HR-transformation
at the Swedish authority Försäkringskassan

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Abstract

Background: Human resource transformation is a fairly new trend in the business environment and it is an influence originating in the US from scientist Dave Ulrich (Bass, Bernard & Riggio 2008).

Questions to investigate: How can such a transformation be prepared, what will it look like, and more importantly, what are the outcomes, changes and consequences after an implemented HR-transformation? The last question is main research question of this thesis with Försäkringskassan as a case organization. The purpose is to investigate what consequences and changes could follow an implemented HR-transformation and it may be of practical value for organizations that are planning to implement an HR-transformation.

Research design: Investigations was done through three interviews at Försäkringskassan and through secondary data collection from the investigator Statskontoret.

Empirical part: The HR at Försäkringskassan needed to be improved; communication, academic education and unified were some areas of focus for the HR-transformation.

Analyzing: The reason why Försäkringskassan transformed their HR could be because their relation to the Swedish government and another factor for the HR-transformation was that it was implemented in connection to the organizational transformation. Regarding how the HR-transformation expressed itself, one can analyze the different HR-stab functions by integrating it into the triangle model of Ulrich.

Conclusion: Försäkringskassan has used a HR-stab model for their transformed HR, which came across implementation obstacles such as integrating issues and cooperating issues between the line managers and HR-employees due to unclear information, which created unclear roles for both sides. The HR-transformation of Försäkringskassan has, after all, proven to improve the quality of the today´s HR work according to this study´s interviews and according to investigations by Statskontoret (Statskontoret 2009).

Key words: redesigning HR, transformation, human resource transformation, organizational change, HR change
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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

It can be argued that constant changes in the world affect the organizations, which need to adapt in order to comply with the requirements of the society. Organizations face numerous challenges; one of them is to be competitive on the markets where they compete. One way to achieve this is to structure the organization efficiently with all resources being utilized. Such restructures may include the organization as a whole or a specific department, such as the human resources (HR) department.

Human resource management (HRM) is simply the management of human capital in an organization in order to be able to reach the goals and strategies of the organization (Nilsson et al. 2011). The interest in HR is increasing and the human capital is playing an important role for the success of an organization. The HR in an organization is simply the employees it has and includes tasks, development, recruitment, and training (Armstrong 2012). The organizations want to ensure that the employees are not just working because it is required; the staff also needs to be motivated which ultimately leads to good results (Economist 2009).

However, the staff in the HR-department has, from a historical perspective, not been heavily involved in strategic discussion. Until recently, the HR-staff devoted most of their time for administration and the staff included lifetime career specialists who had little knowledge or experience about the rest of the business’ goals (Economist 2009).

Due to these above-mentioned causes the old style HR has changed and the HR-staff of today is working with strategic rather than administrative tasks. Organizations began to look at ways to revamp the HR-departments and when doing this significant reconstruction of the HR, they were heavily influenced by, for instance, the professor from the US, Ulrich Dave. Such reconstruction in the context of HR is expressed as a transformation (Economist 2009).

The background of the HR-transformation began with larger American companies in the 90’s that had a globally influenced and very competitive business environment that required constant changes in the organization’s structure. This was the start of organizational transformations that later led to HR-transformations (Thilander 2013).

Transformations the HR-departments is a fairly new topic in Sweden (started around the 21st century) and the research about what happens after an HR-transformation in an organization is somewhat limited (Thilander 2013).
A successful HR-transformation can result in more efficient HR-work (Thilander 2013) and a reason to implement it for many organizations is to win competitive advantages (Ulrich et al. 2009).

1.2. Problem Discussion

Nowadays, reconstructions of organizations could be seen as a result of the ongoing globalization in a world, which is seen as one giant external affecting influence (Ulrich et al. 2009). The globalizing factors include a technique that is more advanced and communication that is becoming simplified (Briscoe, Schuler & Tarique 2012), and these factors along with many other conditional influences put pressure on organizations to be competitive and to change the activities together with the requirements of the society (Ulrich et al. 2009).

When adapting internal activities, organizations can restructure their organization and make some significant changes. Some restructures concern the HR-department, which are the so-called HR-transformations. The restructuring process organizations go through should be well-planned, directed and implemented to make sure that the changes will give the expected outcome (Ulrich et al. 2009).

There are many ways of restructuring the organization itself, but there are not too many HR-transformation models that follow. The lack of HR-transformation models is due to the small supply of research in the area.

The Swedish authority Försäkringskassan made an HR-transformation in the year of 2008, which occurred simultaneously as the organization was going through a reconstruction of the whole organization itself (Statskontoret 2009). There is some research done about the transformation by the Swedish Statskontoret and most of it was collected only at the time when the transformation was done. Today, the information is limited about what consequences followed by the specific HR-transformation in the authority, despite that it is now five years after the transformation (Statskontoret 2009).

If HR-transformations meet obstacles regarding bad planning, lack of directions or a bad implementation, the organization may be negatively influenced. Ulrich’s triangle model that will be presented in this thesis could be a good starting point but most likely will an organization’s HR-structure find its own way to operate and function (Thilander 2013).

There are organizations in Sweden that have done HR-transformations, but the lack of information about what happened during and especially after the HR-transformations is as mentioned limited (Thilander 2013). To be able to gather information about a real-world organization’s processes of change and more importantly about its consequences and effects,
one could therefore try to receive primary sources from the organizations themselves. Consequences in this context include how the HR-work is affected by an HR-transformation. Specially, the knowledge is limited in the area of how the transformed HR-department affects the cooperation regarding HR-practices, the involved employees, and the line managers. However, the Ulrich triangle model has in theory proven to give some guidance when organizations worldwide have implemented HR-transformations (Thilander 2013).

1.3. Research Questions

The problem discussion creates an interest to study the HR-transformation of the Swedish Social Insurance Agency – Försäkringskassan, which started in the year 2008 with a purpose to increase the knowledge about what consequences an HR-transformation could implicate in the HR-work.

In order to find an answer to the problem some more questions must be investigated:

- What are the main and overall objectives of the HR-transformation at Försäkringskassan?
- What happened with the HR-employees, line managers and HR-practices?
- What major changes in the HR-construction were necessary after the implemented HR-transformation at Försäkringskassan?

1.4. Purpose

This thesis has a descriptive purpose and it will investigate what consequences and changes follow the implementation of HR-transformation. By “consequences and changes” we mean to investigate what happened with the role of different groups such as; HR-practices, HR-employee and line managers. The study may be of practical value for organizations that are planning to implement an HR-transformation, and to use the findings to prepare themselves. It is of interest to investigate this case organization to get a better understanding of how HR-practices could look after a transformation. It is also of interest to follow up what happens after an HR-transformation when using the Ulrich triangle model to structure the HR department, as well as looking into how this will express itself in a state-owned organization.
1.5. Limitations

This study is limited to an organization which has already performed an HR-transformation, the Swedish authority *Försäkringskassan*, and the aim is to be able to delve deeper into the understanding of the complexity of the human resource transformation perspective.

First, the interviewed employees of *Försäkringskassan* are from offices in Gothenburg and the results may not represent the rest of the organization from other areas in Sweden.

Second, the primarily focus is not to study the method that *Försäkringskassan* used to reconstruction, but the main focus of this research is rather on understanding the consequences and changes in the HR-department of *Försäkringskassan* after an implemented HR-transformation.

Third, since HR-transformation is an increasingly common trend (Bersin 2013), it is important to know the concept of it, which could be done by looking at the main author of the concept, Dave Ulrich (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007). Ulrich has received much accreditation for his work as an author and scientist, and in 2012 he received the lifetime achievement award for being the “father of modern human resources” (HR Magazine, 2012). In total, Ulrich has written more than 200 articles and 25 books (Thilander 2013). Ulrich has argued that the role of the HR professional must be redefined to meet competitive challenges that organizations are facing and will face in the future (Taylor & Woodhams 2012). The theoretical part of this thesis is mainly based on the author Ulrich where models, practices and observations are concerned.

1.6. Disposition

The background of this study is presented in the first section of this chapter, and moves on to the problem discussion that leads to the research question of the thesis. This first part includes the quite new topic HR-transformation and there will be a discussion about why the transformation subject is interesting to investigate. Thereupon the purpose is clarified and the limitations of the thesis are defined. Chapter two presents the theoretical framework starting by giving a brief explanation of HR and its growing importance which leads to HR-transformation and the effects resulting from such restructuring of the HR-department. The third chapter describes the methods we have used while conducting the empirical findings that are elaborating the thesis. The method also includes a motivation of the case organization of the thesis and the research reliability and validity. The last part of chapter three consists of
methodology and source criticism. In chapter four, the empirical findings including the interviews and findings the investigations by Statskontoret are presented. After that, chapter five which presents an analysis of the interviews and found data during which a comparison is made on what has been written in the theoretical framework about the HR-transformation. The last section, chapter six, concludes the study and the research question is briefly commented on and answered. There are also complementary appendices describing the interview guides that were used when collecting data for the empirical findings of the thesis.
2. Theoretical Framework

Our study aims to investigate the different outcomes and consequences from an organization’s transformation of human resources (HR). It begins by giving a brief explanation of HR and its growing importance, which leads to the quite new topic human resource transformations (HR-transformation) and the effects resulting from such restructuration of the HR- department. The theory will present work and models that will be the central composition of this thesis where the triangle model of Ulrich and the four questions of Ulrich are central.


Human resources management (HRM) is concerned with all aspects of how people are employed and managed in organizations. HRM covers activities such as human capital management, strategic HRM, knowledge management, organization development, corporate social responsibility, talent management, recruitment, selection and resourcing, learning and development and employee relations. There are goals of HRM in an organization and examples of them are: to ensure that the organization has the talented, skilled and engaged people; create a positive and good relationship between employees and management; and support the organization in achieving its objectives by developing and implementing HR-strategies that are integrated with the business strategy. Most of the organizations have HR-specialists who are often working in tandem with line managers (Armstrong 2012).

A philosophy of HRM made by Storey (2001 cited in Armstrong, 2012, p.7) is as follows: “The beliefs of HRM included the assumptions that it is the human resource which gives competitive edge, that the aim should be to enhance employee commitment, that HR decisions are of strategic importance and that therefore HR policies should be integrated into the business strategy”.

The practice of HRM can be diverse and the goals of HRM vary depending on the state of the labor markets, competitive choices and characteristics of employee. As previously mentioned, HRM covers a vast array of activities and it is often seen from two different schools that are known as “hard” and “soft” HRM (Armstrong, 2012).

Storey (1989 cited in Armstrong, 2012, p.5) critiqued one aspect of these schools: “The hard school emphasizes the quantitative, calculative and business-strategic aspects of managing human resource in as “rational” a way as for any other economic factor. By contrast the soft version traces its roots to the Human-Relations school; it emphasizes
communication, motivation and leadership”. The schools are complementary rather than mutually exclusive and there is a mixture of both hard and soft approaches in the organizations which makes every organization unique.

2.1.1. The Emergence of HR

The HR perspective has its academic connections stemming from the US in the 1980’s but the area of HR was present back in the 1800’s where the employer began their involvement in issues concerning the employee. The former HR-work has since then developed more towards caring about the employee’s well-being (Armstrong 2012).

A significant development has been the so-called HR-movement which came from Chicago in 1924 and it has influenced HR because its perspective of valuing and care more about the employees motivation (Nilsson et al. 2011). It has been shown that HR has an important role in both private companies and public organizations. If the leaders fail in leading its human capital well enough to compete on the market, the organization will fail in the end. The management represents the organizations and the leaders must exploit their employees (Pinnington & Edwards 2000).

The HR-practices differ across the world and the way of handling HR in the US has been both criticized and widely accepted. The HRM is seen differently in the US and Europe. The underlying features of the European economy are different compared to the US and it is argued that these differences have led to different approaches of HRM. The differences in these features include more limited individualism and a greater role of the state in Europe. When discussing European and US approaches it is important to remember the generalization of both continents; for example, Europe includes a huge range of countries and cultures with shifting HR themselves. It could be argued that the US culture is more individualistic and the level of business freedom is higher which influences HRM. Another observation is the increased protection for the employees in Europe compared to those in the US (Brewster 2007).

2.1.2. HR and the Ongoing Trends

The organizations of today are facing many different new ways of working with their HR-practices due to many current trends and movements. The HR-arena has changed a lot in the past, however, the way of looking at HR-work is still changing. Movements affecting the HR thought process are globalization, flatter organizations, skills in the organization, specialization and HR-transformations. These are just some examples of influences that may
have even bigger impacts in the future (Bersin 2013). An increasingly common way to handle these new pressures is to outsource the HR-function to an external expertise unit, which leads to a more efficient organization (Merrit 2013).

The recent IT-developments have also been a contribution of some of the HR-tasks. These developments include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google, YouTube, and online blogs. These channels are used when recruiting new people, educating current employees and to spread information which nowadays can be done in a faster and cheaper way (Meister 2013).

According to Harrington, it is now tougher to keep up and maintain advantages, which puts pressure on the quality of organizations; “Good is no longer good enough. To survive in today’s competitive environment, you need to excel. To excel, an organization needs to focus on all parts of the organization, optimizing the use and effectiveness of all of its resources” (Harrington 2005 p.170)

The overall globalization has encouraged a new perspective in the HRM area called IHRM, which stands for International Human Resource Management and is about managing human resources and activities in a global context. The large firms from developed countries, for instance, the US, the UK, Germany, France and Japan, began their internationalization years ago but recent surveys show that the well-known firms from these countries are no longer alone competing on the markets. The reason is the enterprises from small, developing markets which are contributing increasingly to global trade. Managing human resources has become even more important in the successful conduct of global business since the number of companies which are expanding globally increase. There is a need to explore and analyze how HR practices and policies can best support the rapid advance of globalization. The facts that the economies of the world have become increasingly integrated and that internationalization is spreading faster than ever refers to interaction and integration of people, companies, countries and cultures, and it is driven by many forces. All forms of organizations have increased their global activities and all forms of management functions have been required to adapt to the global environment, including HRM (Briscoe, Schuler & Tarique 2012).

To sum up for the HRM-role it can be noted that adapting the HR to survive on the todays tough markets is on every organizations agenda. A well-known fact is that the employees are playing a key role for the corporation’s success. The employers have to be attractive and focus on the employee’s expertise and interpersonal skills (Lindmark & Önnevik 2011). Business leaders have to be innovative to keep up with a number of external changes (Ulrich et al. 2009). It is also about being effective overall in the organization to be able to deliver
quality products and services to the market. To succeed and continue succeeding in the market, the employers must integrate the HR-functions into the business and its organization. The HR-functions therefore need to be consistent with the objectives, structures and strategies to achieve efficiency (Lindmark & Önnevik 2011).

The HR-specialists in an HR department has the ability to transform the HR-practices and by doing so, the whole organization can change with less resistance (Ulrich et al. 2009). In addition to transformations, creating structures and keeping an internal balance, the organization also needs to adapt to external factors in the environment such as changes and demands on the organization (Lindmark & Önnevik 2011).

2.2. From Administration to Strategy

The role of HR has a history of being tactical and administrative rather than only strategic (Makuerjee 2009). The HR-specialists in the past had to double their work to achieve a seat around the table in the management of the organization (Ulrich et al. 2009).

The phase of implementation strategies in organizations has in recent years become as important as the strategy itself. HR-activities such as rewards, staffing, communication and training are central to an effective strategy implementation. Therefore the role of HR’s participation is nowadays sought much earlier in the strategy process. The HR-specialists have not only been invited to the table; the management now expects much more. The ultimate job of the HR-specialist is to link the human sides of the business with the business strategies in addition to frame and implement individual abilities. To ensure the execution of the strategy, it is important to align the HR-practices; each investment in HR should reflect the strategy. The fact that organizations invest more on strategies sometimes results in an HR-transformation. The result of redesigning the HR-practices is that the organizations need to spend and invest less resource on HR-routine work and more resources on strategies. One way of establishing a more focused strategic function in the HR-work is to use a shared service center or an outsourcing approach (Makuerjee 2009).

An organization has many stakeholders and it is important for organizations to know who the stakeholders are because when implementing an HR-transformation, the stakeholders’ needs must be satisfied. One purpose of the HR-transformation is to ensure that the stakeholders receive value from the organization. HR-transformations should be designed and implemented to the business strategies and the context in which the organization operates (Ulrich et al. 2009).
2.3. Human Resource Transformation

The human resource transformation could be seen as an additional necessity in the perspective of HRM to be able to tackle the complexity from outer changes (Ulrich et al. 2009).

These outer changes are affecting organizations always and by transforming the HR-department a stronger connection could be created to its stakeholders. An HR-transformation strives to totally restructure an organization’s HR-department and an HR-transformation could occur when an organization is restructuring itself or when the HR-practices need to better reflect internal or external conditions. The difference between an HR-transformation and an HR-change is that the former is a fundamental reconstruction of the HR while the latter is changing something already existing (Ulrich et al. 2009).

The purpose of the HR-transformation is to make the human resource management more efficient by changing the structure of the HR-departments by focusing less on administration and more on strategies and this trend started 1995 (The Economist 2009).

A definition of HR-transformation is as follows; “an integrated, aligned, innovative and business-focused approach to redefining how HR work is done within an organization so that it helps the organization to deliver on promises made to customers, investors and other stakeholders” (Ulrich et al. 2009).

The transformative leadership is, someone who, according to the famous scientist James MacGregor Burns; “looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower” (Ciulla 2004).

2.3.1. The Process of the HR-Transformation - the Four Questions

HR-transformation aims to restructure the HR to be able to focus on developing strategies. In the process of the HR-transformation it is also essential to have an unified rationale and according to Ulrich the organization should have four well-planned steps (Ulrich et al. 2009) before starting up the process:

- Why? What are the reasons why an organization would want to do this transformation? When people understand why something is changing they are more likely to accept the question of what. The organization should have reasons concerning the environment around them because it is the outer changes that affect the organization with new pressures. This factor should be aiming for better understanding and coherence of the organization and to get the organization more close to social, economical, international and political changes. One other reason to make an HR-transformation concerns pleasing the stakeholders of the organization (Ulrich et al. 2009).
- What? The second step to clear up is to understand what will happen after an HR-transformation, about the outcomes, and how that will affect the organization and its surroundings. What are the advantages and the disadvantages for this change? What should be recognized here means what the HR-transformation will do for the organization’s competitive advantage. This step aims for bringing forward the organization’s specific talent, what is the organization good at? This talent could alter the transformation to create an even stronger competitive advantage (Ulrich et al. 2009).

- How? How will the HR-transformation be done? This is a step many organizations put most of their energy on and it is about knowing the needs and planning the transformation. What to think about the actual HR-change, and what is it that should be changed to the better? What are the outcomes of an HR-transformation for the organization? Examples of changes could be divided into three sections in an organization which would be first concerning the HR-department which should be concentrated on structuration, goals and strategies. The second step highlights the way of doing work in the organization, which should be well defined and known in the organization but also innovative. The third area is about the people in the organization. It is important to make sure the employees and employers have the right knowledge, skills and competencies for the organization’s position in the future (Ulrich et al. 2009).

- Who? What people are responsible for what things before, under and after the transformation? The line managers are central in this area due to their position in organizations and therefore they are responsible for organizational changes. The HR-specialists know better in detail what should be done and how to organize these changes. Other people such as employees, advisers or consultants should be organized, integrated and informed (Ulrich et al. 2009).

2.4. The Ulrich Model

The above-described rationale of HR-transformation consists of four steps on which the organization should be very clear about. Ulrich has developed a model named after him and when restructuring the HR-department an organization could use this model (Ulrich et al. 2009). There have been debates and discussions regarding how the HR should be structured to deliver its services over recent years and there are a variety of ways in which the HR could be organized (Taylor & Woodhams 2012). Thus by answering the four questions why, what, how, and who could help the organization figure out how to redesign the HR-department. The transforming of an HR-department requires building an HR organization that reflects both
business organization and the HR strategy (Ulrich et al. 2009). The Ulrich model has been popular among organizations that are going through HR-transformations (Economist 2009). When transforming an HR-department it is established that an organization will have a release of burden regarding administrative tasks so that the people in an organization are given better possibilities to focus on well-defined HR-strategies. The model according to Ulrich describe how the newly transformed HR-department could be designed, and the model’s three corners contain of a center of expertise, business partners and shared services which is illustrated below (Ulrich et al. 2009).

![Ulrich triangle model](image)

Figure 1: Ulrich triangle model (Ulrich et al. 2009).

The three corners of the model will each be presented; first, the business partners unit will be described followed by an explanation of center of expertise. After these two units comes the shared services which is a centralized and partly administrative HR-work center (Gifford 2007). The shared services will be described to more of an extent then the first two. There is two ways to go when creating shared service center: either the work stays inside the organization or it will be outsourced (Ulrich et al. 2009). There is a clear tendency for large organizations using economics of scale, centralization and the technology to put some parts of the HR (often called transactions) outside the organization (outsourcing) or inside the organization (shared service center) (Granberg 2011).

2.4.1. Business Partners
The business partners include the people in the organization that are working with HR and they have responsibilities for developing strategies. This unit works directly together with the line managers and each organizational unit. The business partners have numerous tasks,
which could be to clarify strategy, deliver supportive HR-strategies or lead their HR-function (Ulrich et al. 2009). The business partners are often embedded in the business unit where they work in and in this way they have the possibility to steer strategy and strategy implementation. When HR professionals are embedded in the business units they are able to more easily select and implement HR-practices and they support and drive change in people management practices. In this way, the business partners also get the opportunity to utilize the “unique” knowledge and skills of the employees (Taylor & Woodhams 2012). Therefore the business partner`s area of responsibilities include to support business strategy assessments, represent the employee interests and select and implement the HR-practices that are for the delivery of the business strategy (Ulrich et al. 2009). Business partner`s role in organizations varies widely and depends on the size of the organization, organization`s culture and the business priorities (Taylor & Woodhams 2012).

2.4.2. Center of Expertise

The center of expertise works with tasks likes rewarding, employee relations, recruiting, development and training. There could be consulting firms doing this HR work and depending on the size of the organization these consulting firms could have multiple businesses that use their services. This HR-unit creates menus of what could be done to deliver high-quality human resources. The business partners are expected to choose from this menus and the collaboration is close between these units (Ulrich et al. 2009). The HR-employee working at the center of expertise is, as already mentioned, a team with specialized knowledge and a role of their unit is to deliver competitive business advantage through HR innovations in the area of learning, engagement, talent management and reward. This unit is accessed on a national, regional or organizational level and they deliver their services to the business partners at the unit or directly to the line managers (Taylor & Woodhams 2012).

The center of expertise unit will be updated on the latest researches and the experiences within the organization (Ulrich et al. 2009).

2.4.2.1. Shared Service Centers- an Internal Option

The shared service centre (SSC) is the third function of the triangle model of Ulrich (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007) and is a way of keeping the HR-practices internal and it consists of a transaction part and a transformation part. The transaction part includes salary administration, training and recruitment. The transformation service can have a unit of expertise that does strategy implementation, divides the HR responsibilities (among the line managers, HR-
specialists, managers and employees) and other activities that are close to the organization (Granberg 2011). According to investigations done by Cranfield University, 60 % of the Swedish companies (with more than 200 employees) had implemented shared service centers (Thilander 2013).

The SSC could make the organization more flexible which was needed in the 1990´s groups. It was no longer enough to standardize and centralize the work to get more effective and cheap HR-processes. The pressure came from outside the organization and a change to meet the tougher competition was needed and that is where the SSC contributed with a more flexible structure (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007).

Currently, the role of the SSC is aiming more towards creating value for stakeholders through developing and improving business strategies (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007). The purpose of the SSC in the HR-work is to handle the administrative tasks but it has also been seen as a way to unburden the transforming process of the HR-department (Maatman, Bondarouc & Looise 2010). The role of an SSC in an organization that is transforming its HR-function is to clarify who has what responsibilities and take care of the delegations in the organization (Maatman, Bondarouc & Looise 2010). The trend with the HR-department is to decrease the work that is connected to administrative tasks from 70- 80% down to 15- 20% without risking a degradation of quality and this could be done with an SSC (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007).

When the help cannot be found in an SSC, the employees and the line managers have a backup: a call center, which has a purpose of helping out answering questions and solve problems (Maatman, Bondarouc & Looise 2010). An SSC could be a good option for organizations with approximately 8000 or more employees (Granberg 2011).

2.4.2.2. Outsourcing: an External Option

The outsourcing option is also included in the triangle model of Ulrich (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007), but is an alternative to internal shared service centers and a means an outsourcing of the SSC, which is an external option when transforming the HR. In this method the organizations make contracts with specialists of the business process who will take care of the HR-administration. This external corporation often has better possibilities to be well-informed, see alternative perspectives, have an updated knowledge and use economies of scale. At the same time, the corporation that outsources has a better chance to focus on the core competencies of the business (Granberg 2011).
Due to this relatively new external option organizations now take advantage of, the outcomes or consequences of it is hard to draw conclusions from. Some of the outcomes for organizations that use this option of outsourcing when doing an HR-transformation could be recognized and those are: cost efficiency due to increased productivity and cost reduction, overall efficiency in the organization due to the updated technology the external unit possess, better quality in the service for the employees and more space for the HR specialists to develop HR-strategies (Ulrich et al, 2009).

Outsourcing means shifting and changing existing employees. The differences in the organization after an outsourced SSC could for instance be the change of qualification requirements of the employees who might have to learn new procedures. The need for routine work decreases and the need for strategically work increases which could for an organization mean a more strategic function in the HR-work by using e.g. a shared service center (Granberg 2011). Corporations began sub-contracting in the 1990’s along with the development of computers and Internet and it became easier to have long-distance control. Some of the business processes that were outsourced to external corporations (inside or outside the home country) were information technology and business processes (including call centers, accounting, claims processing, and customer service and data analysis). From outsourcing, the corporation has gained more time to focus on the core competencies, to make cost reductions and has also a possibility to improve quality for the employees (Briscoe, Schuler & Tarique 2012).

International outsourcing leads to continual training, ongoing business training, negotiations and overseas relationships. These rising activities connect with HR when managing, planning and executing these activities occur (Briscoe, Schuler & Tarique 2012).

Outsourcing success depends on three factors: ample communication to affected employees; the client’s ability to manage and ensuring delivery of quality service and support; and executive-level support in the client organization for the outsourcing mission. Both parts of the contract need a combination of skills in such areas as negotiation, communication, project management and human resource management. The last one includes employee assignment and management, compensation, benefits, training and employee relations. It is also important to have the ability to develop and understand the conditions and terms of the contracts and agreements (Briscoe, Schuler & Tarique 2012).
In many cases the MNC`s reach higher efficiency by outsourcing, however, for SMEs it could result in both advantages and disadvantages and for organizations in the public sector there can be political reasons which stop the organization from outsourcing (Granberg 2011).

2.5. Line Managers, HR-Employees and HR-Specialists

The line managers are important in the transformation of the HR and it is therefore crucial for the organization that good cooperation occurs between the line managers and the HR-specialists who are working in the SSC or in the center of expertise (Ulrich et al. 2009). The HR-specialists have important roles during an HR-transformation and that include to make sure the HR-practices are aligned with the goals of the business (Ulrich et al. 2009).

The role of the line manager when it comes to HR is to handle the people management (recruiting, selections, advising) etc. (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007).

What happens with the line manager’s role in the organization when an HR-transformation is made is that the line managers possess a greater responsibility regarding the HR-work. The line managers might receive a raise in their salary after an HR-transformation and the line manager’s opinions about the change in specific could therefore be false. A dilemma between the line managers and the HR-employee in general is about their responsibilities of the HR-department, which in the end always belong to the line managers and should not be delegated to the HR-employees (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007).

When one is looking more deeply into the work of the line managers, one would see that their tasks should also be to maintain a good communication with the HR-specialists and other leaders and to handle conflicts. The understanding of HR-transformation for a line manager can lead to simplifications of reaching their goals and it can also contribute to value for the business. Staff working in the HR also contributes with value to the business by working in an HR-transformed organization (Ulrich et al. 2009).

2.6. Effects of an HR-transformation

If an organization is competing in a tough competitive market it is very important to be efficient and flexible. One way efficiency can be measured is by looking at the balance sheet and the income statement (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007). The quantitative outcomes can be explained by looking at the net number of people that left and were hired as a result of the HR-transformation (Ulrich et al. 2009).

According to investigations of British organizations, around 30% of the organizations fired employees with administrative tasks as an effect of the HR-transformation. The people hired
as an effect of HRT in 45% of the organizations were line managers or HR-specialists (Gifford 2007).

To learn about the effects of an HR-transformation it is crucial to first know about the procedure and its changes; what park of HR should create value? This could be the new SSC, outsourcing, or giving the line managers and the employees more responsibility. It is also important to realize for whom the HR-transformation creates value and who the major groups are (the internal and external stakeholders). After this is defined and later on accomplished by doing an HR-transformation one could try to measure these values (Ulrich, et al. 2009).
3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

There are two common ways of gathering information when doing research. The “hard” data is quantitative and is expressed in figures, and the “soft” data is qualitative and gives a more detailed picture and focuses on peoples behaving in natural settings. The hard data gives the possibility to reach many people at the same time without spending too much time and energy. Using surveys do not often give the opportunity to get detailed information which, in reality, could be factual information about how people think, behave or work. The quantitative information answers the question “how many” but the qualitative information is better if researchers want to understand the question of “why” (Svenning 2000). In this thesis we have chosen the qualitative approach to collect our information because we wanted to have the possibility to discuss this new phenomenon through interviews. Through interviews we also got the possibility to further understandings and dialogues with the interviewees, which was of great importance because we wanted to understand the details and the causes of this significant redesigning of the HR-department at the case organization.

Furthermore we found it interesting to use a case study which is an observational method that provides a description of an individual. This individual does not necessarily need to be a person; it could also be a school, corporation, etc. Depending on the purpose of the investigation, the case study may present the individual’s symptoms, characteristic behaviors, history or reaction to situations (Cozby & Scott).

The chosen approach for collection of data for this thesis, as mentioned previously, is through interviews. The interviews are linked to the developed questionnaire studies. The choice of method for the questionnaire studies was based on the issue and purpose of the study, and the primary studies in the empirical section was collected by interviews and e-mail contact with respondents at the case organization. The interviews were semi-structured which means that we followed interview guides consisting of selected topics and space for our respondents to answer the questions in their own way. The reason for choosing this interview approach was because we wanted to receive the information clearly regarding the consequences of the HR-transformation; simply, how the HR is functioning today at the case organization. By holding these interviews it was possible to create an overall picture of the organization, about the organizational change and its actual influences on the HR-work.
The HR-transformation started at the case organization in the year of 2008 which makes interviews to an appropriate approach. Surveys have not been used in this thesis because the transformation started at the case organization for some years ago which makes it hard to receive the specific information about the transformation that many years after. Many employees have left the organization since the transformation and we only wanted to reach people that have been working at the case organization before, during and after the transformation and therefore the relevance of doing surveys have decreased. Thus surveys were therefore excluded in our procedure. A further testing on the possibility of using surveys made it clear that the remaining employees that went through the transformation also turned out to have limited information about the process of change. This is why it has been of most interest in this thesis to gather the primary data from interviews with a selection of the “right people” at the case organization. The empirical section also consists of secondary studies taken from investigations by Statskontoret.

3.1.1. Case Organization

The main criterion that a state authority, municipality, or a private company must have done to be considered interesting to examine/study is the implementation of an HR-transformation. It should have been interesting to choose an organization that plans a transformation of the HR in the future or an organization that today is implementing this significant change. As we found it most interesting to study the consequences of an HR-transformation, the choice was to pick an organization that had made the reconstruction of their HR a couple of years ago. Since the HR-transformation is a relatively new topic and organizations in Sweden began doing transformations around 2003, there is limited research done regarding the consequences several years after the transformation. These facts make it even more interesting to actually study the consequences. When investigating the consequences of an HR-transformation it is then also possible to learn about the behavior from employees, line managers, the overall HR-structure and HR-practices.

In additional to the first criterion, the second criterion for the chosen case organization is that the organization should have started the HR-transformation at least five years before the year 2013. This is because we are investigating the organization’s HR in the year of 2013 and we are aware that organizations often reconstruct and change their already-transformed HR a couple of times after, to adapt to opportunities and to follow the eventual changed conditions.

Our choice of case organization is therefore the state authority Försäkringskassan. It could have also been beneficial to study a big private company but it is very difficult to get the
interviews we needed. The importance for us regarding collection of primary information was significant because our aim of creating new research in the area. However, the differences might not be too significant between private-owned and state-owned organizations when it comes to HR-transformations because the approach of using the triangle model of Ulrich requires a significant investment regardless of the characteristics of the organization.

The third criterion that we needed to be aware of was that the organization could not be too small because then it is not profitable to create a service center. Further on, the larger companies are often not likely to share information related to strategies. It might be more severe for a state authority and municipality to implement organizational transformations and the included HR-transformations due to the eventual pressure from governmental forces driven by politics. For students such as us, the politics is a factor that makes the investigating highly interesting, but the subject is not an area of focus. The reason for choosing Försäkringskassan was, additionally to these criterions, because we had the opportunity to directly contact an employee of the HR-department, therefore we received the name of this employee from an external source researching in the area of transformations. From the HR-employee we then got the name of two line managers who have been working in the organization since before the transformation started. All these three respondents were very sympathetic to cooperate with us. It was important for us that the respondents worked directly with HR-questions, has been working at Försäkringskassan during the time when the transformation of the HR started and is still is working there today.

3.1.2 Collection of Data
In an empirical study, the aim is to find material that highlights the problem of the paper which can be done in two ways: the first possibility is to collect the material for a particular study, which is called primary material; in addition to the interview we also used the secondary way of collecting material, which is already collected by other people and is often publicly-available material (Svenning 2000).

The main data collection in this thesis is through interviews, and different interview guides were created that consist of the most interesting aspects of the theory. We wanted to have personal and direct contact with employees working at our case organization to have the possibility to get detailed inside information. The interview guides helped us to be well prepared for contact with our respondents and the questions from the interview guides were sent before the meeting to the main interviewee. This thesis has three interviews, where the main respondent and also interview is with an employee working in the HR-unit, the two
other are complementary interviews with line managers. Thus one of the interview guides was created for a personal meeting with the employee at the HR-unit and the information from this personal meeting is then complemented with further questions and answers sent and received through e-mail. The answers of the questions and the discussion topics were collected on a computer during the personal meeting. The main respondent is in this thesis named Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1). The two other interview guides are created for the line managers; one interview by telephone and the other by e-mail. One of the line managers is in this thesis is Stig Högfeldt (Appendix 2) and the other has chosen to remain anonymous (Appendix 3). The reason why we have chosen to not have a personal meeting with the line managers is because the focus in this thesis is the opinions of HR-employee. There were just a few aspects and opinions that we wanted from the line managers regarding the new way of working with HR and how it affects their work and it was enough doing it by using telephone and e-mail. More specific information about exact positions of the respondents in the organization is presented in the appendices together with the interview guides. In chapter five we present and divide the empirical findings of the information collected by the HR-employee and the line managers. The first part will include the data collection from the HR-employee and the second part is a complement which includes the data collection from the line managers. Furthermore, the interview guides of the line managers are not designed in the same way, but rather complementary to each other. Questions for these respondents on how the transformation has been experienced were main topics of the interview guides. Some of the questions were difficult to receive an answer from, thus the respondents were also interested of the consequences of the HR-transformation which itself caused an open dialogue and discussion.

3.2. Research Reliability and Validity

To decide if a thesis is reliable depends on if the collected data is correct. If the same answer has been gathered for one question by many interviewers it is more likely that the data is reliable. The validity of a thesis has to do with if the collected data whether the data that was suppose to be investigated is the related material for the work gathered or not (Thurén 2006).

Regarding the empirical chapter, a part of the collection of data has come from secondary data due to limited possibilities for the case organization to provide us the desired information. It was instead possible to find the requested data from secondary sources. The empirical findings also have primary data collections from three respondents.

In this study there is one respondent from the specific HR-department of Försäkringskassan and two line managers. All three respondents have been working at the
case organization during the HR-transformation and therefore went through all the changes that affected the HR. The experiences from today are valid and up-to-date for our research purposes and also the respondent from the HR-department is not anonymous in this thesis. The importance for us was to collect data with a mix of subjective and objective information to receive complementary information apart from the secondary data. One purpose with the interviews was to have the possibility to collect subjective data. It was important for this thesis since it has been established that employees are affected by an HR-transformation. From the interviews we also got the possibility to gathered objective data. The fact that we only used one respondent from the HR-department could make that specific information hard to generalize about. The respondent used information from her colleagues and the experiences of her own. The two other respondents had similar job positions; one of them is anonymous and the other is not anonymous in this thesis. All three respondents were from the area of Gothenburg and do not speak for the situations in the HR all over the case organization. The reason why we have three interviews in this thesis is because we wanted to spend more time preparing and analyzing each interview. We are aware about that it can be argued that the more interviews the more scientific the paper becomes (Kvale 2007).

3.3. Methodological and Source Criticism

By excluding the investigation method of surveys we reached less involved people at the case organization. The result of surveys could have contributed with less detailed and more standardized data to the thesis empirical section. Since people might have different attitudes and opinions on situations and the result from the one interview from the HR-unit and the two interviews on line managers might be hard to make a generalization regarding how the case organization works in other areas.

A lot of our theoretical work is based from the scientist Dave Ulrich’s contributions regarding the HR-transformation which could lead to narrow view of the subject. The reason why Dave Ulrich has been mainly chosen in this thesis is because he is the main developer and author of the HR-transformation (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007). In fact, it has been hard to find any other well-established readings which are due to the relatively new thinking when it comes to the HR-transformations. Ulrich has also worked together with Wayne Brockbank to do even more research on the subject.
4. Empirical Findings

The empirical findings will be presented in this chapter and the findings will involve; the current organization of Försäkringskassan, earlier information of the organization concerning the HR-transformation and the HR-changes and other consequences after the implemented HR-transformation. Both the results of the secondary and primary data have been used for this chapter. The primary data is divided into two parts: the first part has the main focus and includes the data collection from the HR-employee and the second part includes the complementary data collection from the line managers. It should be noted that an organizational change and an organizational transformation are two different things where the transformation has to do with a total reconstruction of an organization and in for example an HR-department. An HR-transformation could then be looked at as a fundamental change of the HR-practices and HR-work while an HR-change has to do with adding new ideas, exchanging practices from an old way to a new way, connecting departments with each other, etc. The aim is to understand how the implemented HR-transformation (in connection to the organizational reconstruction in 2008) affects the HR-department of Försäkringskassan. The empirical information that has been investigated and selected is about the consequences for the chosen HR-practices, the different HR-departments and its employees and line managers.

4.1. Försäkringskassan

Försäkringskassan is a Swedish state authority with approximately 13 400 employees working in the organization. This organization is responsible for most of the public social security systems which include around 40 different social insurances, and all of which are important for the Swedish safety system. The authority has the assignment to investigate, determine and pay contributions and compensations in the social insurance. There are today about 60 local insurance centers and 20 national insurance centers distributed nationwide and the main office is located in Stockholm (Försäkringskassan 2013a). The organization went through an HR-transformation in 2008 (Statskontoret 2009). The organization started in 1955 when the need for more social safety nets among people was demanded (Försäkringskassan 2013b). Nowadays, the social security that Försäkringskassan offers, concerns all people that live and work in Sweden (Försäkringskassan 2013c).

Försäkringskassan receives official missions from the Swedish government and the missions aim to investigate different areas, such as health care issues or different forecasts.
The parliament and the government have some control over the organization of Försäkringskassan due to their relationship with each other. Therefore, the organization of Försäkringskassan went through an organizational transformation which began in 2006. During the period of 2005-2008, the government of Sweden gave Statskontoret a mission to investigate the process of change, the transformation and its preparations and goals (Statskontoret 2009).

It is of interest to understand how the organization looked like before the transformation but even more interesting to understand what happened after. When an organization is doing an organizational transformation the HR-department could also be in a need for a transformation and that is mainly what is of interest in this chapter.

According to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1), who is working at the supportive unit at Försäkringskassan before the organizational reconstruction, every county office nationwide had their own characteristics in their own organization, which made the work individualistic. That was a result of the limited collaboration between these county offices. County office was the name of Försäkringskassan before the reconstruction of the organization, and the offices were placed nationwide representing each county in Sweden. Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) says that an aim of the reconstruction of the organization was to create a more merged way of working in all the Swedish counties. Försäkringskassan became a state authority in the year of 2005 which also was a reason for doing the organizational reconstruction. It should not be any differences in the investigation for the customers, thus everyone should be treated equally against the social security law independent of where in Sweden the contact Försäkringskassan is performed (Appendix 1).

4.1.1. The new Försäkringskassa - NFC, LFC and CC

The organization as a whole at Försäkringskassan changed its structure to be more customer-oriented, specialized and flexible. That was done by creating national insurance centers (NFCs), which are handling cases that requires limited customer contact. A local insurance center (LFCs) exists for cases that need extensive customer contact and cases that are more complicated. LFCs are divided in the areas of northern, southern, eastern and western Sweden. In some of these LCSs Försäkringskassan is currently also collaborating with Skatteverket and Arbetsförmedlingen, which the image below illustrates.
The third option for the customers to contact the authority is through the customer service centers (CCs) and self-service, both of which play a central role in the new organization of Försäkringskassan. The CCs are telephone centers for customers and they are taking care of a number of different issues. The whole idea with Försäkringskassans reconstruction is to make the service more independent by making the customers’ primary point of contact through CCs and self-service, instead of visiting an office or having contact with a local officer (Statskontoret 2009).

The new Försäkringskassan is built on a specialization where the customer cases get divided to NFCs, LFCs or CCs depending on its characteristics. This construction could in the long run result in an increased efficient organization if it has the ability to exploit the advantages. According to investigations by Statskontoret, the flexibility of the new organization is lower than before because the new organization’s construction makes it more difficult to exchange knowledge inside the differ parts of the organization. A significant challenge is hence, the communication- and the knowledge exchange between the NFCs and LFCs, but also that Försäkringskassan has the ability to solve the problem regarding the time variations in the customer cases (Statskontoret 2009).

4.2. HR at Försäkringskassan

4.2.1. HR before the Transformation

Försäkringskassan had a hint of hieratical structure in the HR department before the transformation, according to Birgitta Carlsson, (Appendix 1) who also expressed that “the HR-structure before therefore gave an impression of being strict and it was mainly individualistic work-processes”. To maintain these qualities, the HR-employees had a method called “pinnjakt” meaning that everybody had to reach offshoots of goals in time and this
meant a clear focus on results. The HR-structure in theoretical terms before the transformation contained HR-counter offices at all county offices which then were connected to the counties in Sweden. Each county office had its own director, its own HR-administration and its own HR-structure. These counties connected HR-offices meant a closed way of working with the HR. That is because every county only knew what work they were doing themselves and in some places the HR-practices were working out well, but in other counties it wasn’t. The atmosphere among the HR-employees was to have a results-focused mind with an individual approach in their HR-work and this in combination with the counties’ different HR-structures the HR-departments was left inflexible and disconnected (Appendix 1).

The goals, policies and strategies for the new HR-work were prepared before the HR-transformation process started. One overall HR-change is that the individual employee became an area of focus for the new HR-practices. This meant a larger ability to develop employees through coaching and personal plans of education which at Försäkringskassan also included the physical health of the employee. The HR-department at Försäkringskassan went through an HR-transformation and got centralized with common policies and an HR aiming towards developing competencies (Statskontoret 2009). A new atmosphere, according to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) was created and now it was a mix of a team-work type of approach instead of only individualistic work according to our respondent.

4.2.2. HR After the Transformation
After the HR-transformation, Försäkringskassan started to use a model of their own called the “HR-stab” and on this specialized unit, HR questions was gathered. The aim of this new model was to create a more central organization and strive towards a unified and coherent working system with HR (Statskontoret 2009). According to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1), the model contained three parts including strategic HR, direct HR and organizational HR. The purpose of the HR-stab was to control and follow up on HR-work but also to support the managers in HR. The different parts of the HR-stab were responsible for different tasks (Statskontoret 2009).

4.2.3. HR-Stab
The strategic HR deals with evaluating and managing the HR-practices. HR-direct deals with the planning of HR-activities, executing missions from strategic HR, answering questions from managers and employees for them by providing a help desk. The organizational HR deals with people specialized to support the line managers that are working with HR and the
HR-managers. There is a constant ongoing development regarding the professional roles. The aim is to adapt to the decisions of the social security law and the organization’s requirements (Statskontoret 2009). The HR-stab model that was implemented while doing the HR-transformation at Försäkringskassan is illustrated below.

![The HR-work at Försäkringskassan](image)

Figure 3: The HR-stab at Försäkringskassan (Statskontoret 2009).

The model created a more general procedure and centralized the HR-work which was the aim of the whole organizational reconstruction and not only for the transformation of the HR-department (Statskontoret 2009). The lean theory was, according to Birgitta Carlsson, (Appendix 1) also implemented to HR and Försäkringskassan began to work more intensively with a “lean mindset”.

Furthermore this HR-stab model is not representing the way Försäkringskassan works with their HR today due to the difficulties of integrating these three parts of the HR-stab model in the HR-practices. According to investigations by Statskontoret, the organizational HR seemed to have difficulties regarding finding its right position, tasks and role in the HR (Statskontoret 2009).
4.3. Consequences of the HR-transformation

The newly transformed HR at Försäkringskassan did not seem to work, which according to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) had to do with the lack of clear leadership, anonymity in HR and a poorly implemented HR-model. These factors made the collaboration between everybody that was working in HR unclear according to her.

The company KPMG was hired to investigate further on what was wrong with the way Försäkringskassan was working with their newly-implemented HR. According to KPMGs finding’s (Statskontoret 2009) and interviews with, HR it could be established that the roles and responsibilities of HR were unclear and the expectations from employees in relation to the organization and themselves were blurry. The representatives from the union concluded from their investigation of the new HR-work at Försäkringskassan that the HR-tasks unfortunately did not seem to reach the rest of the business. These finding also pointed out that the existing HR-policies were too “loose” and this contributed to the gap between the HR department, the organization and the line managers. An advantage of the HR-transformation according to further investigations by Statskontoret was the quality of the HR-work which had changed to the better (Statskontoret 2009).

According to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) the new way of working in teams contradicted the anonymous approach the HR-employees had to sustain. At the same time the HR-employees worked more as a team unit, they were also told to always stay anonymous towards the customers. This made it impossible to create a relation-driven contact with the customers and also meant that the HR-employees had to do the same work twice. One of the most important reasons to this anonymous approach was a correct answer from HR-direct which had to be the same, independent of with whom the contact is performed, and this has also has to be done with the newly-merged team. There was also a fear to be recognized inside the organization due to the many decisions related to the social insurance and Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) pointed out that it was possible that the HR-employees sometimes believe that they are more recognized inside the organization then they really are. Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) points out that this anonymous way of working was possibly connected to the doubtful and wobbly management. The leadership and representation of the management was unclear during as well as after the transformation was implemented.
4.4. Adaption of the New HR

The transformation of the HR-department did not work internally in all aspects and according to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) the HR was redesigned a few years after the actual HR transformation was made. Some of the adoptions occurred naturally and some were implemented. Regarding the individual communication tools, the organization changed from intranet and emailing to focus more on discussion, dialogues and workshops. There are policy documents developed by the strategic HR which describe how the communicating should be performed. Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) also express that there are both positive and negative tendencies regarding behavior related to communication. The positive is that Försäkringskassan has now started using labor services with the aim to ensure that the employees follow the policy documents. The organization added the social media tool Facebook as a communicating tool, which could be negative in the aspect that the line between of being a professional and being an individual is very narrow (Appendix 1).

4.4.1. The Anonymity

The anonymity that the HR department was using was phased out and approximately at the same time, two years after the transformation, the HR-direct changed its name to supportive HR. The leadership works much better today than during the implementation of the new organizational construction which is positive, however it took an unnecessarily long time to create a good type of management. The managers are now taking care of the competencies of the employees in a better way instead of only exerting control and they are also more open for discussions in different contexts (Appendix 1).

4.4.2. The Implementation Model

One of the major adoptions that were following the reconstruction of the organization and effects the HR department is the implementation of an implementation model. The model consists of six steps which describe the different parts of the implementation from the start of the assignment until its finished including monitoring. The goal is to improve the implementation procedure of structure changes regarding HR and contribute to the line managers reaching the HR strategies. One aim associated with this model was also to clarify how the HR strategies should be implemented, find a specific approach and to clarify responsibilities. A prerequisite success related to this model is that all the employees working in the HR-stab have a deep knowledge and understanding of it (Försäkringskassan 2009).
4.4.3. Lean

A “lean mindset” at Försäkringskassan according to Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) means regular meetings, having a responsible officer for each case, and that all cases are followed up. The entire individual customer cases have also a due date when it should be finished which puts pressure on the process. The management of the organization believes in this way of working and there are coaches in the area who visit different Försäkringskassor nation-wide with the aim to implement this mindset and to train the employees in being more lean-oriented. The organization strives for increasing the responsibility of the employees and makes the employees retain Försäkringskassan as an employer. It is also important to make the employees work in an effective way and at the same time ensure quality of the work that they perform (Appendix 1).

4.5. Line Managers

It is also of interest to reach the line manager’s point of view about the HR-transformation and what changes this meant for their support from the HR-department. In this part of the empirical findings the perspective of the line manager’s opinions about the outcomes of the HR-transformation and also how they use the different parts of the HR-stab will be presented.

The HR-department has, since the transformation, become more flexible and includes three departments with HR-employees. Both of the interviewed line manager respondents agreed that the help they could receive from the HR-stab was allocated in different channels (contrary to the previous procedure). Nowadays, if line managers need help with an HR-question, the line managers themselves have to find the right channel they could receive this help either from the organizational HR-unit, strategic HR or supportive HR. The anonymous respondent (Appendix 3) expresses that it was hard to find the right channel and help regarding HR questions directly after the transformation but that “you get used to it and adapt to the new way of working after the transformation”. The anonymous respondent (Appendix 3) is also saying that still it is not obvious from which part of the HR-stab the help can be found. By starting at one channel the right HR-employee is always found in the end and the next time the question goes to the right HR-employee directly, and eventually you get used to it. They both agree that the transformation of the HR has resulted in a better HR-work and the HR-employees are perceived as a support group. Stig Högfeldt (Appendix 2) says that the HR-employees overall currently are more professionally and that most of the help from the HR is regarding requirement of employees.
Regarding how the line managers can use the HR-stab as support in their work, the anonymous respondent (Appendix 3) explains that the supportive HR is normally used as a help desk where it is possible to ask questions by e-mail or telephone. This part of the HR-stab occurred directly after the transformation and was completely anonymous but today this HR-employee signs the answer with their name. The employees at the supportive HR are still anonymous in the sense that it is impossible to have a dialogue with them. Therefore, if the line managers contact a HR-employee regarding a question and receive help it is not possible for the line manager to ask complementary questions to the same person. When the line manager needs to contact the supportive HR again, the question can reach anybody’s inbox; therefore it is important to be clear in the questions to this unit. The larger offices have their own HR-employee from the organizational HR-unit working at the office every day and who support the line manager in their daily work. The smaller offices share a person working as a HR-employee in the organizational HR-unit; this person is then spending one day a week at an particular office and the other days at other offices. The line managers have no daily contact with the strategic HR, which is a group located in Stockholm, and according to the anonymous respondent (Appendix 3) their tasks include creating policy documents and routines regarding the HR-work. The contact with strategic HR happens only when they need opinions from the line managers.

In the beginning of the newly transformed HR, the daily co-operation between the line managers and the HR employees did not work. Statskontoret investigated this and surveys showed that too much information for the employees made it hard to adapt and learn the new HR-functions. The stated possibility to have dialogues with line managers concerning new HR-tasks showed to be of limited value and the dialogues quickly became monologues, where the line managers did not possess the required explanations regarding the new HR-work. The line managers were also supposed to get support from the HR but according to investigations the HR had difficulties achieving its new goals (Statskontoret 2009). It was also found that because of the fact that the new HR did not quite perform as planned, the line managers at Försäkringskassan began to avoid seeking help from the HR-stab (Statskontoret 2009).
5. Analysis and discussion

In this analysis our own thoughts will be presented. The analysis connects back to both the theory from chapter three as a background and also the empirical findings in chapter four about the specific targeted Försäkringskassan and their HR-transformation. The purpose with this chapter is to analyze the HR practices at Försäkringskassan including a discussion of the consequences after the HR-transformation.

Consequences include introduced adaptations of HR-practices at Försäkringskassan with focus on the different roles of an HR-department (management, line managers, and employees) and the interaction between them. The first part of the analysis consists of a discussion about the overall organizational reconstruction at Försäkringskassan and the second part analyzes the HR.

5.1. The Consequences of the Organizational Reconstruction Overall

The HR-transformation was implemented in connection with a restructuring of the whole organization which resulted in a closer collaboration between the county offices of Försäkringskassan that are located throughout Sweden. The reconstruction overall at Försäkringskassan was aiming at making the organization more flexible, specialized, and customer oriented (Statskontoret 2009), and in this part of the analysis the focus is to discuss if the organization as a whole has reached its goals. The aim in this section is to go further in the understanding of how the business strategy is connected to the consequences of the HR-transformation.

5.1.1. The Flexibility

Regarding the flexibility in the organization, it can be mentioned that the NFC (national insurance centers) and the LFC (local insurance centers) have a communication problem where they have troubles concerning exchanging knowledge. This could be a flexibility issue, contradicting the aims towards an increase in terms of flexibility. For instance if the NFC is gathering new important knowledge from customer case experience, time could be saved by have a highly functioning contact with the LFC and vice versa. This does not seem to be the case according to the investigations by Statskontoret. In comparison with the less unified approach before the organizational transformation, the transformed Försäkringskassan with a unified work will probably handle changes easier, as it was meant to. Since external conditions affect organizations in the way that they have to answer quickly to sustain on the
market, it is important for both the collaboration with the government and Försäkringskassan themselves to keep the whole organization as one unit.

5.1.2. The Specialization

Dividing the customer cases depending on its characteristics also hopefully means a more specialized organization overall. The offices and the line managers working at the different parts of the organization (NFCs, LFCs and CCs), receive the possibility to easier focus on what their customers usually want help with. There are today a numerous different ways for a customer to contact Försäkringskassan and of course it has to do with the specialized parts of the organization, but also due to the advantages from the technological improvements in recent years.

Directly after the organizational reconstruction Försäkringskassan had difficulties to exploit the advantages of this new construction. It probably had to do with the same reasons as for the HR-department, for instance the communication tools that had to change and the lack of clear leadership. Further reasons could have been that the employees had difficulties finding its “right place” in the organization and the problems regarding exchange knowledge inside the different parts of the LFCs, NFCs and CCs. The organization seemed to work out better today five years after the organizational reconstruction due to a few adoptions that were needed, and in the future it has the possibility to result in an even more efficient organization where more adoptions probably will be necessary.

When analyzing if the HR-department has been specialized or not it could be established that before the HR-transformation the line managers only needed to call one person or one department who knew and could answer about the HR- questions. Now, a line manager has to learn to whom or where to call for questions that they might have. This means a clearer distribution of HR-tasks and the three HR-channels are specialized in their specific area, with the aim to reach internal efficiency. Instead of relying on one channel at Försäkringskassan which possess all the HR-knowledge, there are now specialists doing the same work, but more advanced, only divided into the three HR-stab functions.

5.1.3. A Customer-Oriented Organization

To achieve the customer-oriented aim, the NFC, LFC and CC became the new construction of the organization. This improvement that Försäkringskassan had in mind, at first started with an anonymous approach of the HR-stab and in general in the organization towards customers in the customer centers, which made the job complicated. In the HR-stab the work had to be
done twice because the already-processed HR-questions could not be connected to any HR-employees, which could make the whole HR-culture impersonal and surely more inefficient. The anonymity towards customers at the CCs resulted in complaints to the Parliamentary Ombudsman (Statskontoret 2009), which Föräkringskassan had to do something about. In this perspective, the aim to achieve an increased customer oriented organization was not accomplished. It should be mentioned that after this, Föräkringskassan invested in educating employees and changing the anonymous approach. This change we think has led to a tighter organizational culture both internal among employees and external towards customers.

We believe that if Föräkringskassan has different ways to work in the organization and even towards customers, it might be tougher to change the whole organization in the same process. We can not help to think about the governmental influence that Föräkringskassan now are more involved in and what would happen with the governmental reputation if Föräkringskassan did not reach these goals (flexibility, specialization and customer oriented). After reading the investigations from Statskontoret we understood that what seemed for us to be internal goals of Föräkringskassan, might have been external goals for Föräkringskassan towards the government. Although, since these goals in general is something to strive against, for any organization, we don’t really think it is of importance from what forces the demands arose from. What is important to have in mind is that these goals are deeply connected to the business strategy and therefore they could also function as a foundation for a well working Föräkringskassa and HR.

5.2. The four Questions by Ulrich

While discussing the HR-transformation of Föräkringskassan it is interesting to understand Föräkringskassan’s outcomes regarding their HR but it is also of importance to investigate why these outcomes happened. This will be analyzed through answering the four questions of Ulrich: Why, What, How and Who. By using these four questions we have the possibility to analyze and discuss our research questions and apply our research HR-transformation of Föräkringskassan on the theory of Ulrich. It is important to be aware of that the four questions are questions that the organization should ask themselves in the initial stage of the HR-transformation and it is most preferred before the plan of the procedure is created. In our analysis the focus regarding these four questions is to try to find answers in the situation of today, about five years after the transformation was done.
5.2.1. Why do the HR-Transformation?

The main reason for reconstructing the organization or/and doing an HR-transformation is because of the ongoing trends in the business environment and external context changes in politics, culture, economy and society (Ulrich et al. 2009).

Generally, the organizations are investing more resources in human capital because it could be seen as a competitive advantage to have loyal and motivated employees (Economist 2009).

We think that organizations including Försäkringskassan choose to invest money and time on following the trend and in this way being an attractive employer. For Försäkringskassan these external pressures behind the HR-transformation were related to their relationship with the Swedish government. The government needs Försäkringskassan to be a well-organized and highly flexible organization since they became a state authority in the year of 2005. What is a matter of Försäkringskassan is also a governmental matter as well. A number of quality improvements, internal and external, needed to work better which we believe are a driving force behind the whole transformation.

Regarding the HR specially, the old HR at Försäkringskassan was not the same all over the organization and that meant different HR approaches. When collaborating with the government it became crucial to have a working HR approach, and to guarantee such thing, both for themselves and the government, the whole HR needed to change towards the same direction. To have a unified HR approach could also result in a unified organizational culture towards stakeholders. By transforming their HR Försäkringskassan also knew they could win advantages in efficiency which is an overall goal for the restructuring to begin with. If the HR-employees understood why the transformation occurred, we believe it was simply well-known fact that high governmental pressure somewhat forced the HR into a restructuring. The international pressure could be recognized as the globalized HR/ IHRM where the HR of Försäkringskassan followed the trend concerning exchanging administrative focus to strategy focus. On the other hand, it could be hard to argue about Försäkringskassan being exposed to an international competition but since Swedish companies in different industries are becoming more affected by globalization and international practices, this could in fact affect Försäkringskassan as well. An example on how Försäkringskassan can be affected by international forces is the phenomenon of HR-transformation, which is a recent influence from the US aiming towards a specialized and strategic HR-work. Economical pressures always occur, but did they occur more than ever for Försäkringskassan before HR-
transformation? Economical pressures could have made Försäkringskassan more eager to transform their HR, knowing that the costs afterwards would possibly be reduced. The financial crisis started during the HR-transformation and was probably nothing that the organization calculated for. During the HR-transformation the costs became larger than expected which caused Försäkringskassan to try to push the restructuring process to finish it faster. The social pressures that Försäkringskassan faced included, among others, the social media influences. All the customers are online and more comfortable than ever because of the IT-revolution. These influences are local but also world-wide and Försäkringskassan needed to integrate activities into their organization which probably contributed to the restructuring as well. Regarding the IHRM, the influences that affect Försäkringskassan as well is the in- and outflow of people in Sweden, which we believe lead to new knowledge in the business culture along with extra costs. If an employee of Försäkringskassan receives a task required for that person to work abroad, the organization would need to prepare and train the future expatriate individual. When repatriating that person might bring back some new perspectives- like new HR-practices proven to work successfully in similar organizations abroad.

The aim in the near future at Försäkringskassan is to make it possible for the customers to sit at home with their computers and chat with administrators at Försäkringskassan to together accomplish their case (Försäkringskassan 2013a). We believe these improvements will be more efficient in the customer help and more comfortable for the customers to not need to fill out any forms and send it by mail and wait for the reply of Försäkringskassan. The customers are one of Försäkringskassans most important stakeholders, and when aiming towards a better reputation in the society this specific stakeholder group holds the key, which could have been an aspect and reason for implementing social media more in the organization and in the HR. Another reason why Försäkringskassan transformed their HR was due to the will of having a merged HR, which we believe was possible with a functional HR-stab. Another reason for the Försäkringskassa to transform their HR could be regarding to improve their reputation in the Swedish society. The brand of Försäkringskassan, as any other brand, benefits from what customers think about the brand and we believe that internal quality improvements will improve reputation towards external stakeholders as well.

### 5.2.2. What are the Outcomes of the HR-Transformation?

Starting from the question “what” we have the possibility to analyze what major changes in the HR- construction have been necessary after the implemented HR-transformation at Försäkringskassan.
It is important to get it right from the start; to use the newly developed HR thinking properly, to be able to accomplish the changes brought by the HR-transformation. If the new HR practices are not communicated or directed enough there will be some misunderstandings regarding unclear assignments among the different levels in the whole organization, which we think was happening in the new HR. An outcome of this is that some tasks might not get done at all. We believe that the HR-transformation was in this perspective a bad implementation and resulted in a gap between the HR and its employees and managers.

One outcome of the HR-transformation could be recognized and was that an implementation model was created the year after, which contributed to a better understanding of the implementation process regarding changes in HR. The implementation model also had the aim to clarify how the HR-strategies should be implemented and improve the implementation procedure of structure changes regarding HR.

However, this gap should have been predicted before the transformation and our respondent Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) agreed that the HR-transformation could have been better planned, and that the HR-department needed time to figure out how the HR-structure could been used specifically at Försäkringskassan. Also Birgitta Carlsson (Appendix 1) stated, which we also agree about, that the management of Försäkringskassan was not prepared for this significant reconstruction as the HR required.

Generally speaking, when analyzing the overall success of the HR-stab, there are no doubts that Försäkringskassan did plan the HR-transformation in theory at least as well as they planned the overall reconstruction of the organization. However, in practice, the HR did not work as it was supposed to (at first), which we have reasons to believe was because the HR had a lack of communication channels with the line managers and lack of connected links with the overall operating business. Such business-connected links are simply clear directions from overall management and clear roles of every employee to enable clear daily tasks.

From one point of view, the planning of the transformation was not good which was due to the costs of the transformation which became larger than planned and to hurry up the process of change, the HR-transformation seemed to suffer. Once the transformation was implemented we think the challenge was to be patient about the change. We believe the quality of the process of the HR-transformation could have been affected by the lack of planning concerning the financial situation.

The costs of the organizational reconstruction were showing high numbers (under two years the costs reached 700 million SEK) which affected the restructuring badly since the
managers at Försäkringskassan made decisions to quicken the organizational transformation (Statskontoret 2009). The sped-up transformation, we believe, also affected the HR-transformation that also had to be hastened.

Another outcome of the HR-transformation was the increasing work of strategies and the decreasing focus on administration. At Försäkringskassan there has been an increased focus on education and an increase in academically educated employees (Statskontoret 2009), and these increasing factors we believe could lead to better productivity in the future of the HR. Other outcomes could be the closer daily work the HR-stab has with the rest of the organization due to new integrated strategies but also since the HR has become a great support for the overall business, for instance for line managers. This increased quality our interviewed line managers (Appendix 2,3) experienced could positively influence Försäkringskassan to become a better organization overall, which we think is a general outcome of the HR-transformation.

5.2.3. How was the HR-Transformation done?

The effects and changes of the HR-practices that were followed by the HR-transformation will be discussed by using the question how.

Regarding the “how” question, one can find out that the HR-stab was a model designed for the HR at Försäkringskassan. The three functions of strategic HR, organizational HR and supportive HR are now analyzed from Ulrich’s triangle model’s point of view where the strategic HR function works as the center of expertise, the organizational HR is seen as similar to the business partners, and the supportive HR is similar to the shared service centers. To illustrate how we perceive Försäkringskassans HR-stab, a model is created and illustrated below following by a description of each part.
The Ulrich model and the HR-stab Försäkringskassan

As mentioned, the figure, illustrated as Ulrich’s model (center of expertise, shared service center and business partners) but the model is implemented on the HR-stab/ the transformed HR of Försäkringskassan. The strategic HR, supportive HR and organizational HR are all central in the HR and strive to working together and developing. The HR-stab are physically on different spots in the HR but integrated in each other as well. In the triangle where the business partner and organizational HR are included explain their roles of preserving a good relation towards the line managers. The HR-stab and its connection to the triangle model of Ulrich will be presented below in the following subtitles. Furthermore, an arrow represents the inflow of daily activities into the HR, including people, performance, information and work. The top management is at the top position and also possesses the HR-oversight. The line managers are in a constant contact with the HR which also is illustrated in the figure and will also be analyzed further down in the analysis.
5.2.3.1. The Center of Expertise - Strategic HR

In this model, the center of expertise, the organizational factors (people and performance) information and work are inflows in the triangle of business partners, help desk, self-service and finally the line managers who are standing for themselves (Ulrich & Brockbank 2007). The strategic HR from Ulrich’s triangle model is seen as the center of expertise because this is where the strategy is developed, prepared and planned in the organization. However, it should be pointed out that Försäkringskassan’s strategic HR function is not identical with the center of expertise which Ulrich describes, this is due to the fact that Försäkringskassan developed their own HR-model (the HR-stab). The HR-transformation has made it possible for the HR to focus more on business and HR-strategies, and it is within this unit that the focus lies.

We believe the strategic HR is the innovative force which will adapt and take in new trends and efficient methods for HR in the future at Försäkringskassan. This is where Försäkringskassan’s HR follows the trend of getting rid of administrative work to focus on becoming strategically specialists.

5.2.3.2. Business Partners - The Organizational HR

The organizational HR could be compared to the business partners due to the fact that the functions of these are closely related to that of the line managers. The organizational HR seemed to have a highly important role compared to the line managers at Försäkringskassan and we believe this unit is the strongest link between the HR and the overall business. The line managers sometimes have complicated HR-questions and then the administrative unit (supportive HR) cannot help, and that is when discussions and advice from business partners could help out.

5.2.3.3. Shared Service Center - The Supportive HR

The supportive HR has the similar HR-practices as the shared service center and we can see that the HR at Försäkringskassan did not choose to outsource the HR-administration. We believe the reason why Försäkringskassan chose the shared service centers is because they wanted to hold on to their own information and knowledge and therefore not outsource their supportive HR. This is probably a good decision since the risk of knowledge dissemination is smaller with the shared service alternative. This way Försäkringskassan educates the existing HR-employees that will work in the supportive HR and it means a significant investment in the people of the HR.
This step was the HR-transformation at Försäkringskassan and we believe this totally new HR required a lot of education on the part of the HR-employees. It is highly possible that a lot of employees had to change job positions or even leave the organization due to the higher demands on academic skills that the transformed HR required. This also means that a lot of new people are employed which we believe bring different perspectives into the organization because it is a big shift of people in relatively short period of time.

In the model one can also see that the supportive HR functions as a help to the employees.

5.2.4. Who is Getting Affected by the Transformation?

The question “who” includes the supporting question to the main research question regarding the HR-employees and line managers at Försäkringskassan.

The HR-employees at Försäkringskassan receive a larger impact on the organization due to their increased HR-responsibility. We believe the three functions of the HR-stab means a creation of three groups of specialist which could make the HR-employees better on what they are focusing on, whether it is helping out with administrative tasks, developing strategies or solving customized HR-questions.

It should be mentioned that there are also individual positions in the HR that are called “HR- specialists” who are working as specialists on HR- details (Ulrich et al. 2009). In general, regarding the HR-employees, the higher skills requirements became important to make sure the organization withheld educated people that can handle complex and new tasks (Statskontoret 2009).

Since the transformed HR at an early stage did not fully function due to bad communication between HR-employees and line managers, Försäkringskassan received criticism and had to be better. We believe this somewhat bad start in the HR and could later on have contributed to a greater will in the HR-employees to manage their tasks, especially since the work did improve after the investigations by Statskontoret, which pointed out what was flawed in the co-operation between the line managers and the HR-employees.

The line managers at Försäkringskassan had the responsibility for the results of HR-transformation: that the results should be aligned with the business strategy (Statskontoret 2009). It could be argued that it was in fact the line managers it depended on regarding the success of the new HR. Interviews from Statskontoret did indeed show that it was the line managers who could not help the HR-employees regarding their new tasks, but surveys also showed that the reason the line managers could not support the HR-employees was because the line managers did not fully understand the meaning behind the newly developed HR-tasks.
We believe the roles became clearer, followed by a phasing-out of the anonymous approach to some extent, and the tasks were later on functioning as they were supposed to. Our interviews of the line managers also confirmed this since both of the respondents agreed about that, now five years after the implemented HR-transformation, the HR-stab was working better than ever.

5.4. The future

The work of Ulrich has proven to be very useful in our case study, however, his theories concerning the triangle model when transforming HR has seem to be useful for many companies as well. It is critical to analyze if his work really is worth to use as a central model and we believe Ulrich has contributed a lot to the HR and its future. We believe this because it is almost an HR trend to use the approach of him, which shows that his model to at least some extent is working in a competitive and global business climate. We are convinced, the existing research and studies regarding HR-transformations and its affects and consequences will increase in the near future due to the fact that more and more organizations choose to implement this significant redesigning of HR. The topic of HR-transformation is fairly new and we believe this is the reason why the research of the consequences is limited. Probably investigations can start some years after implemented transformations. We believe HR-transformations will be even more popular in the future; because, organizations that are planning to do HR-transformations in the future have the possibility to learn from others mistakes and success. To connect back to the introduction of this thesis, we would like to bring forward the importance of the human capital and the increasing interest of having loyal and motivated employees, these trends in organizations, we believe will continue in the same direction. The attitudes towards the HR will in the near future be even more of a strategic question in organizations, with almost the same importance as for instance the planning of the production or market and product strategies. The increasing interest for the human capital in organizations in connection with even more restructures such as transformations of the HR-departments enables the organizations to get all the possibilities to be competitive. But we think that it is important to have in mind that in the end there is always the employees approach to their work that is decisive for the success of the organization.
6. Conclusion

The preparations of new goals, policies and guidelines in the transformed HR-practices were not spread well enough (Statskontoret 2009), integrated or even used properly in the HR-department which made the implementation of Försäkringskassans HR-transformation in that perspective a failure.

From this study, it has been observed that the triangle model of Ulrich was the base construction of the HR-transformation, interpreted via a model of their own called HR-stab.

A conclusion from using this model is that in practice it seems tougher and more complex to implement the triangle model than what the theory presents (Thilander 2013) and it is therefore a bad idea to approach the model “right from the book” without a specific match on the organization. First of all, all organizations have different external environmental influences and Försäkringskassan is mainly driven by forces from the Swedish government. However, Försäkringskassan also receive influences from the business environment where trends are spread. Second of all, the link between the line managers and the HR must be very clear before the HR-transformation, regarding the roles and what is expected and from who. At Försäkringskassan the relation between HR-employees and the line managers did not work out well directly after the HR-transformation, which led to a poorly-operating HR overall which also affected the business because tasks where not done the planned way, if at all. This dilemma has been discovered before, but the HR-transformation “guru” Ulrich has not successfully explained this phenomenon in his books yet but there is some new science from (Thilander 2013) who investigates the Swedish Försvarsmakten and more or less straightens out/points out the problem area between the HR-employee and line managers in connection with HR-transformations.

The science show exactly the same thing that happened to Försäkringskassan´s HR regarding these two groups and because of diffuse instructions to the line managers concerning the new way of cooperating with the HR- employees, the transformed HR had some start-up problems. The line managers at Försäkringskassan did instead find the HR-support they needed through contacting the channels that was used before and that was trusted, instead of using the new transformed HR as it was meant to be used. How to avoid this problem when changing HR in the future is to not only focus on the transformation of the tasks of the HR- employees, but to also prepare the line managers on a transformation (Thilander 2013).
However, the HR-transformation today is proven to be better in terms of quality (internal; better communication, external; customer oriented), which our three interviews have confirmed but also the investigations by Statskontoret (Statskontoret 2009).

Consequences of the HR-transformation regarding efficiency improvements have been noticed: cost reductions due to the decreased need of employees, a higher requirement on academic knowledge rises the work skills, it is easier to get help from the HR because of the specialization groups of the HR-tab that are improving the quality for the general business work, and there is less focus on administration and a stronger focus on strategies (Statskontoret 2009) to make the HR even better in the future.

The reconstruction of the organization at Försäkringskassan in the year of 2008 (including the transformation of the HR) resulted in a new nation-wide organization. We are convinced that Försäkringskassan (as all other organizations in the world) will continuously change their HR with the aim to create competitive advantages and efficiency. In this way, knowledge and experience regarding significant HR-reconstructions will increase, and hopefully the organization will be even better prepared on all levels and learn from the earlier mistakes of others.

What surprised us in this research was regarding how the Ulrich model has been used by organizations, because it seems like the model in theory is very similar to how it works in the reality. This we think is rare, especially since the model requires organizations to invest and change a lot and engage their HR to 100 % to be able to go through with the HR-transformation. We believe organizations rely on this model because they have seen other successful examples and this is how the HR trend of Ulrich started. The result of an increased HR quality and the communicational issues between the HR and the line managers did not surprise us, since both findings have been observed before. Our advice on future research in the subject of HR-transformation is to investigate how to fully involve and inform all concerned employees about the new practices and work but also how to include line managers in this training.

The interest of HR-transformations has increased (Thilander 2013) among many different organizations and will most likely continue increasing in the future, but one should also have in mind that if one organization wants to be efficient and continuously renew its HR the work of change will never end, and as one management consultant at Försvarsmakten said about their HR-transformation: “We started up our own HR-change in late 80's and we are not finished yet” (Thilander 2013 p.264).
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8. Appendices

The interview guides will be presented in this chapter and the character of each interview and the position of the respondents are presented in different appendices. Same for all interviews was the initial stage where we took commando by introduce ourselves, the university and the purpose of both the interview and the thesis.

8.1. Appendix 1

The first interview was with an HR- employee working at the supportive HR at Försäkringskassan. The name of the respondent is Brigitta Carlsson who is working at the Supportive HR located in Gothenburg. She has been working at Försäkringskassan since the year of 2006 thus she was employed just before the transformation started at the organization.

The interview was made through a personal meeting at her office in Gothenburg on the 10th of April, at 10 o’clock in the year of 2013. The interviewers were Rebecca Skogsèn and Malin Lindström and the interview was done by a personal meeting. Because of the discussion and dialogue at the meeting in addition to the answers of the questions information regarding the organization and the transformation was also gathered. Later on complementary e-mails were sent to Birgitta Carlsson for further understanding regarding the consequences of the HR-transformation.

Questions prepared for the personal meeting with Brigitta Carlsson,

- How were Försäkringskassan constructed nationwide before the reconstruction of the organization in the year of 2008 and what were the major changes?

- What are the main and overall objectives of the HR-transformation at Försäkringskassan?

- A new HR-model was implemented which meant a centralized way of working with HR-tasks. This model is called the HR-stab and consists of three parts including supporting HR, organizational HR and strategic HR. What are your experiences of the HR-stab until today?

- Describe your HR-tasks in the organization at the supportive HR, how has this part of the HR-stab been changed since the transformation?
- In what way are the HR-employees at organizational HR collaboration with the line managers?

- Do you have any idea if the line managers today, five years after the transformation are aware about how they can reach help from the different parts of the HR-stab?

- What is your opinion, has the HR-transformation until today resulted in a more efficient HR-work?

Complementary questions sent to Birgitta Carlsson by E-mail,
- The new HR-stab had to change and adapt at some parts after the transformation, how did the HR-stab change to fit the organization in a better way?

- What was the reason for the direct-HR to be anonymous and what happened with the anonymity after the transformation?

- In what year did HR-direct change its name to supportive HR?

- A “lean” way of working is introduced, what does it mean at Försäkringskassan?

- Is the leadership better today than during the transformation procedure, if yes, in what way?

- How has the internal communication changed since the transformation?
8.2. Appendix 2

The second interview was with a line manager working at Försäkringskassan. The name of the respondent is Stig Högfelt who is working as a line manager at an office located in Gothenburg. He was working as a line manager at Försäkringskassan since the year of 2007. He was also working in the old counties system before the transformation was implemented possessed different manager positions with beginning in the year of 1982. The interview was performed through an E-mail sent to Stig Högfelt on the 3th of May, at 2.30 pm in the year of 2013 and the answer was received on the 8th of May. The interviewers were Rebecca Skogsèn and Malin Lindström.

Questions sent to Stig Högfelts E-mail,

- Are you aware about how you as a line manager can receive help from the different parts of the HR-stab?

- How, and in what situations are you using the competencies of the HR-employee?

- Explain how you perceive the new HR-stab, and has the HR-work become more efficient?
8.3. Appendix 3

The third respondent has chosen to be anonymous in this interview; the respondent is working as a line manager at a national insurance center with location in Gothenburg. The respondent has been working as a line manager at Försäkringskassan since a couple of years before the transformation started. The interview was a telephone meeting on the 3th of May, at 3.00 pm in the year of 2013. The interviewers were Rebecca Skogsèn and Malin Lindström.

Questions prepared for the telephone meeting with the anonymous respondent,

- Was it hard for you as a line manager to adapt to the new way using help from the HR?

- Are you today five years after the transformation sure about where you can receive help regarding HR-tasks?

- How, and in what situations are you using the competencies of the HR-employees?