruments, the qualitative method is recognized by closeness to the studied object (Holme & Solvang, 1997). Basically, this method aims for understanding rather than proving, meaning that it focuses on gaining a large amount of information from few observations, hence the opposite of the quantitative method. Daymon (2002) further argues that the qualitative study intends to investigate a range of interconnected activities, experiences, beliefs and values of people in terms of their context.

To best answer the purpose, we believe we need to develop a deep understanding of how middle management is leading. Thus, in order to do so we will accumulate this knowledge through interviews with relevant managers. We argue that it would be most difficult to investigate a social science as leadership and measure the thoughts of the interviewed persons by statistical methods.

We are aware of the fact that, as Creswell (1994) points out, that qualitative researchers apply their own subjective or biased interpretations, as they use a personal, informal and context-based rhetoric. Hence, we will keep the risk of being subjectively biased in mind throughout the thesis, and will try not to let our own opinions affect the thesis.

### 4.4 Case study design

When conducting research in social science, one can choose between several designs such as surveys, experiments and case studies. Rather than using large samples, a case study is an investigation of a phenomenon within a real-life context, and it is used to research contemporary events, rather than historical (Yin, 2003). We believe we cannot rely solely on previous research; we need to find contemporary information as well to best understand how middle managers motivates subordinates and are motivated themselves. Thus we argue a case study design is the best design for our research.
4.5 Primary and secondary data

Preferable both primary and secondary data should be used in order to obtain a valid research (Lekwall & Wahlbin, 2001). Secondary data is originally collected for another purpose than the study in question. In contrast, primary data is information collected first hand, in this thesis through interviews with middle management and co-workers. When collecting secondary data for the middle management part, we relied heavily on the middle management database stored at Anytimenow, provided to us by Professor Thomas Müllern at JIBS. To further complement our secondary data we have used literature and articles from the Jönköping University Library and databases accessed through the same library.

The primary data was collected through interviews, both face-to-face and by use of questionnaires, with middle managers and employees at Arbetsförmedlingen in Jönköping County. Even though questionnaires may be considered as its own method, May (2002) argues an interview can either be conducted in person or a questionnaire can be sent by post or email. In any case, we will in this thesis refer to our primary data as interviews, but we will discuss positive and negative aspects of each method.

4.6 Selection of respondents

The public sector consists of many non-profit organizations as well as companies seeking profit. Since our aim is to investigate how intrinsic motivation is used, we focused on a non-profit organization. The theory suggests that middle management is most needed during change, why we sought out an organization within the public sector that was undergoing change.

The political alliance that won the Swedish election in 2006, made it clear that it would decrease the unemployment rate. Thus, the responsible public organization, AMV, is facing many challenges to meet new demands. Arbetsförmedlingen is the employment agency executing the directives made by AMV. AF is present in numerous cities in the Jönköping County, having more than a dozen regional offices.

We chose to interview middle managers at three AF offices within the Jönköping County due to the fact that each office only has a few middle managers. By selecting more than one office we would be able to gather more data for analysis, but decided three offices would be enough. Each AF office has one Office Manager (OM) and at least one Assistant Office Manager (AOM), but as they all have subordinates above them and employees below them, we considered both positions as middle managers. Our intention was to interview the OM and at least one AOM at each office, but due to the current changes the organizations is facing, at some offices we only interviewed one manager. In total we conducted interviews with six middle managers, three by using personal interviewers and the other three by e-mail questioners. As all managers had worked for the organization for at least five years, we argue that they all possessed the relevant knowledge to answer our questions.

The employees we interviewed were selected by respective manager as they needed to plan the lost time due to our interviews. We are aware this might be a disadvantage as the respondents might believe they have to answer, and this might have affected the answers.

Försäkringskassan (FK) is another non-profit organization within the public sector that is currently re-organizing. Our intentions were to interview a selection of managers at FK to
compare with AF, but unfortunately middle managers at FK could not help us with this study due to lack of time, caused by this current re-organization.

4.7 Interview method

When using a qualitative method, interviews are the most common way to collect empirical data. All interviews consist of an interviewee and one or more respondents, while the former asks the questions, the latter answers them. How the questions are presented varies from personal meetings to phone or (e-) mail. The most common interview methods used are structured, unstructured, and semi-structured (Yin, 2003).

As structured interviews are created to limit the respondents’ answers and the unstructured method allows the respondent to answer without restrictions (Yin, 2003), we argue the semi-structured method suits our purpose best. We designed the questions in order to engage in a discussion, rather than just short answers as we argue that the semi-structured method allows us to ask open-ended questions, but still limit the answers by steering the interview.

Our interviews were both conducted through personal meetings, with an average time of one hour, and questionnaires distributed by e-mails (see Appendix A and Appendix B). The term questionnaire often refers to quantitative research interviews (Alexander, 1999) where the respondents fill in yes or no answers, tick a box or grade something from, for instance, 1-5. Despite this we will refer to our list of questions as a questionnaire, as it consists of several questions which we have created to be open-ended allowing the respondent to answer with more than a yes or no. “How”, “in what way”, “If so, how”, “please elaborate”, are all phrases we used to make it easier for the respondents to give descriptive answers.

A questionnaire’s advantages and limitations are correlated; one must pay special attention to each issue to make it an advantage. These issues include; time is used efficiently, good chance of high return rates, and questions are standardized (Alexander, 1999). The response time was set to one week, enabling the respondents to complete the questionnaires in their own time, thus the issues could be thought through. The questionnaire allowed us to distribute and collect much information with little time consumption. As we first contacted AF’s managers and confirmed they would answer the questionnaire we received a 100% return rate. By standardizing the questions the data returned would thereby be comparable and measurable. However, we needed to think all questions through to avoid misunderstandings, so we tested the questionnaire on an unbiased college. This way we gained understanding how each question could be interpreted which helped us re-phrase certain questions. By including a cover letter, we introduced the respondents to our research, and explaining in what context the questions were asked, see Appendix C.

The personal interviews brought the advantage of allowing us to ask follow-up questions and clarifications of both answers and questions. To a greater extent than with questionnaires, we could with interviews obtain large amounts of data in a short time frame (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Marshall & Rossman also discuss the limitation of face-to-face interviews. The respondents may feel uncomfortable revealing information and thoughts in live meetings, but our interviewees did not reveal any apparent discomfort, which we argue may be due to the promise of anonymity. Another factor that may cause discomfort is the use of sound recorders (Svenning, 1997). However, none of the managers expressed any concern when we asked if they would mind the use of such device. The recorder further allowed us to focus on the respondents’ body language and guide the interview (Svenning,
Thus, we believe they were in fact comfortable in our meetings and the extensive material gained implicates the same.

### 4.8 Data Analysis

Even though our focus lies on middle managers, we believe it is necessary to compare the leadership style and the managers’ intentions with the employees. By asking the same questions to all of them and then comparing the answers we argue we gain credibility.

Since all our interviews were recorded, the data needed to be transcribed (Bryman & Burgess, 1999), providing us with a better overview of what was said and assuring us no information was lost. The data was then structured in order to interpret it more easily (Holme & Solvang, 1997).

Both managers and employees expressed some critique to respective managers and felt unsure of how this could be perceived by their superiors. In order to prevent any discomfort and obtain as honest information as possible we offered the respondents anonymity. We believe that this especially enhance the creditability of the answers provided by the personnel, as they otherwise might have been concerned about their opinions reaching their managers. Therefore we will use false names throughout the thesis, and not reveal at which offices in Jönköping County the managers are working.

Our empirical findings will first bring up results from interviews with the managers, followed by the employees’ answers. This way the reader will attain a clear view of how the managers, as a collective, view and practise motivation. The reader can then easier follow our comparison with the answers retrieved from the employees.

The data gathered from our empirical findings will be analyzed and compared in relation to our theoretical framework. The analysis will be structured according to our research questions, which is in line with Silverman’s (2001) suggestion.

### 4.9 Trustworthiness and critique of method

Trustworthiness refers to the degree of quality which all academic research need. Gummesson (2000) describes quality as the reader’s confidence and trust in the research. It is constructed by reliability and validity which holds that the research can be reproduced using the same method and whether the research assesses what is intended. Due to the respondents’ anonymity it is difficult to verify the reliability as one needs to know the identity of the respondents to replicate our research. This is of course a major disadvantage with anonymity, but in order to gain trust from the respondents and thereby receive honest opinions of one’s motivation we argue it is necessary.

Objectivity is further important to minimize biased conclusion (Gummesson, 2000), but trade-offs will always exist and thus a perfect research design is rarely seen (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). As discussed previously, the hermeneutic philosophy holds that we interpret the collected data and the conclusions will thereby be biased to some extent. However, we argue we increase the trustworthiness by continuously keeping the concepts of objectivity and validity in our minds throughout the thesis.

All interviews were conducted in Swedish and the data translated into English. This could be seen as a problem since information may be lost in the translation. However, we claim
that this is not a major issue since we possess satisfactory English skills, in order to provide an accurate translation.

Interviewing managers about how they motivate their employees certainly include biased and subjective answers. Naturally, managers would like to portray themselves in the best light possible. Hence, the questions we ask may be interpreted by the respondents to provide the right answer, portraying them of being a good manager, rather than an honest answer. In general, when asked by students – who will use the answers in a public report at the local university – it may be difficult to provide an unfavourable image of one’s abilities to manage and lead.

Moreover, as we did not have the possibility to choose the employees to interview, we face a risk of having interviewed the manager favourable employees. Even though anonymity is given, the employees may have been chosen by the managers because they already have favourable opinions about both the organization and the middle managers’ leadership skills.

We believed that an observation, would enhance the trustworthiness of the study, because the risk of (biased or) deliberately favourable answers would decrease. However, due to the current change AF is undergoing, the managers felt they did not have time for us to observe their management/leadership style.

To sum up, even though we have no evidence supporting that the answers provided would be deliberately favourable, we do not exclude the possibility.
5 Empirical findings

In this chapter our empirical findings gathered through interviews conducted with middle management and the co-workers are presented. The chapter will start by a short presentation of the AF organization.

5.1 Background AF

Arbetsmarknadsverket was founded in 1948 in order to create a common work policy in Sweden. Since then the organization claims to have developed in order to exercise its main objective, to provide jobs to unemployed, in a more efficient manner. As the current organization is constructed, Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen (AMS) is the controlling authority, in charge of 20 länsarbetstämman, which in turn wheels 325 arbetsförmedlingar or employment agencies (arbetsformedlingen.se). We have focused on three of these employment agencies in the Jönköping County, interviewing both middle management and the employees. The three offices differed in size, ranging from about 30 to close to 90 employees. For an overview of the organizational structure of AMS, please see appendix D.

Our empirical data will be structured according to the hierarchical order, hence start with the middle managers, and finish with the data collected from the co-workers. As the focus of this thesis lies on middle management, the empirical data concerning these will be more extensive than the one regarding the employees. The data from the interviews will be presented under common headlines, rather than being divided up by the respective AF office. We believe that this will make it more interesting to read, as it will limit the number of repetitions which would probably have occurred if the interviews were presented separately.

As the middle managers all expressed a wish to be anonymous, and we believe that the co-workers will provide more truthful answers when anonymous, we have chosen to use fictive names when referring to them. These names will be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle Managers</th>
<th>Employees (all emails, 2007-05-07 - 14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonsson (personal meeting, 2007-05-10)</td>
<td>Andersson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karlsson (personal meeting, 2007-05-14)</td>
<td>Bengtsson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larsson (email, 2007-05-07 – 14)</td>
<td>Davidsson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martinsson (email, 2007-05-07 – 14)</td>
<td>Eriksson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niklasson (email, 2007-05-07 – 14)</td>
<td>Fredriksson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olofsson (personal meeting, 2007-05-18)</td>
<td>Gustavsson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5-1 Fictive names of respondents

To make it easier for the reader to separate the two groups, we have chosen to structure the names in alphabetic order, starting with the employees and continue with the middle managers. As we have presented the dates when the interviews were conducted above, we argue that we do not need to repeat these in the empirical findings.
5.2 Middle Management

5.2.1 The role as a middle manager

Concerning the most important tasks for a manager, Jonsson expresses that these are to lead the organization and evaluate the progress. Every week several goals, ranging from short term concerning a few weeks, to long-term goals of about a year, are to be evaluated. Jonsson reports to his supervisor, explaining whether these goals have been, or are about to be, fulfilled.

Karlsson explains that her job is to make sure that the organization has a well functional structure and to encourage the co-workers to take part in developing this. The same goes for Larsson, claiming that daily guidance of the job and result evaluation as the managers' most important tasks.

Many of the respondents expressed difficulties with their role as middle managers. Larsson perceives the position as somewhat "ungrateful" as the view of the organization differs significantly between his superiors and co-workers, making it hard to take both sides into consideration. He further explains that while his daily work is mostly concerned with leading individuals or smaller teams, his superiors are focusing on a wider perspective which can be conflicting. Moreover, as AF is re-organizing, Larsson states that he has a greater responsibility and more to do, which in combination with less funding has made his job much more stressful. Martinsson agrees and states that the directives from her supervisors sometimes are unclear and not fully thought through, which in turn makes it hard to convey these to the co-workers. The same goes for Olofsson who argues that the goals set by the government can be very difficult to achieve and communicate to the co-workers.

Jonsson explains that the role as a middle manager can be seen as a hamburger in which he is the meat. Top management constantly makes up new directives that he is to convey to the co-workers, which can be difficult. Jonsson claims that with force, nothing gets accomplished, rather:

"I try to explain to my co-workers what we are supposed to do and ask them, how do we do this?"

Karlsson agrees, claiming that the middle manager’s position is somewhat difficult as directives from superiors may conflict with the way she believes the organization should be run. This in turn might create a feeling of discourage as there is so much to do. She explains that:

"Sometimes I wonder what my superiors are thinking"

As a middle manager, however, it is important to find a solution of how to implement the directives, and the local office has great freedom when deciding how the directives should be fulfilled (Karlsson).

5.2.2 Middle leaders

When discussing the possibility for a middle manager to take on the leadership role, all managers stress the importance of being a leader.

Karlsson claims that her ambition is to be a leader as she believes more in leadership than management. She argues that:
“Everyone can be a manager, but few are to be leaders”

Karlsson is of the belief that it takes time to develop leadership skills and that it is something that one has to constantly work on. Leadership is about much more than just give orders; it is about getting the co-workers to strive towards a common goal which they have developed together with the leader. It is important to try to see the possibilities instead of the problems.

For Niklasson it is very important to be a leader and not just a manager as he claims that:

“You have to follow a manager but you want to follow a leader”

He argues that as AF’s organization has been made flatter, tougher goals are to be fulfilled but at the same time more focus has been paid to leadership and coaching. Niklasson further explains that his most important task is to translate the message from the supervisors in an understandable way to the co-workers. He does this by communicating the “whole picture”, so that the individual co-worker sees the effects of the work he/she does.

Olofsson agrees, arguing that by communicating the overall picture, motivation is increased among co-workers as they understand which decision to make and are able to work more freely in order to fulfill the desired objective. Olofsson states that:

“I am a leader; I do not even use the word manager”

He explains that sometimes one has to be fairly clear about what is expected, in other cases one do not have to lead much at all. Olofsson talks a lot about the big picture and claims that if the co-workers have a deep understanding of the organization and its goals, no discussion concerning short-terms goals are needed since everyone knows what is expected from them. By trying to communicate this understanding, Olofsson believes that co-workers will know what to do and which decisions to make in 80% of the cases. The other 20% are dependent on factors outside the control of AF which the co-workers will have to discuss with him. However, this is not fulfilled yet.

Larsson argues that his most important task is to be supportive and lead the co-workers towards good results. Martinsson shares that opinion and claims that she works closely to the co-workers, has high expectations on them but also try to make sure that they have the right tools to succeed with their assignments. She believes that it is very important to build a strong relationship with the employees, as they then can take their own initiatives and develop both themselves and the organization.

Jonsson claims himself to be a leader, or a coach, more than a manager. He states that sometimes he has to give direct orders and then he perceives himself more as a manager, but in the day-to-day activities:

“I want to be the coach that is my aim”

However, we experienced that Jonsson had some difficulties explaining how he practiced his leadership, and what separated him from a typical manager. What we did find, however, was that Jonsson claims empowerment is of vital importance and he strongly believes that by giving more power to the employees, they will be more motivated. Moreover, it is important to give the right assignment to the right people as one need to consider the knowledge needed for a specific task. Jonsson argues that by providing clear assignments, his subordinates are motivated as they know when the goals are achieved and take pride in fulfilling these.
Jonsson also tries to provide lots of feedback, mostly by giving encouragement throughout the assignments and try to explain what can be done better. He states:

“It is all about being open, listen and interpret the signals that the co-workers give to me”

Karlsson is of the same opinion, arguing that feedback is given both through group meetings with the co-workers in which the current results are discussed, and through individual discussions. However, Karlsson argues that the most important feedback is given on a daily basis in a more informal setting.

Another thing that Jonsson has discovered to be of vital importance is to be present at the work place. Currently Jonsson is situated at the sixth floor which has made the co-workers very upset as they never see him anymore. As a consequence he has to move down to the first floor again. Hence, Jonsson concludes that:

“Being visible for the co-workers is extremely important”

Both Jonsson and Olofsson argue that, in the daily work, their aim is to give so much power to the co-workers that they do not need the manager. Rather, the manager’s main responsibilities lie within strategy, choosing which path AF should take. Olofsson further explains that:

“In the current change, I as a leader have a very important role”

Olofsson believes that without middle managers the development within the organization would slow down, as people would get stuck in the day-to-day activities and do not see where the organization is heading. In short, he argues that in the daily work he is not of great importance but once this change due to certain factors, the middle manager plays a vital part.

5.2.3 What is motivation?

Jonsson explains that his motivation is that the organization is to accomplish the goals it has set, because if it does, the stakeholders are satisfied which in turn motivates us. Jonsson further explains that he has a background as an athlete and hence is motivated by winning and be the best. However, when asked what “best” means in a sector where no competition exists, Jonsson states that being the best simply means to achieve the goals. Niklasson claims that he is motivated by motivating others to do a great job, which is supported by Martinsson who claims that pursuing results with her co-workers motivates her. Larsson states that motivation is:

“Something that gives me a ‘go’ feeling, I want to go to work when I am motivated”

Jonsson believes that his superior has a huge responsibility in the organization, but that he does not receive the motivation he would like from her. The superior uses the whip more than the carrot, and Jonsson wishes that she could coach him more. He says it is very important that managers see and appreciate their subordinates if they are to do a good job, which he is trying to implement. He continues the argument by stating that he would be more motivated if he could receive that energy from his manager. Jonsson explains that:

“You give so much every day, you need to get something back as well”
However, Jonsson clarifies that instead of getting the attention he desires from his superior, he gets it from his co-workers. This is in line with the answers provided by most of the other middle managers, as they all claim to be motivated by their co-workers’ growth and development. Martinsson further states that she is motivated by fulfilling the goals set and Niklasson argues that AF has a very important function in the Swedish society which motivates him.

Karlsson, as opposed to Jonsson, states that she receives plenty of feedback and support from her superior. She also argues that her manager fills the function as a mentor for her personal leadership development. Even so, she states that out of tradition:

"Middle managers in this organization do not seek support from higher authority but try to solve the problems themselves."

Niklasson argues that as AF’s organization is currently being re-organized, the span of control (number of co-workers each manager is in charge of) has increased which makes it harder to give and receive feedback. Even so, most of the respondents claim that feedback is one of the most important tools to keep the employees motivated. Martinsson states that it is important to assign clear tasks, and be equally clear in the feedback concerning what was good, and what can be improved.

All middle managers state that goals are set by their superiors, and these are translated by the middle managers into smaller, operational goals in co-operation with the personnel. Every two weeks, these goals are evaluated and feedback is given in a fairly structured way. Martinsson argues that she works hard on creating a climate in which people feel free to express their views. She believes this to be:

"The only way to develop my team and generate ideas on how to improve our procedures"

The perception that the job performed at AF is important is shared by all middle managers. Jonsson recognizes his job to be very important and is motivated to do a good job because of this. This statement is supported by Niklasson who claims that the work performed by AF affects the Swedish economy, while Martinsson is more focused on the fact that AF helps individual people. Karlsson claims that people working at AF do so because they like to help people, not because they want a big salary. Hence, she is not sure that extrinsic motivators such as bonuses and increased salary would boost her, or the employees’ motivation. This is supported by the other managers which all argue that financial rewards are not the reason to why people feel motivated.

Nevertheless, since a few years, performance can be rewarded individually by increased salary. Jonsson explains that he receives a set sum of money which he can use as he pleases to increase the co-workers’ salary. As this is a new occurrence, the middle managers argue it is somewhat difficult to give more money to one person than another. However, Jonsson believes they are on the right path even though they can not compete with the private sector when it comes to salary and bonuses.

5.2.4 Motivation in change

All middle managers believe that people who work at AF has a desire to help people and that this fact creates a general motivation. However, as AF now is in turmoil, the managers experience a decline in motivation among their co-workers.
Karlsson explains that most of the co-workers at AF have been working for the organization for a very long time and are therefore used to change and new directives. However, she admits that this is the greatest re-organization that AF has ever gone through and that some resistance exists. She believes that her co-worker might feel that:

“I will not put too much effort into this change, as there will be new changes soon”

Some of the co-workers have expressed a wish to settle down and “just work, without constant change”. Karlsson states, however, that nothing will ever be as it used to and she tries to convey this to the co-workers in a smooth way. Olofsson agrees, arguing that some co-workers are currently demotivated since they are used to approach work in a certain way, which is no longer available. However, Olofsson says that AF now is more business like and that the co-worker has to realize this, meaning that:

“We have to be more efficient than before, negotiate with the companies and strive towards cost effectiveness”

This transformation is huge for the co-workers as they have to break old habits and understand that in order to help people, they have to think more in terms of costs and benefits.

Niklasson believes that demotivation occurs when the competence of an individual is not in line with the one needed to perform a certain task, making it very important to give the right tasks to the right people. Martinsson agrees and further claims that when tasks and procedures do not align with one’s personal values, demotivation is created. Larsson believes people to become unmotivated when they are not heard and feel unable to affect the way in which the work is carried out.

Olofsson argues that his co-workers apply to the 80/20 rule in which 80 % are motivated by the big picture he tries to communicate, while the remaining 20 % mainly focus on the individual cases. He further argues that the requested delivery times sometimes are unrealistic, he explains:

“I receive money which they (the government) argue should affect the unemployment statistics in three weeks, which is just unrealistic.”

Jonsson tells us that AF has been exposed to a lot of criticism lately due to the changes in the unemployment policies, imposed by the new government. This is supported by Olofsson who argues that the government does not always support their own decisions. Rather, when media highlights individual cases in which an unemployed may have been treated bad, the government claims that it was not their intentions with the directive and AF is left alone as the messenger. This has indeed been a challenge for all employees and has also devaluated the AF brand.

Karlsson agrees, and tells us that unemployed people visiting AF often are angry and disappointed at the co-workers because of the lower unemployment benefits. However, AF has nothing to do with this decision but is still criticized for it. As a consequence, the co-workers become demotivated as they are accused of things which they can not control. Furthermore, threats and violence against co-workers has increased due to lower unemployment benefits. Quite natural, Karlsson discusses this a lot with the personnel, trying to find a solution. She also explains that she wants the co-workers to send people with hostile complains directly to her. The same goes for Olofsson who argues that people do not express themselves in the same way when a manager is in the room. However, this is a major problem because:
“How do I motivate co-workers who do not feel safe?”

One should realize that AF is an organization controlled by the political parties, meaning that what is valid today, might well be changed by tomorrow. This fact can be uninspiring as people might feel that nothing ever stays the same so why should they put so much effort in it? Jonsson has noticed that the major transformation AF is going through, has brought some problems, especially for the older employees. He explains that the co-workers are used to offer supportive activities such as education and internships to the unemployed. However, as the funds for these have been cut by 60%, solutions have to emerge.

“The old tools we used to work with are no longer available, meaning that we now have to do things differently.”

Karlsson agrees, stating that in the ongoing change, things can be difficult as AF has to find creative solutions to provide jobs when the funds are lowered. Jonsson believes, however, that the changes will bring something good to AF as they are now supposed to focus more on finding real jobs instead of providing education and internships and so on. Karlsson says they are now more of a selling organization as they have to get out there and find the jobs.

5.2.4.1 Environment

Overall the respondents seem happy about working climate, with the exception of Larsson who claims that it gets tougher and tougher. This is somewhat supported by Niklasson who argues that due to the government’s change, it has been a bumpy ride lately. Martinsson argues that her personnel is functioning very well as people are eager to develop and take responsibility. However, she is not equally happy with the management team as the organization is a bit stiff, something she hopes the re-organization will improve.

Jonsson believes that the general working environment is good at AF but he wishes that more employees could tell him how they feel. He experiences that most of the co-workers are open when it comes to their job situation, but maybe the few ones that are not, have the most important opinions.

Jonsson further claims that the public sector is in more turmoil than the private sector, as it is controlled by political actions. To illustrate this, Jonsson explains that two weeks ago a new directive came which explained that no money was longer available for internships and educations. The political intervention also means that money often need to be saved, but the politicians are not sure in what area the savings should be made. Olofsson agrees, arguing that due to cut funds, AF had to abort ongoing internships and other programs. Moreover, he experience that the control is very tight in public organizations as the exact amount of money devoted to unemployment policies should be used, meaning that he has to exercise tight control of his co-workers. Olofsson wishes that the organization had a certain marginal of 5%, which would allow a more flexible organization.

5.3 Employees

In order to obtain a trustworthy study of how the middle management leads and motivates its staff we believe we need to compare the managers’ intentions with the personnel’s perception of these. The staff is working as handling officers, each with the responsibility to provide job-seekers with jobs and employers with competent employees. Thus, they fulfil the public sector organization’s mission, working as a link between the unemployed and the companies.
5.3.1 What is motivation?

With a few introductory questions the personnel provided us with their view what motivation means to them and what is experienced to be de-motivating. The staff has all personal views of the term motivation but a common denominator is that motivation drives them forward. It is the force that makes them willing to achieve their goals.

“If you are motivated, you put more time and effort into your work” (Fredriksson).

With motivation it is also possible to

“Achieve more than one thought was possible” (Andersson).

Most of the employees believe that the source of motivation comes from within themselves but that it is supported by their environment, such as co-workers, managers, and clients. Recognition from clients, both job-seekers and employers, motivates them as it confirms that their efforts have given positive results. One member of the staff feels motivated by

“The gratitude and attention one receives from co-workers”. (Davidsson)

A discussion led by another employee reflects on the need for motivational support in different stages. Initially, feedback is of more importance as one is new at the position, but the more familiar one becomes with working tasks and responsibilities the task itself becomes motivating. Still the manager needs to continue providing feedback but perhaps not to the same extent. Andersson believes that the challenge in their jobs is motivating as they work as an intermediate between unemployed and employers, aiming for a mutual agreement where both parties are satisfied. This is a challenge they face on a daily basis and she states that

“Challenge is an important ingredient in motivation” (Andersson)

The staff further names several important factors that are crucial for them to feel motivated. To be “seen” by co-workers and managers, to feel that one is an important part of something bigger, and to be able to contribute to both AF and to the society are all examples of such factors. Outside factors also have an impact on the motivation. As AF is a politically controlled organization, the personnel faces fast changing conditions, new directives may come with short notice with fast implementation time. These changes are sometimes perceived to undermine the work the handling officers do and some feel they might lose credibility because of this. It is important to clearly see the meaning of the work, meaning the work needs to be connected with the goals and responsibilities set by their managers. As the conditions are rapidly changing at AF, several employees express the need for a leader which can guide them through this.

“In times of change, I feel I have a greater need for a leader than a manager.” (Andersson)

5.3.2 How are you motivated?

AF is, according to the personnel, contributing to Sweden’s GDP in terms of increased employment rate, and thereby increasing tax revenues and decreasing costs for the welfare. This fact is a very important motivation factor for the employees at AF. Eriksson’s view, based on his experience is that unemployed, especially long-term unemployed, feel bad about themselves as they perceive themselves to live outside the society. This in turn may render lower self-esteem, which might make it even more difficult to perform well at job in-
terviews (Fredriksson). All employees have expressed strong feelings that their work is of great importance.

“What I feel is highly important (with the job) is that we diminish inequality and discrimination.” (Andersson)

“We at AF have Sweden’s most important job, and maybe the most difficult.” (Andersson)

They all agree on the fact that the country’s economy and social welfare is affected by their daily work. However, they do feel pressure, primarily from the mass media. Media’s attention often focuses on mistakes and bad things in the society which affects the general state of AF’s staff. On the other hand, this can also work as a motivator as it challenges the handler officers to persuade job-seekers that the situation is not as bad as the media makes it appear.

“Despite often incompetent and sometimes furious accusations (from the media) I’m convinced we contribute to an improved job market” (Gustavsson)

A job affects people’s health, according to Eriksson, because people in general identify each other through the work they do. “What do you work with?” is a common question. When unemployed, people not only feel less secure about themselves, but they are also questioned by others. The aggregated effect is that the country’s health is improved.

“The right person at the right place within employment improves the overall health.” (Davidsson)

### 5.3.2.1 Empowerment

Clear goals and set responsibilities have both been mentioned by the staff to be of importance in motivating them. Each AF office has three different kinds of meetings when discussing short and long term goals and objectives. They have individual meetings once a year to discuss personal development and salaries, group meetings every two weeks discussing each department’s goals and an office meeting where everyone is participating. These meetings are structured to give feedback individually and group wise respectively. In addition, continuous feedback is provided throughout the weeks.

Even though the employees have clear defined goals and objectives what to achieve, they all have the possibility to affect how they obtain them.

“Methods to achieve set goals are created by me, but also in co-operation with my colleges and my manager” (Davidsson)

This kind of responsibility is highly appreciated by the staff, as they, due to this “freedom with responsibilities” (Fredriksson) feel more stimulated and motivated to perform their work.

“The manager needs to function as a catalyst to start a process, but then let the worker be independent and accountable.” (Andersson)

The personnel feel this structure is giving them more motivation to work as it provides them with continuous feedback. However, as one employee states, “goals must be measurable” (Andersson). In order to provide constructive feedback the managers’ task is to provide these measurements and is, according to Eriksson, one of the most important tasks a
manager has. The structure is also good when it comes to solving problems. The manager is usually only consulted when there are issues of policy decisions or specific authority is needed. However, if a situation with clients is infected, the manager can work as an intermediate to solve the problem. As the organization faces many changes, the employees are used to this and have both the knowledge and the motivation to solve most problems individually or with assistance from colleges.

“At our office we’re dependent on each other, we’re used to fast changes and I think this is what makes us so efficient.” (Andersson)

All of the employees argue that they are given both proper authority and responsibility for their respective work.

5.3.2.2 Feedback

Feedback is considered well executed by the management. Comments about respective employee’s manager reveal that they succeed in making the staff feel secure and well cared for. Positive oral feedback is often given in presence of colleagues which render recognition among peers. The managers also communicate feedback through emails and scheduled individual meetings.

“I feel my manager cares about me, that he has confidence in me and my abilities.” (Davidsson)

“My manager devotes time to listen to me, but is also honest and gives clear directives on how to pursue a problem.” (Andersson)

At certain times employees need more attention from their managers, such as when the workload is heavier, problems need to be dealt with, and when certain goals need to be prioritized. None of the staff members have expressed anything that would reveal the management to be biased; in fact they view their managers as fair, not showing tendencies to prefer one employee over another.

“At times, due to specific assignments, colleges need more attention, and then my manager provides that.” (Andersson)

Feedback is considered as a certainty at AF. Both managers and staff expressed the need for it, both formally and informally, and everyone appreciates it. Specific guidelines for feedback do not exist, they rather concern criteria for salaries and what competence is needed. The formal feedback to individuals is, however, given during the yearly personal development meetings, and during the group meetings and office meetings feedback is provided collectively.

“We have a fairly structured agenda during the personal meetings, and feedback is an important topic” (Gustavsson)

In addition, both colleges and managers give advices and comments for improvement throughout the work day, during coffee breaks, informal meetings and such.

“Feedback is given when it’s needed, it depends, but we have a friendly atmosphere so anyone may comment on anyone’s work.” (Andersson)

Both managers and employees express their concern that each must feel welcome and appreciated for who they are and what they do. The county office, Länsarbetsnämnden, is ac-
According to Andersson also supporting informal communication, an “open” and friendly working environment.

“If the staff is motivated, the working environment is open, and critique is welcomed” (Andersson)

Clients, unemployed and employers, also provide positive and negative critique. As the politically controlled organization AF is, changes for the organization have effects on the clients.

“We’re daily exposed to critique from customers” (Andersson)

Usually customer feedback is handled with discussions with the customers, as many complaints are misunderstandings or customers simply express frustration over their situation. Constructive criticism towards the organization is forwarded upwards in the hierarchy, negative as well as positive.
6 Analysis

The following analysis will be structured to answer the research questions, thus combining the knowledge gained from both frame of reference and empirical findings.

6.1 Why is the role of middle manager important?

Middle management is a very wide concept as one can define it as all but the top management of an organization. They are supposed to communicate information upwards and downwards in the organization (Thompson, 1967) and are responsible for operational decisions (Brennan, 1991). This in turn means that they face the acknowledged dilemma of being caught in the middle that, among others, Denham (1997) argues is a problem for middle managers. This is supported by the middle management at AF, and something that Karlsson experiences as a difficulty in her role as she sometimes feels frustrated when new directives can be the opposites of what has recently been ordered. Larsson claims his position as a middle manager to be “ungrateful” due to this fact and Martinsson states that the directives from superiors sometimes are hard to convey to the co-workers. Hence, we realize that middle management experiences the role as somewhat difficult as multiply interest need to be taken into account.

As opposed to Engel (1997) and Peters (1992) who claim that middle managers are not needed, the position is perceived to be essential for the organization by the middle managers at AF. Engel (1997) argues that due to empowered employees, the need for middle managers decreases as the employees gain more control. Olofsson and Jonsson (AF), however argue that even though employees gain more control, they are more concerned about the day-to-day activities. A middle manager is still needed in order to provide perspective, to execute the plans accordingly to the top management’s goals. In addition, the current reorganization has increased the pressure as more needs to be done with less funding. We argue that the answers provided by the personnel also imply that the middle management fulfills an important position. To set goals, provide feedback on the work done, and to take on the overall responsibility are all things which make the middle manager important. Furthermore, most of the co-workers believe that a manager can increase their motivation to work.

Olofsson argues that the role of the middle manager during change is increasingly important, since they are responsible for implementing the change. He is also of the belief that leadership skills are very important to possess in order to achieve change. This notion is also supported by the personnel as Andersson states that in times of change, there is a greater need for a leader than a manager. Hence, we can see that these findings are supporting Dopson, Risk & Stewart’s (1992) conclusion that when an organization is experiencing rapid change, the middle manager’s role is getting increasingly important. We also find support for Brandt’s (1994) claim that middle managers nowadays are executing the plans – by motivating employees – which drives the business forward. Hence, from the theoretical and empirical findings, we argue, in line with Quentin (2001), that middle management is a vital asset for AF.
6.2 To what extent can AF’s middle managers be said to be middle leaders?

6.2.1 Middle leaders?

The public sector has by researchers been characterized as an environment where decision processes are highly regulated (Schartau, 1993), leading to an inflexible organization, where several goals need to be met (Holmberg & Henning, 2003), leading to uncertainty and unclear roles for leaders. As for AF, the managers describe the organization as hierarchical, but feel that they have good possibilities to decide how new directives are to be implemented. This freedom with boundaries provides the middle managers to focus on leadership, rather than management. This freedom also diminishes the uncertainty created by the constant flow of new directives, allowing AF’s middle managers to create a solution for each problem. Thus, researchers’ belief of public organizations inflexibility is not applicable on AF, but as Schartau (1993) also states, public companies are not homogenous.

As stated in the frame of reference, we believe that a distinction between management and leadership can be made. As Lewis (2003) argues, a manager is mostly concerned with the administrative tasks of an organization, while the leader gets people along to achieve the organization’s goals. We can see that this perspective is in line with the definition of leadership we use for this thesis, i.e. “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse 2004, p.3). This is also acknowledged by Bennis & Nanus (2003), and Walton (2003), who argue that the ability for a leader to communicate a desired state is important. The interviews with the middle management revealed that some of them agreed. Niklasson states that translating his supervisor’s directives to the co-workers by communicating the overall picture, hence highlighting the impact every co-worker has on the organization is very important.

We argue that middle management should take on the leadership role, but since they often feel that the directives given to them conflict with their own views, problems might arise. Bennis & Nanus (2003) argue that a leader has to be able to communicate a desired future state and show consistency towards that goal. We question whether this is possible for a middle manager who feels that the directives given to him/her are not thought through. How is one supposed to inspire co-workers to pursue a directive that one does not believe in?

When discussing this issue with the middle managers at AF, however, it is clear that they all claim to be leaders, rather than managers. Furthermore, they argued that even though the directives are given to them, they are relatively free to implement them as they please. We argue that this supports Frohman’s (2000) claim that while top management’s leadership is visionary, middle leadership focuses more on immediate problems and opportunities.

Karlsson argues that even though she may not always agree with her superiors, it is important to see the possibilities instead of the problems. She believes that by focusing on the opportunities and communicating a positive state, the co-workers will realize that the problems are possible to overcome. She further claims that everyone can be managers, but only a few can be leaders and says that leadership is about getting the co-workers to strive towards a common goal. One realizes that this technique is somewhat the base of effective leadership as researchers (Adair & Thomas, 2004, Bennis & Nanus, 2003) argue that a leader needs to be role model. He/she should be enthusiastic and committed to the organization while staying the course and show consistency towards the goals of the organization.
The managers all claim to spend much time on this and argue that it is very important for the effectiveness and motivation of the co-workers. This is in line with what Frohman (2000), Nilson (1998) and Sethi (1999) discuss, that in order to focus on an organization’s immediate problems and opportunities, middle managers should engage with team members, coach and inspire them to be active participants. The opinions of the personnel support this claim as they argue that to be “seen” by both co-worker and managers is of big importance. Overall the co-workers seem to agree upon the fact that the middle managers give them satisfactory support to make them succeed in their work. Davidsson claims that he feels as if his manager cares about him and has confidence in his abilities, while Andersson states that her manager listens to her, but that her manager also can give clear directives on how to pursue a problem.

As the discussion above implies, we believe that the managers interviewed are what Engel (1997) refers to as non-managers, as they coach and inspire their co-workers. We experienced that all managers had a fairly clear view of what leadership is, and they all argued that management and leadership are two separate things.

When trying to verify the statements made by the middle management to the opinions of their co-workers, we realize that the managements’ claim of being leaders is supported by the personnel. They argue that they receive good feedback, support and freedom in their job situation, which in turn makes them more motivated and filled with an understanding for the goals of the organization. Several of the co-workers describe that the managers decide the goals but that it is up to them to decide how these are executed, which is the very foundation of empowerment. As a consequence, we believe that the middle managers at AF can be said to be middle leaders.

6.3 How are the employees motivated?

Our frame of reference reveals that motivation is closely related to leadership (Maddock & Fulton, 1998; Lewis, 2003; Antonioni, 2000), in fact, as Maddock & Fulton (1998) state; the main characteristic of a leader is how well he/she motivates subordinates.

6.3.1 Environment

According to the literature, before the leader can motivate others, certain pre-requisites need to be fulfilled. Both Maslow (in Lewis, 2001) and Hertzberg (2003) argue the organization must provide a safe working environment and interpersonal relations should be supported. This used to be found in AF, but as a consequence of the change in unemployment benefits, several managers highlight the fact that the working environment has become more hostile. Karlsson and Olofsson (AF) explain that threats against the personnel has increased, thereby making another aspect of job security an issue. The managers are dealing with this by discussions with the personnel and channelling those hostilities towards themselves, allowing the handling officers to focus on their job. We believe this is in line with what Hertzberg and Maslow argue, as it is the managers’ task, as spokesmen for the company, to provide such safety.

Although AF is re-organizing due to political change and faced with financial cut-backs, Jonsson and Olofsson state that, so far, it is mostly affecting AF’s customers, not the employees. AF’s managers have not yet been forced to let any of the staff go; hence this aspect of the job security is still intact. Another issue that is related to the working environment is the obvious effects of change. Change is also uncertainty; what is to come next, how will it
be dealt with, will the results be good? Such uncertainties are something the managers at AF believe the staff is used to because the organization is politically controlled. Karlsson explains that as change at AF is a certainty, it is something everyone needs to adapt to. Antonioni (2000) argues that a leader needs to implement change and lead it in a long-term perspective, which most of the managers agree upon. They all seem to believe that the current political change will bring something good to the organization which, according to Denny (2005) makes them more able to motivate others.

Thomas & Dunkerley’s (1999) study found that managers within the public sector were more critical to the changes than in the private sector. Furthermore, the morale was affected as the managers claimed to be under increased pressure but had received no rewards for their growing workload.

Even though we have not compared our findings with the private sector, this can not be seen from our empirical findings as all but one middle manager argue that the current change is good for the organization. Larsson is the exception and argue that the change has brought more stress and tougher working environment upon him.

Karlsson admits that a constant changing environment puts additional pressure on people, leading to frustrations among the employees. As Andersson, an employee, says, the change itself is rarely a problem but certain changes are contradicting their current task, so it is important that the managers explain how their work is connected to the new goals. Since everyone is aware that change is also necessary to perform their work, we believe temporary irritation is natural but as the empirical finding shows, the goal AF has is also highly motivating. This leads us to the question how motivation is achieved and supported at AF compared to our frame of reference.

6.3.2 Intrinsic motivation

The importance of having a staff that wants to perform is related to the impact it has on an organization’s profit and success (Wiley, 1997). Adair & Thomas (2004) says that managers need to provide incentives to trigger employees and stimulates them to enjoy their work. We argue that motivators delivered from managers, such as autonomy and feedback, are good supportive measures, but the most important motivator in order for people to like what they do is the work itself. This is the goal, as it will make anyone enjoy coming to work. This factor is also the most important one in the model of Hertzberg’s motivational factors, a fact that contribute very much to the motivation of the employees. AF’s goal, to decrease the unemployment in Sweden, is such a motivator, as both employees and managers are convinced that the organization’s goal is very important for Sweden. The awareness that each day’s success, providing jobs to clients, is contributing to the country’s well-being is something we believe is the key motivators at AF. Such intrinsic motivation is perhaps the most powerful, as it without the manager’s influence provides a sense of importance and contributes to an individual’s self-esteem.

Whereas Hertzberg’s hygiene factors describe the general working environment, his motivation factors describe what need to be accomplished in order for people to be motivated. Recognition for achievement, sense of importance, and involvement in decision-making are all examples of such motivators. With these motivators implemented, managers will receive employees that want to perform their work. Motivation is thus an important goal as it leads to energized and committed (Adair & Thomas, 2004) employees, making them wanting to work. The need for recognition is confirmed by the employees, however it is not only recognition from the managers they refer to, they also appreciate feedback given from the peo-
ple they work with. Managers and colleges, as well as clients, are providing them with feedback of their performance. This, they argue, makes them feel recognized and admit it is a crucial part of being motivated.

Jonsson at AF emphasizes the importance of recognition, of what has been accomplished. When a person is dedicated and put much effort into the work it is imperative to provide feedback, otherwise the effort may be lost. The employee needs to know that his/her work is important and that it is worth putting a lot of effort in. The possibility of providing feedback is, according to Martinsson, linked to how well defined the goals are and how many subordinates a manager has. It is imperative that individual goals are based on each person’s competence; otherwise they will soon feel insufficient and de-motivated to work (Niklasson). Denny (2005) argues the same, claiming that goals should be specific and not too long-term since they then do not have the desired effect. The current re-organization has increased each manager’s staff and made it more difficult to dedicate time to each employee, thereby the importance of clear goals increases. However, both managers and the personnel claim that continuous feedback is given, which ensures that goals are met as planned, and any obstacle is dealt with immediately. Feedback is given in both directions at AF; hence the employees are also able to give feedback to the managers. Furthermore, it is not solely involving performance but also the creation of ideas. By creating an environment where the employees feel free to express their views and opinions, the managers succeed in receiving input back.

6.3.3 Empowerment

Empowerment is allowing employees to take part of information about the organization’s goals and current status and providing them with tools so they can make the right decisions in each situation. This makes them more motivated to perform a better result which in turn makes the department or organization more efficient as a whole. Jonsson, among other managers explain that she frequently involves the personnel in the decision making. When decisions are made based on more than one person’s opinions they are easier to implement, thus improving the effectiveness of them. This does not only improve the organization but perhaps more importantly involves the employees in the decision-making, which is in line with Hertzberg (2003) and Nelson (2005), arguing an encouraging environment to contribute is increasing the intrinsic motivation.

Olofsson believes that if the co-workers share an understanding of the organization’s main goals, they will know how to act in any given situation and are free to make their own decisions. This is seen in the theory as Antonioni (2000) and Bennis & Nanus (2003) argue that a leader should create a shared vision of the right things to do and show consistency to that goal. The managers’ intentions are confirmed by the personnel, who argue that, even though they have fairly clear defined objectives which are to be achieved, they have the possibility to affect how they attain them. Fredriksson explains that he has a lot of responsibilities in his job, but that he is also relatively free to fulfill the goals in the way he finds best. Andersson is of the same opinion, stating that her manager often starts a process or a task, but then she is independent and accountable for executing it.

Because the employees are given both formal and informal feedback, they are allowed independence. They feel secure in their roles as their managers will, with few exceptions, not interfere with their work unless the managers are asked to. Most problems are solved by each handling officer or between colleges. Porter et al (2003) argues feedback needs to be combined with autonomy in order to enhance the intrinsic motivation. We can conclude that
this structure provides the employees with a good portion of autonomy, thereby the social intrinsic motivation – feedback – leads to environmental intrinsic motivation – autonomy.

By sharing responsibility, the manager shares the burden and involves the employee in the decision-making, allowing him/her to contribute to the organizations performance. By empowering, the manager provides the employee with autonomy, enabling him/her to decide how to perform the work and where the employee also is accountable for decisions taken (DuBrin, 2000; Twyla, 1993). The manager needs to believe in empowering (DuBrin, 2000), that the employees are capable of handling the information, seeing them as able to solve problems on their own, rather than problem creators, provided they are given the possibilities.

At AF, empowerment has been implemented for a long time. Each manager is sharing information and responsibility downwards in the hierarchy, allowing each level to come up with the best solutions. The interviews in this study have all revealed structured ways how the employees are involved. In both personal and group meetings responsibility is shared as both individual and collective goals are set. This shows that the managers have confidence in the employees’ abilities to solve problems, as long as they are provided with the necessary tools. In turn, it creates a problem-solving environment where anyone can help anyone, and feels free to do it. The familiar tone in which everyone is referring to each other during the interviews confirms they feel secure, the managers believe in the employees and the managers receive recognition of their efforts as they have created an environment that supports motivation.
7 Conclusions

In this chapter we will answer the purpose of this thesis and draw conclusions upon the importance of middle leaders.

The purpose of this thesis is to describe the middle managers role in a public sector organization and how they motivate their employees. We chose to approach this study by interviewing middle management and employees in a government controlled organization, AF, as it experiences a management crisis (Thomas, 1999), it is an organization in change and we wanted to study how the managers motivate their employees with non-financial means, as it we believed it was of less use in this sector. In addition, little has been written about middle managers in the public sector (Schartau, 1993).

We argue that the role of middle management is vital for a public sector organization because employees need continuous feedback, recognition and support for their work, a manager needs to take an overall responsibility for the local office, and directives from the top management need to be translated into operational actions in order to achieve the organization’s goals. This, we argue, is always important, but especially important when the organization is in change.

The efficiency with which the organization’s goals are met is created by motivating the employees, making them want to work. This is done by providing an open environment, continuously giving them both formal and informal feedback and recognition, and empowering them, sharing responsibility and giving them autonomy. All these tasks are performed by a leader rather than a manager, why we claim the role should be called middle leader.

However, we believe that even in a state where each team member is fully empowered, a leader is still needed, as too many decisions would otherwise be debated, causing more procedures and administration, which would lead to inefficiency. We have found that in times of change, the importance of a good leader increases as people will need to know which way to go and the leader provides this guidance.

As many employees have claimed that to be “seen” is very important for them to be motivated, the importance of middle leaders further increases. We argue that in larger organizations, such as AF, top management is doubtfully able to coach and support each employee. Thus, we believe the need for middle leaders in larger organizations is a certainty. Furthermore, the employees would not receive the feedback a middle leader provides, which we have seen is of great importance for the employees’ motivation to work.

Through the information gathered in this study we argue that the middle management at AF can be said to be middle leaders to a great extent. They give responsibility and autonomy to the employees, coach them and provide feedback in an efficient way, which motivates the personnel to perform better.

The old notion (Thompson, 1967) of a middle manager as someone who is merely communicating information upwards and downwards in the organization is outdated. The middle leader of today coaches, empowers and make sure that the organization fulfills it goals.
8 Discussion and final remarks

This chapter will discuss the thesis and the trustworthiness of the study. We will also present suggestions for further research.

Since the shift in political control of Sweden in 2006, AF has been heavily criticized in media, gained less funding and is currently being re-organized. We therefore thought it would be interesting to study the middle management of this organization, as the concept has been somewhat bypassed in the leadership literature. We found that little was written about middle management in public sector but discovered that a relatively new term, middle leader, was discussed by some researchers.

Concerning our study, we argue that it could have been performed differently, but we claim that our solution fit for this subject. Even though we are convinced that middle management should try to transform into middle leaders, we argue that we can not generalize upon the concept of middle leaders based on the information gathered in this thesis. We have come to the conclusion that the managers interviewed can be said to be middle leaders, but in order to make a generalization more than one organization must be included in a study.

8.1 Trustworthiness of the study

When conducting a study it is important that the assembled empirical data reflects the reality and that objectivity is ensured, in order to minimize the risk of a biased conclusion (Gummesson 2000).

Yin (2003) argues that two major approaches are used when determining the trustworthiness of a study, i.e. reliability and validity, in which reliability measures to what extend the study can be reproduced by others with the same result. Patel and Davidson (2003) argue that using standardized interviews is a prerequisite in order to attain reliability. As a semi-structured interview technique was used, we argue that to exactly reproduce this study would be most difficult, since many variables influence both the questions and the answers. The questionnaires, which guided the personal interviews, were designed to stimulate an open discussion so even if one would use the same questionnaire, it is likely that the discussion would turn out differently. This might be seen as a disadvantage, but we argue that when studying social sciences a thorough discussion should be engaged in order to avoid inaccurate answers.

Regarding the validity, it refers to whether the study answers what was intended and if these results reflect the truth (Yin, 2003). As we claim to have answered the research questions and our purpose, one of the criteria of validity has been fulfilled. Concerning the element of truth we argue that the problem of objectivity may have come into play. As we argued in the method, we believe that the managers interviewed were eager to present themselves in the best light possible, hence they might have answered what they thought was the “right” answer, rather than the true. However, we can not assume that the middle managers provided false information. Furthermore, the answers provided by the employees supports the middle managers claim to be leaders, rather than managers.

As a consequence we believe to have validated our findings in a satisfying manner, arguing that the reader can trust our study.
8.2 Further research

The middle leader concept is relatively new and more research is needed in order to verify its importance. We have concluded that middle leaders are a valid term on the new middle management, and that middle leaders motivate their personnel. However, we have not seen how this affects the organizations effectiveness in real terms. Further research is needed to determine to what extend competent middle leaders contribute to the revenue of private organizations and fulfilling of the organization’s goals for public ditto.

Moreover, one could argue that if the middle manager is, apart from being caught in the middle and manage, also supposed to lead this can increase the pressure on an already stressful position. The middle managers we met were all eager to lead, but if this is the case for all middle managers? Is there a negative trade-off when middle managers are too concerned with leading and neglect the management side?
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Appendices

Appendix A

Questions to middle managers

Background

• What is your name?
• When did you become a middle manager?
• How many employees do you have?

Middle manager

• Which 3 work tasks are in your opinion the most important?
• Can you identify any difficulties in satisfying both employees and manager? Please elaborate.
• If so, why do you believe the role of middle management to be important?
• Do you, first and foremost, regard yourself as a manager or a leader? Please elaborate.
• Have you experienced any change in your role as a middle manager the past few years? Please elaborate.
• How are you motivated as both a leader and as a manager?

Motivation

• What does motivation mean to you?
• If so, how do you feel you have support from your manager?
• How do you show your employees appreciation?
• What do you believe to be de-motivating, and how do you prevent this?
• If any, with what kind of financial rewards can motivate your employees?
• (If yes, do you perceive these financial rewards to motivate work?)
• If any, what kind of individual and department goals do you have?
• (Have the employees been involved in creating these goals?)
• (How are these goals followed up?)

• Are you sharing responsibilities, giving authority and independence to your employees? If so, why, what is your intent?
• If so, how do you perceive your job as important?
• Do believe your employees feel the same way?
• In a “problem situation”, are the employees – in general – solving the issue or do you participate? Is this the best solution, and why?

• How is feedback provided? (are there guidelines, routines)
• How is critique handled?
• How would you describe the working environment?
• Are the conditions good for being motivated and motivating your employees?
Frågor till mellanchefen

Bakgrund

• Vad heter du?
• När blev du mellanchef?
• Hur många har du under dig?

Mellanchef

• Vilka är dina tre viktigaste arbetsuppgifter?
• Ser du några svårigheter i att tillfredsställa både ledning och personal?
• Ser du dig själv främst som en ledare eller chef? Motivera.
• Känner du att din roll som mellanchef har förändrats de senaste åren?
• Hur motiveras du som chef respektive ledare?

Motivation

• Vad är motivation för dig, och hur yttrar sig denna?
• Hur uppmärksammar du din personal och ger den bekräftelse?
• Vad tror du är orsakerna till att folk känner sig omotiverade? Hur motverkas detta?
• Vilka belöningssystem har ni att tillgå? Har du möjlighet att belöna extraordinärt jobb?
• Är belöningar verkligmotiverande?
• Har du uppsatta mål för avdelningen och enskilda? Har dessa konstruerats i samband med personalen? Hur följs de upp?
• Jobbar ni i riktning mot att ge medarbetarna mer befogenhet och självständighet? Om ja, varför, och vad är målet?
• Upplever du att det jobb som er organisation utför är viktigt för Sverige? Tror du att dina medarbetare upplever detta?
• I en problemsituation, löser personalen problemet själva eller är du ofta inblandad? Är det senare nödvändigt, upplever du det som bra?
• Hur ges feedback, finns det rutiner, ”guidelines”, öppet klimat, välkomnas kritik, innovativ miljö?

Förutsättningar

• Hur skulle du vilja beskriva arbetsklimatet?
• Vilka förutsättningar finns det på din arbetsplats för att du ska känna dig motiverad och kunna motivera dina underanställda?
• Är den offentliga sektorn tryggare/jobbsäker än privata. Mindre vinstintresse – mer långsiktigt?
• Är den offentliga sektorn en motivationsfaktor i sig?

Kommentarer

Om du känner att det saknas en fråga, eller något övrigt du vill ta upp, ber vi dig skriva detta här.
Appendix B

Questions to employees

Background

- What is your name?
- What is your position?

Motivation

- What does motivation mean to you?
- If so, how are you motivated?
- Do you feel you have support from your manager?
- What do you believe to be de-motivating, and how is this prevented?
- How are you appreciated by your manager?
- Do you perceive co-workers to receive more attention by your manager?
- (If so, which do you believe to be the reasons?)
- Have you and/or your manager set up goals for your position and/or your personal development? Is this necessary? Why?
- Have you experienced that your manager is giving you more responsibilities and autonomy? Is this good or bad? Please elaborate.
- Do you believe your job to be important? Why / why not?
- In a “problem situation”, do you – in general – solve the problem yourself or does your manager assist you / interfere? Is this satisfactory?
- How is feedback given?
- How would you describe the working environment?

Comments

If you feel that any question is missing or if you have any other comments you would like to bring to our attention, please write them here.
Frågor till personalen

- Vad heter du?
- Vad har du för arbetsuppgifter?

Motivation

- Vad är motivation för dig, och hur yttrar sig denna?
- Vad tror du är orsakerna till att folk känner sig omotiverade? Hur motverkas detta?
- Hur uppmärksammas du av din chef, får du bekräftelse för utfört arbete?
- Känner du att du själv eller att dina kollegor får mer uppmärksamhet av din chef? Vad tror du detta kan bero på?
- Har du och din chef satt upp mål för din tjänst och/eller personliga utveckling? Behövs det? Varför, varför inte?
- Upplever du att din chef ger/har gett dig mer ansvar? Hur upplever du detta?
- Upplever du att det jobb som er organisation utför är viktigt? På vilket sätt?
- I en problemsituation, löser personalen problemet själva eller är chefen ofta inblandad? Är det senare nödvändigt, upplever du det som bra?
- Hur ges feedback, finns det rutiner, ”guidelines”, öppet klimat, välkomnas kritik?

Kommentarer

Om du känner att det saknas en fråga, eller något övrigt du vill ta upp, ber vi dig skriva detta här.
Appendix C

Prior to this introduction letter the AF office has been contacted and a relationship with the middle managers been established. The middle managers selected two employees each for us to distribute the questions to. This letter is served to introduce the respondents in which context the questions are asked.

Introduction letter

Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss

We are writing a Master of Science thesis, concerning how middle managers motivate their employees, with emphasis on non-financial rewards, so called intrinsic motivation. Our focus lies within public sector organizations as its middle managers have less possibilities using financial rewards. The leader’s, thereby the middle manager’s, role is of most importance when organizations are in change, as the “right” motivation can be crucial. This is why we have chosen to ask you to participate in this investigation.

In order to increase the trustworthiness of our thesis we would like both managers and employees to participate. As some questions regard your opinion of your manager, how you perceive his/her leadership we offer you full anonymity. Our thesis will include fake names so the reader can follow the interview, but your names will not be a part of the thesis. We hope this will render honest answers, without you fearing repercussions.

Because of the change AF is undergoing we send these interview questions. You can of course write as much or as little as you would like, but we would appreciate as complete answers as possible.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your participation.

Please return the questions by email to

Bbaf03bean@ihh.hj.se (Anders Berg) and
Bbac03frjo@ihh.hj.se (Jörgen Fransson)

Bäste Herr/Fru/Fröken,

Vi skriver vår magisteruppsats om hur mellanchefer motiverar sin personal, med betoning på motivering som inte inkluderar belöningsystem, s.k. intrinsic motivation. Vi fokuserar vår uppsats på organisationer i den offentliga sektorn då dess mellanchefer har mindre möjligheter att använda belöningsystem. Ledarens, och däremot mellanchefernas, roll är som viktigast i förändringar då rätt motivering kan vara avgörande, varför vi valt att fråga Er.

För att vår uppsats trovärdighet vill vi intervjua både mellanchefer och deras personal. Då vissa frågor behandlar Er uppfattning av era chefer erbjuder vi er full anonymitet. Vår uppsats kommer inkludera påhittade namn så att läsaren lättare kan följa resonemanget, men era namn kommer i presenteras. Vi hoppas detta resulterar i ärliga svar, utan att ni känner rädsla för konsekvenser.

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Då det ej funnits tid till personliga intervjuer sänder vi detta frågeformulär. Ni kan naturligtvis skriva hur mycket eller lite ni vill, men självklart uppskattar vi om svaren är så uttömmande som möjligt.

Vi skulle uppskatta om Ni vill fylla i och sända tillbaka detta formulär senast fredag 11 maj, 2007.

Ni är hjärtligt välkomna med frågor.

Vänligen sänd ifyllt dokument via email.

Tack på förhand!

Anders Berg och Jörgen Fransson

Bba03bean@ihh.hj.se och bbac03frjo@ihh.hj.se

Internationella Handelshögskolan, Jönköping
Appendix D

Organization chart, Arbetsförmedlingen

Arbetsmarknadsverkets organisation