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Master Thesis Circle

HRM in Managing Strategic Organizational Change

Thesis Title

HR Competency Model for Change Management: An Explorative Case Study



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This research is supported by Royal Philips Electronics. Therefore, all the reports and company documents that were consulted will not be enclosed to this Master Thesis.

Preface

What seemed as an endless process has come to its end. My desire to achieve a meaningful and relevant outcome was a great motivator. Looking back, I could say with no doubt that I gained valuable learning experience and despite the challenges I faced I enjoyed the journey.

It is no secret that the process of writing this master thesis was “painful” for me. I faced a lot of challenges, I had to overcome many barriers and therefore, I have no words to express my deepest gratitude to the people who made finalizing this paper eventually happen!

Here is the place for me to thank Bram de Swart, all HR Professionals, Line Managers and Works Council Members in the IT Department of Royal Philips Electronics. Without giving me the chance to develop my project at Philips and without the constant encouragement and support I received this master thesis might have not even been completed. For that I will be eternally gratefully.

I am furthermore very happy and consider myself lucky that I had the chance to work under the supervision and constant support of Pr. Jaap Paauwe. His expertise and willingness to guide me to achieve the best possible results tremendously improved the quality of my paper.

I am also extremely grateful to Doc. Ad Vossen, whose advices and support in the data analysis section were more than valuable and thus contributed to enhancing the added value of the research.

Last but not least, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the people without whose support I would have never even started the journey called “Master in Human Recourse Studies”. Thus, my most special thanks are dedicated to my family and friends who made me realized that even in the most difficult periods of my life, there are people who believe in me and will always support me. Despite the countless milestones and the moments of despair they did not stop encouraging me, believing in me and giving me strength to carry on! For that and for not letting me give up THANK YOU!!!

Plamena Uzunova

March, 2012

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Abstract

Although there is a lot of literature dedicated to Change Management, little research has been focused on the required change agents' competencies and even less - on the HR competencies contributing to an increased HR effectiveness in a change context. Thus, this research investigates what are the necessary HR change Management competencies, resulting in a comprehensive competency model to be applied by practitioners. Firstly, a heuristic framework was derived from an extensive literature review. Secondly, an explorative case study was conducted in the IT Department of Royal Philips Electronics. Qualitative and quantitative data sets were collected. Thus, the perceptions of HR Professionals, Line Managers and Works Council Members (in their role of employee representatives) were analyzed. Additionally, the current HR effectiveness in Philips IT was assessed. The results indicated that HR was indeed considered a valued partner by management in a change context. In addition, the findings provided support for our heuristic framework, with all of the predefined HR Competencies being recognized as contributing to an improved HR performance in change management. However, several of the predefined competencies were relabeled as to reflect their broadened content. One competency collapsed and one new - emerged. Furthermore, the findings revealed that no distinction was to be made in the required HR competences based on the type of change organizations were undertaking. That resulted in an important managerial implication; namely that HR change agents should be successful in managing incremental changes if they are to be successful when managing large scale organizational changes. In conclusion, the *importance* of the predefined competencies was assessed higher as compared to the *HR effectiveness* in Philips IT. These differences were furthermore statistically significant, thus indicating a room for improvement for HR in change management.

Key words: *Change Management, Large Scale Organizational Changes, Incremental Changes, HR Change Management Competencies, HR Effectiveness in Change Management, HR Competency Model, Explorative Case Study*

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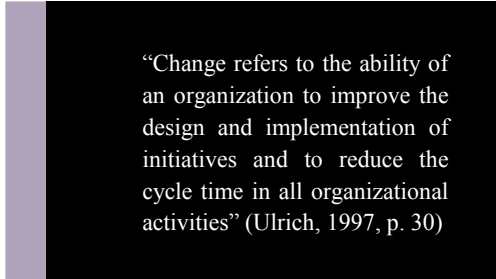
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Introduction

Organizational change is a phenomenon commonly met in the business world nowadays. Not surprisingly Hughes (2010) emphasizes that “change is the only constant” (p. 61). Furthermore, an increased pace of change is caused by, among others, globalization, technology innovations, customer demands and increased competition to which organizations need to respond (Ulrich, 1997).

While the list of literature dedicated to successful change management is quite extensive (Burke, W. 2010; Thornhill et al., 2000; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005; Hughes 2010; Burke et al., 2008; Kotter, 1995; Hatch 1997; Burke & Litwin, 1992; Gilley et al., 2001; Hubbard 2001) many organizational changes (e.g. Mergers & Acquisitions) fail to produce the profits anticipated (Hughes, 2010). Successful change management is, however, a necessary condition for survival since it requires from companies to adapt to the constantly changing environment (Ulrich 1997; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Even more, they need to adapt fast (Gersick, 1991). Nevertheless, change is not a phenomenon that can be anticipated or controlled (Ulrich, 1997). Therefore, Ulrich (1997) identifies “winners” and “losers” in the process of managing change. “Winners” will be those organizations that have developed their “ability to adapt, learn and respond” to the changes and their pace whereas “losers” will be those that try to “control and master change” (p. 151). Thus, an important trait “will not be the pace of change but the ability to respond to the pace of change” (Ulrich, 1997, p. 151) implying that organizations need to build their capacity to change (Ulrich, 1997).



“Change refers to the ability of an organization to improve the design and implementation of initiatives and to reduce the cycle time in all organizational activities” (Ulrich, 1997, p. 30)

Being the people to make the change happen the role of the change agents is of utmost importance in this process (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). However, that seems a rather under explored field although there is some literature and research dedicated to the required change agents’ competencies (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005; Raineri, 2011; Armenakis et al., 2001; Sinkovics et al., 2011). Considering the fact that HR has a role to play in any change initiative with people impact since the “organizations as we know them are the people in them; if the people do not change, there is no organizational change” (Schneider et al., 1996, p. 7) we argue that a special focus needs to be paid to the required HR change management competencies. However, an extensive review of the work of the most influential authors focusing on HR competencies (Ulrich et al., 1995; Ulrich, 1997; Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005; Ulrich et al., 2008; Han et al., 2006; Long & Ismail 2008; Huselid et al., 1997) was not able to detect an explicit framework of the HR competencies contributing to an increased HR effectiveness in change management. Still, managing employees’ expectations and reactions is not an easy task (Sinkovics, et. al., 2011). On the contrary, institutionalizing the changes appears to be a challenge many organizations face (Buchanan et al., 2005). Therefore, we argue that to be “winners” organizations need competent HR change agents.

Thus, to ensure a successfully managed transition, the appointed HR change agents need to be equipped for the job likewise any other role in the organizational structure (Becker et al., 2001). However, as was pointed out above, no comprehensive framework of the required HR Change Management Competencies was detected. Thus, the objective and main contribution of this explorative research is to outline the HR

competencies contributing to an increased HR effectiveness in change management. Furthermore, as the HR Change Management Competencies are recognized to be the ones with the greatest predictive value for the HR performance (Ulrich, 1997) deepening the knowledge in this under explored field is another contribution of the paper. As for the practical contributions, developed as a case study, the research incorporates an HR Assessment of the participating organization. Thus, apart from a competency model to be applied by practitioners, this paper will conduct an HR Audit and provide the participating organizations with the analysis as well as with improvement areas and suggestions, if such can be derived.

Thus, to investigate how the HR effectiveness in change management can be increased an HR competency model for change management will be developed. This heuristic framework will be built extensive literature review. The model will be adapted, if necessary after the analysis of the collected data. The purpose of developing an HR competency model for change management is to use it as a tool for: performing an HR Audit in order to assess performance gaps and increase the effectiveness of the HR change agents (Ulrich, 1997); predicting how a person will perform the job; and evaluating whether a person fits the job profile (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Thus, the academic as well as practical relevance of the paper was outlined.

All of the above leads to the following research questions:

- 1. Can HR Professionals act as change agents?**
- 2. If so, what kind of organizational change management competencies do they need in order to make that contribution?**
- 3. Is there a difference in the required HR Change management competencies whether involved in large scale organizational changes or in incremental changes?**

Overview of the content:

In Chapter I, theory and research findings in several key areas will be discussed. In Chapter II, the HR Competency Model for Change Management will be introduced and explained. Chapter III will focus on research design and methodology as well as the organizational context of the case-study organization. Chapter IV will present the key findings followed by a Discussion of these in Chapter V. Limitations of the research will be acknowledged and Recommendations for Future Research will be presented in Chapter VI.

Chapter I: Theoretical background

As emphasized above, to our knowledge, no explicit framework depicting the HR Change Management Competencies has been developed so far. Thus, the exploratory nature of the study becomes evident as exploratory research is mainly used when there is lack of knowledge about a phenomenon (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Furthermore, “an exploratory study must always be regarded as simply a first step; more carefully controlled studies are needed to test whether the hypotheses that emerge have general applicability” (Connaway & Powell, 2010, p.109). That implies that exploratory research serves the purposes of gaining insights and ideas, clarifying concepts, increasing the understanding of an issue as well as developing hypotheses to explain a particular phenomenon (Stevens et al., 2006; Gratton & Jones, 2010). Shields & Tajalli (2006) indicate that instead of “hypotheses” “working hypotheses” can be formulated in exploratory research “to signal that conceptualization is in its preliminary stages” and can “lead to the discovery of other critical facts” (p. 320). Cooper & Schindler (1998), on the other hand, distinguish between “propositions” and “hypotheses” with the former one being defined as “a statement about the concepts that may be judged as true or false if it refers to observable phenomena” whereas the latter one allows for empirical testing and has a “tentative and conjectural nature” (p. 43). In their essence we believe that “propositions” and “working hypotheses” both serve the same purposes. Thus, this research will formulate and test *propositions* for the expected relationships between the concepts whereas *hypotheses* for future testing will be formulated in Chapter V. Before proceeding with the literature review the conceptual model for developing the research will be depicted in Figure 1.

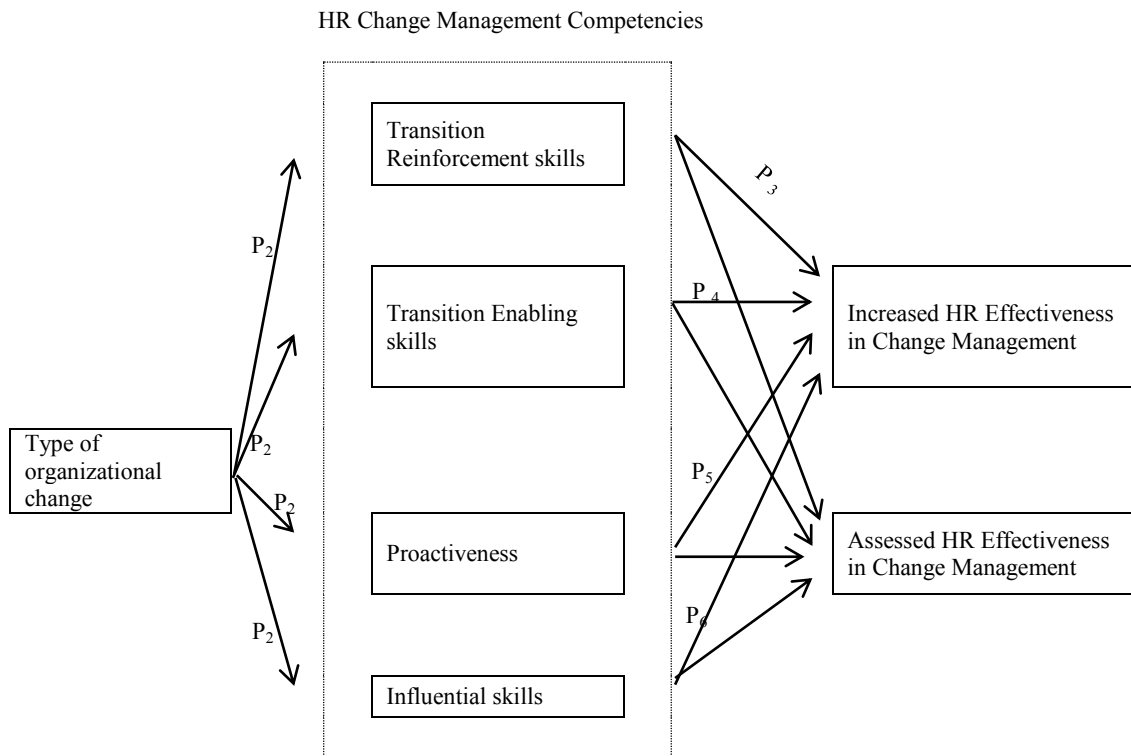


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Visualizing the core concepts and the relationships between them at the beginning of the study is intended to give a frame of reference for reading the paper. The left hand-side of the model will be explained in Chapter I whereas the HR Change Management Competencies proposed (middle column) will be the focus of Chapter II. These competencies are expected to contribute to an increased HR Effectiveness (also referred to as *Importance* of the proposed competencies for an increased HR effectiveness) and the assessed HR Effectiveness of the participating organization (right-hand side).

1. The role of HR in Change Management

Before proceeding to the discussion of the change types organizations can face we need to outline what is the HR Role in Change Management and if such is to be found. In the literature it is to be found that different organizational members can play the role of Change Agents - the CEO, a team dedicated to managing change, external consultants, line managers or HR Professionals (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005; Thornhill et al., 2000).

When HR Professionals perform as “changemakers” (Storey, 1992), they are seen to be able to contribute to the success of the change initiative by demonstrating different behaviors. They might, for instance, deliver the necessary resources (Thornhill et al., 2000, p. 26), help the organization in identifying the process for managing change (Ulrich, 1997) or support the employees in the process of institutionalizing the changes (Ulrich, 1997). That outlines the unique and challenging position for HR in change management – one closely related to the strategy of the business while ensuring organizational members’ successful adaptation to the changes. The latter one, as highlighted above, is a crucial success factor.

All of the above is an indicator that HR has an important role to play in change management. Furthermore, two of the most influential authors in the field of HR role typologies (Storey and Ulrich) identify the change agent’s role as one of the core HR roles (Appendix A). Moreover, both typologies depict the HR role in change management as having a strategic focus emphasizing the importance of the role for the strategy implementation of the business. This is also recognized in a more recent publication of Ulrich & Brockbank (2005) where the authors describe the HR strategic partner role as consisting of the strategic partner and change agent roles jointly whereas these were still described as separate ones in Ulrich’s 1996 role model typology.

Thus, HR might be in a good position to play a proactive role in change management, aiming at achieving a strategic contribution (Caldwell, 2003) by replacing “resistance with resolve, planning with results, and fear of change with excitement about its possibilities” (Ulrich, 1997, p. 152).

However, to be emphasized is the fact that “HR professionals as change agents do not carry out change, but they must be able to get the change done” (Ulrich, 1997, p. 161). Thus they need to be proficient in guiding, facilitating or delivering change (Caldwell, 2003). This can be achieved by, for instance, triggering executive discussions, helping those in charge to create action plans and to take smart decisions (Ulrich, 1997), performing a gap analysis and ensuring sponsorship for the change. Furthermore, they can collaborate with line management to ensure alignment of the implementation actions with the change direction and provide specialized and technical knowledge, if necessary, to support and deliver a specific project (Caldwell, 2003). Thus, they can even be viewed as change auditors who make sure that change happens and is successful (Ulrich, 1997). To achieve that they should also be able to identify *critical change factors* leading to an increased capacity to change (Ulrich, 1997). Assessing each change initiative

against these factors might contribute to an enhanced success rate in several ways. Firstly, that would guarantee that a key element would not be left out of the equation and thus a successful change outcome. Additionally, that could also contribute in determining the organization's capacity to change and help HR change agents in their auditor role. The proposed seven *critical success factors* by Ulrich (1997) can be used as a guiding principle in this process (Appendix B). These are: leading change (who is responsible); creating a shared need (why do it); shaping a vision (what it will look like when we are done); mobilizing commitment (who else needs to be involved); modifying systems and structures (how will it be institutionalized); monitoring progress (how will it be measured); and making it last (how will it get started and last) (Ulrich, 1997, p. 160).

In fact, Caldwell (2003) provides a more profound typology of the different roles HR professionals can take over when supporting the change efforts. These are Change Champions, Adapters, Synergists or Consultants (Caldwell, 2003). A brief description of these different roles is provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1
HR Change Agents roles

o Change Champions	Align HR with the business strategy and provide “sponsorship for strategic change” Proactive and persuasive Have credibility (which is directly linked to business experience), Possess analytical skills (e.g. gap analysis) and political skills (to make change happen) Take risks, inspire people and make them aware of the need for change.
o Change Adapters	HR generalists who implement the change in business units and functional areas “Translate the vision into practical actions” and are involved in the implementation process Need to encourage, persuade, empower & challenge the line.
o Change Consultants	Work on a project or specific stages of an HR project Need specialized knowledge or technical expertise, administrative skills, consulting skills, project management experience & skills as well as the “ability to meet demanding timescales”.
o Change synergists	“Capable of strategically coordinating, integrating and delivering complex, large scale and multiple change projects across the whole organization Need coordination, integration, project management and leadership competencies Operate strategically and act as catalysts for change.

Source: Caldwell, 2003

Reflecting on the above, it seems that when being in the role of Change Agents HR professionals can indeed make a contribution. To explore if this is the case however, we formulated our first proposition:

P₁: When playing the role of change agents, HR professionals can contribute to an increased success rate of change initiatives

Proposition 1 does not sit in conceptual model depicted in Figure 1 as it is intended to only explore the role of HR in Change Management. Thus, before developing the HR Competency Model for Change Management, we need to ensure that HR can indeed contribute when in the change agent's seat.

Next, the types of organizational changes will be elaborated on as that might have an impact on the required change agents' competencies.

2. Organizational Change Processes

In the change management theory two main types of organizational change processes can be identified – *episodic* and *continuous* change (Weick & Quinn's, 1999). Different views are to be found on the dynamics between these change types. Proponents of the punctuated Equilibrium Paradigm argue, for instance, that organizations move from periods of stability (equilibrium) through periods of rapid (episodic) change and thus the prepared organizations survive (Gersick, 1991) whereas continuous change models emphasize the on-going change that guarantees organizations' adaptation and survival (Balogun & Hope hailey, 2005).

For the purposes of the current paper we agree with Weick & Quinn (1999) and Balogun & Hope Hailey (2005) who argue that organizations rarely go through only episodic changes; neither do they adapt by just minor adjustments (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Thus, companies use a combination of these models. Continuous change is desired as it creates a “learning” organization which seems a necessary condition for gaining competitive advantage (Hatch, 1997) but still a lot of organizations undertake rapid changes as part of their strategy. Furthermore, the end result and desired outcome of a planned episodic change might even be the development of the organization's capability for continuous change (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Furthermore, as will be outlined below, these two change types require different management styles. Therefore, the type of organizational change is expected to have an impact on the required change agent's competencies (left-hand side of the conceptual model).

1.1. Episodic/ Transformational/ Cultural change

Episodic change is usually implemented following a top-down approach and leads to substantial changes in the total system since it requires challenging the organization's core system, values and beliefs (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Burke & Litwin, 1992; Balogun & Hope hailey, 2005). *Episodic change* might be also referred to as *transformational* (Burke & Litwin, 1992) or *cultural change* (Ulrich, 1997) and therefore these terms will be used interdependently in the paper.

Episodic change is furthermore characterized as being “slower because of its wide scope, less complete because it is seldom fully implemented, more strategic in its content, more deliberate and formal than emergent change” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 368). Such episodic changes might follow a long stable period for the organization due to the created inertia (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Rumelt, 1995). Although inertia can be beneficial for organizations as they might improve their competencies and focus on achieving the goals embedded into the deep structure without changing it (Gersick, 1991), it can also be the reason for organizational ineffectiveness to change. Inertia is therefore defined as the “inability for the organizations to change as rapidly as the environment” (Pfeffer, 1997, p. 163).

When that happens, an episodic change seems to follow the three-stage model proposed by Lewin – unfreeze-transition-refreeze (Weick & Quinn, 1999). First, the forces driving change become stronger than the ones trying to preserve the status quo, thus creating the need for change. The change itself happens through the process of *replacement* when a new entity replaces the old one (Weick & Quinn,

1999). That might be, for instance, a new strategy or a program replacing the old one which involves “telling people what to do” (Pasmore & Woodman, 2008, p. 13). After the changes have been implemented and balance has been achieved again, another stability stage can follow (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Hatch, 1997). However, Beer et al. (1990) the logic of replacement seldom works. Therefore, being the people “responsible for making the change happen” (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005, p. 2), organizations need competent change agents able to create enabling conditions in order to ensure the success of the change initiative. Weick and Quinn (1999) describe the change agent’s role in an episodic change as one of a “prime mover of change”; one that neutralizes specific tendencies during large group settings such as “stereotyping, decreased ownership of ideas, increased abstraction, and less willingness to express unique thoughts” (p. 374). Thus, the role of language interventions seems to increase as alternatives need to be presented clearly and persistently.

All the above arguments do not suggest, however, that during the stability periods, no changes occur. On the contrary, continuous changes happen but on the transactional level, in the *initiatives* (projects, programs or procedures) and *processes* (the way the work is done) (Burke & Litwin, 1992; Weick & Quinn, 1999; Ulrich, 1997). Next, the main characteristics of the concept *continuous change* will be outlined.

1.2. Continuous/ Transactional/ Incremental change

Continuous changes are associated with the bottom-up approach and the creation of a flexible organization. They are more likely to occur in an organizational unit rather than the organization’s corporate center and thus, focus on solving a particular business problem (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Burke & Litwin, 1992; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Continuous changes are furthermore also referred to as incremental (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005) or transactional changes (Burke & Litwin, 1992) which is why these terms will be used interdependently in the current paper. Their purpose is to make organizations more flexible and adaptable to change (Weick & Quinn, 1999). In such a way they can contribute to an increased success rate of episodic changes (Ulrich, 1997).

Continuous change is characterized as being the outcome of grouping together “organizational changes that tend to be ongoing, evolving, and cumulative” (Weick & Quinn, 1999) and occur on the transactional level, at the group/unit or individual level (Burke & Litwin, 1992; Ulrich, 1997). If the episodic change is considered to be a planned change, the continuous change is to be seen as an emergent one, not resulting from intentions defined prior the change (Weick & Quinn, 1999). However, as indicated above, increasing organizational effectiveness in continuous changes might still be the desired outcome of a planned change process.

While the logic of *replacement* is central to the episodic change, the logic of *attraction* becomes key to the success of continuous change as change agents need to *lead* the change. They need to inspire people and show them “how to be” (Munduate & Gravenhorst, 2003, 3). As Pasmore and Woodman (2008) emphasize “to lead change is to “pull” change by showing people what is possible (logic of attraction) rather than “pushing” change by telling people what to do (logic of replacement)” (p. 13).

To achieve that, the concepts of *improvisation*, *translation*, and *learning* become crucial for the success of continuous change (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Improvisation refers to the continuous innovative alterations of everyday on-the-job activities performed by self-managed groups that might lead to changes in the transactional level (Weick & Quinn, 1999). *Translation*, on the other hand, refers to the continuous process of adoption these alterations and editing them. Thus, the originator of the idea is no more important than the people (s)he presents the idea to. The focus here is on knowledge sharing and discussing for improvement purposes, not on the degree of persuasiveness of the originator (Weick & Quinn, 1999). *Learning* refers to a change in the organizational members' skills and knowledge in such a way that existing skills are not just entirely substituted but rather improved and strengthened (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Thus, for the success of continuous changes, change agents need to ensure employees' active participation, willingness to share knowledge and to adopt new behaviors.

On a process level, continuous change is also different from episodic change. Instead of the Lewin's three-stage change model for episodic changes Weick & Quinn (1999) propose an alternative model; namely, freeze-rebalance-unfreeze. That requires from change agents to firstly increase visibility of the current state with the patterns that need to be relabeled (freeze); secondly, these need to be changed in a way that problems start being reinterpreted as opportunities and "fewer restraints and barriers are present and the continuous change can flow more freely" (Burke, 2010, p.156); thirdly, to sustain these outcomes, organizations need to be capable of using the improvisation, translation and learning mechanisms as a way to change and develop (Weick and Quinn, 1999).

To conclude, organizations undertake different types of changes which require different management styles and behaviors. A constant factor is the important role change agents play in ensuring the success of the change initiative either by promoting successful "replacement" through creating enabling conditions for the organization and the organizational members or by promoting "improvisation, translation, and learning" to create a learning organization.

Thus, requiring different management styles implies that change agents will need different competencies to make the change successful. This leads to our second proposition:

P₂: The required change agent's competencies will differ depending on the change type organizations are undertaking

To move forward, Chapter II will focus on theory and research used to develop the HR Competency Model for Change Management. Additionally, apart from defining "competency", the heuristic framework developed will be explained.

Chapter II: HR Competency Model for Change Management

Before starting the discussing on the HR Change Management Competencies, a definition of “competency” needs to be provided.

1. Definition of “Competency”

The definition applied in the current paper is a “compilation” of the ideas of several influential authors in the field of (HR) competencies – Ulrich, Becker and Spencer & Spencer.

HR Change Management Competences are defined as the right set of “knowledge (of change processes), skills (as change agents) and abilities (to deliver change)” (Ulrich, 1997, p. 68) as well as personality traits that can determine and predict the success of the individual job performance (Ulrich, 1995; Spencer & Spencer, 1993; Becker et al., 2001).

Having this definition in mind, next theory and research in several closely linked fields will be synthesized in a way as to make the transition to explaining our framework.

2. HR Change Management Competencies: Theory and Research

First we shall start with the role of the HR Change Management competencies as contributing to an enhanced HR performance.

Although no framework depicting the HR Change Management Competencies was detected after an extensive literature review, some research on the crucial competencies enhancing the HR performance has already been conducted. The Michigan’s HR Competency Research is one of the most extensive and influential ones. The HR Competency Study (HRCS) investigates every 5 years which are the HR competencies with the greatest added value for the business (Ulrich et al., 2008).

Ever since the first round of the study in 1987 has been conducted to the last one in 2007, the HR competencies in change management have always been listed among those with the greatest impact on the overall HR effectiveness. In 1987 they are among the three competencies recognized as outstanding and are furthermore considered to be the most important predictor for HR effectiveness (Ulrich et al., 1995). Change is also among the four identified competencies in 1992 and among the five identified in 1997. In 2002 the strategic value of the HR change management competencies becomes evident with the emergence of the new Strategic Contribution domain as a combination of Culture & Change. That furthermore links change and culture management. Thus, we could argue that via ensuring a successfully managed transition HR professionals can contribute at the strategic level. Furthermore, this strategic contribution seems to have a great added value as Ulrich et al. (2008) highlight that a more strategic HR role is to be noticed in the high performing firms. Hence, the relevance of the current paper is to be outlined again. In the latest study results, culture and change are again in the same domain (*Culture & Change steward*) which is an indicator for the HR change agents that successful change management is closely related to successful culture management (Ulrich et al., 2008, p. 225).

Additional research bringing insights for the HR competencies in change management is provided by Huselid et al. (1997) and Long & Ismail (2008). They distinguish between *professional* and *business-related* competencies. The former ones are meant to deliver “the traditional technical HRM practices” (Huselid et al., 1997) whereas the latter ones grow in importance with the emergence of the strategic HRM approach; they “enable members of a human resources staff to understand how business considerations unique to a firm can create firm-specific HRM needs” (Huselid et al., 1997, p. 174).

Business-related competencies in that sense consist of *strategic contribution* and *business knowledge* which are both significantly related to the change agent’s role with the former one having moderate correlation effect and the latter one - strong correlation. Furthermore, the factors they identify within both domains are: Culture management, Fast change, Strategic decision-making and Market driven connectivity within *Strategic contribution* and Value Chain Knowledge, Value Proposition knowledge and Labor knowledge within *Business knowledge*. These results are intriguing as they imply that although both are important, having business knowledge is a stronger predictor of change agent’s effectiveness than strategic contribution. However, looking at the HR competency model developed by Ulrich et al. (2008) Culture and Change are in the same domain and are seen as strongly related to each other.

The *Professional competencies* are significantly related to the Employee Champion and Administrative Expert roles and consist of Personal Credibility and HR Delivery (Long and Ismail, 2008). The former one refers to the fact that HR professionals need to gain credibility in their relationships with working partners being they HR professionals or line managers. The latter one emphasizes that HR professionals need to be able to deliver “traditional and operational HR activities to their business” (Long & Ismail, 2008, p. 91). That could include various activities such as providing advice and support on career and organizational development, restructuring, evaluating the HR practices and programs’ impact, talent and performance management. Although, the link between the Change Agent role and the professional competencies has not been examined, the view that “personal credibility competency is the foundation for a HR Professional to become intimately involved at the strategic level once given the opportunity” as well as the fact that HR delivery is important at all stages of the reorganization process (as discussed above), it seems that both professional and business-related competencies are of great importance for the HR effectiveness in change management. Furthermore, Huselid et al. (1997) find support for the fact that strategic HRM effectiveness is associated with both business-related and professional competencies. Thus, as the HR role in change management is seen as contributing to the strategic level we argue that there is a close link between the *business-related* and *professional competencies* on the one hand and the increased HR Effectiveness in Change Management, on the other. That will become evident in our heuristic framework that will be introduced in Chapter II.

Reflecting on the above we argue that being effective in change management is of utmost importance for the HR professionals. Indeed, HR Professionals are perceived as being more effective by their associates (their work-partners) if they “demonstrate competencies in business knowledge, delivery of HR, and management of change” (Ulrich et al., 1995, p. 473). However, although while discussing the HR role in change management we already touched upon some of the competencies required from HR change agents, research in this field is lacking.

One of the very few papers on the HR change management competencies is developed by Ulrich et al. (1995). In this article the HR change management competencies refer to “*the processes for making*

change happen (e.g. building relationships, managing data, problem solving, leadership, influence) and *the content of change* (innovation and creativity, business goals)” (Ulrich et al., 1995, p.482). Being one of the very few papers focusing on HR change management competencies further research often builds upon their work. That includes the presented above work of Huselid et al. (1997) and Long & Ismail (2008) as well as Ulrich et al. (2008).

Since research on the HR change management competencies is not very extensive, in developing our competency model we shall make use of theory and research on the change agents’ competencies in general, thus not focusing on the HR role specifically.

Among the authors discussing the required change agents’ competencies, though not focusing on the HR role specifically, are Balogun and Hope Hailey (2005). They distinguish between *managerial and personal* competencies. The former one consists of *analytical, judgmental and implementations skills* whereas the latter one underpins the requirement for change agents to be *self-aware* and to be *able to reflect on their own behaviors and prejudices*.

Raineri (2008), also without focusing on the HR Role, outlines the importance of *analytical skills* during the preparation stage and *interpersonal and political skills* during the implementation stage.

Next the HR change management competencies identified will be outlined and the guiding principle for development of the framework will be explained.

3. HR Competency Model for Change Management

In Chapter II the heuristic framework depicting the **HR Competency Model for Change Management** will be presented and explained. Thus, the focus below will be on the proposed HR change management competencies (middle part of the conceptual model depicted in Figure 1) for an increased HR effectiveness in Change Management (right-hand side of the conceptual model).

According to Spencer & Spender (1993) the best way to develop a competency model reflecting superior job performance is using either productivity measures or participants’ ratings. Since, however, we had access to neither of these, an alternative approach was chosen; namely, **the framework was developed based on an extensive literature review** - a method also used by Ulrich et al. (1995) in their study exploring the HR competencies with impact on the overall HR Effectiveness.

The purpose of developing an HR competency model for change management is for it to be used it as a tool for: (1) performing an HR Assessment/Audit with the end goal of increasing effectiveness of the HR Change Agents; (2) predicting how a person will perform as a Change Agent; (3) and evaluating whether a person fits the job profile (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

The framework outlines four competency domains composed of ten competencies in total. On the right hand-side example behaviors for each of the ten competencies are provided. A more detailed list of these is provided in Appendix C.

The four competency domains are: Transition Reinforcement Skills, Transition Enabling skills, Leadership skills and Proactiveness. The first two domains, Transition Reinforcement Skills and Transition Enabling skills, were intended to reflect the process and the people aspect of the change

process. The former one integrates the views of the guiding and facilitating role of the HR change agents while the latter one refers to ensuring that organizational members adapt successfully to the changes. Leadership skills and Proactiveness are, on the other hand, intended to reflect the personal traits that contribute to the increased HR effectiveness in change management.

Next, each of the four domains and their adjacent competencies will be described in more detail.

3.1. Transition reinforcement skills

Transition reinforcement skills refer to the HR role in facilitating the change process. This facilitating role is in our view extremely important in large scale organizational changes with high people impact as HR professionals are the ones to have the best view on the people aspect within the organization. They can contribute (1) to the planning activities by analyzing and diagnosing the organizational context from an HR point of view, thus bringing the employee aspect at the table, and by administrative employee-related tasks, (2) to the implementation of the changes by taking actions to make the change happen and (3) by ensuring that changes are sustained via proper after-care. These will be discussed in more detail below.

3.1.1. Analytical & Diagnostic skills

Analytical skills refer to the change agents' competencies in making a sophisticated and detailed analysis of the organization with its practices and staff, as well as the context within which it operates (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005).

Thus, HR change agents are expected (1) to consult the business on diverse *context-specific topics* (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005), (2) to identify *the organization's strengths and weaknesses, obstacles that might be faced during the implementation of the changes* as for instance capability gaps (Raineri, 2008), (3) to identify *change needs* (Ulrich, 1997) and (4) to *support problem solving* (Ulrich et al., 1995).

That implies that HR Change Agents need to:

1. analyze the political context of the organization (relationships of trust and influence) to identify people who make change happen fast (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005).
2. analyze work processes in order to identify activities and areas that could be impacted by the change program (Ulrich, 2008)
3. work in close cooperation with management team members and other key stakeholders (Ulrich et al., 2008)

In addition, successful culture management was outlined above as closely related to successful change management hereby implying that HR change agents need to be able to conduct a cultural audit (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005). Thus, identifying the culture required to achieve desired business outcomes becomes an important skill (Ulrich et al., 2008).

Furthermore, in case of a people impact, change agents need to *identify relevant individuals or groups to be affected by the change as well as an appropriate approach to reach them* (Raineri, 2008).

After the initial analysis change agents need to also be able to diagnose the underlying causes of problems (Ulrich et al., 2008). Additionally, HR's ability in *diagnosing readiness for change and resistance to change* (Armenakis et al., 1993; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005, Raineri, 2008) has also been recognized as crucial element of the HR contribution to the success of the change initiative.

Defined as “the cognitive precursor to the behaviors of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort” organizational member's readiness for change can be an important success factor (Armenakis et al., 1993, p. 681). Thus, diagnosing readiness for change can help in selecting the most appropriate approach to support the change efforts (Armenakis et al., 1993). Identifying patterns of resistant behavior is, on the other hand, of utmost importance as it can lead to low organizational performance such as turnover, decreased individual efficiency, even aggression (Burke et al., 2008, Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005) and must be therefore properly addressed.

3.1.2. Administrative skills

Although as stated above, HR is a valued strategic player, certain administrative tasks, still considered within the HR scope in Change Management, are important. We define administrative skills as closely related to the “Administrative Expert” role identified by Ulrich (1997) in his HR role model typology. Thus, administrative skills are viewed as necessary for delivering efficient HR processes and “managing the flow of employees throughout the organization” (Long & Ismail, 2008, p. 90).

Among these administrative skills are the need for a common HR framework for effective change management (Ulrich et al., 2008) and the HR contribution in clarifying the roles and responsibilities to be applied after the change (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005).

Furthermore, processes, systems and resources need to be aligned with the change direction (Ulrich, 1997; 2008). For that purpose, HR change agents need to understand how the change is linked to the different HR systems such as staffing, appraisal, rewards; and these need to be modified, if necessary, to support and sustain the changes. Additionally, HR processes and practices need to also be modified in a way that alignment between individual and organizational goals is ensured (Ulrich, 2008). Last but not least, HR change agents need to ensure that the organization has “the right people, with the right information, doing the right things, with the right measurements and the right incentives” (Ulrich, 2008, p. 94).

3.1.3. Process Implementation skills

Process Implementation skills, as the name suggests, refer to the ability of HR change agents to facilitate the transition stage. Here they can support the change efforts by *creating action plans to make changes happen fast* (Ulrich, 2008, p. 212); ensuring that “initiatives are defined, developed, and delivered in a timely manner; that processes are stopped, started and simplified; and that fundamental values within the organization are debated and appropriately adapted to changing business conditions” (Ulrich, 1996, p. 152). Process Implementation skills sit very close to the administrative skills as described above. However, the focus here is on “action” and facilitation. Thus, HR change agents need to be action- and results-oriented and responsible for *ensuring fast results* (Ulrich, 1997; Caldwell, 2003).

3.1.4. After-care

After the changes have been implemented, HR change agents have an important role to play in making sure that these changes are sustained. How HR can support organizational members at this stage will be discussed below as part of the people aspect we mentioned above. From a process perspective we argue that HR change agents need to provide proper after-care to ensure institutionalization of the changes. That includes *monitoring the change process, offering accurate and candid feedback to those implementing the changes and deriving lessons learned to be applied in future change initiatives for a high quality change process* (Ulrich, 2005; Ulrich, 2008). In such a way, HR change agents can furthermore contribute to the increased overall organization's capacity to change (Ulrich, 2008).

After introducing the concept of the Transition Reinforcement skills domain and its adjacent competencies, our next proposition is:

P₃: If HR Change Agents apply Transition reinforcement skills, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

3.2. Transition enabling skills

The Transition enabling skills domain reflects the people aspect of the change and refers to the ability of HR to create enabling conditions for organizational members to institutionalize the changes. Thus, HR can support (1) employees in the process of accepting and institutionalizing the changes and (2) line managers in their role as people managers helping them to appropriately address people reactions and manage their expectations. That led to the identification of two competencies within this domain: Provide support for employees and Provide support for managers.

3.2.1. Provide support to employees

In their role as Human Resource Professionals, HR change agents are often expected to create readiness for the change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Gerlick's, 1991; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). For that purpose they need to *create dissatisfaction with the status quo, raise awareness as to why the change is needed* (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005) and inspire confidence in organizational members' ability to make the change happen (Gerlick's, 1991; Armenakis et al., 1993; Raineri, 2008). In such a way, they can also create employees' commitment to the change direction (Weick and Quinn, 1999).

HR change agents would be also expected to *develop an action plan to overcome resistance* (Raineri, 2008; Ulrich, 2008, Armenakis et al., 1993; Gerlick's, 1991; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005) for which they need to be able to manage employees' reactions and expectations (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Thus, to achieve an institutionalized change HR change agents should be able to address organizational members' feelings of loss, fear, uncertainty, loss of direction and create optimism to replace the initial reactions of shock and denial by awareness, acceptance, testing and integrating the new behaviors (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Furthermore, HR change agents need to support employees in understanding their roles and responsibilities in making the change work (Gilley et al., 2001). Additionally, emphasizing personal benefits and creating enabling conditions for employees to develop the necessary capabilities to make the change happen, can help in gaining employees' participation (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005).

3.2.2. Provide support to managers

As important as the HR role in change management is, line managers should take ownership in bringing the changes into live (Thornhill et al., 2000; Ulrich, 1997). During turbulent times, their role as people managers (Thornhill et al., 2000) is a critical one as they are “responsible for absorbing the change and passing it on” (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005, p. 247). Thus, they also have responsibility for managing employees’ reactions and expectations in such a way that negative outcomes of the change initiatives are identified, addressed and mitigated. Such negative outcomes could be, for instance, organizational members’ resistance to change and the “survivor syndrome” (feelings of guilt in “survivors” after lay-offs and fear of future redundancies). Addressing them is of utmost importance as they could become barriers to change and could lead to decrease in employees’ productivity, commitment and loyalty (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005). Furthermore, being positioned closer to the employees compared to HR professionals, they have the opportunity to notice employee reactions easier and to know better “what will work and what will not” (Thornhill et al., 2000, p. 25).

Thus, line managers need to be equipped with change management skills and competencies. Therefore, another important competency for the HR change agents is taking responsibility in the process of developing *management’s competency in self-facilitation as well as their change management/counseling skills* (Ulrich, 1997; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2005; Thornhill et al., 2000).

Thus, our next proposition is:

P₄: If HR Change Agents apply Transition enabling skills, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

3.3. Proactiveness

The third domain identified is proactiveness and, as already stated, it has a different nature from both domains presented above with its focus on HR’s attitude and traits instead of skills.

The online Business Dictionary (businessdictionary.com, n.d.) defines being proactive as:

“an action and result oriented behavior, instead of the one that waits for things to happen and then tries to adjust (react) to them. Proactive behavior aims at identification and exploitation of opportunities and in taking preemptory action against potential problems and threats, whereas reactive behavior focuses on fighting a fire or solving a problem after it occurs”

Having this definition in mind, we argue that for increased effectiveness in change management, HR change agents need to have a proactive attitude. This, we believe, is mostly needed in culture management and in managing incremental changes as these two areas are the ones we recognize as being the least susceptible to planned management actions but on the contrary require a proactive effort.

Thus, the identified competencies within this domain are: Culture Management and Management of Incremental changes.

3.3.1. Proactiveness in Culture Management

As discussed above, successful culture management is closely related to successful change management. This is the case since, as already stated, “organizations as we know them are the people in them; if the people do not change, there is no organizational change” (Schneider et al., 1996; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Therefore, in our view, proactive change agents are able to “*make culture management a business priority*” (Ulrich et al., 2008, p. 240). They also communicate the desired culture and “*frame it in ways that engage employees*” (Ulrich et al., 2008, p. 81), thus ensuring successful institutionalization of the implemented changes. This can be achieved *through appropriate HR practices* (Thornhill et al., 2000, p. 354) as well as through providing *support for individuals in their new roles and also celebrating success*. In such a way, HR change agents can *reinforce the new and desired types of behavior and* contribute to embedding the changes into the every-day activities of organizational members.

3.3.2. Proactiveness in managing Incremental changes

While the above described competencies refer mostly to managing large-scale organizational changes, HR change agents need to be also capable of successfully managing Incremental changes. Since, that was a key point discussed in Chapter One, in the process of developing our competency model, we took into consideration the point made by Weick & Quinn (1999); namely, that HR change agents need to successfully promote “*improvisation, translation, and learning*” to create a learning organization if they are to be successful in managing incremental changes. This can be achieved, we believe, again via demonstrating proactive attitude, since it requires from HR change agents to demonstrate ability in encouraging *innovation in the business via increasing employee engagement and enthusiasm for change and innovation* (Ulrich, 2008); promoting *reflection on change and learning* (Weick & Quinn, 1999, Hatch, 1997) and *identifying and share knowledge* because it is seen as “*a source of strategic advantage*” (Ulrich, 2008, p. 213; Hatch, 1997). “*Managing language, dialogue, and identity*” (Weick & Quinn, 1999) is hereby an important tool as everyday conversations might lead to significant change interventions and innovations as discussed above.

Thus, we formulated our next proposition:

P₅: If HR Change Agents demonstrate Proactiveness, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

3.4. Influential Skills

The last domain we identified is Influential skills. As the Proactiveness domain discussed above, it reflects personal traits required from the HR change agents, as we believe that in order for them to be actively involved at all stages of a large scale organizational change process, they need to be influential figures able to lead the HR-related actions but also have credibility in the eyes of the organizational members.

This can be achieved if HR change agents demonstrate role-model behavior, prove themselves as being committed to the change process (Ulrich, 1997; Raineri, 2008) and act as “*prime movers of change*” (Weick and Quinn, 1999). Thus, two competencies were identified within this domain: Credibility and Leadership.

3.4.1. Credibility

As Long & Ismail (2008) emphasize, “*personal credibility competency is the foundation for an HR Professional to become intimately involved at the strategic level once given the opportunity*”. Becker et al., (2001) also recognize that credibility contributes to the perception of increased HR effectiveness.

Thus, we consider it an important tool for the HR change agents to influence the organization. Demonstrating role-model behavior, establishing trust in relating to others and acting “with an attitude” (p. 161) are basic elements for building up the Credibility of the HR change agents (Becker et al., 2001). That implies the necessity for them to have an informed opinion (Ulrich, 2008, p. 212) and be able to back up that with data, be innovative, solve problems and “encourage debate about key issues” (Becker et al., p. 161, 2001). Additionally, to build credibility as strategic partners, HR change agents should be perceived as not being risk-averse (Caldwell, 2001; Becker et al., 2001) and as being “*business literate and savvy*” (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005).

3.4.2. Leadership

Leadership skills are, in our view, also important for the HR change agents if they are to influence the organization. Thus, walking into the strategy room with an opinion about the future of the business, taking “*strong stands*” as well as bringing intellectual rigor to business decision-making, they might be “able to set the direction for change” (Ulrich, 2005, 224; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Therefore, we argue, that HR change agents are well positioned to set up “an agenda for the future” (Ulrich, 2008, p. 212), engage people and ensure organizational members’ buy-in (Balogun and Hope Hailey, 2008). To achieve this, they need to be able to provide *persuasive but also clear and consistent (verbal & written) communication (Ulrich et al., 1995; 2008) in order to create enabling conditions for organizational members to accept and internalize the changes as well as to motivate others to actively participate and contribute to the change efforts (Raineri, 2008; A&M, 1993; Weick & Quinn, 1999). They also need to ask “insightful questions” to facilitate discussions (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005) and might become in such a way the “prime movers of change” (Weick and Quinn, 1999). Additionally, encouraging executives to behave consistently with the desired culture (Ulrich et al., 2008) is an important behavior for the HR change agents in their efforts to lead the organization through the changes.*

Thus, our last proposition is:

P₆: If HR Change Agents apply Influential skills, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

Figure 2 below depicts the HR Competency Model for Change Management as explained above. In conclusion, the current chapter presented our HR Competency Model for Change Management. Chapter III will focus on the organizational context and methodology used for carrying out the study.

Before proceeding, the lack of expected relationships (propositions) between the HR Change Management Competencies and the assessed HR effectiveness (right-hand side of the conceptual model) needs to be explained. As part of the study, assessment of the HR Effectiveness of the participating organization will be conducted and is an important aspect of the data analysis. Therefore, it was included as part of the conceptual model. However, no expectations can be stated as to what is the current HR Effectiveness.

Domains	Competencies	Example behaviors
Transition Reinforcement skills	Analytical & Diagnostic skills	Context-specific view Diagnose resistance & readiness to change Gap Analysis General Analytical & Diagnostic skills (e.g. separate root causes from symptoms) Analyze & Understand the political landscape of the organization
	Administrative skills	Ensure that technically everything is up and running Clarify roles & responsibilities
	Process Implementation skills	Create action plans to make changes happen fast/push process forward
	After-care	Monitor progress, provide feedback and derive lessons learned
Transition Enabling skills	Provide Support to employees	Develop management's competence in self-facilitation/ develop their change management/counseling skills Translate the vision
	Provide Support to managers	Provide training Create readiness for change & Tackle resistance Properly address employee reactions
Proactiveness	Proactive Change Management	Make culture management a business priority Support individuals in their new roles
	Proactive management of Incremental changes	Change in mindset: issues seen as opportunities Identify and share knowledge Increase employee enthusiasm for change and innovation
Influential skills	Credibility	Act as a "demonstrator" of the change Business literate and savvy Deliver on commitments Demonstrates the financial impact of HR activities/ROI Take responsibility Make strong stands
	Leadership	Communication Inspire confidence/make the change happen fast

Figure 2. HR Change Management Competency Model

Chapter III: Organizational Context and Methodology

The empirical study was carried out in the IT Department of Royal Philips Electronics. Thus, an explorative case study design was applied to test the propositions formulated in Chapter I and Chapter II.

“Exploratory research suggests” (Stevens et al., 2006, p. 35) and “is in some ways akin to detective work – there is a search for “clues” to reveal what happened or is currently taking place” (Stevens et al., 2006, 27). McDaniel & Gates (1998) define exploratory research as the “preliminary research to clarify the exact nature of the problem and to understand the environment surrounding it” (p. 27).

To further explain the empirical approach applied in this research we need to make use of two methodological models: the empirical cycle (Dehue, 1995) and the regulative cycle (van Strien, 1997; van Aken, J. E et al., 2007). The former one focuses on the scientific standards and prediction as a key point in scientific research (Dehue, 1995) whereas the latter one puts the emphasis on problem-solving with a core role for intervention rather than prediction (Heitink, 1999). Considering the clear theoretical as well as practical implications of the research outlined in the Introduction of the paper the need for an integrated approach is evident. To make that clear both cycles will be briefly discussed below.

The first stage of the empirical cycle is *observation* or collection of empirical data. The purpose of the second phase, *induction*, is to formulate hypotheses based on collected empirical data. Once hypotheses are formulated, these need to lead to formulating testable predictions (*deduction*) which as a next step need to be further *tested* with new empirical data. The last stage of the cycle is *evaluation* of the results leading to the formulation of new questions. Thus, the cycle begins again.

Additionally, the applied case study design, also positions the current research in the regulative cycle (van Strien, 1997) as the need for an intervention planning is not covered by the empirical cycle. Still, one of the desired outcomes of the paper is performing an HR Audit of the HR function in the participating organization. The regulative cycle has a similar structure to the empirical cycle but focuses on problem-solving behavior. It starts with *defining the problem* which is further analyzed and *diagnosed* in the second stage of the cycle. Next, an action *plan* is developed aiming at finding a solution followed by an *intervention* which implements the action plan. The last phase is *evaluation* of the achieved outcome which may result in new problems in which case the cycle starts again (van Strien, 1997; van Aken, J. E et al., 2007).

These two cycles seem linked in such a way that information can be transferred from one cycle to the other to improve either “prediction” or “intervention”. Thus, for instance, theoretical implications as a result of the empirical cycle can be used for defining and diagnosing a problem as well creating an action plan to increase the effectiveness of the regulative cycle. On the other hand, evaluation of the action plan applied as a part of the regulative cycle seems to be able to bring insights for observation and induction as part of the empirical cycle.

Therefore, the current research project can be seen as an integration of both cycles. Starting with the observation and induction we developed propositions for the linkages between the concepts. Through the

process of deduction we adapted our competency model specifying testable hypotheses in Chapter V. Additionally, conducting HR professionals audit as part of the data analysis, we went through the problem stage in the regulative cycle. Additionally, diagnosis was still, at least partly performed in the form of a SWOT analysis (Chapter IV). Additionally, the suggestions for improvements presented in Chapter IV could be the basis for the action plan.

Although ideally, a research should go through all of the stages of the empirical cycle, the exploratory nature of this research did not allow for accomplishing the objectives of all five phases. That was due to the lack of theory and time constraints. Thus, we did not perform the last two stages of the empirical cycle – testing and evaluation. The same is true for the regulative cycle where missing are also the last two phases - intervention and evaluation.

Next the organizational context for our case study organization will be presented followed by a more elaborated description of the applied methodology.

1. Organizational Context

1.1. Royal Philips Electronics

Royal Philips Electronics was founded in 1891 in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. Nowadays, the company is well-positioned in all three sectors - Healthcare (referred to as HC), Consumer Lifestyle (referred to as CL) and Lightning, it operates in.

The company was considered appropriate for the study since it operates in a highly demanding and rapidly changing environment. Next to the new competitors, especially in the emerging markets such as China, the company has to deal with inflation and higher prices of raw materials which put organization's profits under pressure. Apart from this market competitiveness and external dynamics, the internal environment is also constantly changing. In April 2011 Frans van Houten was announced the successor of the former CEO Gerard Kleisterlee. In an interview for the Dutch "Het Financieele Dagblad" translated and published on the Philips internal website on June 1st 2011, the newly appointed CEO highlighted the main change areas – "*We have to operate faster. Philips is too slow and the management is too centralized*". All that led to an organizational change focused on unlocking the full potential of all Philips employees, minimizing costs and increasing organizational agility. That required a shift in the company's culture reflected in the introduction of three new values: **Eager to win**, **Take ownership** and **Team up to excel**. The new values were intended to enable the company to accelerate in order to ensure win in the marketplace. With their focus on speed, agility, effective collaboration, customer centricity and empowerment these three values replaced the former 4Ds - Delight customers, Deliver on commitments, Develop people, and Depend on each other which seem to be much more focused on keeping up to the already achieved position in the market place. The urgent need for that shift is best explained by Frans van Houten: "*to grow, however, we have to work on the culture within Philips, creating a strong urge to win and giving people the feeling that they are authorized to spot and grasp opportunities*" (published on the Philips internal website, June 1st 2011).

1.2. Philips IT

The current study was carried out in the IT Department of Royal Philips Electronics. To better explain where IT is positioned, Philips' organizational structure is depicted in Appendix D. Philips has a matrix organization which structure, as part of the organizational change program discussed above, was also reviewed and adapted to enable Philips to deliver benchmark performance and leverage strengths. As mentioned above, the business is organized in three sectors: CL, HC and Lighting. Furthermore, the company operates in more than 100 markets. To ensure customer centricity, markets were organized into 17 market clusters, thus increasing the focus on local relevance, entrepreneurship and pursuing market opportunities in a way that would enable accelerated performance in the regions. Functions provide support to the business and the markets. Thus, IT is positioned as a function across the three sectors and the 17 markets (Appendix D). IT consists of approximately 2 800 employees and 1 500 contractors distributed across the globe. The department has gone through major reorganizations itself in the past years and continues to function within a rapidly changing environment.

During the last reorganization (2008-2010) the different organizational units have been integrated into One IT platform involving (1) sanitizing the organization resulting in Executive Leadership Assessment, De-layering the organization and improved engagement; (2) developing emerging markets and (3) outsourcing activities.

Nowadays, IT is still facing major challenges. With the appointment of a new Chief Information Officer in May 2011 and in alignment with the new Philips' focus on customer centricity and agility, the IT Management Agenda 2011 was revised to enable growth and deliver simplicity.

Thus, all of the above emphasizes the need for the HR professionals in IT (referred to as IT HR) to possess the necessary competencies for an increased success rate of current and future change initiatives. Furthermore, aligned with the company strategy and the IT transformation journey discussed above, IT HR has also been restructured in the past. The reorganization process was introduced in 2008 as part of the transformation of the HR organization within Philips (referred to as Philips HR) and is expected to be finalized in 2012 – 2013. Thus, before presenting the IT HR structure, we will briefly discuss the structure of Philips HR.

1.3. Philips HR

The transformation of the HR organization at Philips is intended to enable a more customer-centric approach which will create time for HR Professionals to focus on more strategic rather than operational tasks.

Currently, Philips HR consists of four building blocks – Functional Leadership, Philips People Services (PPS), Area HR and HR Business Partners.

Functional Leaders translate the company strategy into professional HR Policies and Practices, develop and deploy One Philips approach to recruitment, talent management, engagement, learning & development, performance management, compensation & benefits, grading and organizational development programs.

PPS consists of HR Assistants focused on cost effective services and providing excellence in HR Services in 4 domains: PPS Administration & Payroll, PPS Recruitment, PPS Learning and PPS International Mobility.

Area HR Professionals deploy global policies locally in compliance with legal regulations and thus ensuring the local HR needs are met.

HR Business Partners set the HR Agenda for the business or function, geared towards business and company strategy. They drive organizational effectiveness and are involved in business transformation programs, people business inflow, people growth, people retention and high performance culture.

1.4. IT HR Structure

IT HR consists of HR Professionals supporting the organizational units within IT and includes two of the four building blocks presented above: business partners and functional leaders. These are distributed as depicted in Figure 3 below. The current study focused on the HR Business Partners in IT HR.

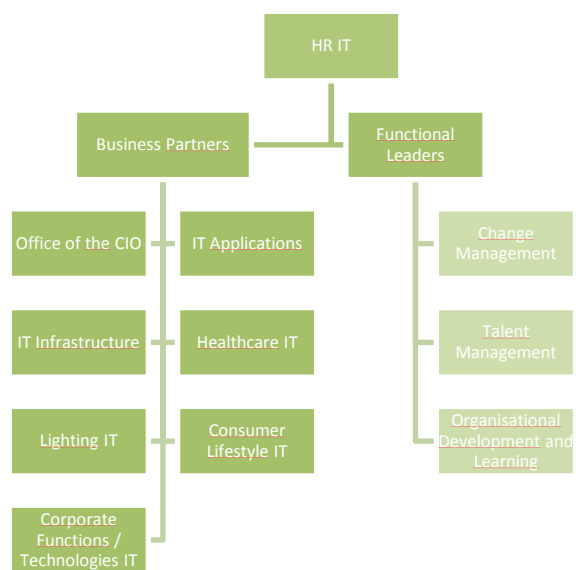


Figure 3. IT HR Structure

1.5. Works Council

Works Councils are organizations of employees within a company representing the workers and aiming at protecting their rights. Organizations are legally obliged to comply with them. Consultation with the Works Council is required when companies plan to undertake organizational changes with people impact.

At Philips, apart from the central Philips' Works Council, the IT Department has its own Works Council. Three of the members of the latter one participated in the study.

2. Data Collection

An explorative case study design was applied in this paper. Although, the case study design has its limitations, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter VI, it also brings advantages for such under explored field as the HR Change Management Competencies. It gives the opportunity to perform an in-depth analysis which is beneficial for getting insights into what competencies are required from HR

Change Agents in a practical setting while enhancing the internal validity of the research. Although generalizing of the outcomes will be more of a problem, we tried to enhance the external validity by building up the proposed framework of the HR Change Management competencies on extensive literature review.

Additionally, as the researched phenomenon is under explored, an exploratory design was considered appropriate as it gives more flexibility and contributes to getting ideas, clues and insights. Additional advantages were presented in more detail above.

Data for the study were collected in the period August – September 2011. Due to time constraints no pre-testing was possible. The Competency development method (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) and the HR Professionals Assessment/Audit (Ulrich, 1997) method were used (though adapted to the purposes of the study) as a baseline for developing the research design and applying the data collection methods.

Next the sampling strategy and the data collection methods will be presented.

2.1. Sampling Strategy

A multiple respondent approach is going to be adopted (Farndale et al., 2010) with three units of analysis - Line Managers (LM), HR Professionals (HR) and Work Council Members (WCM). WCM were selected in their role of employee representatives. Considering the explorative nature of the study, we believe that these three respondent groups can provide the most complete picture of the required HR competencies in change management (combining the perspectives of the HR professionals themselves and their “clients”) (Becker et al., 2001).

Participants were identified with the support of the HR Business Partner in the department involved. The selection procedure consisted of several criteria that needed to be satisfied for the participants to be considered in the scope of the research. The requirements were: (1) LM and HR had to represent both parts of the IT department – IT Applications and IT Infrastructure; (2) LM and HR had to operate in different countries; (3) LM, HR and WCM had to have participated in previous organizational changes; (4) WCM had to have been involved in negotiations with the company; (5) WCM had to have been involved in discussions with employees on how they were experiencing the changes. Before conducting the research permission to approach the participants in scope was obtained. Confidentiality was guaranteed.

2.2. Data collection instruments

Two data collection methods were used - **semi-structured interviews** (interview protocols to be found in Appendix E) and a **self-developed questionnaire** (Appendix F). Our choice of instruments was determined by the research design applied as well as by previous research in the field of (HR) competencies.

Firstly, “one advantage of qualitative methods in exploratory research is that use of open-ended questions and probing gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do” (Mack et al., 2005, p. 4). Additionally, qualitative methods give the researcher the opportunity to use probes (e.g. why, what do you mean etc.) to ask for additional information and thus get the more in-depth input one needs (Mack et al., 2005).

Furthermore, in previous research on HR competences interviewees with line managers have been the main approach used. Therefore, given the explorative nature of the research, interviews were considered to be the best option for getting in-depth information and insights over the researched phenomenon. Interview Guides/Protocols were developed prior the interviews but were modified whenever possible (Cassell & Simon, 2004) for the upcoming sessions.

However, we took into account that interviews with managers might not always be the best strategy as managers might not recognize an HR competency as important (contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness) if they had never collaborated with an HR person applying it (Becker et al., 2001). Therefore, we decided to use multiple respondents that could give a more complete picture of the researched phenomenon.

Still, to be taken into account is the fact that, as the research topic is rather broad, the flexibility provided by the exploratory design can mitigate some of the contributions of the study due to time constraints. Therefore, apart from interviews, we decided to include a mail survey as a data collection method - to enhance rigorousness of the research and achieve more “tangible” results. *Mail* questionnaire was preferred as it helped to overcome time barriers; namely, it was sent out by e-mail and allowed participants to complete and return it to the researcher in convenient for them time (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Additionally, considering the small sample size, to be addressed below, the main advantage of sending out a mail survey was that it allowed us to reach a broader population of respondents.

To further emphasize the benefits of the combination of these data collection methods, we need to highlight that if just a survey is sent to the participants the possibility to leave an important competency out of the framework, not included in the questionnaire, increases (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Thus, having in mind the limitations of both methods as well the constraints of the current research discussed in Chapter VI we decided that combining a questionnaire with semi-structured interviews would provide us with the “rich” data which we needed for this explorative study.

To move forward, the participants’ representation will be discussed below.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 *HR*, 9 *LM* and 3 *WCM* (N=19). In addition, the mail survey was sent out to 59 *LM* and 9 *HR*¹. With a total number of N=25 responses² (9 *HR* and 16 *LM*) the *survey response rate* is 37%. We consider this satisfactory as at the period of conducting the study the organization was entering a large scale organizational change which might have led to reluctance in some organizational members to participate.

Table 2 presents the total representation of the participants in the (N=28). With 57% the majority of participants are within the *LM* group as compared to 32% *HR* and 11% *WCM*. During the selection procedure we tried to get a representative sample for each of three participants’ groups but we do recognize the low number of participants as one of the limitations of the current research and we shall come back to that issue in Chapter VI.

Table 2
Total Representation of the Participants in the Study (N=28)

¹ *WCM* agreed to participate in the study at a later stage and therefore they did not fill it in
² *HR* and *LM* who participated in the interviews also filled in the survey

Role	Participants	
	n	%
HR	9	32.1%
LM	16	57.1%
WCM	3	10.7%

Furthermore, not all participants took part in both data collection methods. Participants' representation per method used is shown in Appendix G.

3. Data analysis

Qualitative data were used to address RQ1³ (P₁) and RQ3 (P₂). Thus, the interviews were analyzed to investigate if HR can play the role of change agents and if the type of organizational change has an impact on the required change agents' competencies. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data sets were used to address RQ2 (P₃-P₁₀) and to assess the impact of the four proposed HR competency domains (in their role as independent variables) on two dependent variables: an increased HR Effectiveness and assessed HR Effectiveness. That resembles the right-hand side of the conceptual model depicted in Figure 1. *Importance* refers to the extent participants perceived the independent variables as contributing to an increased HR effectiveness in change management whereas *assessed HR Effectiveness* refers to the assessed effectiveness of IT HR on the proposed competencies.

Below, the data analysis methods applied will be presented in more detail.

3.1. Qualitative data

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with all three groups of participants: HR, LM and WCM. Participants were asked to describe the current and the desired role of IT HR during changes; the state of the current and the desired HR Change Management Competencies in IT HR as well as to identify areas for improvement. Interview protocols were developed prior the interviews but were adjusted on an ongoing basis as much as possible (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Interviews were taped and transcribed. A software program for qualitative data analysis (QSR Nvivo 9) was used for the coding procedure and data analysis. The coding procedures applied for each research question (RQ) were as follows:

- To address RQ1 “Can HR Professionals act as change agents?” **open coding** and **axial coding techniques** were applied
- To address RQ2 “If so, what kind of organizational change management competencies do they need in order to make that contribution?” and RQ3 “Is there a difference in the required HR Change management competencies whether involved in large scale organizational changes or in incremental changes?” as well as to identify areas for improvement **pattern matching** was applied. However, where necessary (e.g. a newly emerged competency) we applied **open coding** (Gibbs. R, 2002)

³ Throughout the paper RQ stands for *Research question*

3.1.1. Open Coding and Axial Coding

Open coding is one of the techniques that a researcher might apply to make sense of the data one had collected. As it is a common technique used as part of the grounded theory approach, we might argue that the current study resembles, at least partly, this approach. The starting point when performing open coding is the data itself and requires breaking it down in an interpretative manner, looking at the data with an “open” mind and suggesting codes (Trauth, 2000). Sometimes, as it also happened in this research, that might involve line-by-line coding for generating inductive initial codes by looking for similarities and differences. After initial codes are defined, these need to be organized in concepts. That requires an ongoing testing and comparison of the categories derived from the text that might lead to the emergence, alteration or collapse of categories. Next step applied in the research was *axial coding* which evolves the same way as open coding. Making sense of the open codes, axial coding identifies the “core concepts of the study” using “reanalysis of the results of open coding” (Babbie, 2010, p. 402).

Illustration of both coding techniques is provided in Table 3 with *initial codes* and *second-order codes* (where applicable) exemplifying the open coding technique and *concept* – exemplifying the axial coding. The table presents partly the data analysis on the HR Roles (RQ1) with two main elements: Current HR Role and Desired HR Role. These will be discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

Table 3
Illustration of open and axial coding procedure

Quotations	Initial code	Second-order code	Concept
Current HR Role			
"it's not only people management role but also strategic business" (HR7)	Strategic partner		Act as a strategic partner and facilitator
"what is the gap analysis between what are the necessary or the required capabilities after the change and what are the capabilities you have before the change" (HR6)			
"we need to design for learning and development platform that links to the demand" (HR2)			
"HR should be there as a facilitator for the change" (HR3)	Facilitator		
"the role of HR is to help team leads" (HR5)			
"...and then help to manage the transition from the current organization to the new organization" (HR4)			
Desired HR Role			
"First of all, I think that as a true Business Partner you should be at the beginning of change; so not only inform everybody that the organizational change is done and you are surprised with the change and you need to do stuff. So, you need to be involved from the beginning. I do believe HR can also contribute a lot in terms of the business case for the change" (HR3)	True Business Partner	Equal Business Partner	Act as an equal business partner and proactive facilitator throughout the change process
"they have a different perspective on the world than a manager. We have the same goal but a different perspective" (LM5)			
"I believe HR should be really a function with high level people that are able to say “No” to managers in such a way that managers listens to them" (LM5)	Equal Business Partner		

<p>" that has to be translated though to a more tactical perspective but then when it comes to the majority of the organization it has to be again translated from an operational standpoint in the sense of "what do I need to do every day in order to act to that strategic vision that the leadership has in mind. So, HR is in a perfect position to be the translators to help facilitate" (LM6)</p> <p>"I see HR more as generic supporting organization that is listening well to signals from the organization if things go as planned and raising the red/yellow flag" (LM3)</p> <p>"a really really strong role in the project that has been set up at that time; also in the project board" (LM1)</p> <p>"I think they might be aware of what you might expect as kinds of resistance; they will not identify it easily with individuals because they don't interact with them a lot, only occasionally, so, it is for the LM to be sensitive and to identify it but to how to call it...to sensitize the manager - that could be an important role" (LM4)</p>	Facilitator	Facilitator throughout the change process
<p>" they should investigate what is this change and how it will affect the people. And proactively look at the consequences. And then create a support structure when the change happens that you know where the impacts are and then for every impact you have a plan how you are going to address it. So, that it is not going to come out of the air. Especially that proactive part is very important, that upfront you think about the impact and what are you going to do about it" (LM8)</p>	Proactive facilitator	

3.1.2. Pattern matching

Unlike the open coding technique, the starting point in *pattern matching* is a predicted pattern (expectations for the relationships between the concepts) rather than the text itself (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Marschan-pekkari, 2004). Pattern-matching furthermore allows for linking the collected data to initially formulated propositions (Campbell, 1975). In the current study these predefined expectations take the form of the proposed HR Competency Model for Change Management and more specifically the predefined competencies. However, we had in mind the example behaviors (Appendix C) when we were allocating data to competencies. Additionally, to increase usability of the model, we identified sub-categories (through open coding) that were intended to simplify some of the more complex competencies. Thus, Credibility, for instance, consists of four sub-categories making it clearer that does this competency encompass.

Although explorative in its nature, due to its complexity, the research resembles different approaches and study designs. We already made the link with grounded theory. Using the predicted "pattern" linking to the independent variables (the proposed HR competencies) our study comes close to the explanatory case study design (Yin, 1994).

The example below (Table 4) illustrates the pattern-matching procedure with starting point the predicted "pattern" – predefined competencies per proposed competency domain. An example of the applied open coding is the newly emerged competency (Legal) Safeguarding. No illustration of this example is included as the procedure is the same as outlined above.

Table 4
Illustration of pattern-matching procedure

Predefined competencies: Predicted "pattern"	Quotations
--	------------

Provide support to employees	"training is one thing but there could be also coaching. And coaching can help people realize the new challenges they get (because change brings a lot ...) so training and coaching can surely help" (LM9)
Credibility	"making sure that the people really do these moves because it is not always resistance but it is also not knowing how to make it" (LM1) "a good understanding of what the business wants" (HR1) "if you don't understand the business then you cannot understand the current state, the future state and the transition state" (HR2)
Proactive management of Incremental changes	"to stimulate people to come up with great ideas, that you explain "ok, we need an idea in kind of core and it adheres to this competency and if you have the best idea we will publish it somewhere" and then people can join this kind of an initiative" (LM1) "You have to be open to everything and anything because that's where you get that "out of the box" thinking, that's where the brainstorming is going" (LM6)
Provide support to managers	"enabling managers to grow their change management skills" (HR2) "provide additional support, especially the people managers. So, they should be able to provide that support" (LM7) "I think they need to be fully involved with the preparation which is generally translating, which is probably a tactical view then, what it means to the organization" (LM6)
After-care	"measuring, whether the change has been fully brought to its end" (HR6) "To make it last, they need to do continuous pulse checks to see how the organization is behaving, how the organization is adapting to changes" (LM7)

However, it needs to be emphasized that after the conducted "pattern-matching" the competencies were reviewed critically and some were relabeled. The data analysis will be discussed in more details in Chapter IV.

3.2. Quantitative data

Apart from the interviews, a self-developed questionnaire was used. Following the approach of Ulrich et al. (2008), the survey consisted of listed traits (items⁴) of the HR Competencies identified.

The survey consisted of two scales: *Importance* and *HR Effectiveness*. The former one refers to the extent the competencies (traits) were perceived as contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness and the latter one refers to the assessed Effectiveness of IT HR. Within each scale, several sub-scales were identified - the HR competency domains in the proposed framework. The only exception was the Transition reinforcement skills domain, which due to its more complex nature, was sub-divided into two sub-scales - Analytical & Diagnostic skills and Transition Reinforcement skills, with the latter one consisting of the remaining competencies identified as adjacent to this domain, thus excluding Analytical & Diagnostic skills.

Participants were asked to assess the *Importance* and the *HR Effectiveness* for each item on a five-point Likert scale ranging **from 1 – (to a very little extent) to 5 – (to a very large extent)**. Although we applied five-point scale, it was treated as an interval measurement level. Several items were "borrowed" from previous research (where considered appropriate) to increase reliability of the scale (Appendix F).

Table 5 presents the items (listed traits) belonging to a (sub-) scale. It also indicates the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of both scales and its adjacent sub-scales.

⁴ 31 items in total as agreed with IT HR

Table 5

Reliability coefficients of the Measurement Scales Importance and HR Effectiveness and their sub-scales

(Sub-)Scale	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Importance	1.1 – 1.31	0.859
Influential skills	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.8, 1.18 and 1.19	0.659
Proactiveness	1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10 and 1.30	0.697
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 1.20 and 1.22	0.711
Transition Reinforcement skills	1.17, 1.25, 1.26, 1.27, 1.28, 1.29 and 1.31	0.744
Transition Enabling skills	1.16, 1.23 and 1.24	0.711
HR Effectiveness	2.1 – 2.31	0.896
Influential skills	2.1, 2.2, 2.8, 2.18 and 2.19	0.642
Proactiveness	2.6, 2.7, 2.9, 2.10 and 2.30	0.623
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.20 and 2.22	0.793
Transition Reinforcement skills	2.17, 2.25, 2.26, 2.27, 2.28, 2.29 and 2.31	0.634
Transition Enabling skills	2.16, 2.23 and 2.24	0.572

The item “ Express effective verbal and written communication” on the HR Effectiveness scale (item 2.4) detracted from the reliability of the sub-scale Influential skills, while at the same time it was (item 1.4) contributing to the reliability of Influential skills sub-scale on the Importance scale. Therefore, we decided to exclude only item 2.4 from the further analyses. We believe that formulating the item as consisting of two different communication types was confusing for participants when assessing HR Effectiveness, while clearly both types were considered important.

Apart from item 2.4, items 1(2).3, 1(2).5 and 1(2).21 were excluded from the analysis as they were shown to detract from the internal consistency reliability of their respective (sub-) scales. There were no reverse-scored items.

Although for some sub-scales the Cronbach’s alpha is lower than the proposed minimum of 0.70 taking into consideration the highly explorative nature of the study, the self-developed character of the questionnaire and the limited number of items, these reliability scores can be considered acceptable and a good base for future research.

Respondents’ scores were averaged to provide with an overall Importance and HR Effectiveness score for both scales and their adjacent sub-scales. Furthermore, the higher the score on a specific (sub-) scale, the higher the perceived Importance and HR Effectiveness of the HR Change Management Competencies.

The only demographic variable included is participants’ role in the organization – HR or LM.

Due to the small number of survey respondents (N=25) no sophisticated data analysis was possible. Therefore, the survey results were used as *complementary* to the qualitative data gathered. Thus, descriptive statistics and parametric tests were performed for the quantitative data analysis. Considering the explorative nature of the research, no testing was performed as to whether all of the predetermined conditions for conducting parametric tests were satisfied. The assumption for normal scores distribution in the population was however tested for all scales and sub-scales through the Shapiro-Wilk Test

(statistics.laerd.com, 2011) as being more appropriate for small samples sizes (Statistics Laerd). The results are presented in Appendix H and could bring insights for future research. We shall come back to this topic in Chapter VI.

To move forward, the next section will outline the research findings and answers the research questions posted in the beginning of the paper.

Chapter IV Findings

Chapter IV will present the findings of the research. The chapter is built up by the three Research Questions, posted in the beginning of the paper, followed by the data analysis per question. As emphasized above, the main focus of the data analysis is the qualitative data gathered whereas the quantitative data were used as complementary. Additionally, quantitative data were used to address only RQ2 whereas RQ1 and RQ3 were addressed by qualitative data.

For presenting the data analysis, the same logic is applied for each research question. First, an overview of the results is summarized and presented in a systematic way. That includes visualizing in tables the qualitative data collected (for RQ1 and RQ2) showing the representation of interviewees (in %) per unit of analysis (HR, LM or WCM) that have commented on the respective HR role or HR competency. Some of the most significant results are discussed afterwards. For RQ2 the survey results are also presented in the overview (tables are only included in Appendix L). Instead of a table, for RQ3 a scheme has been developed. Next, a more elaborated data analysis takes place. That might be broken down by either role (RQ1) or competency domain (RQ2). Furthermore, when presenting the qualitative data analysis, where applicable, quotations from the interviews are provided in the body text in *italics* with an indication within brackets of the participant whose quote is being used. However, as confidentiality was guaranteed to the participants, this is being included as only consisting of the participants' role (HR, LM or WCM) followed by a number (as in the researchers' notes). The data analysis for RQ2 is finalized by identifying improvement areas and practical suggestions that resemble the *diagnosis* and action *plan* phases of the regulative cycle mentioned above.

Next, the data analysis is provided by research question and follows the logic outlined above.

1. Can HR Professionals act as change agents?

P₁: When playing the role of change agents, HR professionals can contribute to an increased success rate of change initiatives

Exploring the HR Role in Change Management, as target group participants were identified LM and HR. They were asked to describe the ***current HR Role*** in Change Management and the ***desired HR role***. The former one was intended to investigate whether and how IT HR is currently involved in change initiatives, whereas the latter one was focused on investigating what the role of HR should be, thus performing a gap analysis.

Table 6 synthesizes the results of the data analysis. Three roles were identified as current HR Roles and three roles – as desired HR Role. Interviewees' representation (in %) indicates which role has been mostly referred to by which group of interviewees as well as the total population. That enables comparison on several levels that will be discussed below. On the one hand, we can investigate which role has been recognized as important by the greatest number of interviewees. On the other hand, a comparison of the perceptions of the different groups of participants could bring insights about the level of consistency between the HR and LM functions.

Table 6
Current and Desired HR Roles in Change Management (N=19)

HR Role	Current			Desired		
	Act as a strategic partner and facilitator	Administrative role	Reactive role	Act as an equal business partner and proactive facilitator throughout the change process	Administrative role	Drive change
HR	85.7%	14.3%	0.0%	85.7%	42.9%	14.3%
LM	11.1%	22.2%	44.4%	100.0%	33.3%	22.2%
Total	43.8%	18.8%	25.0%	93.8%	37.5%	18.8%

Note. No senior management representatives were interviewed. Therefore, gap analysis could be only conducted when assessing the HR Role towards People Managers at the lower levels within the organization. A detailed description of the six roles is to be found in Appendix I.

1.1. Current HR Role

Looking at Table 6, the three identified as current HR Roles are: **(1) Act as a strategic partner and facilitator**, **(2) Administrative role** and **(3) Reactive role**.

The first role refers to the HR involvement in the set-up of the new organization while also supporting the strategy implementation by providing managers with the tools to make the change happen. 85.7% of the HR interviewees indeed described the current HR Role in Change Management as one of a *strategic partner and facilitator* while only 11.1% LM's commented in the same direction, thus indicating a rather big inconsistency in views of HR and LM.

Next to the fact that only 11.1% of the LM looked at HR as being a strategic partner and facilitator, 44.4% of LM referred to the current HR Role as having a more *reactive* character. HR was described here as acting “*on a request*” (LM1), not supporting or guiding LM in the change process. None of the HR participants described the current HR Role as such.

Both groups however agreed that currently HR plays an *administrative role* (14.3% HR as compared to 22.2% LM) which refers to the ability of HR to make sure that technically all HR processes work.

1.2. Desired HR Role

Three roles were identified as desired HR Roles in Change Management: **(1) Act as an equal business partner and proactive facilitator throughout the change process**, **(2) Administrative role** and **(3) Drive change**.

85.7% of the HR Professionals and 100.0% of LM described the HR Role as an “*equal business partner and proactive facilitator throughout the change process*” as a desired one. Thus, 93.8% of the total population interviewees indicated that this is an important role for HR to play during change initiatives. Furthermore, this role seems to build upon the identified as a current HR Role “act as a strategic partner and facilitator” since the HR involvement from the same beginning of the change process and the need for HR to provide managers with the tools to make the change happen were still recognized as important. However, recognized as highly important was also the need for HR to facilitate the translation of the strategy into operational and tactical tasks, to have a proactive attitude and to be an equal business partner, thus being able to stand up and bring the HR perspective on the table.

Consistency in views is also to be noticed with regard to the *administrative HR role*. Thus, both groups of participants recognized that a lot of administrative work has to be dealt with during changes and that was assigned to the HR role. Furthermore, although literature sources pointed towards a more strategic role for HR in Change Management, interviewees considered the Administrative Role important for increasing the HR effectiveness. However, as will become clear when presenting the identified areas for improvement, interviewees emphasized the higher importance of the strategic HR Role in Change Management and thus pointed out that temporary administrative help can be hired in order to take off some of the burden for HR Professionals.

Additionally, 18.8% of the interviewees indicated that HR is well positioned to “*drive change*” with a slightly higher representation of LM (22.2%) as compared to HR (14.3%). To be successful in that role, HR would need to do a lot of explanation around the changes and to ensure buy-in from organizational members.

Thus, Proposition 1 was supported. Additionally, the results indicate that as far as the desired HR role is concerned there is a consistency in HR and LM views. That implies that HR is on the right track as a value adding change agents. However, the opposite trend was noticed when assessing the current HR role; namely HR and LM perceptions were highly inconsistent. Last but not least, the analysis conducted a simple gap analysis. Thus, the difference between the current and the desired HR Roles indicates the starting point for increasing the HR effectiveness in Change Management.

Next, the second research question will be addressed.

2. If so, what kind of organizational change management competencies do they need to make that contribution?

To address the second research question “*If so, what kind of organizational change management competencies do they need in order to make that contribution?*” four propositions were formulated:

P₃: If HR Change Agents apply Transition reinforcement skills, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

P₄: If HR Change Agents apply Transition enabling skills, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

P₅: If HR Change Agents demonstrate Proactiveness, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

P₆: If HR Change Agents apply Influential skills, the HR Effectiveness in Change Management can be increased

To explore these propositions both qualitative and quantitative data sets were analyzed. HR, LM and WCM were identified as the units of analysis, although WCM only took part of the semi-structured interviewees.

The results supported the existence of the four predefined Competency domains. No new domains emerged. Minor differences were however found when analyzing the competencies within each domain.

Additional sub-categories were identified for some of the more complex competencies as to bring clarity on what they encompass. These will be discussed in more detail when presenting the results per competency domain.

The main findings are summarized below and depicted in the adapted framework (Figure 5):

1. *Transition Reinforcement skills*:
 - 1.1. **Process Implementation skills** collapsed. The predefined content, to the extent it was covered in the interviews, was split between *Administrative skills* and *Proactiveness throughout the change process*
 - 1.2. A new competency emerged: **(Legal) Safeguarding**
 - 1.3. **Administrative skills** were described as more of an enabler (although these were still considered important and within the HR scope, they could be assigned to temporary administrative help)
2. *Transition Enabling skills* – although no new competencies emerged, the scope of both predefined competencies *Provide support for employees* and *Provide support for managers* had to be broadened as to reflect the interviewees' responses
 - 2.1. *Provide Support for employees* was thus reformulated in the adapted framework as **Enable Employees to accept the change**
 - 2.2. *Provide Support for managers* was thus reformulated in the adapted framework as **Enable Management to act**
3. *Proactiveness* – similarly to the above presented results in the Transition Enabling skills domain, no new competencies emerged in the Proactiveness domain but the predefined competencies were reformulated
 - 3.1. The scope for *Proactive Culture Management* was broadened and thus the competency was reformulated in the adapted framework as **Proactiveness throughout the change process**
 - 3.2. The second competency *Proactiveness in Incremental changes* did not require a broadened scope but was still reformulated in order to better reflect participants' responses. Thus, in the adapted framework it was positioned as **Proactively create and promote an open and innovative environment**
4. *Influential skills* – this is the only domain which did not undergo transformation after the data analysis

Figure 7 depicts the adapted HR Competency model for Change Management.

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Competence</i>	<i>Example Behaviors</i>
Transition Reinforcement skills	Analytical & Diagnostic skills	Design principles & structure Context-specific view Gap Analysis & Strategic focus Translate the People impact and proactively look at the consequences General Analytical & Diagnostic skills (e.g. separate root causes from symptoms)
	Administrative skills	Ensure that all processes are up and running
	After-care	Ensure proper after-care
	(Legal)Safeguarding	Be aware of legal aspects and consequences
Transition Enabling skills	Enable Management to act	Provide Management with tools to make the change happen Translate the vision
	Enable employees to accept the change	Address uncertainty and manage expectations for a healthy organization Create readiness for change Handle resistance & Provide support to employees
Proactiveness	Proactiveness throughout the change process	Proactive attitude at every stage of the change process
	Proactively create and promote an open & innovative environment	Create an open culture where people are not afraid to speak up and come up with suggestions and ideas
Influential skills	Credibility	Act as a Role model Challenge Management and enable it to act Knowledge Disciplined process for a managed transition Deliver on commitments Decision-making and prioritizing
	Leadership	Communication Inspire confidence

Enabler

Figure 4. Adapted HR Change Management Competency Model

Below, the data analysis will be presented per competency domain. However, before proceeding, the descriptive statistics based on the survey results and the paired-samples t-test results on the total population will be discussed.

Table 7 below provides Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD) for the total sample on both scales (Importance and HR Effectiveness) and their adjacent sub-scales. On the Importance scale (and its sub-

scales) an average of M=4.0 was achieved whereas the HR Effectiveness scale (and its sub-scales) was evaluated with scores approximately 1 point lower.

Table 7
Means and Standard Deviations per Measurement Scale and Sub-scales (N=25)

(Sub-)Scales	Mean	Std. Deviation
Importance	4.01	.428
Influential skills	4.17	.471
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	3.98	.522
Transition Reinforcement skills	4.07	.533
Transition Enabling skills	3.97	.775
Proactiveness	3.78	.603
HR Effectiveness	3.05	.441
Influential skills	3.34	.442
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	3.07	.610
Transition Reinforcement skills	3.08	.493
Transition Enabling skills	3.01	.635
Proactiveness	2.78	.558

Note. The values range from 1 (to a very little extent) to 5 (to a very large extent). A higher score indicates higher Importance/HR Effectiveness.

Additionally, descriptive statistics per role (HR and LM) are provided in Appendix J and the paired-samples t-test tables are provided in Appendix L.

Before breaking down the analysis per competency domain, it seems relevant to briefly discuss the paired samples t-test results on the total population. The t-test was conducted as to investigate whether there was a significant difference in the total population's responses on both scales, Importance and HR Effectiveness. The statistically significant results indicated that the Importance of the listed traits was higher (M=4.0, SD=.4) than the HR Effectiveness on these (M=3.0, SD=.4).

Similar is the trend for the results on a group level. Thus, both HR and LM assessed significantly higher the Importance of the listed traits with an average of 4.0 (HR: M=4.0, SD=.3 and LM: M=4.0, SD=.5) whereas the HR Effectiveness was assessed with an average of 3.0 (HR - M=3.1, SD=.5 and LM - M=3.0, SD=.4).

Thus, these results indicate that the predefined competencies were indeed evaluated as contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness. Additional implication is that a room for improvement for the HR Change Agents in IT HR is to be noticed. Thus next, the data analysis per competency domain will be presented. That includes an overview of the gathered qualitative and quantitative data. Tables visualizing the qualitative data are included with the competencies and sub-categories being highlighted for a differentiation. Since quantitative data results serve complementary purposes, the tables presenting the paired-sample t-test results are only to be found in Appendix L. Next, a more detailed analysis per competency follows. The analysis continues with elaborating on the identified improvement areas. A SWOT analysis will be provided and some practical suggestions made by the interviewees will be outlined.

2.1. Transition Reinforcement skills

As mentioned above, the interviewees' responses confirmed the importance of three out of the four predefined competencies within the Transition Reinforcement skills: *Analytical & Diagnostic skill*, *Administrative skills*, and *After-care*. *Process Implementation skills* collapsed as a separate competency. Furthermore, a new competency emerged: *(Legal) Safeguarding*.

Table 8 below presents the representation of interviewees in their perceptions of the necessary (important) competencies contributing to an increased HE Effectiveness within the Transition Reinforcement skills domain. Since, the data is presented per unit of analysis and not all participants commented on all competencies, if no remark was made a 0.0% was included. Below, the most relevant and significant results will be discussed. Highlighted are the identified competencies. The not highlighted rows represent the identified sub-categories of a certain competency (e.g. "Advising on design principles & structure" belongs to *Analytical and Diagnostic skills*).

Table 8
Perceived Importance of the Transition Reinforcement Skills Domain and its adjacent Competencies for increasing the HR Effectiveness in Change Management (N=19)

Transition Reinforcement skills	HR	LM	WCM	Total Population
Administrative skills	42.9%	33.3%	33.3%	36.8%
Analytical & Diagnostic Skills	71.4%	77.8%	33.3%	68.4%
Advising on design principles & structure	28.6%	22.2%	0.0%	21.1%
Context-specific view	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
Gap Analysis	28.6%	11.1%	33.3%	21.1%
General	57.1%	22.2%	0.0%	31.6%
Strategic focus	14.3%	33.3%	0.0%	21.1%
Translate the People impact and proactively look at the consequences	42.9%	11.1%	0.0%	21.1%
After-care	57.1%	55.6%	0.0%	47.4%
Safeguarding	42.9%	44.4%	0.0%	36.8%

Looking at the last column in table 8, to be noticed Analytical & Diagnostic skills were recognized as contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness in Change Management with the highest representation of the total population (68.4%), followed by 47.4% for After-care, 36.8% for the newly emerged competency (Legal) Safeguarding and 36.8% for Administrative skills.

An interesting result is to be noticed when comparing the representation per unit of analysis for Administrative skills. All three groups of respondents indicated these as being important with the highest representation for HR 42.9%, followed by 33.3% for WCM and 33.3% for LM.

All three participant groups recognized the importance of Analytical & Diagnostic skills as well, with LM having the highest representation – 77.8%. However, when looking at the sub-categories within this competency, to be noticed is the fact that for all them, except one – Strategic focus, the HR representation is higher. Also intriguing is the fact that Gap analysis is the only sub-category referred to as important by WCM as well.

The rest of the identified competencies in the Transition Reinforcement skills domain were referred to as important by both HR and LM with no large representation differentiation when comparing both groups.

Moving to the next step in the data analysis, namely the survey results, to be outlined is the fact that all predetermined competencies were covered in our questionnaire. It however excludes the newly emerged competency (Legal) Safeguarding. Furthermore, as explained above, due to the more complex nature of this domain, two sub-scales were developed: Analytical & Diagnostic skills and Transition Reinforcement skills. The latter one consists of the predefined competencies - Administrative skills, Process Implementation skills (which disappeared from the adapted framework) and After-care.

As the results of the paired-samples t-test show the scores of the total population for Analytical & Diagnostic skills (M=3.98, SD=.52 and M=3.07, SD=.61) and Transition Reinforcement skills (M=4.07, SD=.53 and 3.08, SD=.49) are significantly higher on the Importance scale as compared to the HR Effectiveness scale.

Similar are the results on a group level. Both, HR and LM have assessed the Analytical & Diagnostic skills (M=4.0, SD=.4 for HR and M=4.0, SD=.6 for LM) and the Transition Reinforcement skills as being important “to a large extent” (M=4.0, SD=.3 for HR and M=4.0, SD=.6 for LM) whereas the HR Effectiveness on these has achieved an average of 3.0 - “to some extent” (for both sub-scales respectively - M=3.1, SD=.7 for HR and M=3.0, SD=.6 for LM; M=3.2, SD=.6 for HR and M=3.0, SD=.4 for LM).’

Thus, the results from both the analysis of the qualitative data and the analysis of the quantitative data supported proposition 3.

Below, each competency, as identified after analyzing the data gathered from the semi-structured interviews, will be discussed in more detail. Where applicable, quotes from the interviews (in italics) are incorporated.

2.1.1. Analytical & Diagnostic Skills

Analytical & Diagnostic skills were recognized by all participant groups as crucial for HR in a change context. While analyzing the data, several sub-categories were identified. These are intended to better reveal what this competency encompasses. Thus, general analytical & diagnostic skills are needed. These are, for instance, the ability of HR Change Agents to separate the root causes of a problem from its symptoms and the ability to know what is going on around you. Apart from that, more change-specific sub-categories were identified. Thus, HR Change Agents should be, for instance, able to advise on “*what is important in the design structure (LM8)*”; they should have a context-specific view, thus understanding the “*complexity of the context*” (HR2); they should be able to perform a gap analysis in the current competencies available and the ones required after the change; they should have a strategic thinking focused on what should be done differently while walking together “*with the business in shaping the vision for the future*” (LM7). Last but not least, they have to be able to translate the people impact or how the change will affect the people, and proactively look at the consequences so that they don’t “*come out of the air*” (LM8).

2.1.2. Administrative skills

Although the HR function, as was made evident when discussing the desired HR roles, should strive for a more strategic role, interviewees still recognized certain administrative tasks as being part of the HR responsibilities in a change context. Among these is the need for HR to ensure that all HR processes are working as part of the preparation stage but also as part of the operational execution. The latter one refers to the elements of the Process Implementation skills transferred into this competency. Thus, for instance, within the HR scope are tasks such as ensuring “*correct payroll, correct reporting lines*” (HR1) which requires from HR competency in clarifying roles and responsibilities. Additionally, HR needs to do the formal announcements and “*to take care of the processes*” (LM5) in a way that enables the organization to move forward. However, as mentioned above, the identified areas for improvement revealed the more enabling character of the Administrative skills. Interviewees highlighted the importance of strategic HR involvement and suggested that administrative help can be hired in order to ensure that HR has time and resources to focus on strategic tasks. This will be elaborated on when discussing the identified areas for improvement and practical suggestions.

2.1.3. After-care

Ensuring proper After-care was another area where, if competent, HR was recognized as being able to increase the HR Effectiveness in Change Management and thus, make a large contribution to the change process. That requires from HR to make sure that the change is “*not only a tick in the box for management*” (HR3). For that purpose HR has to engage in “*measuring whether the change has been fully brought to its end*” (HR6) and to provide “*feedback to management about how people are experiencing the change*”(HR6) while meanwhile deriving lessons learned in order to improve future change initiatives.

2.1.4. (Legal) Safeguarding

The newly emerged Competence, as already mentioned above, is (Legal) Safeguarding. Thus, one of the expectations from HR in change management is to be aware of legal aspects and consequences. That means that if an organization undertakes a major restructuring process HR has to ensure that “*it doesn't violate any legal obligations*”(HR4) since that could ruin the company reputation.

2.2. Transition Enabling skills

Interviewees also supported the importance of the predefined Transition Enabling skills domain with its adjacent competencies. However, the data analysis required broadening the scope for both competencies Provide Support for employees and Provide support for managers. That resulted in relabeling them to reflect the broader content they embrace. Thus, the two competencies within the Transition Enabling skills domain as included in the adapted framework are *Enable Employees to accept the change* and *Enable Management to act in order*.

Table 9 is structured the same way as Table 8 and thus presents the representation of interviewees in their perceptions of the necessary (important) competencies contributing to an increased HE Effectiveness within the Transition Enabling skills domain. Below, the most relevant and significant results will be discussed. Highlighted are the identified competencies.

Table 9

Perceived Importance of the Transition Enabling Skills Domain and its adjacent Competencies for increasing the HR Effectiveness in Change Management (N=19)

Transition Enabling skills	HR	LM	WCM	Total population
Enable employees to accept the change	57.1%	88.9%	100.0%	78.9%
Address uncertainty and manage expectations for a healthy organization	14.3%	33.3%	66.7%	31.6%
Create readiness for change	28.6%	44.4%	0.0%	31.6%
Handle resistance	14.3%	33.3%	33.3%	26.3%
Provide support to employees	42.9%	55.6%	33.3%	47.4%
Enable Management to act	71.4%	88.9%	66.7%	78.9%
Provide Management with tools to make the change happen	71.4%	88.9%	66.7%	78.9%
Translating the vision	14.3%	11.1%	0.0%	10.5%

As becomes obvious from table 9, both competencies were recognized as important with high representation of the total population interviewees - 78.9%. Furthermore, both competencies were received support from all three groups of interviewees with a relatively high representation of each group.

Thus, 100.0% of the WCM referred to the importance of *Enable employees to accept the change* as compared to 57.1% of HR and 88.9% of LM. Additionally, within this competency, 66.7% of WCM indicated the importance of the HR ability to “Address uncertainty and manage expectations for a decrease in stress-related illness” as compared to 33.3% of LM and even lower representation of HR - 14.3%.

The second competency *Enable Management to act* was also identified as important for increasing the HR Effectiveness in Change Management with relatively high and consistent representation across the units of analysis (88.9% of LM, 71.4% of HR and 66.7% of WCM). Additionally, looking at the sub-categories within this competency, 78.9% of the total population indicated the importance of the ability of HR to “Provide management with tools to make the change happen” with all three groups supporting this behavior. “Translating the vision” was also recognized as important though with a lower representation of the total population – 10.5%. Furthermore, LM supported the importance of this subcategory with lower representation (11.1%) as compared to HR (14.3%).

Moving forward, the survey results will be discussed next. As we agreed with the participating organization on a limited number of items to be included in the questionnaire, the two predefined competencies were combined into one sub-scale – Transition Enabling skills and only 4 items were included in the questionnaire.

The conducted paired-samples t-test for this sub-scale indicated significant differences in the cores of the total population on both scales Importance and HR Effectiveness. Thus, Importance was evaluated as important “to a large extent” (M=4.0, SD=.8) whereas the HR Effectiveness of IT HR - “to some extent” (M=3.0, SD=.7).

Furthermore, the same trend is to be noticed when performing the t-test on a group level (HR/LM). HR and LM’s scores on the importance of this domain were consistent with achieved values of M=4.0, SD=.6

and $M=4.0$, $SD=.9$, respectively. At the same time, the HR Effectiveness was assessed with $M=3.2$, $SD=.7$ for HR and $M=3.0$, $SD=.6$ for LM.

Thus, the results from both the analysis of the qualitative data and the analysis of the quantitative data supported proposition 4.

Below, the two identified competencies will be explained.

2.2.1. Enable employees to accept the change

Similar to the competency discussed above, “Enable employees to accept the change” presents the broadened version of Provide support for employees introduced in Chapter II. Within the scope of this competency several sub-categories leading to an increased HR Effectiveness in Change Management were identified by the interviewees. They are all intended to support the employees during the transition stage in a way that organizational members can as easily as possible accept the changes. These sub-categories will be discussed next.

Firstly, interviewees’ recognized as important the need for HR to “address uncertainty and manage expectations for a healthy organization”. The focus here is on the ability of HR to “*explain what is going to happen*” (LM2) but also to be available and contactable because as interviewees put it: “*don’t know triggers fear*” (LM6). And this uncertainty can lead to people being unproductive and dropping out.

Secondly and closely linked to the first sub-category, is the expectation of HR to properly “Handle resistance”. The difference between both behaviors, however, comes from the fact that whereas “addressing uncertainty and managing expectations” can diminish some negative outcomes, people might still demonstrate resistant behavior. And interviewees emphasized that if this is the case, HR needs to be able to use this resistance as a feedback. Thus, resistance should not be interpreted as people being unwilling to cooperate, rather as them being willing to understand.

“Creating readiness in organizational members” is another area where HR has to be skilled in, implying that HR should explain what are the goals and “*what’s in it*” (HR6) for the employees in order to ensure buy-in and participation.

Last but not least, HR needs to “Provide support to employees” in case they struggle with the changes. That can be achieved by, for instance, providing a training plan but also explaining to employees how to make the change happen, thus proving a lot of guidance and support.

2.2.2. Enable Management to act

“Enable management to act” covers the aspects already outlined in Chapter II when discussing “Provide support for management”. However, the data collected had a broader score which requested broadening the score of the competency as well. Thus, two sub-categories contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness can be distinguished here: (1) Provide management with the tools to make the change happen and (2) Translate the vision. The former one refers to the HR role in “*enabling management to grow their change management skills*” (HR2) by, for instance, creating a standard change management roadmap to guide managers but also coach them about how to deal with the people factor. The latter one refers to ability of HR to facilitate the translation of “*the strategy into the business, into the day-to-day*

practices of the people” (HR2). Thus, an obvious focus here is the ability of HR to create enabling conditions for LM to operate but also to embrace and develop their change management skills.

2.3. Proactiveness

Similarly to the Transition Enabling skills domain, the predefined competencies within the Proactiveness domain were reformulated in the adapted framework. Thus, these competencies are “*Proactiveness throughout the change process*” and “*Proactively create and promote an open and innovate environment*”.

Table 10 is structured the same way as the tables presented above for the already discussed domains. Thus, it presents the representation of interviewees in their perceptions of the necessary (important) competencies contributing to an increased HE Effectiveness within the Proactiveness domain. Below, the most relevant and significant results will be discussed.

Table 10
Perceived Importance of the Proactiveness Domain and its adjacent Competencies for increasing the HR Effectiveness in Change Management (N=19)

Proactiveness	HR	LM	WCM	Total Population
Proactively Create and Promote an open & innovative environment	28.6%	33.3%	66.7%	36.8%
Proactiveness throughout the change process	85.7%	55.6%	0.0%	57.9%

As becomes obvious from table 10 above, both competencies identified were recognized as important by the total population with slightly higher representation for “Proactiveness throughout the change process (57.9%) as compared to “Proactively Create and Promote an open & innovative environment” (36.8%).

Furthermore, the table shows that 66.7% of WCM recognized as important the HR competency in “Proactively creating and promoting an open & innovative environment” as compared to 33.3% of LM and 28.6% of HR. On the other hand, HR provides strongest support for the importance of the HR “Proactiveness throughout the change process” (85.7%) as compared to 55.6 of LM and 0.0 of WCM.

Next, the survey results will be presented. Again, due to the limited number of items, we included only one sub-scale: Proactiveness developed as a combination of the two predefined competencies Proactive Culture Management and Proactive Management of Incremental changes. Considering the broadened scope of this domain however the sub-scale needs to be adjusted in future research.

The paired-samples t-test conducted for the total population returned statistically significant results. Importance of the listed traits (M=3.8, SD=.6) was assessed significantly higher than the HR Effectiveness on these (M=2.8, SD=.6).

In the same direction were the HR and LM’s results. The Importance was assessed significantly higher than the HR Effectiveness by both groups LM (M=3.8, SD=.6 on the Importance scale and M=2.8, SD=.5 on the HR Effectiveness scale) and HR (M=3.7, SD.6 on the Importance scale and M=2.8, SD=.7 on the HR Effectiveness scale).

Thus, the results from both the analysis of the qualitative data and the analysis of the quantitative data supported proposition 5.

Below, the two competencies included in the adapted competency model will be elaborated on.

2.3.1. Proactively create and promote an open and innovate environment

In order to increase the HR Effectiveness in Change Management, HR needs to be able to “Proactively create and promote an open and innovative environment”. That refers to the ability of HR to create an open culture where people are not afraid to speak up and come up with suggestions. That is considered important as people are then triggered to come up with innovative solutions (“*any kind of innovation, just out of the box*” – HR1) and these were recognized as being important to help people become “*more adaptable to change*” (HR3). In such a way, interviewees emphasized that organizations will be able to change faster and more successfully.

2.3.2. Proactiveness throughout the change process

“Proactiveness throughout the change process” refers to the need for HR to demonstrate proactive attitude at every stage of the change process with a slight emphasis on culture management. This competency also includes the predefined aspect of the Process Implementation skills that focuses on the action- and results-oriented behavior for ensuring that results are being delivered. Thus, HR Change Agents are seen as able to facilitate the change process at all stages. As one of the interviewees put it: “*especially that proactive part is very important*” (LM8). Another of the interviewed LM further highlighted:

“HR should play a more proactive role, that’s what I am looking at; and proactive + taking kind of an advisory role to the MT; and their primary role...their primary business is about people. So, they should be able to sense people-related things first” (LM7).

Furthermore, that proactive attitude was considered especially important for the purposes of internalizing and embedding the changes into organizational members’ behaviors. Thus, as emphasized by the interviewees, only explaining what the desired behaviors are is not enough. Therefore, proactiveness is considered important for successful cultural transformation. Thus, HR needs to, for instance, “*look at what elicits people’s behaviors*” (HR4) in order to find a way to change these; “*hold people responsible for acting in a new way*” (HR6); “*offer help in order to see what is the problem, why are they not changing their behavior or why are they not changing the way they are working*” (HR6) and notify management if needed.

2.4. Influential skills

The Influential skills domain is the last domain to be discussed and as mentioned above, it is the only one which did not undergo transformation after the data analysis. Thus, the two competencies identified here are *Credibility* and *Leadership skills*.

Table 11, similar in its structure to the tables presented above, presents the representation of interviewees in their perceptions of the necessary (important) competencies contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness within the Influential skills domain. Below, the most relevant and significant results will be discussed. Again, highlighted (in a darker color) are the identified competencies. In this case, also

highlighted are the sub-categories, only for Leadership skills, as due to their complexity one more layer beneath them had to be identified. Thus, these sub-categories consist of specific desired behaviors. The latter ones are included in the data analysis as they are considered crucial for understanding what these competencies and sub-categories consist of (e.g. *Communication* had to be broken down into separate elements as to bring awareness which are the desired behaviors).

Table 11

Perceived Importance of the Influential Skills Domain and its adjacent Competencies for increasing the HR Effectiveness in Change Management (N=19)

Influential skills	HR	LM	WCM	Total Population
Credibility	85.7%	88.9%	0.0%	73.7%
Decision-making and prioritizing	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
Deliver on what has been promised	42.9%	11.1%	0.0%	21.1%
Disciplined process for managed transition	14.3%	22.2%	0.0%	15.8%
Equal business partner who challenges management and enables it to act	85.7%	66.7%	0.0%	63.2%
Knowledge	42.9%	33.3%	0.0%	31.6%
Walking the talk	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	5.3%
Leadership skills	100.0%	88.9%	100.0%	94.7%
Communication	100.0%	88.9%	100.0%	94.7%
Bring different perspectives together	57.1%	22.2%	33.3%	36.8%
Clear and consistent message for effective and persuasive communication	42.9%	22.2%	33.3%	31.6%
Communication plan	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%	15.8%
Constant information flow	28.6%	11.1%	0.0%	15.8%
Create awareness by asking the right questions	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
Listen well to enable bottom-up communication & engagement	14.3%	44.4%	33.3%	31.6%
Political skills for effective collaboration and communication	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
Inspire confidence	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	15.8%

Thus, both Credibility (73.7%) and Leadership (94.7%) were pointed out as important HR Change Management Competencies by the total population.

The data shown in table 11, 63.2% representation of the total population recognized the ability of HR to “act as an equal business partner who challenges management and enables it to act” for building up the HR’s Credibility. Furthermore, HR and LM were consistent in their views on the importance of the sub-category with 85.7% and 66.7% representation respectively.

Within Leadership skills, “Communication” was recognized as an important tool to increase HR effectiveness in change management by 94.7% of the total population of interviewees. When looking at the different Communication elements (desired behaviors), however, HR and LM were focusing on the importance of different elements. Thus, HR referred mostly to the importance of HR’s ability to “Bring different perspectives together” (57.1%), to provide “Clear and consistent message for effective and persuasive communication” (42.9%) and a “Communication plan” (42.9%) whereas LM focused on the

HR role in “listening well to enable bottom-up communication and engagement” (44.4%). In their role as employee representatives, interesting is the view of the WCM. To be emphasized is the fact that WCM identified as important the same elements LM focused on as well two out of the three elements that HR recognized as important. Thus, WCM focused on “Bring different perspectives together” (33.3%), provide “clear and consistent message” (33.3%) and “Listen well to enable bottom-up communication and engagement” (33.3%).

An intriguing result is also to be found when looking at the sub-category “Inspire confidence” which was recognized as important by LM with 33.3% compared to 0.0% for HR and WCM.

Thus, above we presented the qualitative data analysis. Again, due to the limited number of items, only one sub-scale *Influential skills* was developed as a combination of *Credibility* and *Leadership skills*. A Paired-samples t-test was conducted.

The scores of the total population suggest that the perceived Importance of the Influential skills (M=4.2, SD=.5) is significantly higher than the perceived effectiveness of HR on these (M=3.3, SD=.5).

A Paired-samples t-test was also performed to compare the perceptions per participant group (HR and LM). Similarly to the significant results of the total population, statistically significant differences were found within the HR (M=4.1, SD=.4 on the Importance scale and M=3.3, SD=.5 on the HR Effectiveness scale) and LM’s scores (M=4.2., SD=.5 on the Importance scale and M=3.3, SD=.5 on the HR Effectiveness scale).

Thus, proposition 6 was supported.

Below, the two competencies *Credibility* and *Leadership skills* will be discussed.

2.4.1. Credibility

Credibility is composed of several sub-categories which will be briefly explained below. These are: *Decision-making and prioritizing*, *Delivering on what has been promised*, *Having a disciplined Process for Change Management*, *Knowledge*, *“Walking the talk”* and *Acting as an equal Business Partner who challenges management and enables it to act*.

Thus, HR needs to be able to prioritize and be strong in decision-making, meaning that people should not “constantly come back to their decisions” (HR7). To build credibility HR needs to also deliver on what has been promised and apply a disciplined process for change management which takes into account all the various dimensions, thus transforming change management into “more of a routine” (LM8). In addition, HR Professionals need to have such a process to be applied by them but they also need to provide Line Managers with one. Thus, HR Change Agents will indeed make the change more of a “managed transition” (LM8). Another important aspect for HR is to act as an “Equal business partner who challenges management and enables it to act”. Here, the interviewees highlighted that HR should “not always be easy going with managers” (HR1) but to also put a mirror in front of them, be able to “say No” (LM5) and to “stand up” (LM5). Furthermore, HR needs to be able to “walk the talk” (LM7) in order to ensure buy-in from the rest of the organization. Additionally, knowledge in certain areas is also recognized as important for building-up the credibility of the HR function. These areas are Business Knowledge, (“if you don’t understand the business then you cannot understand the current state, the

future state and the transition state” - HR2), Change Management knowledge (“how change affects people” – LM8), Organizational structure understanding (“how people are effective in a complex environment” – LM8) and Understanding of the political landscape in the organization in order to be able to better allocate resources (“they also need to have an understanding of where to find the people they need for their organizational change projects” – LM1).

2.4.1. Leadership Skills

The ability to lead the organization was also recognized as important for the credibility of the HR Change Agents. The two sub-categories identified as building up the HR Change Agents’ “Leadership skills” are *Communication* and *Inspire Confidence*.

Indeed, interviewees recognized as important for the HR function to *“inspire confidence because it is all about confidence – organizational change can be so scary for people that you have to have someone that you can rely on as a manager but also as an employee” (LM4).*

Additionally, “Communication” was recognized as being the other tool for HR professionals to lead the organization. It was seen as an opportunity for HR to bring different perspectives together since HR was described as *“the linking part between the business and the people” (HR3)*. This could be achieved by having *“a communication for each stream” (HR3)* in order to *“communicate clearly and consistently”* and to *“adapt to different audiences” (HR3)*. HR was also seen as being able to enable bottom-up communication. For that to happen, interviewees emphasized the importance of listening skills but also *“just talking to the people, taking their concerns seriously” (HR3)*. Additionally, HR Change Agents are expected to *“feed that back” (LM3)* to the leaders because *“people feel frustrated if they are trying to say that this is not going to work or they don’t understand the business case” (LM8)*. When working with managers, HR Professionals could make sure that they *“ask the right questions”* to *“trigger thinking”* and *“bring awareness” (HR2)* in the team. Next to this, HR is expected to ensure *“a constant information flow” (HR7)*. For all this to indeed happen, HR Professionals need political skills as to identify and engage the right people. However, talking about Communication, an important point to make is that HR Professionals were seen as being in charge of the content only. Therefore, collaboration with e.g. a Communication department is needed to bring their messages. In this way, Communication was considered a collaborative effort.

Hereby, we presented the data analysis for all competency domains as included in the adapted framework. In conclusion, the identified areas for improvement together with practical suggestions for improvement will be reported.

2.5. Areas for Improvement and Practical Suggestions

As mentioned above, as part of the semi-structured interviews, participants were asked to identify areas for improvement. The analysis of the so identified improvement areas is presented in table 12 which illustrates the representation of interviewees (in %) within each group (HR, LM and WCM) who recognized a specific topic as an improvement area. Wherever possible, these were linked to the HR Change Management competencies in the adapted framework. Additionally, the data is broken down to the following sequence using color coding (from darker to lighter) - competencies, sub-categories,

elements (of the sub-categories). The ones that were allocated to a specific competency are listed as “Others”. Below the most significant results will be discussed.

Table 12
Identified Improvement Areas (N=19)

Improvement areas	HR	LM	WCM	Total population
Proactiveness	50.0%	27.8%	33.3%	36.8%
Proactiveness throughout the change process	71.4%	33.3%	0.0%	42.1%
Proactively create and promote an open & innovative environment	28.6%	22.2%	66.7%	31.6%
Influential skills	85.7%	100.0%	100.0%	94.7%
Credibility	85.7%	88.9%	0.0%	73.7%
Decision-making and prioritizing	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
Deliver on what has been promised	14.3%	11.1%	0.0%	10.5%
Disciplined process for managed transition	28.6%	33.3%	0.0%	26.3%
Equal business partner who challenges management and enables it to act	42.9%	44.4%	0.0%	36.8%
Knowledge	28.6%	22.2%	0.0%	21.1%
Leadership skills	57.1%	55.6%	100.0%	63.2%
Communication & collaboration skills	57.1%	44.4%	100.0%	57.9%
Lead the organization through changes	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%	10.5%
Transition Enabling skills	14.3%	88.9%	100.0%	63.2%
Create readiness for change, Address resistance & Manage employees' expectations	11.1%	33.3%	100.0%	31.6%
Give the organization time to internalize the changes	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%	10.5%
Enable Managers to act	14.3%	88.9%	100.0%	63.2%
Transition Reinforcement skills				
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	28.6%	11.1%	0.0%	15.8%
General	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
Translate the people impact and proactively look at the consequences	28.6%	11.1%	0.0%	15.8%
After-care	42.9%	44.4%	33.3%	42.1%
Administrative skills				
Competency Management and Clarity on Roles Responsibilities	0.0%	11.1%	66.7%	15.8%
Data gathering	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%	10.5%
Others				
Move away from administrative agent	42.9%	22.2%	0.0%	26.3%
Speak in financial terms	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
Strategic WF Planning	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
Increase visibility of HR	0.0%	22.2%	100.0%	26.3%
Benchmarking	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
Creativity and outside-in thinking from HR	28.6%	11.1%	0.0%	15.8%
HR involvement	14.3%	22.2%	33.3%	21.1%
Improve collaboration in the HR department	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%	15.8%
Better match between HR & LM	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	5.3%
Project Management skills	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	5.3%
Time constraints	42.9%	55.6%	66.7%	52.6%

As becomes evident from Table 12, several topics were recognized as areas for improvement with a relatively high representation of the total population. Looking at the last column, it is to be noticed, that 94.7% indicated that HR needs to improve in Influential skills. Additionally, 63.2% referred to the need for improvement in Transition Enabling skills and 42.1% - in providing proper After-care. Furthermore, 52.6% of the total population identified the Time constrains experienced by both, HR and LM, as a big barrier to successful change management.

Looking at a group level, additional intriguing results are to be noticed. These are mostly related to the perception of WCM regarding the improvement areas for HR as compared to HR and LM's perceptions. Thus, 66.7% of WCM indicated that HR needs to improve capabilities in proactively creating and promoting an open & innovative environment as compared to 22.2% of LM and 28.6% of HR. Similar trend is to be noticed for competency management and clarity on roles and responsibilities which was pointed out as an improvement area by 66.7% of WCM, 11.1% of LM and 0.0% of HR. Transition Enabling skills were recognized as an improvement area by 100% of WCM and a high percentage of LM – 88.9% whereas only 14.3% of HR indicated they need to enhance capabilities in this direction. These results can lead to important managerial implications as to *what is* and *what should be* the focus of the HR involvement in Change Management.

As far as the rest of the identified areas are concerned, HR seems to be self-aware of where improvement is needed.

Table 13 below presents some practical suggestions pointed out by the interviewees as to how HR can increase effectiveness in Change Management.

Table 13

Suggestions for an Increased HR Effectiveness in Change Management (N=19)

Suggestions for an increased HR Effectiveness in Change Management

- Appoint a social worker/employee relations specialist who walks around and shows interest in the colleagues
 - Appoint a person dedicated to Change Management on a global level (also lower in the organizational structure)
 - HR KPIs (*key performance indicators*) for managers embedded into PPM (*people performance management*)
 - Proper post-project reviews
 - Hire administrative help; increase capacity during organizational changes
 - Connect with employees throughout the year - e.g. PPM, career development
 - Make managers aware as to what kind of resistance they might expect
 - Stepwise approach for change management shared with LM
-

Thus, the suggestions include the appointment of a person dedicated to Change Management and the soft aspects of the change. Indeed, such a position (Change Champion) exists in IT HR. However, not all interviewees recognized the benefits of this position. For instance, the presence of a Change Champion was highly appreciated by managers operating in the company HQs (the Netherlands) whereas those located elsewhere either did not even know such a position existed or did not feel the added value the same way managers in the Netherlands did. Thus, it was proposed that such a position was opened on a global level as well as lower in the organizational structure (e.g. a social worker).

Secondly, interviewees pointed out that no HR KPIs were developed for LM. Developing such and even embedding them in the performance evaluation process (PPM) was recognized as a way to ensure that LM did indeed focus on the people management aspects of their roles.

Thirdly, interviewees strongly suggested the need for proper project-reviews. These were recognized as important tool to ensure that the change had indeed been brought to an end.

Fourthly, interviewees recognized the fact that HR experienced time constrains. Although they indicated that administrative work was important, they highlighted the need for HR to focus on more strategic tasks and thus, they proposed that temporary administrative help was hired.

Another suggestion for an increased HR Effectiveness was related to the identified gap between HR and the employees. Thus, it was proposed that HR increased visibility in order to relate to employees on an ongoing basis, as part of the career development or the performance evaluation process, for instance.

The last two suggestions were related to the HR role towards people managers. In this role, interviewees indicated that it would be helpful, if HR prepared LM for the people reactions. Thus, HR could make LM aware as to what kind of resistance they could face and how to address it.

Last but not least, several LM pointed out that they would appreciate if HR could provide them with a standard roadmap for change management to guide them.

Reflecting on the above, a SWOT analysis was conducted (Figure 5) for the purpose to explicitly point out the *managerial implications* of the study. This analysis can furthermore be used for the development of planning activities aiming at increasing the HR Effectiveness in change management. Brief description of the figure is provided below.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
Communication - repeating the message	Administrative work - lack of clarity on jobs and responsibilities
Communication - consistent message	Administrative work - competency management
Communication - constant information flow	Administrative work - lack of capacity to support the changes
HR team collaboration	Administrative work - improve (accuracy of) data gathering
Established trust between HR and Business Managers	Lack of proper after-care
Deliver on commitments	Poor learning from previous changes (referring to the whole organization; not only HR)
Flexibility	Improve as Change Agents towards the People Managers
Mature expertise in Change Management	No actions to measure readiness to change
HR as business partner and facilitator	No actions to identify resistance to change
Self-awareness regarding Improvement areas	Primary focus on symptoms instead of root causes of a problem
Administrative work	Lack of proactive behavior (when looking at people impact; preparing the organization for the changes)
	Poor match between HR and LM (in some cases)

Not optimized HR structure; constant changes in HR
 Need for HR to enhance outside-in thinking; commercial insights and creativity
 Lack of people dedicated to change management (except for TS) and the personal impact; need to increase HR visibility
 Poor (lack of) guidance from HR on design principles
 Need to improve collaboration within the HR department itself; focus on personal strengths instead of roles
 Need to improve Project Management competencies
 Time constrains for HR
 Need to enhance benchmarking capabilities
 Need for strong decision-making capabilities
 Need to consistently deliver on commitments
 Lack of a common disciplined change management approach
 Need to enhance HR business partnering skills, to challenge management and enable it to act
 Need to enhance Business knowledge; Change Mgt Knowledge; Understanding the political landscape for better allocation of resources; Understanding on business structure & business models
 Need to enhance the strategic focus (Long-term vision; Move away from administrative agent; Speak in financial terms; Strategic WF Planning)
 Need to improve communication and collaboration skills
 Need to move from a support group to more of a leadership organization
 Poor focus on uncertainty and managing expectations
 Need to improve collaboration with other departments (e.g. Communication)

Opportunities

Close the gap between management and the people on the ground floor
 Business Managers and WCM are open to collaboration with HR
 Degree of HR involvement by management
 High level of recognition for doing a good job by other stakeholder
 Recognized need for expertise in Change Management by other stakeholders

Threats

Managers behave in a way that demonstrate being closed to ideas and suggestions
 Constantly changing environment
 "Go for speed instead of quality" (HR1)
 Time constrains for LM
 High sickness rate during major reorganizations
 Lack of HR KPIs for managers

Figure 5. SWOT Analysis

The above presented analysis was developed following the SWOT analysis format. It takes IT HR as the unit of analysis. Thus, Strengths and Weaknesses reflect internal factors for IT HR whereas Opportunities and Threats represent external factors for IT HR (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Risk Management Agency, Technology & Engineering, 2008; quickmba.com, 2010). Aligned with the objectives of a SWOT analysis, the figure above is intended to serve as a base for reviewing the internal and external factors that could increase or decrease the HR Effectiveness in Change Management and thus, can be used as a tool for planning activities. The data for the analysis were derived from the qualitative data collected and company documentation. The latter ones cannot be shared due to confidentiality concerns.

Strengths were interpreted as the competencies and resources that IT HR already applies and can further strengthen the HR performance in Change Management. These were derived from all positive remarks made by the interviewees that reflected the mentioned criteria (e.g. deliver on commitments). From the positive remarks of the interviewees was derived the content in the *opportunities* quadrant, as well. These, however, as opposed to the strengths, had to reflect the external environment (e.g. high level of recognition for doing a good job by other stakeholder). *Weaknesses*, on the other hand, were derived from all identified during the interviews areas of improvement that were internal for IT HR (e.g. primary focus on symptoms instead of root causes of a problem). The *threats* quadrant reflects these improvement areas that were used to characterize the external environment for IT HR (e.g. constantly changing environment).

In addition, using wordle.net a visual representation of the most reappearing words in the interviews was created (Appendix M). Wordle.net is an online application for generating “word clouds” that “give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text” and thus was considered appropriate tool to identify the most frequently used words.

With “*communication*”, “*employees*” and “*business*” being emphasized as the most reappearing words it seems that indeed the HR Role in Change Management is one of finding the balance between the employees and the business, using communication as the tool to achieve it.

Thus, above we presented the adapted HR Competency Model for Change Management as well as the results of the performed gap analysis.

Next the data analysis for the third research question will be presented.

3. Is there a difference in the required Change management competencies whether involved in large scale organizational changes or in incremental changes?

P₂: The required change agent’s competencies will differ depending on the change type organizations are undertaking

Based on the qualitative data analysis, figure 7 below depicts the way the different organizational change processes relate to each other. Our findings suggest that these should be viewed as being inextricably linked rather than as separate ones. Thus, proposition 2 was rejected.

Figure 6 depicts the HR Change Management Competency model and distinguishes between two levels: continuous and process level. The *continuous competencies* are positioned in the center and should be applied by HR on an ongoing basis whereas the *process competencies* will be mostly applied during large-scale organizational changes. These are however placed in one model as it represents interdependent relationships.

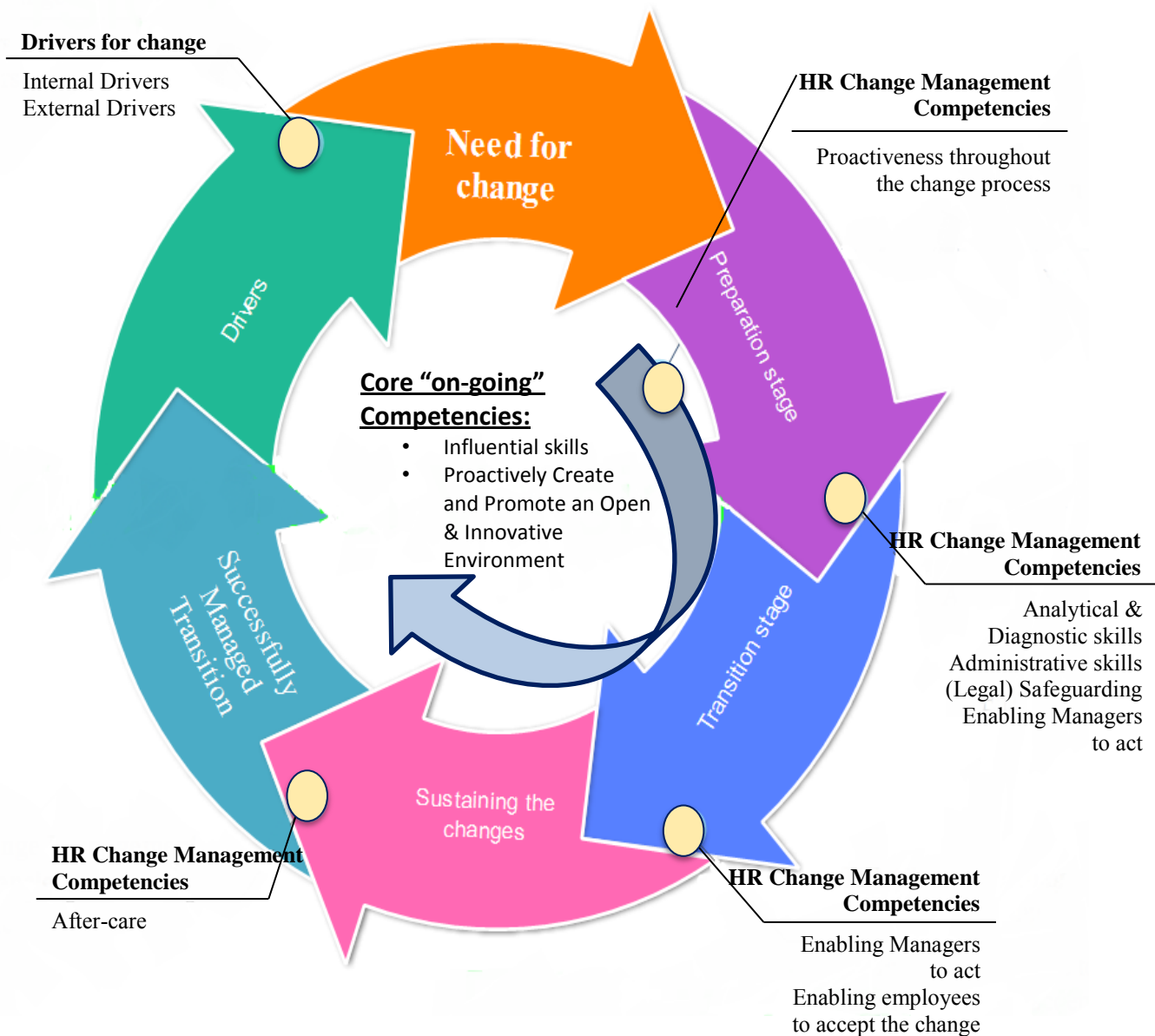


Figure 6. Change Management (Competencies) process cycle

The continuous competencies consist of the ability of HR to *Proactively create and promote an open & innovative environment* and *Influential skills*. The ongoing character of the HR competency in proactively creating and promoting an open and innovative environment was well-positioned by one of the interviewees highlighting that managing Incremental changes successfully could make *“the employee population more adaptable to change and more employable”* (HR3). Additionally, as another interviewee put it:

“If you trigger and ask people to come up with innovative solutions it mobilizes energy, it mobilizes direction. By that I think it will help in change; any kind of innovation, just out of the box”(LM6)

As far as the Leadership skills are concerned, interviewees referred to the need for HR to build Credibility and demonstrate Leadership skills on a daily basis. However, its importance throughout the whole episodic change cycle was also recognized. Thus, the organization needs a *“strong HR Function that is able to stand up”* (LM5), possessing specific knowledge but also skilled in inspiring people and communicating in a persuasive manner.

The process level, on the other hand, presents the HR Change Management Competencies in a stage-wise process cycle which refers to the successful management of large scale organizational changes. Thus, looking at the model, HR needs to demonstrate Influential skills and to **Proactively create and promote an open and innovative environment** on a daily basis. In doing so, they can achieve several outcomes. Firstly, increase the organization’s capacity to change. Secondly, when **internal and external drivers** trigger a change (1) organizational members will be more likely to adapt faster to the new situation and (2) HR will be seen as a valued player with high degree of credibility able to lead the organization through the changes. Thus, when drivers trigger the **need for change** HR Change Agents need to demonstrate proactive attitude throughout all stages of the change initiative for an increased effectiveness in change management. Looking from a process-specific point of view, at the preparation stage, HR Change Agents are expected to apply **Analytical & Diagnostic skills** and to ensure **(Legal) Safeguarding**. They are also expected to **Enable Management to act** and to apply **Administrative skills**. The last two competencies, however, are also important competencies to be applied during the transition stage. Additionally, HR change agents need to **Enable employees to accept the change**. To increase the success rate of future change initiatives, HR Change Agents need to also ensure proper **After-care** is in place. Additionally, as mentioned above, HR Change Agents need to demonstrate **Proactiveness throughout the change process**.

Applying the model above would enable HR Change Agents to indeed increase the HR Effectiveness in Change Management but also to increase the organization’s overall capacity to change. That could contribute to achieving an increased success rate of change initiatives transforming them into **successfully managed transitions**. Thus, building upon the theoretical knowledge presented in Chapter One and the data analysis, the above depicted process cycle was proposed.

In Chapter V the findings will be discussed and Managerial Implications will be outlined.

Chapter V: Discussion

The current research focused on the HR role in Change Management. Since, to our knowledge, no previous study provides a comprehensive framework of the HR Change Management Competencies we investigated whether indeed HR Professionals can act as Change Agents and focused on developing an HR Competency Model for Change Management. Thus, the theoretical and practical contributions of the paper become evident. Furthermore, developed as a case study, the current research was carried out in the IT Department of Royal Philips Electronics. Collecting qualitative and quantitative data, we investigated what competencies contributed to an increased HR Effectiveness in Change Management while also conducting an HR Audit of the department involved. Thus, improvement areas were also identified by the participants in the study and were provided to the company.

Three Research questions were posted at the beginning of the paper:

1. **Can HR Professionals act as change agents?**
2. **If so, what kind of organizational change management competencies do they need to make that contribution?**
3. **Is there a difference in the required HR Change management competencies whether involved in large scale organizational changes or in incremental changes?**

Below, each of these questions will be briefly discussed, results will be summarized and hypotheses to be tested in future research will be formulated. However, the explorative nature of the study needs to be taken into account. Thus, when drawing conclusions based on our findings we need to be very conscious of the research design and its preliminary nature. As emphasized above, exploratory design is mainly used to gain insights and ideas. Thus, below, we shall present the most significant ideas and propose hypotheses for future testing.

1. **Can HR Professionals act as change agents?**

Three HR roles were outlined by the interviewed HR and LM as roles currently played by the HR Professionals in Change Management. Furthermore, three roles were identified as desired roles for the HR Change Agents, implying that HR is a valued partner in Change Management. Thus, our first proposition “HR Professionals can play the role of Change Agents” was supported.

However, the results presented in Chapter IV indicate a rather big misalignment between HR and LM’s perceptions of the current HR Role. LM described the current HR participation as being rather reactive and focused on administrative work whereas HR Professionals described their role mostly as one of a strategic partner and facilitator.

Compared to their rather inconsistent views on the current HR role in change management, HR and LM seemed to be much more consistent when discussing what the HR Role in change management should be. Thus, the three identified roles were **(1) Act as an equal business partner and proactive facilitator throughout the change process, (2) Administrative role** and **(3) Drive change** with the first one being the one mostly recognized as an important HR Role. Furthermore, to be noticed is the fact that although literature sources (Storey, Ulrich) as well as the interviewees themselves recognized the need for HR to

take over more strategic tasks, the administrative HR role was still within the desired HR roles in change management. However, participants also indicated that this administrative work was important though not necessarily part of the HR Change Agents' responsibilities. Thus, it was seen as an enabler for successful change management. Therefore, it was even proposed that it could be assigned to administrative help which would, on the one hand, enable HR to spend more time on strategic work and, on the other hand, could lead to excluding this role from the model. Last but not least, HR was also seen in the perfect position to drive change. This was, however, indicated by more LM than HR.

Thus, our conclusion is that this rather big inconsistency between HR and LM's views on what the current HR Role in change management is implies the need for these two views to be brought together for better collaboration and increased HR Effectiveness. Furthermore, to be emphasized is the fact that LM indeed recognized HR as a valued partner in change management but a more proactive attitude was desired. Furthermore, HR needs to enhance capabilities in facilitating while acting as an equal business partner. Additionally, the consistency in HR and LM's views on the desired HR role indicates that HR and LM look in the same direction as to what the HR Role should be, thus implying that HR is on the right track in increasing the effectiveness of the HR change agents.

Additionally, a strong contribution of the study is the proposed model of the HR Change Agents' Role itself. Although that was not the main focus of the paper, the research findings enabled us to identify three roles which if applied by HR Professionals might increase the HR Effectiveness in Change Management. While reviewing literature sources, no similar framework was found. The only model that depicted HR Change Agents' roles was the one proposed by Calwell (2003). However, it seems mostly linked to specific HR Roles with the ones at a higher level being able to take over the Change Champion's role, for instance, whereas those at lower organizational levels could act as HR Consultants. Our model presents a more generic view on *how* HR Business Partners can add value in Change Management.

Reflecting on the above, four hypotheses to be tested in future research are proposed:

H₁: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if administrative tasks are delegated to a support function

H₂: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if HR Change Agents act as equal business partners and proactive facilitators throughout the change process

H₃: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if HR Change Agents drive change

2. If so, what kind of organizational change management competencies do they need to make that contribution?

The analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected supported the proposed framework as consisting of four domains: Transition Reinforcement skills, Transition Enabling skills, Proactiveness and Influential skills. That also supported the propositions developed. However, the competencies identified as adjacent to these domains underwent alterations, with the exception of Credibility and Leadership skills within the Influential skills domain.

The data analysis supported the existence of three out of the four predefined competencies within the Transition Reinforcement skills domain. Process Implementation skills collapsed as a separate

competency with its content being spread between Administrative skills and Proactiveness throughout the change process. A new competency emerged: (Legal) Safeguarding. Furthermore, interviewees suggested that although administrative skills were important a more strategic focus was desired from HR. Thus, administrative skills were recognized as having more of an enabling nature and thus, might be assigned to temporary workers in order to save time for HR Change Agents to focus on strategic tasks. Therefore, we argue that in the future these might fall out of the framework. However, as they are currently considered important for the HR performance in Change Management, they were included in the competency model.

Additionally, the predefined competencies within the Transition Enabling skills domain and Proactiveness were relabeled as to reflect their broadened content. Thus, Provide Support to employees was reformulated to Enable employees to accept the change and Provide support to managers – to Enable management to act. Furthermore, the predefined competency “proactive culture management” was indeed recognized as important for the HR Change Agents but interviewees emphasized that Proactiveness should be demonstrated by HR Professionals at all stages of the change process. Thus, it was replaced with Proactiveness throughout the Change Process in the adapted framework. The other predefined competency in the Proactiveness domain, Proactiveness in managing Incremental changes, did not require a broadened scope but after the data analysis we felt that relabeling it to Proactively create and promote an open & innovative environment better reflected its meaning.

Our results are intriguing considering that Long & Ismail (2008) argue that Business Knowledge correlates stronger to the role of HR as Change Agents as compared to Strategic Contribution, which includes Culture. Our results assume the opposite trend. Though explorative in its nature, the study provides support that Proactiveness throughout the change process, including Culture Management, was recognized as contributing more to the HR Effectiveness in Change Management (57.9%) as compared to (Business) Knowledge (31.6%). Additionally, (Business) Knowledge was positioned in the business-related competencies by Long & Ismail (2008), thus separating it from Personal Credibility – in the professional competencies. In our model, however, (Business) Knowledge was recognized as a way for HR Professionals to gain Credibility. In the last round of the HRCS study, Ulrich et al. (2008), although pointing out that HR Professionals need to apply all competencies of the model, also separate the Culture and Change Steward domain from Credibility and Business knowledge. Our model partly supports this view. It however also emphasizes that Credibility, and thus Business Knowledge as well, is crucial for the HR Effectiveness in Change Management. That is most evident considering the fact that Influential skills which encompass Credibility were identified as continuous competencies (to be discussed in more detail below).

Furthermore, we strongly believe that the proposed framework managed to identify the HR competencies contributing to an increased HR Effectiveness in change management since an average of 4.00 (“to a large extent”) for the Importance scale was achieved after analyzing the survey results. This is also true for the assessed importance of all sub-scales.

In addition, the achieved average of a 3.0 (“to some extent”) for the HR Effectiveness on the listed in the survey traits was significantly lower as compared to the assessed Importance. That indicates that although the HR competencies in change management are recognized as highly important improvement is needed. This is furthermore consistent in HR and LM’s scores indicating that HR has a realistic view on the

current state of the HR Change Management Competency. Additionally, it is also a sign of alignment between both groups as to what is needed for an increased HR Effectiveness.

Thus, several strengths of the current study should be acknowledged. First, as suggested by Becker et al. (2001) for a competency development process relevant target groups were identified and their perspectives were combined contributing to the explorative nature of the study. Second, combining both survey approach and semi-structured interviewees enabled us, despite some limitations, to adapt the proposed framework in a way as to enrich the model.

Thus, the four identified Competency domains with their adjacent Competencies for increased HR Effectiveness are as follows:

1. Influential skills built up of Credibility and Leadership
2. Transition Reinforcement skills built up of Analytical & Diagnostic skills, Administrative skills, After-care and (Legal) Safeguarding
3. Transition Enabling skills built up of Enable employees to accept the change and Enable Management to act
4. and Proactiveness built up by Proactiveness throughout the change process and Creating and Promoting of an open & innovative environment

Furthermore, as Spencer & Spencer (1993) emphasize, a competency model should indeed focus on the competencies contributing to superior job performance as opposed to average one.

Reflecting on the above the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₄: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if HR Change Agents demonstrate Influential skills

H₅: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if HR Change Agents demonstrate Transition Reinforcement skills

H₆: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if HR Change Agents demonstrate Transition Enabling skills

H₇: The HR Effectiveness in Change Management will increase if HR Change Agents demonstrate Proactiveness

3. Is there a difference in the required HR Change management competencies whether involved in large scale organizational changes or in incremental changes?

At the beginning of the paper we stated our expectation to find differences in the competencies increasing Change Agents' effectiveness depending on the type of change organizations are undertaking. The data, however, did not support this statement and thus proposition 1 was rejected. Actually, the two change types we were looking at (incremental changes and large-scale organizational changes) seemed to be inextricably linked.

The data analysis furthermore suggested that successful management of Incremental Changes might be an important prerequisite for a successful management of large-scale organizational changes. For that

purpose, two continuous competencies were recognized: Influential skills and Proactively Create and Promote an Open & Innovative environment. Applying these on an ongoing basis, HR Change Agents would be able to build up their Credibility and demonstrate Leadership skills which would gain organizational members' trust and make HR an even more valued player in Change management. Furthermore, HR could indeed increase organization's capacity to change as organizational members would become more flexible and more adaptable to changes.

Thus, when a large scale organizational change has to be undertaken, HR would be involved from the same beginning and would be perfectly positioned to lead the organization through the changes. That would enable HR to play an important role at all stages of the change process applying the rest of the identified competencies.

Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₈: The HR Effectiveness in managing large scale organizational changes will increase if HR Change Agents apply the Continuous Competencies on an ongoing basis

Managerial Implications

Developed as a case study, our research has significant managerial implication. Firstly, it provides support for the importance of the HR Role in Change Management. Secondly, it outlines three roles for the HR Change Agents recognized as *value adding ones*. These, if successfully performed, can contribute to an increased HR Effectiveness in a change context. Furthermore, outlining the current HR roles and the inconsistency in views of HR and LM could bring insights as to what is needed to leverage HR performance in Change Management.

In addition, a comprehensive HR Competency Model for Change Management was proposed and empirically validated. If applied, these competencies could also contribute to an increased HR Effectiveness as well as to an increased organization's capacity to change.

Moreover, investigating the current HR Role in Change Management and the HR Effectiveness on the predefined competencies as well as the identified improvement areas, the study provided valuable feedback to the HR department involved.

Several aspects need to be mentioned here. The importance of the predefined competencies reached an average of **4.0** (“**to a large extent**”) whereas the HR Effectiveness – an average of **3.0** (“**to some extent**”), thus indicating a room for improvement. Additionally, an inconsistency between HR and LM's perspectives was noticed throughout the whole data analysis. Firstly, this was the case when describing the current HR Role. Under further investigation, the HR department might look into the reasons behind this misalignment and try to close the gap. This is a crucial point as HR needs to provide the services LM need to make the change happen within their teams. An important point to make is that HR and LM views on the desired HR role seem to be much more consistent meaning that HR is on the right track. Secondly, analyzing the behaviors within the identified competencies, it was evident that in some cases HR's view on the important competencies was different than the view of LM and WCM. That could imply the need for HR to review priorities but might be also an indication that LM do not recognize a certain behavior as being within the HR scope. In the latter case, two plausible explanations are to be outlined. Either a certain behavior is indeed outside the HR scope of work or LM have not collaborated with an HR person

applying that behavior. Either way, a further investigation is needed. Several examples of such inconsistency in views can be found throughout Chapter IV.

Additional implications can be found when reviewing the improvement areas identified by the interviewees. The time constraints experienced by both HR and LM were seen as one of the biggest barrier to successful change management. Furthermore, HR and LM seemed to be rather consistent with one another, though not consistent with WCM. The latter ones had a slightly different perspective. In their role as employee representatives, their view might be useful for planning the improvement actions.

Last but not least, HR needs to ensure successful management of incremental changes if they want to be successful when managing large-scale organizational changes.

The last Chapter will acknowledge the limitations of the current research and will outline Recommendations for Future Research.

Chapter VI: Limitations and Future Research

Chapter VI will discuss the limitations of our study and will outline directions for future research.

Firstly, a major limitation of the current research is the case study design which does not allow generalization of the study findings (De Vaus, 2001). Therefore, we strongly recommend that in future research the study is conducted within multiple organizations.

Additionally, the explorative nature of the research requires cautiousness when drawing conclusions based on the study findings. These can be however used to test the hypotheses proposed in Chapter V.

Due to time constraints no pre-testing was possible. However, considering the explorative nature of the study that is an important limitation to be taken into consideration. Pilot testing are often a preferred approach to explorative research (Yin, 1994) and allow for finalization of the data collection instruments. Since however pre-testing was not possible in our research, that was lead to further limitations. Firstly, we self-developed (though based on extensive literature review and conducted research) the questionnaire and did not have the opportunity to pre-test it. Thus, after the data analysis we can determine that although the survey has good characteristics, it does need to be adjusted. The same is the logic for our interview protocols. We had to update the questions after each interview (where time allowed), which is common practice (Miles & Huberman, 1994), but still we believe we were not able to get the maximum out of the initially scheduled interviews. These limitations will be discussed in more detail below.

Additionally, we were not able to follow all of the steps identified by Spencer & Spencer (1993) (outlined in Chapter II) in the process of developing a competency framework. Thus, we recommend that future research might pay more attention in the study planning phase as to make sure these steps are incorporated in the study design.

Furthermore, to be acknowledged is the fact that although strongly supported with qualitative data, none of the (sub) scales in the questionnaire was evaluated with the highest score - 5.0 (“to a very large extent”). That also refers to the limitation mentioned above; namely, that we did not follow the identified by Spencer & Spencer steps. Thus, future research might focus on distinguishing between competencies contributing to superior job performance (of the HR Change Agents) as compared to an average one (Spencer & Spencer).

Next, no senior management representatives took part in the research. We consider this a limitation as interviewees were not able to assess the HR Role and Competencies applied in the planning of the change initiatives. Therefore, we recommend that in future research senior managers involved at the preparation stage are asked to participate.

Although WCM took part of the study, we do recognize that a survey sent to a representative sample of the organization’s employees or focus groups might have been more beneficial for the investigated phenomena. However, no access to employees was provided by the participating organization.

Last but not least, the focus of the study was the HR Business Partnering role. In future studies, researchers may want to investigate what competencies are needed from the other HR functions in the organizations supporting the change efforts.

Next to these more general limitations, we can distinguish between two groups of limitations linked to the two data collection methods applied: semi-structured interviews and a self-developed questionnaire.

1. Semi-structured interviews

The first limitation to be outlined is related to the selection procedure of participants. Some of the beneficial aspects of our selection procedure were outlined above. However, we are not able to judge whether our sample was representative for the studied population as we did not have access to data such as IT headcount and distribution of roles in IT.

Furthermore, two of the identified (with the support of the HR Business Partner in IT) participants did not take part on the study eventually, due to availability issues.

Also, due to availability constraints, the interviews were scheduled over a few weeks period of time (in some cases several interviews were scheduled in one day) which did not enable us to improve our interview protocols for each of the interview sessions as proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994). However, we did our best to transcribe and analyze the interviewees during the data collection period and whenever possible we adapted the interview protocols for the upcoming interviews.

Additionally, participants in the research were mainly from Dutch nationality. During the few interviewees conducted with people from other nationalities we could recognize difference in opinions and focus. However, as these were not enough to conduct further analysis, we recommend that in future research a more diversified participants' list is used.

The last limitation to be addressed here is related to some technical issues encountered during two of the interviews which did not allow the use of recordings but only the interviewer's notes for the transcribing process.

2. Self-developed questionnaire

Next to the limitations discussed above, a separate group of limitations related to the self-developed questionnaire should be outlined.

Thus, the two main limitations are the self-developed measurement instrument and the small number of survey respondents. These had several implications. Firstly, although the reliability scores for both scales (Importance and HR Effectiveness) were rather high, the alpha scores for some of the sub-scales were below the required minimum of .70. Thus, future research could use our measurement instrument as a solid basis but needs to improve it in order to achieve meaningful results. Some suggestions on how this can be done are: use a larger sample size (a limitation that will be discussed below) and adapt the questionnaire (1) to reflect the validated framework and (2) avoid unclear item formulations.

Secondly, the small sample size did not allow a sophisticated data analysis to be conducted. Thus, the quantitative data was only used to back up the interview data. Additionally, due to the highly explorative nature of the research, parametric tests (paired-samples t-test) were conducted without an elaborated

analysis whether the predetermined conditions were satisfied. We tested only the scores' distribution for both scales and sub-scales. As the results in Appendix H show, with one exception (Importance of the influential skills sub-scale) the distribution of scores in the population on both scales and sub-scales was normal. No additional testing was conducted to cover the scores' distribution per respondent group. Thus, we recommend that in future research with larger sample size special attention is paid on whether all conditions for conducting parametric tests are satisfied.

Additionally, due to the case study design, a maximum of 31 items was agreed upon with the participating company. Considering the highly explorative nature of the study, we recognize this number insufficient. Therefore, we recommend that researchers adapt the measurement instrument.

Last but not least, also due to the small survey sample size, we were not able to perform factor analysis. Thus, the competency model was developed based on logic and common sense. However, for further validation of the framework, we recommend that future research takes into account the approach applied by Ulrich et al. (2008); namely identifying the competency domains by performing factor analysis.

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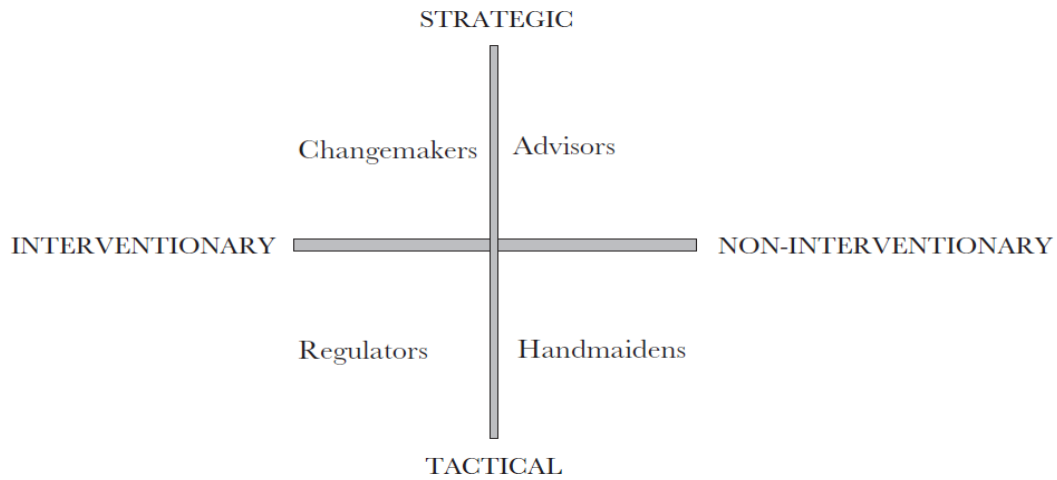
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Appendix A: HR Roles' models

1) HR Roles: Storey



Source: Caldwell, R, 2003

2) HR Roles: Ulrich



Source: Caldwell, 2003

Appendix B: Success factors for change management

Key Success factors for change	Questions to assess and accomplish the key success factors for change
Leading change (who is responsible)	<p>Do we have a leader...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> who owns and champions the change who publicly commits to making it happen who will garner the resources necessary to sustain it who will put in the personal time and attention needed to follow through
Creating a shared need (why do it)	<p>Do employees...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> see the reason for change understand why the change is important see how it will help them and/or the business in the short- and long-term
Shaping a vision (what will it look like when we are done)	<p>Do employees...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> see the outcomes of the change in behavioral terms (that is, in terms of what they will do differently as a result of the change) get excited about the results of accomplishing the change understand how the change will benefit customers and other stakeholders
Mobilizing commitment (who else needs to be involved)	<p>Do the sponsors of the change...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize who else needs to be committed to the change to make it happen know how to build a coalition of support for the change have the ability to enlist support of key individuals in the organization have the ability to build a responsibility matrix to make the change happen
Modifying systems and structures (how will it be measured)	<p>Do the sponsors of the change...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand how to link the change to other systems, for example staffing, training, appraisal, rewards, structure, communication, and so on recognize the systems implications of the change
Monitoring progress (how will it be measured)	<p>Do the sponsors of the change...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have a means of measuring the success of the change plan to benchmark progress on both the results of the change and the process of implementing the change
Making it last (how will it get started and last)	<p>Do the sponsors of the change...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize the first steps in getting started have a short-and long-term plan to keep attention focused on the change have a plan to adapting the change over time

Source: "Seven key factors to success in making change happen" Ulrich (1997, p. 160)

Appendix C: HR Competencies and Example behaviors

Domain	HR Competency	Example Behaviors
Transition Reinforcement skills	Analytical & Diagnostic Skills	<p>“Identify the culture required to meet the business strategy of the business” (Ulrich et. Al., 2008)</p> <p>Adopt a context-specific perspective</p> <p>Analyze strengths and weaknesses</p> <p>Identify key change factors and initiatives</p> <p>Anticipate obstacles & challenges(to achieving the change)</p> <p>Separate symptoms from causes</p> <p>Engage in constructive problem solving with client</p> <p>Analyze & understand the political landscape within the organization (patterns of influence and trust)</p> <p>Identify people who make change happen fast</p> <p>Identify relevant individuals/groups to be affected by the change as well as an appropriate approach to reach them</p> <p>Analyze work processes in order to identify activities and areas that could be impacted by the change program</p> <p>Counsel upon resources and competencies that need to be destroyed/preserved</p> <p>Diagnose readiness to change</p> <p>Diagnose resistance to change</p>
	Administrative skills	<p>Clarify roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Ensure that technically everything works</p>
	Process Implementation skills	<p>Design, align and deliver HR Practices that create and maintain the desired culture</p> <p>Create action plans to make changes happen fast/push process forward</p> <p>“Ensure the availability of resources (money, information, time, people) that make change happen fast”(Ulrich et al., 2008)</p> <p>Ensure that decisions are made quickly</p> <p>Coordinate multiple projects</p> <p>Identify and act within specific timelines</p>
	After-care	<p>Monitor progress of change processes</p> <p>Provide feedback to those implementing the change</p> <p>Derive lessons learned and apply them in new change initiatives</p>
Transition Enabling skills	Provide support to employees	<p>Bring awareness of the need for change/Help people understand why change is important</p> <p>Create dissatisfaction with the status quo</p> <p>Make the change look achievable (to employees)</p> <p>Create a feeling of "togetherness"</p>

		<p>Help employees understand the behavioral implications of the desired culture for them personally</p> <p>Properly address employees' reactions during a change process</p> <p>Provide appropriate coaching (for different target groups)</p> <p>Tackle resistance</p> <p>Encourage reflection on change and learning</p> <p>Bring employee voice on the table</p> <p>Treat employees with dignity and respect</p>
	Provide support to managers	<p>Develop management's competence in self-facilitation/ develop their change management/counseling skills</p> <p>Translate the vision</p>
Proactiveness	Proactive Culture Management	<p>Support individuals in their new roles</p> <p>“Make culture management a business priority”(Ulrich, et al., 2008)</p> <p>Celebrate success and reinforce new ways of behaving</p> <p>“Frame culture in a way that engages employees” (Ulrich et al., 2008)</p> <p>“Measure the influence of culture on firm performance” (Ulrich, et al., 2008)</p> <p>Take actions to make the change last</p> <p>Sustain change through HR Practices</p>
	Proactive management of Incremental changes	<p>Take a proactive role in bringing about change</p> <p>Change in mindset: issues seen as opportunities</p> <p>Identify and share knowledge</p> <p>Encourage reflection on change and learning</p> <p>“Increase employee enthusiasm for change and innovation” (Ulrich et al., 2008)</p> <p>Improvisation: be innovative</p> <p>Translation: adopt (if necessary, edit) successful practices</p> <p>Learning: skills are improved & strengthen: Support by HR Practices</p>
Influential skills	Credibility	<p>Business literate and savvy</p> <p>“Establish trust and credibility in relating to others” (Ulrich et al., 2008)</p> <p>Act as "demonstrator" of the change</p> <p>“Take appropriate risks to accomplish objectives” (Ulrich et al., 2008)</p> <p>Take responsibility</p> <p>Make strong stands</p> <p>Demonstrates the financial impact of HR activities/ROI</p> <p>Sets priorities</p> <p>Reflect on own behaviors and prejudices(Self-awareness)</p> <p>Deliver on results</p>
	Leadership skills	<p>Set a leadership agenda</p> <p>Support the strategic-decision making (via Backing-up with evidence, f.ex. analyzing employee data)</p> <p>Catalyst for change/ Provide "sponsorship for strategic change”</p> <p>Ensure that key leaders are aligned around major change initiatives</p> <p>“Encourage executives to behave consistently with the desired culture”</p>

(Ulrich et al., 2008)

Encourage others to make change happen fast

Express effective and persuasive verbal communication (Manage discourse - Ask “insightful questions” to facilitate "crystallization of ideas"; Neutralize negative behaviors (stereotyping etc.))

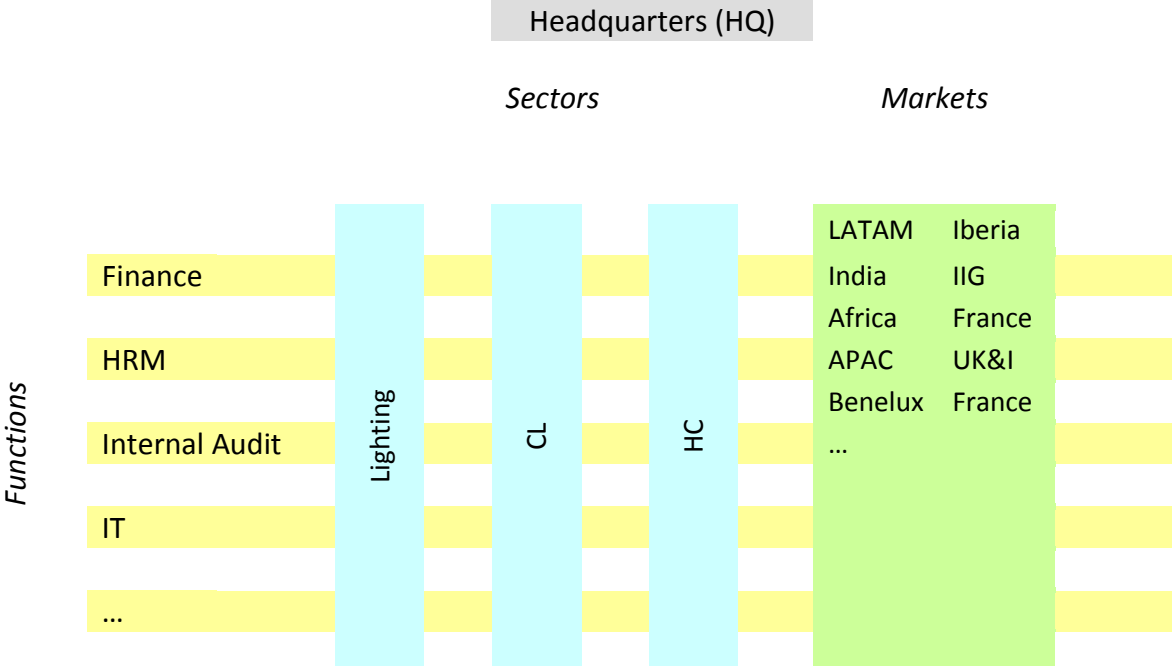
Express effective and persuasive written communication

Provide clear and consistent communication

Articulate outcomes from change

Create channels/opportunities for feedback giving

Appendix D: Philips organizational structure



Appendix E: Interview Protocols⁵

Instructions

Good morning (afternoon), my name is Plamena Uzunova and I am currently doing my internship at HR within IT Applications. Thank you for coming. I am carrying out a research for my Master Thesis in order to understand to what extent the HR Department supports the business and the employees during change initiatives. Hence, the purpose of this interview is to get your perception about what competencies are important for HR, how is HR currently performing as well as to identify areas for improvement. There are no desirable or undesirable answers. Finally, I would like to ask you if I can tape-record our conversation so that I can get all the details for my analysis. However, I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential without any reference to individuals.

Question 1: What is your role in the organization?

Question 2: What should be the role of HR during in change management, according to you?

Question 3: How does HR perform?

Question 4: How is HR supporting you/the employees during changes?

Question 5: What according to you are the most crucial competencies for HR to successfully manage change?

Question 6: What would you recommend for HR professionals to be more successful as change agents?

Question 7: In one sentences, what is the key for HR professionals to be successful in managing change?

Question 8: Do you have additional remarks to the HR change management competencies?

⁵ Initial list of questions. Questions developed during the interviews are not included in this overview

Appendix F: Self-developed Questionnaire

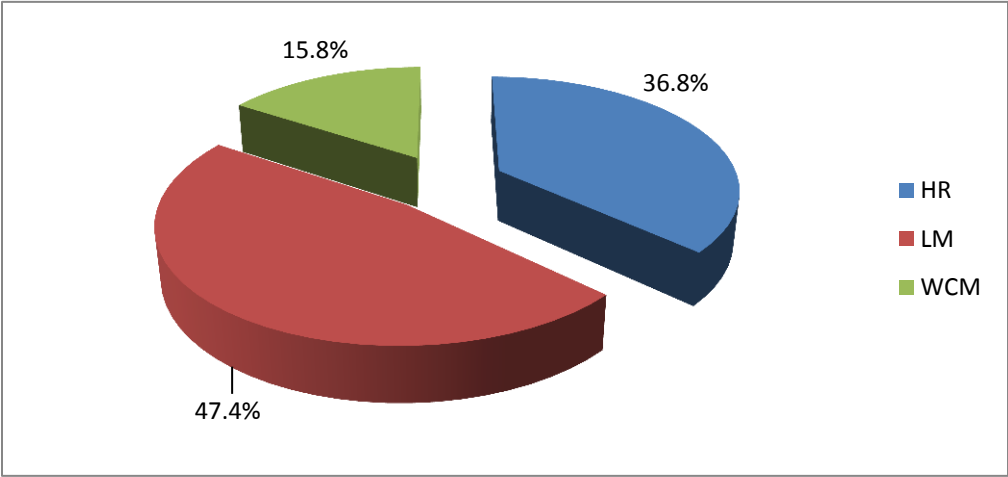
Please answer to both questions for each of the statements:

To what extent do you consider this HR competence crucial for successful change management? (1)					<u>HR Change Management Competencies</u>					To what extent do you think the HR Managers in your department successfully apply this competence to manage fast change? (2)				
					<i>Scoring:</i> 1 – to a very little extent 2 – to a little extent 3 – to some extent 4 – to a large extent 5 – to a very large extent									
1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Business literate and savvy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Establish trust and credibility in relating to others (Ulrich et al., 1995)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Take appropriate risks to accomplish objectives (Huselid et al., 1997)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Express effective verbal and written communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Use reasoning to influence others (Ulrich et al., 1995)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Take a proactive role in bringing about change (Ulrich et al., 1995)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Make culture management a business priority (Ulrich et al., 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Encourage managers to behave consistently with the desired culture (Ulrich et al., 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Encourage innovation in the business (Ulrich et al., 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Identify and share knowledge across organizational boundaries (Ulrich et al., 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11. Anticipate future business trends and evaluate the current culture according to that analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12. Anticipate obstacles and challenges to achieving the change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

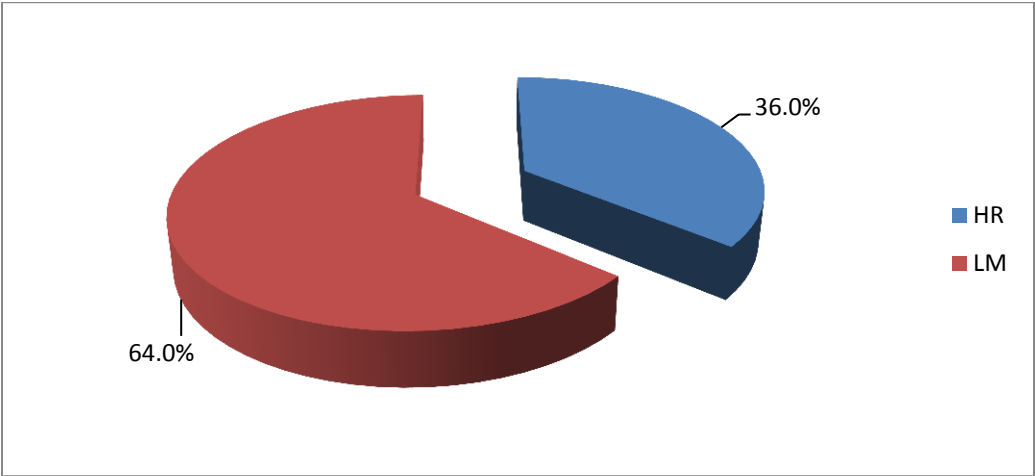
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13. Engage in constructive problem solving with client (<i>Ulrich et al., 1995</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14. Separate problem symptoms from the actual (root) cause(s) of a problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15. Put specific problems in the context of the larger system (<i>Ulrich et al., 1995</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16. Translate business goals in a meaningful way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	17. Cooperate with other parties (if necessary) to ensure the availability of resources (money, information, time, people) that make change happen fast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18. Help shaping the change vision by articulating the desired outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19. Act as "demonstrator" of change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20. Identify and engage people who can make change happen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21. Help create awareness and readiness for change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22. Identify patterns of resistance and act upon it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	23. Mobilize employee commitment to the strategic direction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24. Work with managers to improve their self-facilitation skills in change management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25. Ensure that decisions are made quickly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	26. Support the change direction by modifying processes and structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	27. Clarify roles and responsibilities (<i>Ulrich et al., 1995</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	28. Monitor progress of change processes (against plans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	29. Provide accurate and candid feedback to those implementing the change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	30. Take actions to make the change last	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	31. Derive lessons learned and apply them to new change initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix G: Participants' representation per data collection method

1) Semi-structured Interviews



2) Questionnaire



Appendix H: Distribution of scores for the total population on both measurement scales and their adjacent sub-scales

(Sub-)Scale	Shapiro-Wilk
Importance	0.398
Influential skills	0.032
Proactiveness	0.116
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	0.602
Project Support skills	0.297
Transition Enabling skills	0.064
HR Effectiveness	0.681
Influential skills	0.577
Proactiveness	0.359
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	0.171
Project Support skills	0.825
Transition Enabling skills	0.299

Appendix I: Current and Desired HR Role and Example Quotations

HR Role in Change Management	Example Quotations
Current HR Roles	
Act as a strategic partner and facilitator	<p>"support on getting clarity on what the current organization is...And in the second part to help define what the new organization should" (HR4)</p> <p>"what is the gap analysis between what are the necessary or the required capabilities after the change and what are the capabilities you have before the change" (HR6)</p> <p>"we need to design for learning and development platform that links to the demand" (HR2)</p> <p>"it's not only people management role but also strategic business" (HR7)</p> <p>"they are really involved in the theoretical part; so they set up the new organization, they make roles, they make sure that everything is in place" (LM1)</p> <p>"I try to trigger people to get mobilized" (HR2)</p> <p>"I really see HR as an enabler. We are not the drivers in the strategy design because there we have our leaders. They are strategists. What we can do is bring different perspectives on the table to make sure that decisions are based upon solid broad knowledge" (HR2)</p> <p>"HR should be there as a facilitator for the change" (HR3)</p> <p>"...and then help to manage the transition from the current organization to the new organization" (HR4)</p> <p>"the role of HR is to help team leads" (HR5)</p>
Administrative Role	<p>"it is more on the administrative part" (HR1)</p> <p>"They do the formal part of it, formal announcements. Yeah, well, there is a lot of administration that comes with changing positions and they have to take care of that, so it's more the administrative part of it." (LM4)</p> <p>"More administrative support, make sure that technically works and if there is a change and it has a people impact they are the people that have to list the names, to list the names of people to change. It's the downside of the story. And of course that has to be done as well and I do think they do that pretty well." (LM8)</p>
Reactive Role	<p>"On a request. Not by itself. On a request - if I need information, or if I have a question about something or whatever, I go to HR but HR does not come to me" (LM1)</p> <p>"they are more reactive. So, they are part of a group, we discuss organizational change and then the HR person then either objects or contributes or advises but they are more in an advisory role and I think they could give a bit more guidance" (LM4)</p> <p>"When it comes to change the general feeling is at the lower level of the organization we all have to figure it out on our own. So, minimal HR involvement and I as a manager at a lower level have minimal information from HR in regards to what am I supposed to do" (LM6)</p> <p>"I don't even think there is a change support office...HR needs to be an expert in Change Management" (LM6)</p> <p>"I still feel that HR are still kind of a back-room kind of group, just doing their thing in the background" (LM6)</p> <p>"HR has been playing a reactive role" (LM7)</p> <p>"And I have really not seen any great preparation, at least coming from HR in terms of Change Management" (LM7)</p>
Desired HR Roles	
Act as an equal business partner and proactive facilitator throughout the change process	<p>"First of all, I think that as a true Business Partner you should be at the beginning of change; so not only inform everybody that the organizational change is done and you are surprised with the change and you need to do stuff. So, you need to be involved from the beginning. I do believe HR can also contribute a lot in terms of the business case for the change" (HR3)</p> <p>"as a true business partner HR indicates - ok, guys, this is not going well, we need to do something" (HR3)</p> <p>"you are more or less the mirror for the organization; where you can say to people in the team you have to think about these kinds of things in order to make the change going smooth, successful" (HR3)</p> <p>"a really really strong role in the project that has been set up at that time; also in the project board" (LM1)</p> <p>"they have a different perspective on the world than a manager. We have the same goal but a different perspective" (LM5)</p> <p>"that has to be translated though to a more tactical perspective but then when it comes to the majority of the organization it has to be again translated from an operational standpoint in the sense of "what do I need to do every day in order to act to that strategic vision that the leadership has in mind. So, HR is in a perfect position to be the translators to help facilitate" (LM6)</p> <p>"I see HR more as generic supporting organization that is listening well to signals from the organization if things go as planned and raising the red/yellow flag" (LM3)</p> <p>"especially in the multinational things, HR person should know the cultural difference in certain countries, all kinds of legal things" (LM3)</p> <p>"Mainly, maybe they could help with a standard roadmap - things you shouldn't forget and when do you have to involve whom; they should also I think accompany personally or coach LM who actually have to make the change" (LM4)</p> <p>"inform and coach the staff that has the biggest legal impact with regards to your legal position in the company. So, I think HR is more the surrounding staff like labor conditions, what is changing etc so they should really inform" (LM4)</p>

	<p>"I think they might be aware of what you might expect as kinds of resistance; they will not identify it easily with individuals because they don't interact with them a lot, only occasionally, so, it is for the LM to be sensitive and to identify it but to how to call it...to sensitize the manager - that could be an important role" (LM4)</p> <p>"HR needs to be an expert in Change Management. So, that they can help facilitate the organization to move effectively while still remaining productive; move from one place to another and that people can count on HR for this" (LM6)</p> <p>"actively support the people managers and provide them all the information and the tools" (LM7)</p> <p>" they should investigate what is this change and how it will affect the people. And proactively look at the consequences. And then create a support structure when the change happens that you know where the impacts are and then for every impact you have a plan how you are going to address it. So, that it is not going to come out of the air. Especially that proactive part is very important, that upfront you think about the impact and what are you going to do about it" (LM8)</p> <p>"They need to help us explain better to the people the old and the new situation" (LM9)</p> <p>"I believe HR should be really a function with high level people that are able to say "No" to managers in such a way that managers listens to them" (LM5)</p>
Administrative Role	<p>"there is a lot of administration that comes with changing positions and they have to take care of that, so it's more the administrative part of it" (LM4)</p> <p>"More administrative support, make sure that technically works and if there is a change and it has a people impact they are the people that have to list the names, to list the names of people to change. It's the downside of the story. And of course that has to be done as well and I do think they do that pretty well" (LM8)</p> <p>"data gathering is very important in a change process; so that you know what you are talking about" (HR1)</p>
Drive Change	<p>"I believe HR from the beginning should contribute actively and maybe even be the initiator of the change, and makes sure that what "lives there" is taken into the new strategy" (HR3)</p> <p>I think that the response should not be "oh, no, another change" but "ok, we are going to be lead to the next level of maturity in order to maintain our competitiveness at the market". And so they should be seen as leaders and guides as opposed to the organization saying "oh, no, not again" – huge opportunity here fir HR" (LM6)</p> <p>I think that when organizational change is happening HR should be the first group to be involved. They should know upfront, before the other part of the organization, so in that sense they are in a better position to drive the change (LM7)</p>

Appendix J: Descriptive statistics per role⁶

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LM					
Importance	16	3.14	4.88	4.0044	.50157
Influential skills	16	3.17	4.83	4.1875	.51953
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	16	2.71	5.00	3.9286	.58087
Process Support skills	16	2.57	5.00	4.0893	.63434
Transition Enabling skills	16	2.00	5.00	3.9583	.86816
Proactiveness	16	2.60	4.60	3.8094	.61325
HR Effectiveness	16	2.11	3.73	2.9956	.40190
Influential skills	16	2.20	4.20	3.2500	.53417
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	16	2.00	4.00	3.0327	.56175
Process Support skills	16	2.14	4.00	2.9940	.43081
Transition Enabling skills	16	2.00	4.00	2.9167	.57735
Proactiveness	16	1.80	3.60	2.7563	.50195
HR					
Importance	9	3.36	4.32	4.0122	.28015
Influential skills	9	3.33	4.67	4.1333	.39826
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	9	3.29	4.57	4.0794	.41102
Process Support skills	9	3.71	4.71	4.0476	.31135
Transition Enabling skills	9	2.67	4.67	4.0000	.62361
Proactiveness	9	2.40	4.60	3.7333	.61644
HR Effectiveness	9	2.33	3.70	3.1391	.51542
Influential skills	9	2.40	4.00	3.2778	.51424
Analytical & Diagnostic skills	9	2.00	4.00	3.1270	.71943
Process Support skills	9	2.29	4.14	3.2460	.57931
Transition Enabling skills	9	1.67	4.00	3.1852	.72860
Proactiveness	9	1.75	3.80	2.8111	.67675

⁶ Color coding was applied for better differentiation between LM and HR (dark grey) and Importance and HR Effectiveness (light grey)

Appendix K: HR Change Management Competencies and Example Quotations

Domains, HR Competencies and Behaviors		Example quotations
Credibility	Decision-making and prioritizing	"constantly see that people come back to their decisions" (HR7) "You can maybe better wait 2 or 3 more months" (HR2)
	Deliver on what has been promised	"deliver to your commitments" (HR1) "Not to promise that the change is over and introduce new changes every 6 months" (HR5) "what I see on my level is they start something and then I never hear about it again. So, they recognize the importance with regards to starting that initiative, they reach out but then nothing else is heard" (LM6)
	Disciplined process for managed transition	"you could pre-structure that so that it becomes more of a routine and that also the people in HR know" (LM8) "create those various dimensions and say what do you do typically in the different stages. So, then it becomes more if a managed transition" (LM8) "I think it will be useful not only for HR but also for people like me who are having staff underneath so that we are also handling it properly" (LM9) "Kind of a change cookbook" (HR1)
	Equal business partner who challenges management and enables it to act	"challenge management; so, not to be always easy going with the managers" (HR1) "continuously, in every discussion that is going on bring in the future state perspective" (HR2) "play that role of putting a mirror in front of our people managers" (HR3) "in some cases we just nock and say "yes"; maybe we should say more "no" (HR7) "challenging also the MT in how to deal with an organization that needs to change" (LM3) "you need a very strong function that is able to stand up" (LM5) "being a partner for the manager. And that means partner in all the aspects. So, being almost an equal partner. So, that you can really say to the manager - "No, you should stop. You are making a mistake" (LM5) "HR I think should be professionals there to guide us" (LM8)
Knowledge		Business Knowledge "a good understanding of what the business wants" (HR1) "I think that the most important competency is understanding the strategy of the business" (HR2) "if you don't understand the business then you cannot understand the current state, the future state and the transition state" (HR2) "know the business well" (LM7)
		Change Management Understanding "change management understanding, understanding how change affects people" (LM) "General change management knowledge - knowing how a change management process goes, what the phases in change management are, what are you going to, what are the milestones, what is the context, understanding and knowing what are the context features change has" (HR2)
		Organizational structure understanding "organization structure understanding" (LM8) "They should know how people are effective in complex environment. So they should really understand that, what makes these people successful, what are all the dimensions impacting and they should really see what is needed to make that person effective in his/her role" (LM8)
		Understanding of the political landscape for better allocation of resources "it is also about involving the right people"(LM1) "They also need to have an understanding of where to find the people that they need for their organizational change projects" (LM1) "they need to be able to find the right resources in the organization. And for that they need to really really know the organization and all aspects" (LM1) "during preparation they should also involve key representatives, probably from the organization that is impacted by the change; so these people can interact as change agents within the organization during the execution phase" (LM7)
Walking the talk		"they should really act as change agents. So, when the other parts of the organization see HR acting as a champion and do "walk the talk" they will also buy-into that. So they should be able to understand and internalize the change" (LM7)

Leadership Skills	Communication	<p>Bring different perspectives together</p> <p>"whether it is an outsourcing or a change in the organizational structure, or selling off a company or something or a certain department, it is always this balancing act" (HR1)</p> <p>"be the linking part between the business and the people, and make the right balance there" (HR3)</p> <p>" I think it is very relevant for change management, is the ability to bring people together. So, link different perspectives together" (HR4)</p> <p>"the people factor is very important. On the other hand you have sometimes KPIs that are in conflict with this and as a manager, as a MT you have to find the balance. That's what you have to do. I think for HR is important to facilitate managing that balance" (LM2)</p> <p>"Helping the management from the top to establish what they need to establish, by in a timely fashion bringing up the people things, the HR interests on the table" (HR3)</p> <hr/> <p>Clear and consistent message for effective and persuasive communication</p> <p>"communicate clearly and consistently, make sure you can adapt to the different audiences" (HR3)</p> <p>"at least if it is a change where employees are involved, what's in it for them" (HR6)</p> <p>"that means that you have to be able to express all those things in writing in a good way that people can relate to, on the other hand that they are also clear and unambiguous and binding" (LM4)</p> <p>"And communication is about not making false promises" (LM4)</p> <p>"I think it is better to have a clear message than that there is no message and that people are guessing "it will mean this or it will mean that" (WCM3)</p> <hr/> <p>Communication plan</p> <p>"in the HR community not to the employees, know what is going on, what is expected, timeline is very important - what is deliverable at a certain stage and what steps do we need to take" (HR1)</p> <p>"you have to have kind of a communication plan for each stream but also for a project" (HR3)</p> <p>"you should have one communication plan. So everybody, HR, Line manager, Jeroen Tas, Frans van Houten, everybody should have the same message with the same content and keep repeating" (HR3)</p> <p>"upfront you need to think about to ask your communication expert "how are we going to do that?" (HR6)</p> <hr/> <p>Listen well to enable bottom-up communication</p> <p>"Just talking to people, listening, taking their concerns seriously and even if you don't do anything with it because it doesn't fit the model, but just listening to them, helps in getting the appreciation and engagement in the end" (HR3)</p> <p>" sessions where people could indeed tell what is going right, what is going less good. And also bringing people together and stimulating them to find their own solutions" (LM3)</p> <p>"having an antenna for people things, about soft skills" (LM3)</p> <p>"And also listen to all the people and feed that back because people say to HR person different things than to their own LM. And you can cross check that" (LM3)</p> <p>"you might listen what certain things will not work. And people feel frustrated if they are trying to say that this is not going to work and or they don't understand the business case" (LM8)</p> <p>"now for example, the communication happens only top-down. They can more debriefing sessions with the teams, that is one way of helping because then they can really collect ideas and concerns and globally they can do more" (LM9)</p> <p>"Then the whole feedback mechanism happens" (LM9)</p> <p>"a people HR Manager, detecting at any moment what is around - the problems people on the work floor are dealing with, the fear that surrounds, stress that occurs, so the day to day issues but those day to day issues are very important at this moment" (WCM1)</p> <hr/> <p>Create awareness by asking the right questions</p> <p>"communication is very important and asking questions" (HR2)</p> <p>"asking the right questions to trigger their thinking" (HR2)</p> <p>"everyone should be very aware of the situation. And that is where I think you as an HR could also contribute to make that awareness in the team" (HR6)</p> <hr/> <p>Constant information flow</p> <p>"if you are constantly in a change inform people, regularly, weekly" (HR7)</p> <p>"And communicate, communicate, communicate. Even if there is nothing to communicate, because you have an embargo on what you can share, they just see it" (HR3)</p> <p>"communication, a lot of explanations, that's why influencing skills are very important" (LM7)</p> <hr/> <p>Political skills for effective collaboration and communication</p> <p>"Identify and engage people - that's also important one; that the change leadership council" (HR1)</p> <p>"everyone should talk with the same message so that nobody says "I agreed with the change but actually I am not in a favor of it" (HR6)</p>
	Inspire confidence	<p>"you also have to inspire confidence because it's all about confidence - organizational change can be so scary for people and you have to have someone that you can really rely on as a manager of course to support you in the process but also as an employee" (LM4)</p> <p>"I think that the response should not be "oh, no, another change" but "ok, we are going to be lead to the next level of maturity in order to maintain our competitiveness at the market". And so they should be seen as leaders and guides as opposed to the organization saying "oh, no, not again" - huge opportunity here for HR" (LM6)</p> <p>"inspire people with "we are in the new situation and what does this bring to us, and what are the new opportunities, what is extra possible, why we do it" (LM8)</p>

Administrative skills		<p>" if your decision is based on fact you need to make sure that you know that the facts are right" (WCM2) "correct payroll, correct reporting lines, the administrative finalization of a change with HR" (HR1) "there is support from HR in defining what the new organization should look like, what roles do you need to define and how are you going to assess people against the requirements for those roles" (HR4) "The preparation is of course also about job description because in the preparation phase you need to prepare them, to be clear about what the roles and responsibilities exactly are" (LM4) "the formal part of it, formal announcements. Yeah, well, there is a lot of administration that comes with changing positions and they have to take care of that" (LM4) "operational execution that we've agreed is fine, they should do that because it is important. So, they need to take care of the processes" (LM5) "more administrative support, make sure that technically works and if there is a change and it has a people impact they are the people that have to list the names, to list the names of people to change. It's the downside of the story. And of course that has to be done as well and I do think they do that pretty well" (LM8)</p>
Analytical & Diagnostic Skills	Advising on design principles & structure	<p>"What is very important are your design principles - so, what is important in your structure. And there HR can advise" (HR1) "I think they could probably also look more at the structure. When we put down a structure...because any model can work but somehow the way we do it we don't even make it work so I think HR could really look there" (LM8)</p>
	Context-specific view	<p>"understand the context and the complexity of the context" (HR2)</p>
	Gap Analysis	<p>"what is the gap analysis between what are the necessary or the required capabilities after the change and what are the capabilities you have before the change, and how can we make it happen to go from A to B" (HR6) "capabilities, change brings opportunity but there might be a gap in the capabilities of the people to deliver that" (LM9) "to see how the current workforce maps on the new model" (WCM2)</p>
	General	<p>"This one is also very important - separate the root causes from the symptoms" (HR1) "anticipating on change, so make sure that leaders and managers are aware that things are moving" (HR2) "the ability to understand what is going on" (HR4) "to define what is the issue, what is the root cause, what can be done to improve it" LM 2</p>
	Strategic focus	<p>"In the MTs that is constant awareness of the changes, of the future state. So, continuously, in every discussion that is going on bring in the future state perspective, that's one thing" (HR2) " HR needs to make sure that the right people are involved. That is really really really important; with the right skills and most of all the right knowledge. They need to make sure that they can get the knowledge there because HR is not trained enough to see the roadblocks themselves. And certainly not if you look at business or if you look at technical things" (LM1) "they also need to be strategic thinkers in terms of "are we on the right track in the department? Are my MTs running ok, what should I steer, what should I do differently?" So, I expect from HR that kind of feedback and therefore I expect on top of their operational responsibility also these more strategic responsibilities" (LM5) "they should be able to walk together with the business in shaping the vision for the future" (LM7)</p>
	Translate the People impact and proactively look at the consequences	<p>"they should investigate what is this change and how it will affect the people. And proactively look at the consequences. And then create a support structure when the change happens that you know where the impacts are and then for every impact you have a plan how you are going to address it. So, that it is not going to come out of the air. Especially that proactive part is very important, that upfront you think about the impact and what are you going to do about it" (LM8) "make sure that the managers know how to deal with the HR side of it" (LM8) "as HR you are related to what will be the effect on the personnel" (HR6)</p>
(Legal) Safeguarding		<p>"you have a role to safeguard whatever you're trying to do, making sure it doesn't violate any legal obligations, or anything that negatively impacts your social standing in your business environment" (HR4) "Usually how they support is by giving good advice about conditions, what is and is not possible in terms of making a quick change, where do we have to be more careful or take more time, or align – so, that's good" (LM4)</p>

	After-care	<p>"I really feel it's also the role of HR to make sure that it's not only tick in the box for management but there is also some after-care" (HR3)</p> <p>"A high-performance team always reflects" (HR5)</p> <p>"measuring, whether the change has been fully brought to its end" (HR6)</p> <p>"you have to also measure the fact whether it is also effective, do you see progress making after the change was there" (HR6)</p> <p>"you need a proper follow-up, action plan also after the change" (HR6)</p> <p>"feedback to management about how people are experiencing it" (HR6)</p> <p>"Definitely an important tool - lessons learned, so it means don't repeat the mistakes what we have done in the past and also do the good things we have done in the past" (LM7)</p> <p>"To make it last, they need to do continuous pulse checks to see how the organization is behaving, how the organization is adapting to changes" (LM7)</p> <p>"measurement whether it is sustaining. That information can be then feed backed to the organization via the managers how additional communications can be made to reinforce or how managers can be advised or coached on how to reinforce the behaviors" (LM6)</p> <p>"we've been through a lot of organizational changes in the past, and it seems to me that we never learn from it. We don't learn from it! What I saw 10 years ago happening I see again happening now. Why? Why didn't we learn from it?" (LM1)</p>
Transition Enabling skills	Enable employees to accept the change	<p>Address uncertainty and manage expectations for a healthy organization</p> <p>"many things pop up and I think then to have an open-door, to be constantly available, contactable" (HR7)</p> <p>"the HR department is able explain what is going to happen. And that from an employee benefit point of view...and I think that HR should play a facilitating role in that sense - to remove insecurity" (LM2)</p> <p>"I think this is also one of the competencies an HR manager should have - to judge what kind of people you have to deal with during change and "how must I communicate what was going to happen to those people"(LM2)</p> <p>"don't know" triggers kind of fear. So, this is another skill that HR should be expert at in regard to what kind of expectations may arise, how do we address them, how do we manage them so that the organization continues to perform in an optimal manner" (LM6)</p> <p>"there was a lot of insecurity and they just keep going. So, that's hard for people. Some of them even dropped out" (LM8)</p> <p>"That period of insecurity should be limited. People become very unproductive; as soon as they smell something is going to change, they drop procedures, they drop the interest in their assignment, and they start looking what's in it for me" (LM8)</p> <p>"they should probably open the door more active, so that people know who is my HR and that they somehow ways that they easily discuss their own concerns. The people skill is very important, I think" (LM8)</p> <p>"I don't actually know whether it is an HR aspect but people get lost and frustrated during these organizations and what you see is that the stress-related illness is very high" (WCM2)</p>
	Create readiness for change	<p>"This one is the same for me - create awareness and readiness for change - that's what we also just discussed. That's also a very important one" (HR1)</p> <p>"for an employee - what's in it for them in order to fully support, participate in the change" (HR6)</p> <p>"It is about creating, making aware to the organization what the goals are. That is what they should do. That is a very important competency" (LM1)</p> <p>"HR should be able to explain the context of why the change is happening, and make sure that people are bought-into the change" (LM7)</p> <p>"And of course you need to be ready, you need to do some work upfront" (LM8)</p>
	Handle resistance	<p>"This is also very important but we don't do anything, resistance, readiness. Top managers just go and they don't look at it" (HR1)</p> <p>"resistance is feedback. Feedback is information that can be used to one one's benefit but what is generally happening is resistance is interpreted as these people aren't cooperative. And I am using the term "those people" which is also very loaded and fascinating. So, it is interpreted in a defensive mode instead of "let's use this information in our advantage" and change in influence" (LM6)</p> <p>"but having questions is a way of cooperating; it is like to translate what they hear into something practical for themselves so if they have questions you simply have to give more answers; it's not like they don't want to cooperate but they want to understand" (LM8)</p> <p>"I think it is very important and needs certain amount of management attention because there is resistance in the organization change, people are ... they sometimes hamper the change process just by resisting and not in a very public way but if they just stay and say "ok, I am not going to do anything, we know this will end up" (WCM2)</p>

	Provide support to employees	<p>"explaining to the employee, sit down with them" (HR1)</p> <p>"explain, explain, explain" (HR3)</p> <p>" training plan or whatever in order to bring them to the new situation" (HR6)</p> <p>"making sure that the people really do these moves because it is not always resistance but it is also not knowing how to make it" (LM1)</p> <p>"But you cannot expect that from below Grade 70. Those people need to be guided; those people need to be told what they should do. This part I really miss and me, myself as a manager, I can do something about that of course but I need HR to support me" (LM1)</p> <p>"The coaching aspect is very important - coaching in general, coaching of people. So, not only coaching in career paths but also coaching if there is an organizational change that they can coach people on every level within the organization how to make this change happen" (LM1)</p> <p>"if the change is substantial they might have a one-on-one discussions with the LM and the employee about the new conditions and how to smooth transfer" (LM4)</p> <p>" During the change it is more guidance, so it is following-up on the day-to-day "be there" - so have close relationship with the company doctor and the managers and the people, so really be part of it" (LM8)</p> <p>"training is one thing but there could be also coaching. And coaching can help people realize the new challenges they get (because change brings a lot ...) so training and coaching can surely help" (LM9)</p> <p>and also making sure that they try to position themselves in an employee position and look towards the change - "how are employees experiencing this change" (WCM3)</p>
	Enable Management to act	<p>Provide Management with tools to make the change happen</p> <p>"instruct managers how to deal with a change because the manager is still the direct contact person for an employee" (HR1)</p> <p>"enabling managers to grow their change management skills" (HR2)</p> <p>"I really feel that HR should be giving the tools and guidelines and guidance towards the people managers to make sure that in these teams the people managers are sending the right message, the right message and continuous/constant message" (HR3)</p> <p>"advise managers how to communicate the consequences of the change to their employees. So, give advice to the team leads and managers" (HR6)</p> <p>"I mean I need a little bit more guidance from HR to make sure that my team also follows the goal that we have in mind" (LM1)</p> <p>"I think we should be helped by HR by stressing how people think and act and react when changes are coming so that we understand the signals. So, also us because we as line managers should on the first place listen well. And that means we need to understand if a person starts shouting or crying or are working like hell and all because they are afraid of what is ahead of us" (LM3)</p> <p>"Mainly, maybe they could help with a standard roadmap - things you shouldn't forget and when do you have to involve whom; they should also I think accompany personally or coach LM who actually have to make the change"(LM4)</p> <p>"provide additional support, especially the people managers. So, they should be able to provide that support" (LM7)</p> <p>"when these changes come I feel somehow responsible for 450 people with my MT. So, for us we really need to have discussions how to make it work, how to keep these people motivated" (LM8)</p> <p>"work with team leads, help us, and train us to handle it more properly. And another way is maybe evaluating and coaching us" (LM9)</p> <p>"Line Managers should have the capability to manage people. You can have the HR department (Bram) but the human resource management is not the responsibility for the HR department. It's the responsibility of the line manager and they should be trained in fulfilling that area of responsibility" (WCM2)</p> <p>"I think if HR prepares adequate feedback, or material for managers that can also be very good. I think that the role of HR could be increasing the HR skills for managers because a lot of managers don't have HR skills" (WCM3)</p>
	Translating the vision	<p>"I can assure that the Team Leads and the CG Managers know what the current state is, what the future state is, what the strategy is, and I can enable them to translate the strategy towards the day-to-day practices of their people" (HR2)</p> <p>"I think they need to be fully involved with the preparation which is generally translating, which is probably a tactical view then, what it means to the organization" (LM6)</p> <p>"I think that what would offer the most value is that translating role in regards to facilitating, "what it means to me, that strategic view, on a daily basis?" so, I think the facilitating of that translation of that is of most value" (LM6)</p>
Proactiveness	Proactively Create and Promote an open & innovative environment	<p>"if you trigger and ask people to come up with innovative solutions it mobilizes energy, it mobilizes direction. By that I think it will help in change; any kind of innovation, just out of the box" (HR1)</p> <p>"how can we make our Philips employee population more adaptable to change and more employable" (HR3)</p> <p>"to stimulate people to come up with great ideas, that you explain "ok, we need an idea in kind of core and it adheres to this competency and if you have the best idea we will publish it somewhere" and then people can join this kind of an initiative" (LM1)</p> <p>"if you shut down suggestions or ideas, then people will stop giving suggestions and ideas...saying "oh, no, you are wrong' the receiver is not open to anything and everything which you have to be for innovation" (LM6)</p> <p>"You have to be open to everything and anything because that's where you get that "out of the box"</p>

thinking, that's where the brainstorming is going" (LM6)
"we have this expression "just stay low, don't shout too much and nothing will happen to you; as long as you speak up you move into the dangerous zone" (WCM2)

Proactiveness throughout the change process

"We often talk about leading to change in culture, to install new behaviors, but what we actually do is only explain what the behaviors are and then reference what people do against those behaviors. But what we don't do is look at what elicits people's behaviors. And how can we change that so that they start heaving the way we want them to" (HR4)
"you can hold people responsible for acting in a new way. And if not, you can offer them help in order to see what's the problem, why are they not changing their behavior or why are they not changing the way they are working" (HR6)
"if they notice that something is not going all right, then they should be able immediately to notify the management and engage all the relevant people and come up with solutions how can we address those issues so that the change is sustained throughout the organization" (LM7)
"what I am trying to say is HR should play a more proactive role, that's what I am looking at. And proactive + taking kind of an advisory role to the MT. and their primary role...their primary business is about people. So, they should be able to sense people-related things first" (LM7)
"giving people the opportunity to explore the concept, what the change means to them" (LM6)
"especially that proactive part is very important" (LM8)

Appendix L: Paired-Samples t-tests

1) Influential skills

Table 1a.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for the Total Population on the Influential Skills Sub-Scale

		Paired Differences							
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Influential Skills (Importance) – Influential skills (HR Effectiveness)	,90800	,56464	,11293	,67493	1,14107	8,040	24	,000	

Table 1b.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for HR and LM on the Influential Skills Sub-Scale

		Paired Samples Test							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
LM	Influential skill (Importance) – Influential skills (HR Effectiveness)	,93750	,45426	,11356	,69544	1.17956	8.255	15	,000
HR	Influential skill (Importance) – Influential skills (HR Effectiveness)	,85556	,75148	,25049	,27792	1.43319	3.415	8	,009

2) Transition Reinforcement skills

Table 2a and 2b.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for the Total Population on the Analytical & Diagnostic Skills and Transition Reinforcement Skills Sub-Scales

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
	Analytical & Diagnostic skills (Importance) - Analytical & Diagnostic skills (HR Effectiveness)	.91619	.72561	.14512	.61667	1.21571	6.313	24	.000
	Transition Reinforcement skills (Importance) – Transition Reinforcement skills (HR Effectiveness)	.98952	.52938	.10588	.77101	1.20804	9.346	24	.000

Table 2c and 2d.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for HR and LM on the Analytical & Diagnostic Skills and Transition Reinforcement skills Sub-Scales

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
LM	Analytical & Diagnostic skills (Importance) - Analytical & Diagnostic skills (HR Effectiveness)	.89583	.63916	.15979	.55525	1.23642	5.606	15	.000
LM	Transition Reinforcement skills (Importance) – Transition Reinforcement skills (HR Effectiveness)	1.09524	.57063	.14266	.79117	1.39931	7.677	15	.000
HR	Analytical & Diagnostic skills (Importance) - Analytical & Diagnostic skills (HR Effectiveness)	.95238	.90068	.30023	.26006	1.64470	3.172	8	.013
HR	Transition Reinforcement skills (Importance) – Transition Reinforcement skills	.80159	.40998	.13666	.48645	1.11673	5.866	8	.000

3) Transition Enabling skills

Table 3a.

Paired-samples T-Test results for the Total Population on the Transition Enabling Skills Sub-Scale

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Transition Enabling skills (Importance) – Transition Enabling skills (HR Effectiveness)	.96000	.75963	.15193	.64644	1.27356	6.319	24	.000

Table 3b.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for HR and LM on the Transition Enabling Skills Sub-Scale

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
LM	Transition Enabling skills (Importance) – Transition Enabling skills (HR Effectiveness)	1.04167	.61914	.15478	.71175	1.37158	6.730	15	.000
HR	Transition Enabling skills (Importance) – Transition Enabling skills (HR Effectiveness)	.81481	.98758	.32919	.05570	1.57393	2.475	8	.038

4) Proactiveness

Table 4a.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for the Total Population on the Proactiveness Sub-Scale

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
	Proactiveness (Importance) – Proactiveness (HR Effectiveness)	1.00600	.80225	.16045	.67485	1.33715	6.270	24	.000

Table 4b.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for HR and LM on the Proactiveness Sub-Scale

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
LM	Proactiveness (Importance) – Proactiveness (HR Effectiveness)	1.05313	.68300	.17075	.68918	1.41707	6.168	15	.000
HR	Proactiveness (Importance) – Proactiveness (HR Effectiveness)	.92222	1.02167	.34056	.13689	1.70755	2.708	8	.027

5) Importance - HR Effectiveness

Table 5a.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for the Total Population on Both Scales (Importance – HR Effectiveness)

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
	Importance – HR Effectiveness	.95998	.48749	.09750	.75875	1.16121	9.846	24	.000

Table 5b.

Paired-samples T-Test Results for HR and LM on Both Scales (Importance – HR Effectiveness)

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
LM	Importance – HR Effectiveness	1.00886	.41813	.10453	.78606	1.23167	9.651	15	.000
HR	Importance – HR Effectiveness	.87307	.60980	.20327	.40434	1.34181	4.295	8	.003

