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Ways to Manage Projects Efficiently

-A Case Study of SEB's Project Group
in the Volvo Ocean Race

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Abstract

Today, projects are very popular in this time-focused society. However, they are complex by nature and include many challenges. Common problems in projects are difficulties with the learning and the knowledge that individuals possess. This thesis focuses on identification of challenges included in projects and different ways to meet them. To accomplish this investigation an action-based perspective, which include participant observations and interviews, is applied on the SEB Project Group, our case company. The theoretical framework we use includes concepts for distinguishing challenges and three tools to meet them: Communication, Shared Understanding and Collective Competence. Challenges SEB faces are for instance; deadlines, internal legitimacy and waterproof contracts. Through our investigation we find certain factors that are important to consider while dealing with these challenges. To mention a few, a shared project platform, an awareness of the ongoing project process, and taking the time to reflect, are vital.

Key words: Project management, action-based perspective, project group perspective, characteristics typical for projects, ongoing process, project challenges, shared project platform, communication, shared understanding, collective competence.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Projects are very popular among companies today, as they are perceived to meet the “time focus” in the society. They have many advantages to handle the time-pressure, as they are dynamic, flexible and process oriented. However, this includes many dilemmas (Hansson, 2002). From research reports we can read that one central dilemma is that projects often exceed the restrictions regarding time and financial resources (Berggren, 2001 from Hansson, 2002). There can be many reasons for these problems, however, according to Antoni (2000) the difficulty with learning and competence in and between projects is definitely one of them (Antoni, 2000 from Hansson, 2002).

Projects have no “organizational memory”, they are temporary to its nature, have no past or future (Packendorff, 1993 from Hansson, 2002). As time and money are limited in projects, short-term solutions are usually preferred before long-term and durable solutions (Eriksen, 2001 from Hansson, 2002). Another reason according to Hansson (2002) for using the short-term solutions is that it is easier to measure the economic situation in all projects. Competence in the organization on the other hand is most “silent” to its nature, and therefore difficult to measure or/and discuss (Hansson, 2002). A further problem according to Hansson (2002) is the “project leader-centralization dilemma.” The project leader has a high workload and has to make a prioritize between the traditional short-term focus consisting of the project restrictions; time costs and quality contra the long-term focus including creating learning and space for reflection (Hansson, 2002).

To understand the complexity in projects, the descriptive approach is used in this report, and applied on SEB’s project team in the Volvo Ocean Race[1]. Our case study, SEB is in their second phase, the Stopover-phase. The reasons for why we chose SEB as our case study company is because of its challenging and unique project in the Volvo Ocean Race. As one of the respondents at the case company expressed:

“The key to success in this project is rather a question of management than event and sponsoring.”

[1] Described further on page 8 and 17.

To deepen our analysis of SEB, we added expert interviews with other project leaders that have experiences of similar tasks and challenging situations. The project leaders we chose to interview work at GKSS (The Royal Gothenburg Yacht Club) (See Appendix) and SCP String (a consultancy company for strategies and communication solutions within sponsorship and events)[2] (See Appendix).

1.2 Problem Description

There are many factors and challenges that affect a project, which cannot be predicted. Investigating projects can basically be done in two ways. You can either use the normative or the descriptive approach. The first- mentioned, which is a traditional project research field, is criticized among researchers. The main criticism concerns its technical and rationalistic approaches, which emphasizes such aspects and models as work breakdown structures (Burke, 1994: Kerzner, 1995 from Söderlund, 2000). This approach could be compared to a "cook book" that gives you as a manager a recipe on how to structure a successful project, this is not grounded in descriptive empirical studies (Packendorff, 1995).

Since time pressure is a main dilemma in projects, the normative approach can be perceived as effective. But on the other hand efficiency can be seen from another angle, the descriptive approach, where taking time to reflect on actions and their underlying factors are seen as effective. This approach is inspired by organization theory (Bryman et al., from Söderlund, 2000). The main source of information about the course of action pursued within a project should be the individuals forming the project organization:

"Action has to be understood as enactment of the subjective and inter-subjective realities of individuals and groups of individuals" (Packendorff, 1995).

According to this approach it is important to take the time to reflect upon the underlying factors and interrelationships behind actions, since every project is unique. This uniqueness consists of different project member compositions and contexts. It is therefore interesting to use a descriptive approach, to be able to understand the complexity in projects.

Lundin & Söderholm (1995) and Hellgren & Stjernberg (1995) state that this complexity in projects consists of sensitiveness towards both external and internal impacts. They can never be enough prepared for environmental issues

[2] Described further in Appendix.

or external actors with different interests concerning e.g. the goal of the project. Internal dilemmas can for example be different interpretations among the project members regarding the task and perception of time (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Time is the major critical factor in a project, which you can never overlook. Time appears in different shapes within a project. It can be everything from keeping a deadline to be able to handle the fact that the project terminates (Söderlund, 2000). Further, it can be that no detailed prerequisites can be set, since projects are dynamic and could be understood as an ongoing process (Christensen, 1997 from Larson,1997).

To be able to understand the dilemmas that occur in the project it is necessary to identify different concepts according to this approach (descriptive), which are typically characteristic for a project. According to Söderlund there are seven different project management schools (Söderlund, 2000). Two of them correspond according to us to our case company: Temporary organization and Network Theory. Temporary Organizations focus on behavioral aspects within organizations and that that they are temporary (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995; Packendorff, 1995). Hellgren & Stjernberg (1995) states that the latter one is central while discussing typical characteristics in projects, since it is dependent on and acting together with external actors.

The concepts that are related to projects in these two schools are both external and internal. The concepts can be divided into intra- and inter perspectives. The intra perspective includes time, task, team and transition, while the inter perspective consists of networks. These differ from the crucial concepts that define the permanent organizations. Permanent organizations are more naturally defined by goal (rather than tasks), survival (rather than time), working organization (rather than team) and production processes and continual development (rather than transition) (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995: Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995).

Another crucial matter concerning projects is the ongoing process and the dynamics. These have to be taken into consideration while formulating prerequisites, e.g. goal- and strategy formulations (Christensen, 1997; Larsson, 1997).

Since our objective is to understand how to manage projects in an efficient way by the descriptive approach, where identifying the actions and the interrelationships behind them, a case study is decisive. What we identified while using our approach on SEB is that a shared project platform is essential, to be able to meet the challenges the group faces. Since a project is an ongoing process, it is important that the group reformulate the platform along the project, with an ongoing communication. It was during our observations and interviews we could identify these challenges typical for SEB. Out of a meeting in the analysis part, we illustrate these challenges which were prominent since it concerned the coordination between their home and away organization.

To get an effective project there are many different tools that can be used to meet these challenges. By theories, interviews and observations we have created our theoretical framework to meet them. To mention one of the main tools that could meet these challenges is an ongoing communication. From Deetz (1992) we found two main communication perspectives, the productive and the reproductive one. The differences between them are that the latter have a fixed subjectivity (no reformulation of the conceptions among the group members) in contrast to the productive one, which has a process subjectivity, i.e. a continuous question and creation of conceptions (Deetz, 1992 from Wikström, 2000).

Further, shared understanding is a central tool to meet the challenges that we have distinguished. From Senge's (1995) reasoning we investigate how systems thinking can simplify the complex reality in projects by forming a language that describes a vast array of interrelationships and patterns of change, it helps to see patterns that lie behind actions.

Another tool is according to Hansson (1998) a high level of collective competence. Hansson distinguishes between practical (the ability among the group members to handle the assigned task in a proficient manner) and interpersonal competence (relates to how proficient the ability to interact with others in the group is).

1.3 Purpose

Our overall objective of this thesis is to develop awareness and understanding for ways to manage the complexity in projects efficiently. Our aim is to get a picture of key challenges typical for projects, and further develop tools for how to distinguish and meet these challenges within a project:

1. Distinguish challenges typical for projects
2. Ways to meet the challenges

Our objectives have not been to create any definite definitions (normative “cookbooks”) of how to manage a project, rather illustrate situations, which can be interpreted and adapted to different project situations and their specific context.

1.4 Case Study

1.4.1 SEB's function in the Volvo Ocean Race

The Volvo Ocean Race is one of the world's longest and most demanding ocean races. The race takes nine months and covers some 33,000 nautical miles broken down into nine legs, including eight port stopovers on five continents (SEB material).

The first race was held 1973/74 under the name of "Whitbread Round the World Race". Since then, the race has been held seven times. After the 1997/98 race, Volvo purchased the rights to what is now called The Volvo Ocean Race (ibid.).

SEB is the Principal Partner in the Volvo Ocean Race. As the Principal Partner, SEB has the right to name the project, *Team SEB,* and the boat, *SEB***,** and will take advantage of all opportunities offered by the project for two-and-a-half years (ibid.).

The project, *Team SEB*, is based on a partnership also called *Team SEB***,** and is being conducted in co-operation with 15 companies who will constitute the commercial partners, and a syndicate company, *Global Team AB*, whose representative among others is Gunnar "Gurra" Krantz -- the noted sailor. The syndicate company is co-coordinating the project and the project-related promotional activities, and is also organizing and implementing the sports program (ibid.).

In our thesis we are only focusing on the project team of SEB, which is one of the 15 companies in Team SEB.

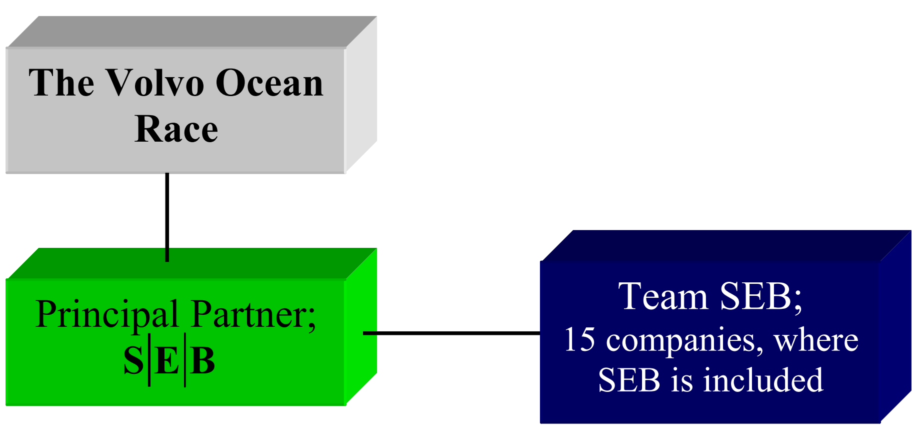


Figure 1. SEB's participation in the Volvo Ocean Race.

1.5 Delimitation

1.5.1 SEB

We have based our case study on SEB's project organization in the Volvo Ocean Race.

The project organization consists of many different levels and numerous people. We focus on the top level in the project organization, which consists of the project leader for the entire project and the part-project leaders who are responsible for one each of the different sub-areas in the project organization. In other words we use a project-group level perspective (Söderlund, 2000). Both the project leader and the sub-project leaders are all situated in Stockholm.

Since we have chosen to focus on the top level in the project organization, it is natural to us, to do this from inside the project organization. In other words, when we for instance studied SEB's external actors and its network, we did this from SEB's perspective.

As our working process was limited to three months, our study on SEB was restricted to just a short period of their two and a half years project. SEB's project is divided into 2 phases. The first one was called the; Christening phase and the second is the stopover phase. Our thesis was based on the latter phase, but it only extended over a period of three months in it, considering the time limit. The three months period covered the two first of the ten stopovers.

1.6 Disposition of our Thesis

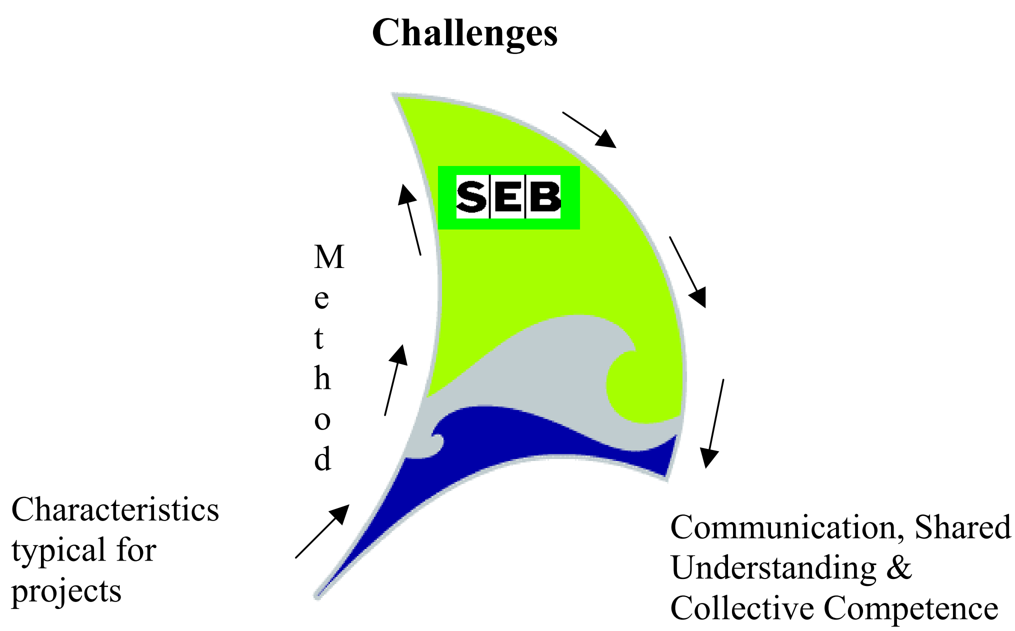


Figure 2. Our Path behind the Disposition (Our own model).

To easier follow the disposition of the thesis we illustrate our path behind it above. A prerequisite to make a case study on the SEB project was to investigate theories that included characteristics typical for projects (Characteristics typical for Projects). Further we chose a method that could bring us close to our case study (Method). Our choice of method helped us to uncover the key challenges in SEB's project organization (Challenges). This discovery made us go deeper into tools, which could meet these key challenges (Communication, Shared Understanding and Collective Competence).

The objective with the first chapter was to give the reader an overall insight of the aim with our thesis. In chapter two we will present the method which has had a central role for our case study. The third chapter gives a presentation of the case company and our expert interview companies, further we describe the function SEB has in the project, The Volvo Ocean Race. The fourth chapter presents the theoretical framework, which is based on our conceptions. The fifth chapter includes our analysis that is a mixture of our theories and empirical findings. To introduce the reader to the analysis we have chosen to illustrate a meeting that took place at SEB's project organization. In the final chapter we will add a concluding discussion.

2. Methodology

In this chapter we describe our method, which plays a central role in our thesis. We will discuss different methods, which we have applied, for instance the qualitative approach, deep interviews, participant observations, abductive- and hermeneutic approaches. The final part presents our case study process.

2.1 Our overall Thesis Process

Out of our own experience we have got the understanding of how important it is to understand the complex interrelationships and the processes behind the actions in projects. We have during our year at the Master program in International Management worked in different group constellations and contexts. By working in different groups we have noticed that no group situation is the other like, human interactions can never be determined or predicted in advance. To be able to handle this complexity efficiently, we experienced that it was fundamental to be aware of the situation and also take the time to reflect upon and analyze it. Our purpose with this thesis is, as mentioned before, analyze ways to manage complex projects efficiently. To be able to fulfill our purpose we saw the importance of using a qualitative-subjective approach and a case study (Strati, 2000). Subjectivity is in contrast to objectivity, a knowledge theory that states that there is no conformity in humans' actions (Trollestad, 1994).

Since it is hard to be aware of and distinguish patterns in your own and other group members' action, it is important to use an external observer. Therefore have observations at meetings have been very useful in our case study.[3]

Qualitative research also seeks to collect the interpretations given by organizational actors to aspects and events of organizational life, emphasizing the nuances that emerge from them (Strati, 2000). These individual interpretations were developed from our interviews. These interviews gave us an understanding for their thoughts and therefore we could more easily comprehend the interactions in the meetings. We made one interview with the project leader and four with the sub project leaders, their duration was about one hour each. We observed one project Council meeting, one coordination meeting and one internal network meeting. The first-mentioned lasted for five hours, while the duration for the other two were about two and half hours.

[3] Further developed on page 17

To accomplish our case study we felt that it was necessary to have a good balance between theory and our practice. The theory gave us valuable knowledge, however to be able to apply theory on practice, we saw the necessity to create our own picture and interpretation of it. When doing the observations we felt it was essential to have a good contact with the members of the case company, to get that we had to formulate and translate the "research language" to a more understandable language. This resulted in that we got a good and open dialogue with them and therefore we achieved much valuable information, which increased our knowledge of the factors behind the complexity that we further on developed in our thesis. We both feel that we have a good balance between theory and practice. One reason could be that one of us has a tendency to dig in to theories while the other one has more of a reality focus. This balance issue is discussed by Alvesson and Sköldeberg (1994), where they name it the abduction method, consisting of a balance induction (common sense knowledge) and deduction (searching for what the researcher already knows), and the approach strives for a satisfying dialogue between theory and the empirical.

We perceive that our thesis process has been like an "expedition." We have from the very start until the end of this thesis applied a dialogue between ourselves, SEB, the theory and other externals[4]. These externals consist of; project leaders (GKSS and SCP String), a mentor (KPMG) and a researcher within the area of collective competence (Henrik Hansson). We have carried through expert interviews with these externals, about two hours each. Since we have had these open dialogues, we have increased our knowledge within this area and have therefore got more angles of incidence. Since we practiced this process we used different tools, i.e. researcher, experts and theories) along the way, that helped us during our expedition. This thesis process could be compared to a hermeneutic working path, which emphasizes on pre-understanding and learning, since this working path is based on a growing design and earlier steps in the process (Alvesson and Sköldeberg, 1994). Further this path is according to Hansson (1998), characterized by a dialogue with the research material, both studies and theories developed by others and own studies, with the purpose of developing knowledge (Hansson, 1998).

" Hermeneutics is to discover or to explore something. A consequence of such discoveries could be called a hermeneutic process" (Filosofilexikonet, Stockholm, Forum, 1988).

As our case study has been central in our thesis, we do see the importance to describe this process thoroughly.

[4] Further developed in Appendix

2.2 Our Case Study Process

"the essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result" (Schramm, 1971, emphasis added from Yin, 1994).

According to Yin (1994) the reason for using a case study is the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, the case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries (Yin, 1994). Further you can divide case studies into three different ones; exploratory, descriptive and explanatory case studies. Our research approach is mainly of the exploratory kind, but there are some descriptive and explanatory elements as well.

The model illustrates our case study process, which can be seen in three different steps.

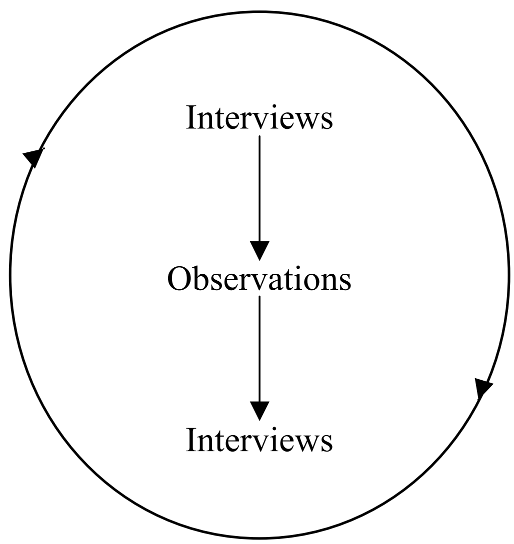


Figure 3. Our Case Study Process (Our own model).

The first step includes interviews we did with the project leader and part project leaders. Here we based our questions on characteristics and challenges typical for projects (basic concepts; time, team, task, transition and network)[5]. Our objective was to get a picture of each individual's interpretation of the

[5] Further developed on page 43

questions. To get that we kept the questions broad, so that it was easier for the respondent to relate it to his/her own situations. To get a good contact with the respondent during the interview we used a tape recorder, and also used us as examples, to get a good and relaxed dialogue. The values of interviews is also discussed by Elton Mayo and colleagues, who stress not only the heuristic value of interviews, but also the emotional relaxation that they produce in the respondents as they talk about their organization (Strati, 2000).

The second step includes participation observations and a brainstorming session. Our initial objectives with this part of the case study process were to have a brainstorming session with the members. Brainstorming is a technique that enhances the creativity and can be used in problem solving procedures (Osborn, 1967). Brainstorming technique does not limit the individual's creativity and it enables one to alter the atmosphere in a problem-solving meeting (Osborn, 1967). By the interviews we had got their individual picture of the project, now we were interested to see if it fitted with the other group members pictures in action. Our intention with this brainstorming session was to produce creativity around the same questions as in step one, i.e. the interviews. An unexpected but a positive surprise appeared during the meeting where the brainstorming session was scheduled. Instead of having their planned meeting and letting us taking care of the brainstorming session at the end of the meeting, the project leader himself did take an unexpected initiative. Our questions during the earlier interviews with him had obviously created awareness and a perceived need to take time and ventilate questions that he maybe had taken for granted earlier. We were astonished over this reaction and felt that we had contributed with something that influenced their process. Since we felt that this was an extremely giving discussion, we did a conscious choice to take the role as participant observers and to videotape it instead.

There are two types of observations according to Strati (2000), structured and participant. Our approach is participant observation, which requires familiarization and socialization to organizational life, which raises the issue of the researcher's immersion in or detachment from organizational processes (Strati, 2000). We felt that it was valuable for our observation that we had interviewed the members before, since we had built up a mutual confidence.

2.2.1 Participant Observation

The distinctive feature of participant observation is the *varying extent* to which the researcher is involved in organizational life during his or her period spent in the organization (Strati, 2000). The extent of our observation was a six-day attendance, which included three meetings.

In participant observation, researchers have sometimes preferred to conceal their roles as investigators. This raises ethical questions concerning the transparency of the relationship between the researcher and the organizational actors who unwittingly collaborate with the research, but it does not affect the *heuristic* value of the information of thus obtained. Nor does it lack theoretical validity, given that the only issue debated has been how to reduce interference by the researcher (Strati, 2000).

According to us our role as participant observers have been both concealed and not. The reason for claiming that is that we think we have influenced the group members, by the interviews in step one, to the topics they had on their agenda at the meetings, but during the meetings we had a concealed role.

Our third step in our case study process includes interviews with the same questions as in step one. This step aim for distinguishs eventual differences in the respondents' answers before and after the brainstorming session, which turned in to being a participant observation.

Except participant observation at different meetings and interviews, we have analyzed different SEB-documents, such as marketing and activity plans, marketing material and internal information for SEB employees.

2.3 Reliability and Validity

According to Norén (1990) a researcher must be capable of answering questions of reliability and validity to be able to reach credibility in the case study.

2.3.1 Reliability

Since we have used a case study in our thesis, it is not easy to decide the reliability. We are aware that the group members at our case company have their own interpretations and that they will change their thoughts and knowledge over time. Another thing that could have affected the reliability is the experience and knowledge we have from our master year at the Management program. A conclusion of this could be that if someone else had conducted the study or/and at another time, the result would have been different.

Nevertheless, Norén (1990) argues that this does not have to mean that those phenomena that the researcher is working with and which changes over time, need to have a faulty reliability. Norén means that instead of working with the traditional reliability, the researcher should try to describe those factors that are giving the instability and changes, and further influence the result of the study.

2.3.2 Validity

Validity is when you measure what you intended to measure. In qualitative research this mean that the respondents are accepting the description of their reality made by the researcher (Norén, 1990). Validity is further fulfilled, when the researcher measures with the chosen method what he intended to study. The credibility of the study depends on how the data was collected, how theoretical concepts have been introduced, operationalized and how the context has been explained. It is important that the researcher describes the progress of work that resulted in the given interpretation and conclusion (Norén, 1990).

To get the respondents in our case company to accept our description of their reality, we made a thorough theoretical research to be able to illustrate and picture their situation as good as possible. We also put a lot of effort in finding methods, which contributed to a good gathering of facts. To achieve a realistic result we used, as mentioned earlier, a type recorder and a video camera, which we could go back to and listen to if any of the fact was diffuse. To be able to picture our case company's reality as realistic as possible we also used our expert interviews to understand how projects worked and the challenges included in them.

2.4 The Presentation of the Analysis

Only those areas that are of importance for meeting the purpose of this thesis are presented in the analysis, and all quotations and interviews are anonymous (the names are not connected to the quotations). As the interviews were made in Swedish, but were translated into English, they become even more anonymous due to the differences in the languages. We will make a mixture of our empirical findings and the analysis. The results will be analyzed with help of the theories in chapter four, as well as our own experiences and understanding.

3. Company Presentation

3.1 SEB

This chapter includes a detailed presentation of our case company's project organization. Further, in the last part of the chapter, we will combine SEB with Event Marketing. The reason for doing this is to get a clearer picture of SEB's function in the Volvo Ocean Race, also to make it easier to understand the challenges SEB has to face in the project.

3.1.1 SEB's Organization

SEB is a European financial group with 360 branch offices in Sweden, Germany and the Baltic countries. SEB is active in the rest of the Nordic area, Great Britain, Luxembourg and Switzerland. After the acquisition of BfG and the incorporation of the three Baltic banks more than half of SEB's employees are working outside Sweden (See Appendix) (www.seb.se, 2001).

3.1.2 The Reasons for SEB's Involvement in the Volvo Ocean Race

The reasons why SEB decided to take part in Volvo Ocean Race are many, but there are mainly three objectives for SEB’s involvement in the Volvo Ocean Race:

- To increase awareness of the SEB brand in Europe.
- Unify SEB around a project that creates pride and commitment.
- To use the event to consolidate current and create new business relations.

The Volvo Ocean Race is an opportunity for SEB to increase awareness of the SEB brand in Europe. Today, SEB is a European financial group primarily for business and financially active individuals. SEB has 630 offices in Sweden, Germany and the Baltic States, with a total of four million customers. Of these, 850,000 are Internet customers (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

In 1999, the majority of SEB employees and the clients were to be found in Sweden, where most of SEB’s revenue was generated. Today, more than half of its employees and customer-base can be found outside Sweden (ibid.).

SEB's growth is primarily due to its acquisitions of the German BfG Bank, now called SEB, as well as the increased ownership of banks in the Baltic States. These acquisitions are the step in SEB's strategy of savings and e-banking ventures in European growth markets (ibid.).

Participating in the Volvo Ocean Race is not only a way for SEB to create attention. There are many parallels between the race and the challenge of establishing SEB on the international market for financial services. Both projects require focus, the will to take risks and a clear understanding of where SEB is heading (SEB material, 2001).

SEB is the Principal Partner in the Volvo Ocean Race. As the Principal Partner, SEB has the right to name both the project (*Team SEB*) and the boat (*SEB*) and will take advantage of all opportunities offered by the project for two-and-a-half years (ibid.).

The project, Team SEB is based on a partnership also called, *Team SEB* and is being conducted in co-operation with 15 companies who will constitute the commercial partners, and a syndicate company *(Global Team AB)*, whose representative among others is Gunnar "Gurra" Krantz -- the noted sailor. The syndicate company is co-ordinating the project and the project-related promotional activities, and is also organizing and implementing the sports program (ibid.).

3.1.3 SEB's Purpose and Goal of Participating in the VOR

SEB's Purpose

SEB's Strategy Is to Grow in Europe within Savings and E-Banking

- Unite the group under one name and one identity and establish SEB as a strong trademark in Europe.
- Involve all parts of SEB in order to strengthen internal unity and commitment.
- Profile SEB as a leading player within e-banking.

SEB's Volvo Ocean Race venture 2001-2002 also creates unique business-related opportunities for the group's different business areas (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

SEB’s Goal

The project shall outline clear goals that are related both to the overall goals of the group and to the actual operations within the different parts of the project.

Based on SEB's overall aims, measurable goals shall be formulated focusing on:

- Increased knowledge/establishment of the SEB trademark in Europe.
- Increased understanding of and commitment to SEB's identity and values.
- Strengthened and new client relations.

Specific goals will also be defined for the project’s operations and activity plans (ibid.).

3.1.4 SEB's Project Organization

The internal project organization within SEB will primarily ensure that the rights and opportunities of the Principal Partner are safeguarded and utilized in the best possible manner (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

The project shall be designed, organized and operated, based on a perspective involving; a broad commitment and participation from “all” functions/units and employees within the group. Secondly, a close co-operation with other partners within the boat syndicate and within the Volvo Ocean race. Thirdly, an integrated co-operation with the organization and project office of the Global Team (ibid.).

In order to ensure that SEB’s commitment to the Volvo Ocean Race is utilized in the best possible way, the venture will be undertaken in the form of a project. The project will be organized in a way that creates commitment within the whole group and at the same time makes use of the resources and the skills that are required. The project work will firstly and foremost be undertaken via internal workgroups and advisory functions (ibid.).

Controlling Institutions

Steering Committee
The Steering committee is the project's highest decision-making instance and determines such things as the overall assignment of the project, the goals and budget, the project description and the action program. The Steering committee shall also function as support for the project management group and ensure that all necessary priorities and resources are met (Ibid.).

Advisory Board
The group will support the chairman of the Steering committee in issues that require special skills within areas such as boat design, technical platform, competition organization, sports-related preparations and so on. By utilizing experienced specialists outside the sport-related side of the project, SEB will create a broader range of skills and a broader basis for decision-making regarding "unusual" issues (ibid.).

Project Council
The project Council is a joint forum for the project's five sub-projects and three workgroups. The Council comprises the overall project manager (Jan Torstenson), five sub-project leaders and the co-ordinators for the project's workgroups. The aim is to co-ordinate joint issues, prepare required issues for decision-making and act as a forum for information exchange and reporting. The project Council also ensures resource needs and necessary priorities (ibid.).

SEB's Project Organization Sheet

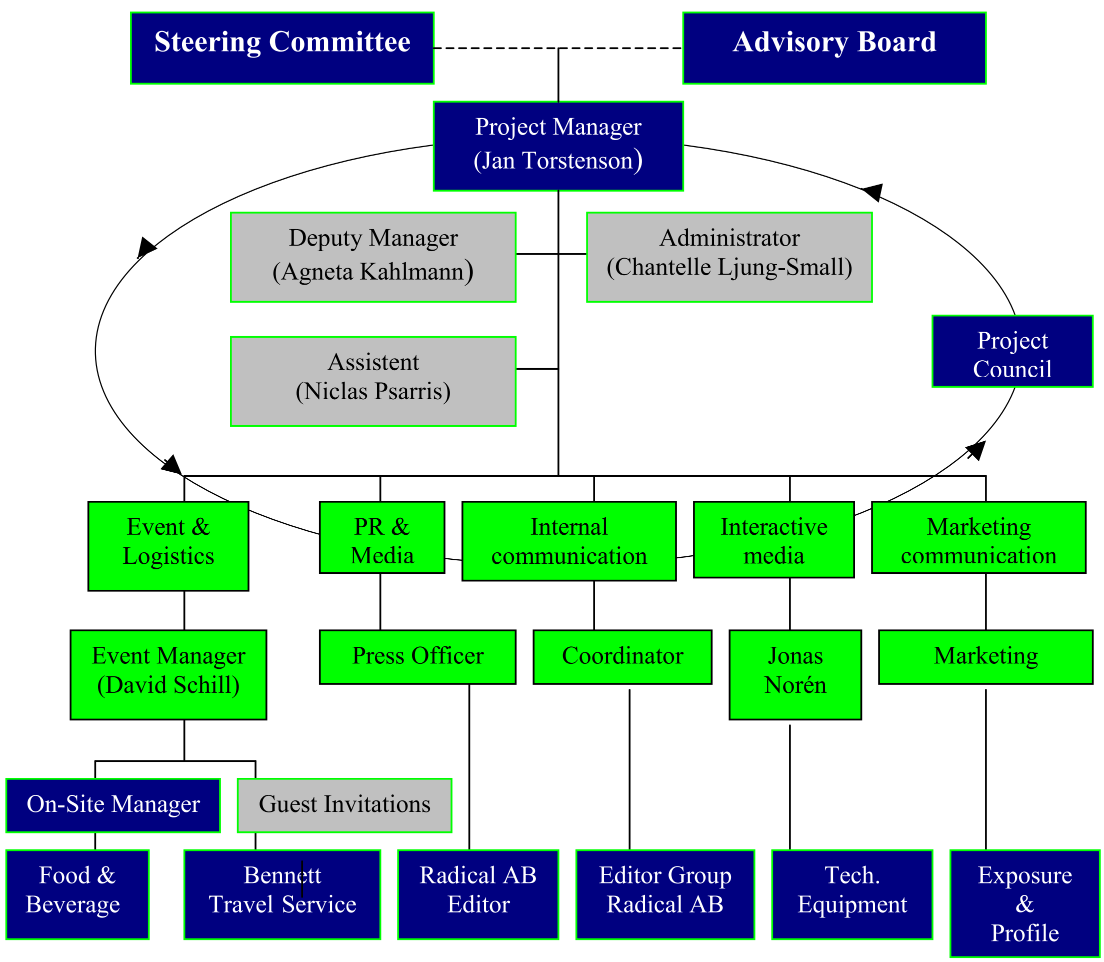


Figure 4. SEB's project organization sheet (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

Project Manager
Jan Torstenson is the Project Manager for the entire project. He is responsible for planning, co-coordinating, operating and carrying through SEB’s internal commitment to Team SEB. The function shall also act as a guarantor for the best possible achievement of the project’s aims and defined goals, for instance by safeguarding SEB's contracted rights as Principal Partner in SEB Global Team, co-coordinating the group's resources in order to utilize SEB's opportunities in an optimal way, etc. (ibid.).

Sub-Areas
The project’s main tasks are undertaken by workgroups:

- Market Communication
- Internet/E-business
- Media Relations
- Event Service
- Internal Communication

Resources on loan, existing functions within SEB and required external skills mankind the groups. The work within each sub-area is coordinated in the joint *Project Council* that has meetings on a weekly basis. The Project Council is the information- and the decision-making forum, where development and planning of the basic-concept co-ordinates. This detailed planning and the carry through at every stopover, co-ordinates of the sub-area: Event Service (ibid.).

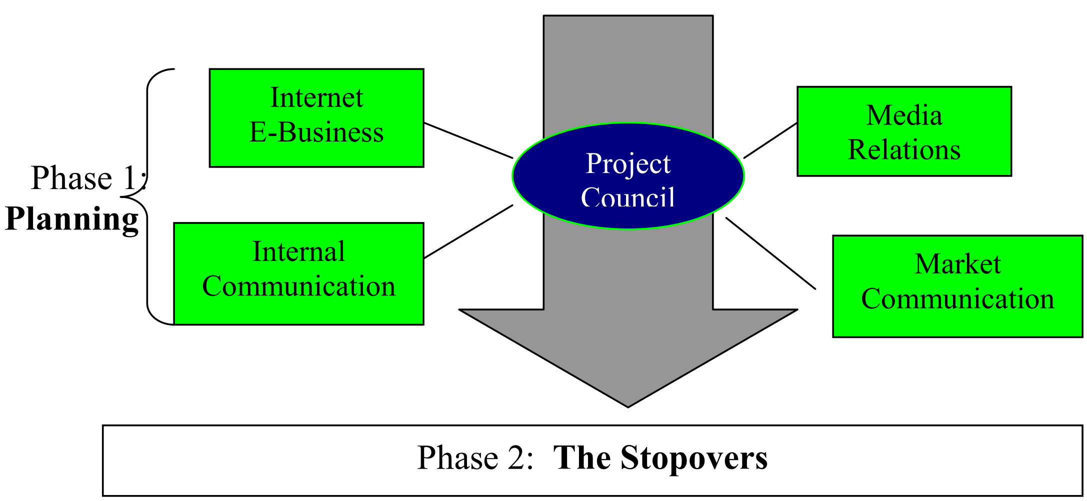


Figure 5. The Project Council and its units (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

The Project Office
The Project Office is located in Stockholm and consists of a "core-troop" that mainly works with co-ordination, follow-up and information. Three of the five sub-areas have their base at the Project Office. These are the Market Communication, Internet/E-business and Market Communication (ibid.).

Other Interested Parties

Volvo Event Management Corporation (VEMC)
VEMC is the overall organizer of the port stopovers and port facilities. VEMC arranges activity programs and related events, and creates a sport commercial platform for participating syndicates. It is also VEMC 's responsibility to market the race locally at the port stopovers, act as a negotiator at the central level and allocate ground space (Ibid.).

Global Team AB
Global Team AB is the Syndicate Company, which organizes and carries out the sportive effort and administer the overall Team-SEB project. It also co-ordinates and secures:

- Team SEB's jointly Press Office.
- All partners' commercial rights and possibilities at the stopovers.
- Team SEB's jointly activities at the stopovers.

Partners -- Team SEB
Team SEB consists of a total of 15 companies, which in different ways participate and contribute in the project. These commitments are regulated in individual partner-agreement between the company and the syndicate-company Global Team AB. To strengthen the possibilities even further in the project, SEB entered into a cooperation with Ericsson, Investor and Breitling. The cooperation intended mostly on the possibilities to carry through joint customer- and PR-activities. SEB also has specific undertakings against Ericsson, Investor and Breitling, of the use of the Race Pavilion. Below is a list, which introduces SEB's partners and suppliers (ibid.).

Partners:

Principal Partner:	*Support Partners:*	*Supporting Yacht Clubs:*
SEB	AP Fastigheter	KSSS
Co Partners:	Nacka Strand	GKSS
Ericsson	Alandia Group	
Investor		

Official Suppliers:	*Partner:*
Sportmanship AB	Unigraphics Solutions
UGS	
Icon MediaLab	

Suppliers:

Suppliers:

Skanska Maskin	Festool
Europolitan	Blåkläder
Rent a Plant	Robshi Batteries
International	Navship
Energizer AB Linco	Breitling
Polopoly	Dirty Dog

3.1.5 Stopovers (SEB's Second and Last Phase in the Project)

SEB is today in their second phase: the Stopovers, where the main concentration is on the work of the planning and the carry-through process for the stopovers. This implies that major changes have been made in SEB’s project organization. As mentioned earlier, it is this phase our analysis later on will be built upon.

Description of the Responsibilities and the Setting of the Stopovers

The Responsibility Areas

Volvo Event Management Corporation (VEMC)
VEMC is the overall organizer of the port stopovers and port facilities. VEMC arranges activity programs and related events, and creates a sport commercial platform for participating syndicates. It is also VEMC’s responsibility to market the race locally at the port stopovers, act as a negotiator at the central level and allocate ground space (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

Local Organizers
The local organizers, which are appointed by VEMC, organize, administrate and provide service relating to: yachts, crews, Volvo, the syndicates, the general public and the media. They provide ports, ground space, catering and various related services, as well as organizing local events, activities and support. The local organizer also co-ordinates accommodation and activity programs via local agents and suppliers, which is why SEB works jointly with them to fulfil SEB’s requirement (ibid.).

Team SEB's Project Office
The project office is currently building up a service concept for hotel accommodation, travel service, activity programs and Team SEB's Race Pavilion. The Project Office also arranges moorings for the vo60 yacht and engages local contacts on site. Team SEB's Project Office is also responsible for the standard activities in Team SEB's Race Pavilion. The Project Office also books premises for additional activities and co-ordinates and carries out other official program activities arranged by VEMC and other syndicates (ibid.).

Event Service
As said before, Event Service is one of the sub-areas in SEB's organization. Event Service is responsible for the co-ordination of the detailed plan and also for the carry-through at the stopovers (ibid.).

The Setting

A critical element of the race, both in terms of safety and marketing, is the inclusion of stopover ports at various intervals. Their location is chosen primarily on the basis of the sailing requirements but also on the basis of the media, marketing and promotional opportunities they offer to the race and syndicate sponsors. At each stopover a *Race Village* is created as a showcase for the yachts and sponsors as well as a major visitor attraction. They are designed to be self-contained with all the facilities that the teams, media, sponsors and visitors require. In most ports, the *Race Village* comprises three areas:

- **Technical Area** -- where the boats can be taken out of the water for repairs and maintenance. Only the syndicates' shore crew (support team) and the crew has access to this area.
- **Syndicates Area** -- Where each syndicate can welcome its VIP guests, either in its own Pavilion or in Volvo's Ocean Club. Volvo runs the Ocean Club and it is intended for crews, syndicates and guests invited by Volvo. *Team SEB* has its own Pavilion in the syndicates' area.
- **Public Area** -- Where Volvo, the local organizer who carries on this area, and other sponsors can draw attention to their products and services. Restaurants and other entertainment are also provided in this area. *The Team SEB Race Pavilion* is owned and managed by SEB. As an SEB host, you are given the opportunity to invite your guests to lunch buffets, a fully licensed bar, internally organized seminar, social gatherings, dinners with entertainment, etc. Here, Team SEB merchandise will be sold and there will be small exhibitions about SEB and joint products and services shared with co-partners. A small area of the pavilion can be opened to the general public (ibid.).

SEB’s Purpose and Goals with the Stopovers

SEB’s Purpose

SEB’s purpose with the Race Pavilion at the stopovers is to create a meeting place for relationship marketing and business to business (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

SEB’s Goals

SEB’s has several goals with the stopovers, these are the ones who follows:

- create a unique platform for exposure
- bring SEB’s communicative message to life “taking knowledge further”
- expose SEB’s trademark as a leading e-banking player
- be a tool for relationship-building activities, both internal and external
- contribute to strengthening existing client relations and to create new ones
- create business opportunities
- create an efficient utilisation of the engagement in VOR for SEB’s business areas
- create relationship and PR-activities with journalists so we get publicity on our main markets (ibid.).

3.1.6 SEB's Organization in the New Phase (the Stopover Phase)

Today the organization is mainly fissured into two parts. One, that works from home, *The Project Office* and one that works at the stopovers, *The On-Site organization* (ibid.).

The Project Office in Stockholm

As mentioned earlier the Project Office is located in Stockholm and its main work-areas are: co-ordination, follow up and information. Three of the sub-areas are situated there: Internal Communication, Internet/E-business and Market Communication. Parallel to the work with the stopovers runs of course, their usual work (ibid.).

Until now, four of the five sub-areas have worked with preparation-work and have created a base that the fifth sub-area *(Event service)* now will realize at the stopovers (See figure 5) (ibid.).

The information-flow between the On-Site organization and SEB’s units, co-ordinates here at the Project Office.

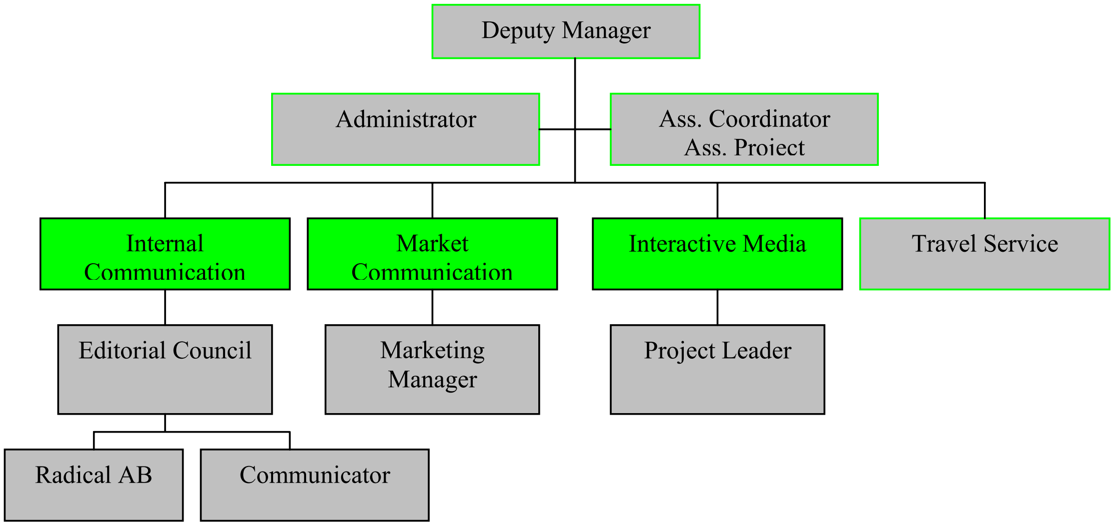


Figure 6. The Project Office (General stopover description, 2001)

The On-Site organization

The On-Site organization is the channel that is the "away" organization. The On-Site organization is mainly managed by the Project Manager (Jan Torstenson) and the Event Manager (David Schill).

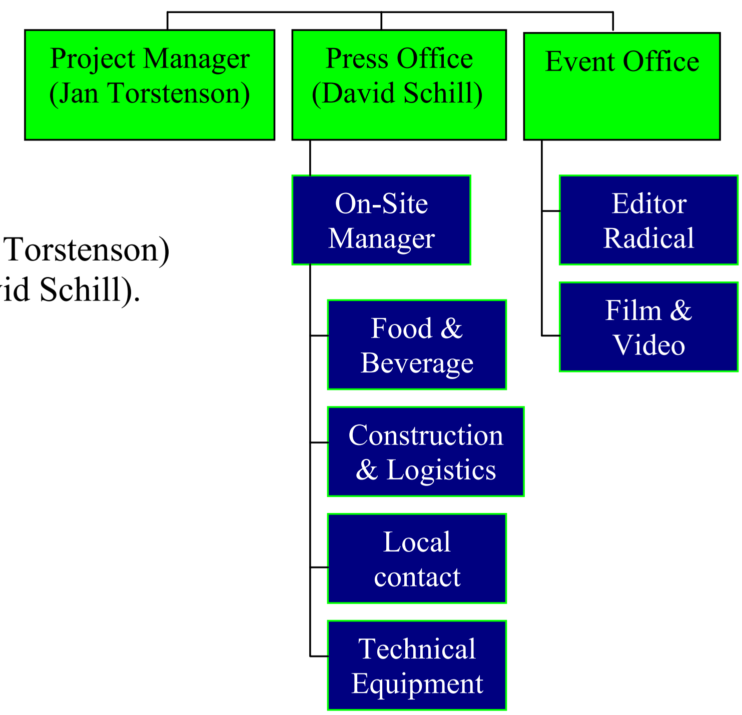


Figure 7. The On-Site organization, which is located at the Stopovers (Psarris & Torstenson, 2001).

The Cooperation and Communication between the “Home and Away Offices”

As have been mentioned earlier, the information flow between the On-Site organization and SEB's units is coordinated in Stockholm. In the new phase where SEB find themselves in right now, the co-ordination and the communication is most important (General stopover description, 2001).

The *Project Council* is the center of the working-process. It is the one that has to make everything work as smoothly as possible and also steer the overall planning. Then it is the *Event service* area that co-ordinats the detailed planning and the carry-through, at every stopover (ibid.).

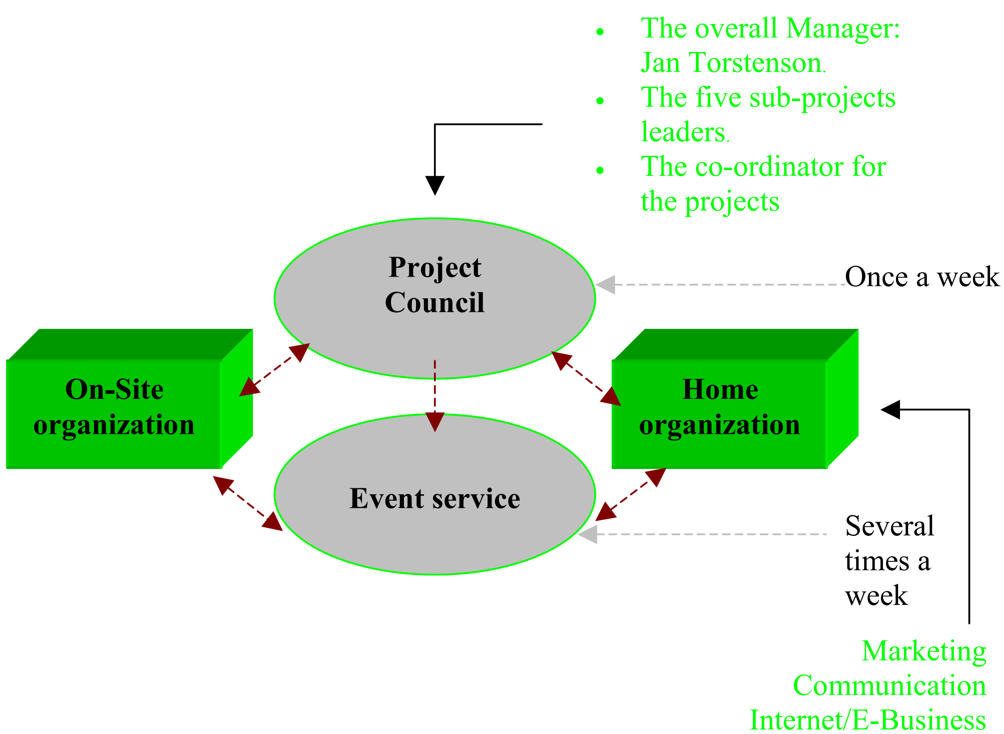


Figure 8. The working process (General stopover description, 2001).

We have now made a presentation of our case company SEB. The presentation described how SEB's project organization was built up and how it has changed when SEB entered phase two: the Stopover phase. We will now continue our case company presentation with an investigation of SEB’s project function in the Volvo Ocean Race.

The reason for deepening our investigation in SEB’s function in The Volvo Ocean Race, is to give a clearer picture of the race, an overview, so that it will become easier to understand the challenges SEB has to face. Further it will help the reader to connect the challenges we have identified to SEB, in our analysis part.

3.2 SEB's Project Function – Event Marketing

Since projects are complex and our ambition is to identify challenges in our case company, we perceive it necessary to sort out what function SEB possesses in the Volvo Ocean Race. Further we felt it was essential to have a good understanding for what Event Marketing is to be able to make a trustworthy analysis.

3.2.1 Event in Broad Terms

In the beginning of our research process for this thesis, we used the expression Event, while discussing SEB. After one of our expert interviews (01-10-19), we did get an understanding of how to categorize a project. According to him a project was divided into five parts.

A Project as a Whole

1. Goals 2. Strategy 3. Packeting	The communication around the carrying-through process, the Event Marketing
4. Carrying-through 5. Following-up	The carrying-through process, the actual Event.

To apply this "model" on SEB are the goals, strategy and packeting, the ways they have used to accomplish successful events along the project. The Event is the carrying-through process where the actual customer relation and contact occurs. SEB is in their Stopover phase today, which to a large extent contains the carrying-through process at the Stopovers and the preparations on the eve of each event (Stopover).

From Getz (1997) we found that events constitute one of the most exciting and fastest growing forms of leisure, business, and tourism-related phenomena. Their special appeal stems in part from the limited duration and innate uniqueness of each event, which distinguish them from permanent institutions and built attractions. Frequently their celebratory and festive ambience elevates them above ordinary life experiences. Inevitably, spectacular growth in the number and diversity of planned events has given rise to new business opportunities, careers, tourism implications, and professionalism (Getz, 1997). Further according to Getz (1997) events are temporary occurrences, either planned or unplanned. They have a finite length, and for planned events this is usually fixed and publicized. People know and expect that the event ends, and this fact provides a major part of their appeal. When it is over, you cannot experience it again. True, many events are periodic, but each one has a unique ambience created by the combination of its length, setting, management (i.e., its program, staffing and design), and those in attendance. This principle does according to Getz apply to all events:

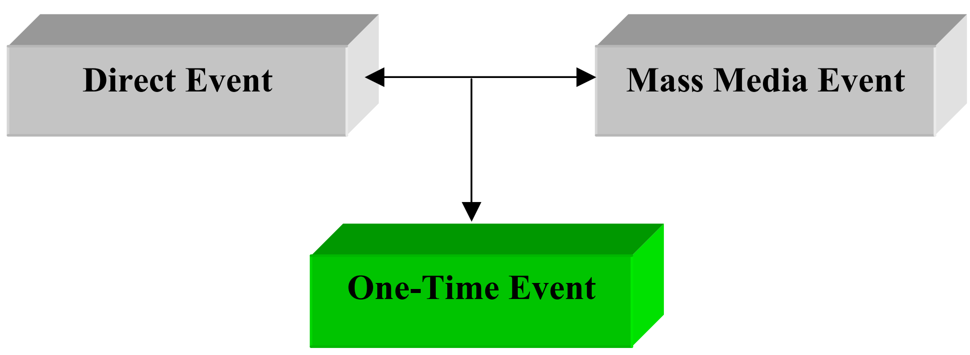
"Events are transient, and every event is a unique blending of its duration, setting, management, and people" (Getz, 1997).

Andersson and Larsson-Mossberg (1994) state that you can classify an event by,

1. Either a *direct* one and/or a *mass media* one, which differs in the sense of; if it experiences an audience directly and/or if it meidates/connects through TV.
2. An event can also be a *one-time* event or a *recurrent* one.
3. An event can also be divided into a *local* or *event tourism*. What differs between these two is that *event tourism* creates consciously just to attract tourists and is used while improving and marketing tourism. *Local Event* is an event that limits its activity just to the local market (Andersson & Larsson-Mossberg, 1994 from Larson 1997).

Applying this on the Volvo Ocean Race and seeing it from SEB's angel.

Volvo Ocean Race is…



…For S E B

Figure 9. What kind of event SEB is in The Volvo Ocean Race (Our own model).

3.2.2 Event Marketing

SEB uses the Event Marketing concept as a tool for getting closer to its customers and also to integrate its image all over the world. Since they do that, we want to get an understanding for what the concept stands for, why it is being used and if there are any difficulties with using it.

Commercial sponsorship as a marketing activity has only developed over the past decades (Meenaghan & Shimpley, 1999), and the concept of event marketing is even more recent. Event marketing has its roots in the sponsorship industry and the term event marketing probably occurred for the first time in connection with the Olympic Games in Los Angeles 1984, when the organizers offered the sponsors the opportunity to use the sponsorship at a larger scale. Contracts were signed which specified the type of exposure the sponsors were to enjoy based on the amount of monetary contribution, as well as to what extent the sponsors could use the event in their marketing communication as a whole. In order to distinguish between this new type of sponsorship and the old, more philanthropic, charity from companies, the concept of event marketing was formulated (Behrer & Larson, 1998; Caterwood & Van Kirk, 1992 from Hoffman, 2000).

The use of events for achieving marketing goals has been gaining a legitimate and important place in companies' communication mix during the past years. An increasing number of companies are shifting substantial resources to become title sponsors, supporting sponsors or official suppliers of special events (Shani & Sander, 1996). According to Meenaghan and Shimpley (1999), commercial sponsorship of events represents one of the most rapidly growing sectors of marketing communication, a statement evidenced by the fact that world-wide sponsorship expenditure has increased from 2 billion US dollar in 1984 to 18 billion US dollar in 1997 (Hoffman, 2000).

Behrer and Larsson (1998) have written one of the fundamental books in Event Marketing. They define Event Marketing as:

"an attempt to co-ordinate the marketing communication concerning a company or sponsorship event. The event in EM is an activity that gathers the target group in time and space: a meeting in which an experience is created and a message communicated." (Behrer & Larsson, 1998)

"EM is the name on a communication form, which describes when a company uses events to communicate a planned message for some of their interested parties." (ibid.)

Relation between Event Marketing and other Elements in the Promotion Mix

Every company has a number of tools for marketing purposes that constitute the marketing mix. Kotler (1999) defines the marketing mix (the 4Ps) as *"the set of controllable tactical tools -- product, price, place and promotion -- that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market"* (Kotler, 1999). One of the four P:s in the Marketing Mix is promotion, which Kotler describes as the *"activities that communicate the product or service and its merits to target customers and persuade them to buy"* (ibid.).

Kotler further writes that a company's total marketing communication mix -- called its promotion mix, is the *specific mix* of advertising, personal selling, sales and promotion and public relations that a company uses to pursue its advertising and marketing objectives. EM integrates many of the different parts in the promotion mix, round an event (ibid.).

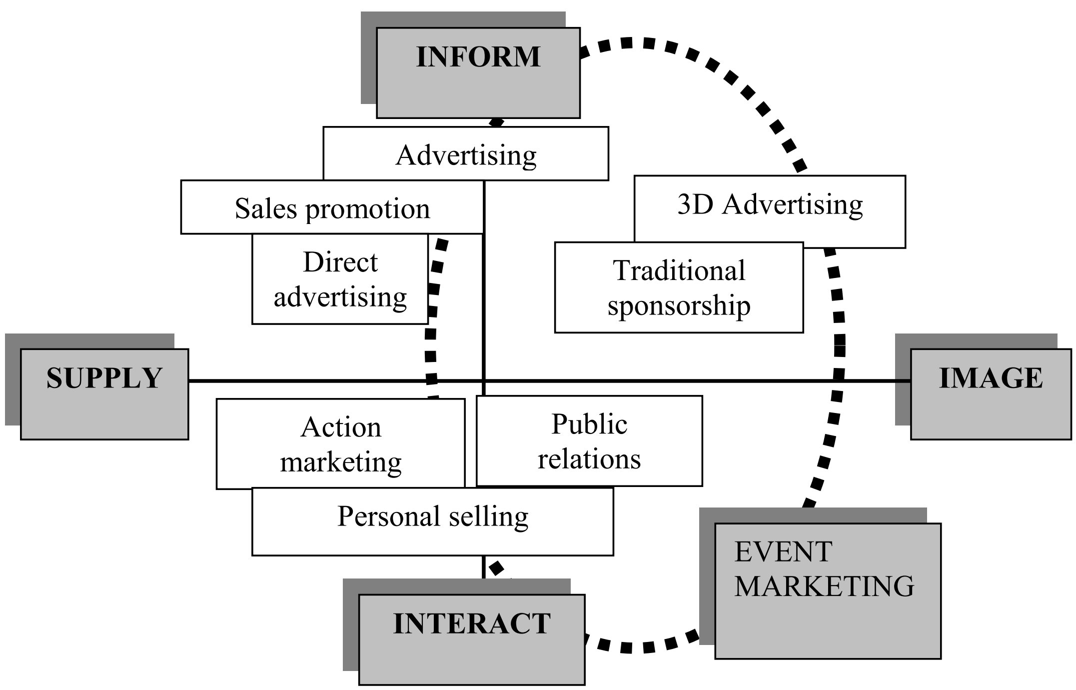


Figure 10. EM within the Promotion Mix (Behrer & Larsson, 1998).

Event Marketing Replaces Sponsoring in the Promotion Mix

Cunningham, Taylor and Reeder (quoted in Cornwell and Maignan, 1998) imply that sponsorship is a component of event marketing, since the term Event Marketing encompasses the notion of event sponsorship. Another view on Event Marketing versus sponsorship is given by Cornwell (quoted in Cornwell and Maignan, 1998), who claims Event Marketing lies within the domain of sponsorship when the event's organizers sell sponsorship rights in exchange for a fee, and when those sponsorships are exploited in the sponsor's promotions. SEB bought the rights to become the principal partner in the Volvo Ocean Race. They joined the race, whereas they wanted to spread their image all over the world (Cornwell and Maignan, 1998 from Hoffman, 2000).

According to Meenaghan (1991), the sponsor of an event is buying two things: the exposure potential that the activity has in terms of audience, and the image associated with that activity in terms of how it is perceived (Meenaghan, 1998 from Hoffman, 2000).

From Behrer and Larson we find that traditional sponsorship and Event Marketing can be classified according to the sponsor's relationship to the arena where the event takes place and the event itself. The event can take place at the sponsor's own arena in direct connection to the daily activities of the company, this is the case for SEB. They have their own pavilion at every stopover along the race. Second, at a place not connected to the company. Furthermore, the event can be created by and adjusted to the sponsoring company, or the event can already exist prior to the sponsoring. The Volvo Ocean Race had existed even if SEB was not the principal partner. So in this case the event is as in the latter part, it already exists (Behrer & Larsson, 1998 from Hoffman, 2000). According to Behrer and Larson, you can divide sponsorship- and Event Marketing into four different categories. They are divided into the different categories depending on if the event is existing or created, further if the event is carried out on the company's own territory or at a separate external location (ibid.).

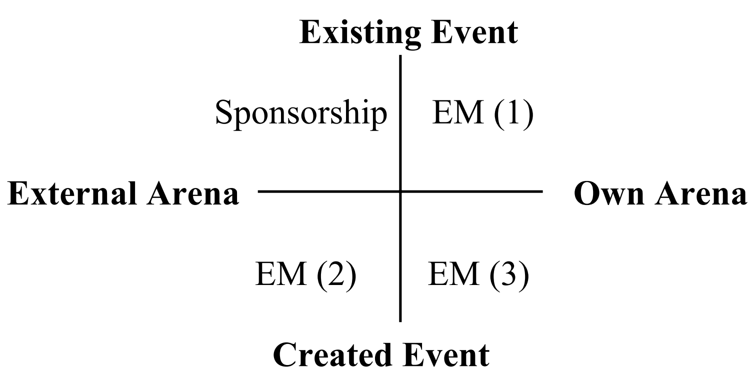


Figure 11. The division of sponsorship and EM (Behrer & Larsson, 1998).

According to us, SEB does "apply" two of the four categories, since they are sponsors in the Volvo Ocean Race, but also carry on events along the race, on their own arena.

Reasons Why the use of EM has Increased

Kotler (1999) writes that the Marketing Mix has limited prerequisites as a competition tool. Today many products have the best quality, a low price and are easy to get in the stores. To compete at the mature market every company faces nowadays, they have to get closer to the customer and do that by trust. Since many companies have good products and services today, they have to convince the customer that their company fits their profile. That is impossible to do without any contact with the customer. A customer must be able to relate to the product or service. Relationship Marketing has become a very important competing tool these days, with this tool a company can meet these new expectations and also get a close connection and relationship with their customer. According to Kotler Relationship Marketing is: *"The process of creating, maintaining and enhancing strong, value-laden relationships with customers and other stakeholders"* (Kotler, 1999). Relationship Marketing is also called the 5th P (ibid.).

Event Marketing is applicable on Relationship Marketing, since it meets all the changing marketing conditions and new demands on marketing (Behrer & Larsson, 1998).

Relationship Marketing is the answer to the marketing demands and the Event Marketing is an answer to how Relationship Marketing could be applied on the mass markets (ibid.).

The underlying thought with Relationship Marketing is its focus on the specific individual, where the message is tailor-made after the specific individual's interests, activities and opinions. An advantage with Relationship Marketing is that it gives you the opportunity to reach every individual with the tools of mass communication. The problem is how companies on a market with thousands of consumers will be able to communicate with thousands of individuals, outside their preferences? This is where Event Marketing has an important role in the application of Relationship Marketing (ibid.).

The figure below summarizes the reasoning above:

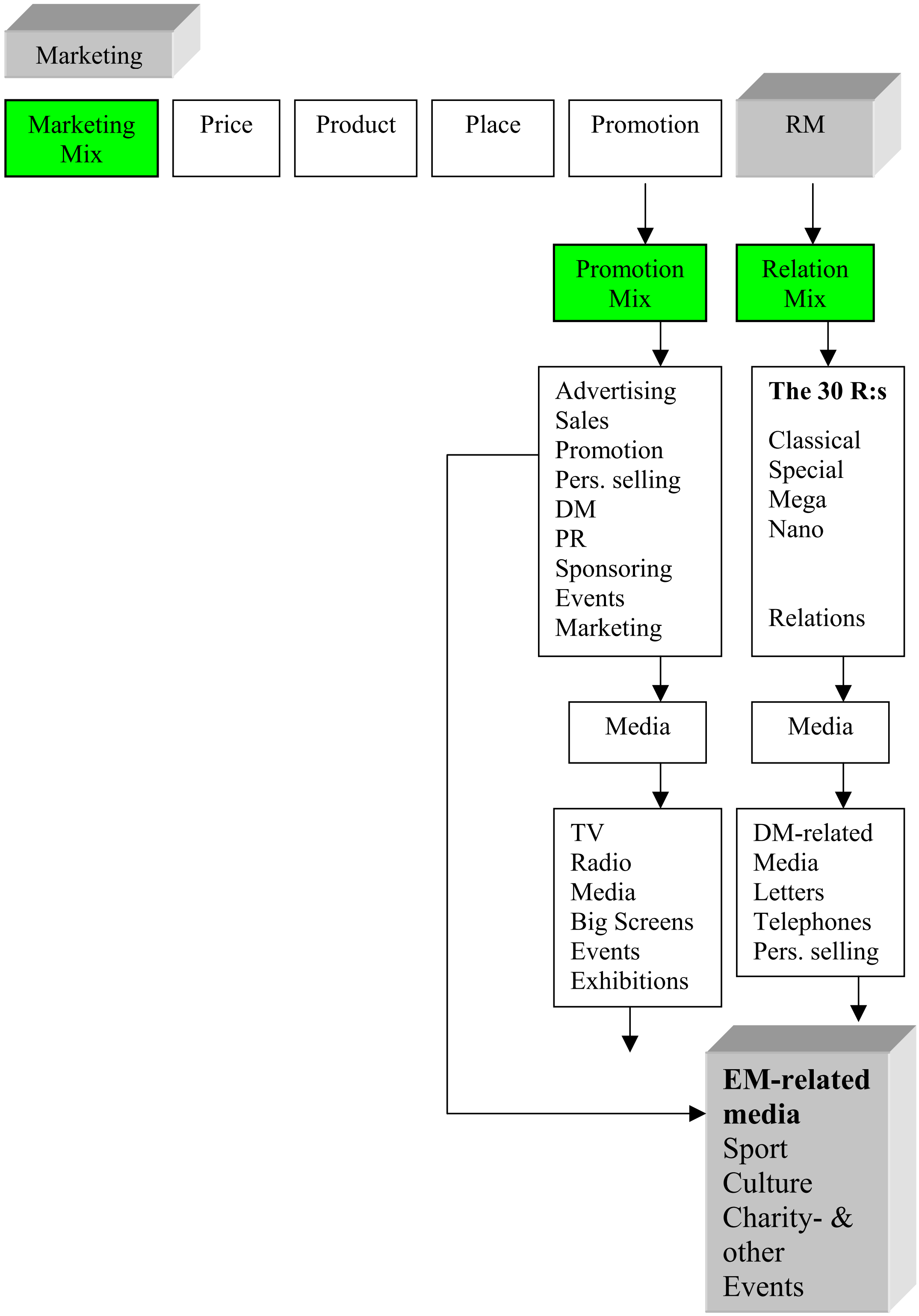


Figure 12. Event Marketing's relation to the Marketing-, Promotion-, and Relation Mix (Hoffman, 2000).

The use of Event Marketing

Behrer and Larsson (1998) write that the event gives the possibility to get direct feedback and communication. It also contributes with personification and identification of both the customer and the company. The company also gets a chance to be a part of the feeling “me-you-us”, in a social ensemble, which in return creates loyalty (Behrer & Larsson, 1998).

Another thing Event Marketing could be a good tool for is to strengthen a company’s image. Since the company gets an individual contact with their customers and also by the event gives the customers an experience of how the company comprehends them, this results in the customer apprehending the company in a certain way. Therefore it is very important that the company create a positive climate and a controlled social context, since the customers’ apprehension will be affected by the climate and interaction in the social context (ibid.).

SEB’s goal as mentioned earlier, is to deliver and spread their image all over the world, through the race. Therefore it is necessary that their events at the stopovers create a good feeling for the customers. In this reasoning about the image, it is not only the event-marketing that has to work, also the sponsorship is important. All customers and future customers cannot be invited to the event along the race, therefore it is significant for SEB to be able to send their message of their image through media and TV. But it is important to recall that the boat will talk for itself, there is no explanation included, when pictures and snapshots are shown. Hence, then it must have been a good explanation before the race started of what the boat’s color and look stands for. If not, the viewers will create their own apprehensions, based on their background, culture and previous experiences (ibid.).

After an insight into SEB’s function, we will now continue to investigate the organization form, projects. This is essential to understand the complexity in projects. The importance of this could not be better expressed than by one of the respondents in our case study:

“The key to success in this project is rather a question of management than event and sponsoring.”

4. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter the reader will be provided with an understanding of which theories we use to identify and meet the challenges in the SEB project. First we present a model illustrating our theoretical framework. Second, investigations in the area of project research approaches, aiming for identifying concepts to distinguish the challenges within the SEB project. Further a discussion of different tools that are capable of meeting the challenges; Communication, Shared Understanding and Collective Competence.

4.1 Introduction

Our theoretical path has been formed out of our aspiration to reach an understanding how to manage complex projects efficiently. We would like to clarify that the theoretical path in this chapter is our adaptation of different theories into our conceptual framework. The model shown below illustrates our theoretical framework:

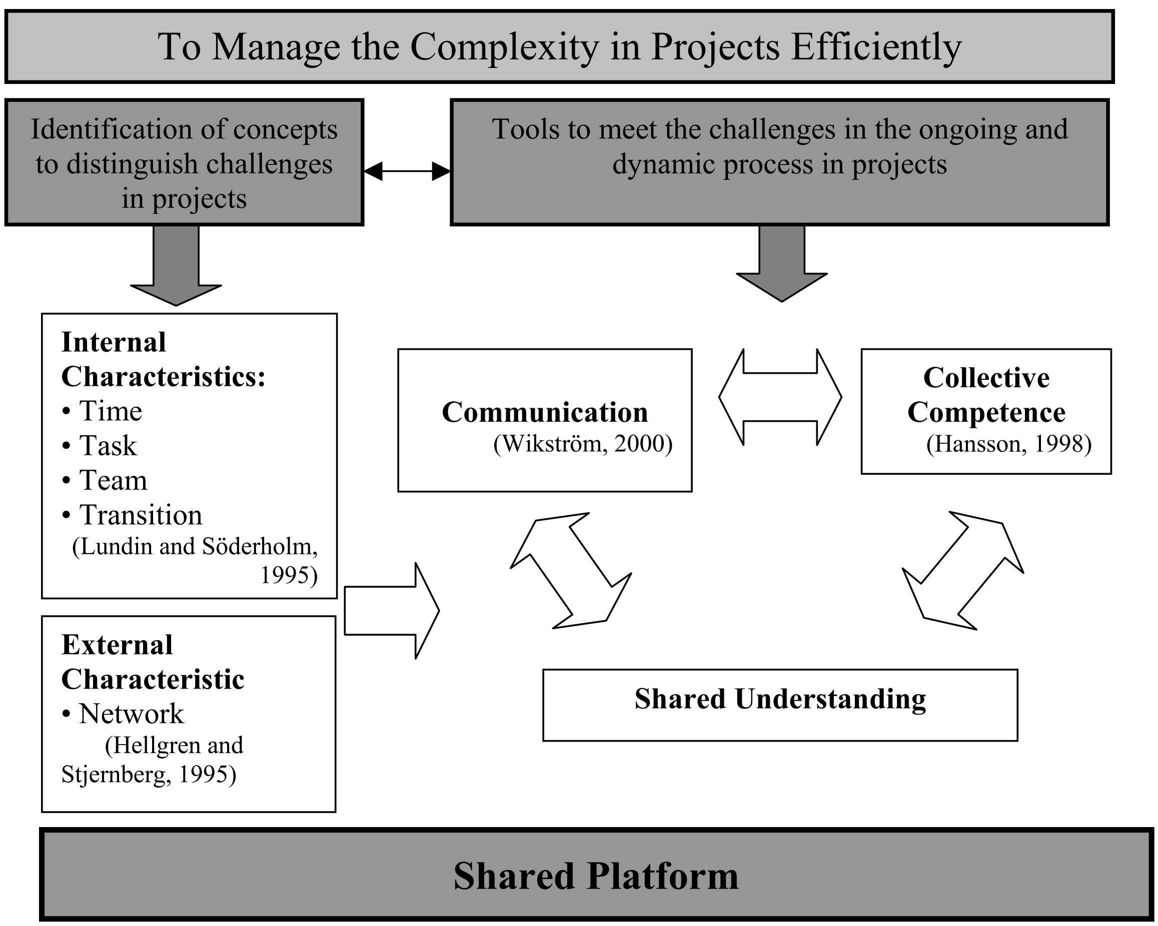


Figure 13. The theoretical path towards an efficient project (Our own model).

4.2 Identification of Concepts to Distinguish Challenges in the SEB Project

Below we discuss one main and one complementary project research approach that we chose as help to distinguish challenges in the project. First, we conduct a discussion concerning the main ideas in the approaches. Further, a presentation of the concepts included in these approaches.

4.2.1 Project Research Approaches

Observations and interviews at our case company, SEB are decisive to fulfill the objectives with this thesis, since we want to distinguish challenges typical for their project and further way to meet those. To be able to identify these challenges we need theoretical tools that can help us with this identification, hence, the tools have to uncover the complexity and interrelationships behind actions in project groups. However, which project research approaches accomplish this?

According to Söderlund (2000) research on projects and project management has increased tremendously in recent years. New perspectives, theories and studies proliferate, new conferences are initiated, and the number of project management journals is increasing (Söderlund, 2000). We became aware of this "jungle of different project research approaches"; there were many ways to go. However, we knew fairly well what we searched for, i.e. to "get under the surface" of projects. We discovered a recent project management research approach, which is our *main focus* in this thesis, the Behavioral School. This recent approach fulfills our aims by proclaiming deep, descriptive studies and considerations to organizational issues, human interactions within projects (Burke, 1994; Bryman et al., from Söderlund, 2000). Below follows a discussion about this project research approach.

The Behavioral School

There are a few recurrent authors connected to the Behavioral School, Lundin & Söderholm (1995) belong to this assembly of researchers. These authors develop *"a theory of the Temporary Organization"* around the notion that *action* has the leading role. The main source of information about the course of action pursued within a project is according to this approach, the individuals forming the project organization.

"Action has to be understood as enactment of the subjective and inter-subjective realities of individuals and groups of individuals" (Packendorff, 1995).

According to Lundin & Söderholm (1995) action is more important than decision, when accomplishing a project (Sahlin-Andersson, 1991 from Larson, 1997). The authors question the implicit assumption that decisions "cause" action and that decisions occur before actions, since it has been shown that actions in fact may be a consequence of decisions. According to Lundin & Söderholm (1995), this does mean that decisions can be made after actions, and that they may be made to legitimize actions already taken. Further that, there may not be any logical connection between decisions and actions. Surrounding conditions such as organizational culture, institutional norms and commitment may also influence actions in ways that that cannot be analyzed in a decision-making perspective (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995 from Larson, 1997). The authors write further that the motive for the existence of the organizations is constituted by the specific actions made in the organization to accomplish a task, e.g. managing and organizing the stopovers in our SEB case study. The actions are also fundamental for the success of the project (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995 from Larson, 1997). Packendorff (1995) is another recurrent researcher (presented above) who proposes research on action in projects, i.e. human interaction within the project organization leading to the outcome of the project. He writes that studying projects as action systems means putting less energy into studying what is meant to happen, and more into what is *really* happening (Packendorff, 1995).

According to Söderlund (2000), inspired by the inception of the IRNOP[6] in 1994, the use of the concept "Temporary Organization" has increased in project management writings. Several of these studies have aimed at extending the interpretations of project management within organization theory. This research is not interested in planning techniques or critical success factors, but, instead, the various *behavioral dimensions* of projects (Söderlund, 2000). The main criticism among researchers towards the traditional project research field concerns some corn-stones. First, it is criticized for its technical and rationalistic approaches, emphasizing such aspects and models as work-breakdown structures (Burke, 1994: Kerzner, 1995). The problem according to Burke (1994) is that project management is widely misperceived as a collection of planning and controlling techniques, rather than as a rich and complex management process (Burke, 1994 from Söderlund, 2000). According to Packendorff (1995) there is an abundance in traditional project management research of normative advice despite lack of empirical evidence (Söderlund, 2000).

[6] Project Management Institute

According to Söderlund (2000), although, Lundin and Söderholm (1995) are the only ones who explicitly relate their work to "behavioral" theory, there are several other studies that share a similar processual view of organizations (cf. Bryman et al, 1987). However, we use these authors as our main source in the area of behavioral theory. According to Lundin & Söderholm (1995), this approach distinguishes between permanent organizations and *Temporary Organizational settings (TO)*[7], e.g. projects. Further, this approach states that mainstream organization theory is based upon the assumption that organizations are permanent (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Lundin & Söderholm (1995) argue that theories of temporary organization settings, such as projects, are much less prevalent (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Söderlund (2000) summarizes the primary focus and key question in this behavioral School, the concept Temporary Organization:

- The primary focus for analysis in this research approach concerns *project organization process (es)*
- The key issue investigated is *"How do project Organizations behave"*
- The project management idea is *"Shaping Processes of Project Organization"* (Söderlund, 2000).

Packendorff, (1995) writes that what is to be studied, in fact, is temporary organizing processes, i.e. the deliberate social interaction occurring between people working together to accomplish a certain, inter-subjectively determined task, human interactions within projects (Packendorff, 1995; Söderlund, 2000). Further, "planning" and "structure" may be important inputs into such a process, but it is the inter-subjective meaning attributed to project plans or structural arrangements by project members that "explain" whatever action is taken with reference to these phenomena (Packendorff, 1995).

This insight into Temporary organizing processes gave us a valuable *processual view on Temporary organizations; an action oriented perspective to analyze internal processes, an intra-perspective*.

The Decision School

According to the company presentation, the SEB project is to manage and organize events[8], which includes an external network (sponsors, partners). This fact made us realize that the working situation in a Temporary Organization best is understood by regarding impacts from the external network upon the project group. Therefore we also *complement* this Behavioral School with the

[7] Project = Temporary Organization, TO.

[8] As developed earlier on page 28.

Decision School. This approach helps us to understand how external actors affect the project group, *inter-organizational perspective*.

According to Larson (1997) several different actors perform the organizing and marketing of an event. These actors act in a so-called project network. A recurrent definition of a project network is defined by Hellgren and Stjernberg, (1995) as a concept focusing on inter-organizational relationships from a temporary project perspective. A project network is temporally limited, dynamically changing and is open in the sense that there are no definite criteria by which the boundary of the network may be identified and controlled. Moreover, it does not have any legitimate authority for the network as a whole (Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995 from Larson, 1997).

According to Söderlund, (2000) several studies of the decision processes preceding large projects have been reported, as a critique against many rational decisions and project management models. This theory is based on the same assumptions regarding the necessity of descriptive and action-based research, it raises critique against normative techniques and methods used for project management (Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995). Söderlund, (2000) further writes that the research seems to be driven by an interest to understand the formation of large projects and the political decision processes typically involved in "project networks" (Hellgren and Stjernberg, 1995 from Söderlund, 2000).
The Decision School in project management research is typified by its principal focus on the *project formulation phase*. Decision researchers, for instance (Hall's, 1980 from Söderlund, 2000) study of planning disasters features as one of the early works, are fundamentally concerned with two questions; why are projects instigated, and why are certain decisions made.

We use Hellgren & Stjernberg (1995); Larson (1997, 2001) as the main sources in the area of network theory. The authors employ a "project network" perspective, in order to study project processes and aspects where traditional project management techniques and routines do not apply. Söderlund, (2000) summarizes the primary focus and key question in this Decision School, the Network research:

- Issues investigated in this research concerns *"How collective units of organizations are managed in coordinated activities"* (Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995).
- The primary focus of analysis is "*Relationships and management by actors in the early stage of a project"*

- "The project management idea" according to Söderlund (2000), concerns *patterns of interactions among organizations* (not on individuals and processes as in the Behavioral approach discussed above) (Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995).

This insight into Network Theory gave us an understanding for *impacts from external actors upon the project group, in Temporary organizations.*

Before we continue to discuss the concepts in these two approaches, which can help us to distinguish challenges in the SEB project, we will clarify a few distinctions we make, in the area of project research.

4.2.2 Our Distinctions in the Area of Project Research

First, the organization form projects, have many functions, according to Antonio can functions in projects can for example be to accomplish an organizational change, research, product development or development of information systems (Antonio, 2000 from Hansson, 1998). The activities performed in our case company, in order to realize an event (organizing, marketing and management), can be regarded as project work (cf. Muir, 1986 from Larson, 1997), since a specific task is executed by a team within a limited time frame (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995 from Larson, 1997). Therefore the project function in our case company is an *Event Project*, to accomplish events (stopovers)[9] in a sail competition.

A distinction can also be made between unique and permanent projects. According to (Getz, 1975 from Larson, 1997) some events are one-time events and performed by a Project organization during a limited period of time for the purpose of realizing the event. Other events are repetitive, i.e. organized for example every summer. The work is, in this case, often organized within a permanent organization in the form of a project, i.e. a new project is initiated each year to organize the event of that year (Larson, 2001). The project organization in our case study is performing *a unique event within a permanent organization* (SEB).

We continue with making a distinction of project levels of analysis. According to Söderlund (2000) project research spans a variety of levels of analysis; this thesis focuses on a *Project-group level*. From Söderlund (2000) we find that the group level covers studies of relatively small groups, frequently only a number of five or ten individuals working either in an overall project structure or as a stand-alone project.

[9] As explained in the case company presentation on page 23.

An additional distinction is made between different project management approaches. This distinction is based on Söderlund's (2000) categorization of different project management research schools. According to the above our main focus is on the *Behavioral School***,** the process of organizing, the "behavior" of project organizations and human interactions within projects (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995) and a complementary approach is the *Decision School*, decision processes in project networks, including legitimacy and commitment issues (Larson, 2001).

Last, our focus on the Behavioral and the Decision School, includes an additional distinction, different phases of the project (Söderlund, 2000). According to the case company presentation above, the SEB project group is in the stopover phase, the implementation phase. We want to take this position in the project life cycle into consideration while investigating characteristics typical for projects. According to Söderlund (2000) there are two phases in projects, project formulation and project implementation (execution). The last-mentioned is connected to the Behavioral School, the process of organizing, and coordination of the members in the project team. The former concerns for example formulations of contract with partners and sponsors at the very start of the project.

Below an illustration which summarizes our distinctions in the area of project research:

Team Environment
Decision School
Project Formulation

↕

Project-group level
Project Function – Event Marketing
A unique Event within a permanent organization

↕

Individual (s)
Behavioral School
Project implementation

Figure 14. Distinctions in the area of project research, adapted by Bengtsson & Sjöqvist*,* 2001 (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995).

4.2.3 Concepts from the Intra- and Inter Organizational Perspectives

In the discussion below we present the concepts from the Temporary Organization and Network approaches that we use to distinguish challenges at our case company.

Intra-Organizational Concepts

According to Lundin & Söderholm (1995), the four concepts, time, task, team, transition provide some insights into the way various types of boundaries between the Temporary Organization and its environment can be defined. The concepts also differ from the crucial concepts that define the permanent organization. Permanent organizations are more naturally defined by goals (rather than tasks), survival (rater than time), working organization (rather than team) and production processes and continual development (rather than transition).

Time

The first concept in Lundin & Söderholm's (1995) framework for Temporary Organizations is *Time.* According to the authors, time is generally regarded as a scarce resource, for any organization. However, for a Temporary Organization the handling of time is more complicated, since time is literally limited: it ends. The authors can see that Temporary organizations provide a highly organized way of dealing with time problems and of acting according to the perception of time as being scarce, linear and valuable. Crucial problems to be handled within sequences of time include uncertainty, conflict resolution and the allocation of scarce time resources, which in turn explain the need for time schedules, synchronization and the allocation of time. This seemed like a valuable characteristic for projects, thoughts arose like, how does SEB allocate their scarce time resources, which actions does this create?

Task

The second concept, *Task,* does according to Lundin & Söderholm (1995) legitimize a Temporary Organization and can according to above, be compared to a permanent organization's devotion to goals. Here it can be interesting to investigate how goal formulations in Temporary Organizations differ from the ones in permanent organizations. Larson (1997), has a discussion concerning goal formulations in Temporary Organizations with a descriptive approach. Larson writes that according to Packendorff (1993), it is hard to predict situations that will influence the project work in the future, since you do something unique in projects. Rather, ways to act and respond to new situations are developed by the actors during the project work, this develop new goals and ways to work during the lifetime of the project. Constant reformulation and updates of the goals are needed. According to (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996 from Larson, 1997) it is reasonable to regard initial prerequisites and goals as preliminary, as this apprehension (development of goals *during* the project) creates occasions for development and learning during the project work. Similar discussion about goal formulations in projects is to be found from (Christensen, 1997 from Hansson, 1998). According to her formal division and absolute distribution are not the most important things in the goal formulation phase, rather what is important is to communicate shared symbols that the project members can work towards during the project work.

Lundin & Söderholm (1995) continue the discussion about the concept task in Temporary Organizations, by writing that, in most cases, the creation of a Temporary Organization is motivated by a task that must be accomplished. It has also been shown that the task itself is more important to participants in Temporary Organizations than it is to members of permanent organizations. An understanding of the task is thus important to an understanding of Temporary Organizations. Two different types of tasks can be identified: unique and repetitive. The unique Temporary Organization is created for one single and specific situation that will not occur again, while the repetitive Temporary Organizations are devoted to a task that will be repeated in the future. When the task is unique, nobody has immediate knowledge about how to act. Therefore according to Lundin and Söderholm (1995) visionary, flexible, and creative actions are needed, in addition to a more deliberate search for experiences from other areas. According to the delimitation above, our case study has a unique task[10]. The table below illustrates unique and repetitive tasks in Temporary Organizations.

	Repetitive Tasks	Unique Tasks
Goals	Immediate, specified	Visionary, abstract
Experiences	Own or codified by professions	Others or none
Competence	Incodes and tactics (silent) Knowledge	Diverse or unknown, requires flexibility and creativity
Leadership	Low or middle managers	Top management
Learning	Refinement	Renewal

Table 15. Unique and repetitive tasks (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995).

[10] The function in the SEB project is further developed, as seen in the case company presentation chapter, on p.28.

We continue by finding out which impacts upon strategy formulation this unpredictable future in Temporary Organizations has? Larson (1997) has investigated contributions from different strategy researches, and finds out that most of it concerns their origin from a rational process, thinking is followed by action, i.e. formulations of goals, strategies followed by implementation. According to (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985 from Larson, 1997) there is a need for a broader perspective concerning the formulation of strategies. The authors investigate the relation, plans-intensions, what *really* happens in organizations, and distinguish between intended and realized strategies.

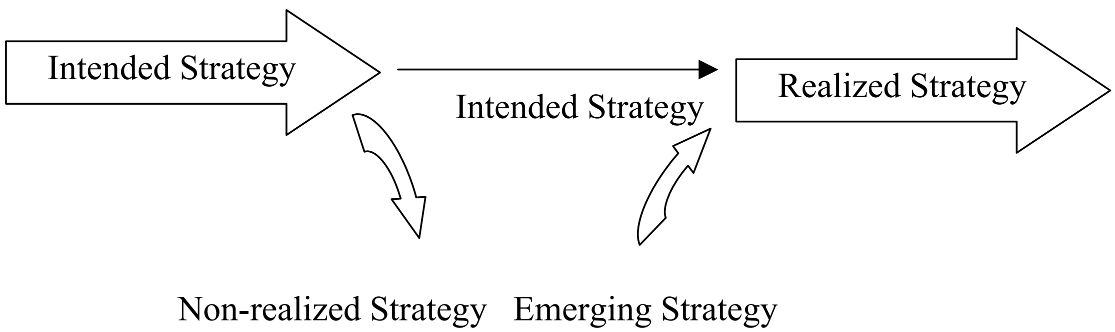


Figure 16. Different kinds of Strategies (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985 from Larson, 1997).

Emerging Strategies; Actions can influence thoughts and ideas in a way that is impossible to predict before the situation appears. A strategy can appear as a response to a specific situation or action. According to Mintzberg (1989) strategy is not necessarily formulated *before* action, i.e. rational formulation before implementation (Mintzberg, 1989 from Larson, 1997). According to Larson (1997) this tells us that some strategies are better formulated gradually, out of the actions and experiences in the organization.

Larson (1997) continues by investigate in Mintzberg's view on strategy formulation. This shows that actions (implementations) can precede strategy formulations. Consequently Larson (1997) writes, actions in Temporary Organizations can influence and change, initial strategy and goal formulations. Mintzberg (1990) writes that gradually formulated strategies by the individuals working with a complicated project (out of actions and situation) contribute more learning to the organization, than initial strategy formulations (Mintzberg, 1990 from Larson, 1997).

Synonymous with the discussion above Hansson (1998) considers that the team members *interpersonally organize* the work, *based on* the prerequisites given to the team. Hansson (1998) discusses the importance of focusing on the ongoing processes and dynamics in working situations, by distinguishing between

Organization and *Organizing***.** The author replaces classic organization theoreticians by theoreticians coupled to organizing principles since it is a process (organizing) rather than an object (organization); an action is coordinating another action.

According to Bergson (1912) alteration is the constant state in social courses, and organizations shall be viewed as crystallization. Below a quotation regarding this dynamics and changeability that the context is exposed to (Bergson, 1912 from Hansson, 1998):

"…a consensually validated grammar for reducing equivocality by means of sensible interlocked behaviors. To organize is to assemble ongoing interdependent actions into sensible sequences that generate sensible outcomes." (Weick, 1979 from Hansson, 1998)

According to Hansson (1998) the development of *organizing* is a valuable way to understand teams' working situations. By investigating the organizing, a valuable knowledge concerning processes is reached, since more stable processes; preparedness (infrastructure) to support these processes can be achieved. The organizing processes shall get the space to be used in a positive way rather than as barriers.

Team

The third concept is *Team* in Temporary Organizations. According to Lundin & Söderholm (1995) the team is always formed around the task or around some aspects of it. Participation in the team is normally predefined as being time-limited, thus creating a specific set of expectations at the individual level. Temporary assignment normally means that individuals have other "homes" before, during and after being involved in a Temporary Organization, which means that the team is dependent on other organized contexts besides the current Temporary Organization.

According to Lundin and Söderholm (1995) there is a relation between the *individual and the team*; the authors say that individuals carry their own set of expectations and experiences with them into the team. These may resemble the expectations and experiences of other team members to a greater or lesser extent. The very fact that the Temporary Organization is to be terminated may be a condition for the acceptance of conflicting interests in the team. Individuals may also enter or exit the team at different times, so the "rules of the game" may change as new expectations or new experiences are introduced. However, the expectations and experiences gathered together in the team provide the basis for commitment within the team, and thus also basis for motivation, communication and leadership (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995).

Another perspective on the relation between individual and team is found in the goal formulation. According to Sverlinger (1996) each individual in the project has his/her own goal picture; this can be divergent from the Temporary Organizations goal formulation (Sverlinger, 1996 from Larson, 1997).

Further there is also a relation between the *team and the team's environment*, and this reflection does, according to Lundin & Söderholm (1995), essentially focus on legitimizing issues. Team members are brought together for example by a common interest in a specific task, by force or by coincidence. The team also needs to relate to outside organizational context. In many cases this is not a problem, perhaps there is a parent organization responsible for the creation of the Temporary Organization. The authors further write that, in other cases there may be competing teams or competing organizational structures; there may even be enemies outside, or the "environment" is simply uninterested in the temporary unit. The need for legitimization and support, however, does affect team interaction. It may become necessary to manage or control contacts between the Temporary Organization and the world outside. This relation between the team and the environment will be developed below in the concepts from the Network theory.

Transition

Constitutes the forth concept. Changes and transitions are according to Lundin and Söderholm (1995) significant concepts in project work or temporary organizations. They define transition as *"The focus in permanent organizations is on production rather than transition. When transition becomes necessary within a permanent organization, temporary organizations are often created to deal with it".* (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995) They write further that the cause is that project-work is expected to lead to development. Something has to be transited or changed because of the project.

Transition can then have two meanings: First it can reefer to the actual transformation in terms of the change "before" and "after", this mean desirable perceptions of the transformation or change among project participants. Second, meaning of transition is more important to the *inner* functioning of project work. It focuses on perceptions of casual relationships, ideas about how to proceed from the present state to the final outcome and conclusion of the project (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995).

To be able to achieve a successful change or transition, two elements are important in a project work over time. First it is important to explore the members created experiences during the project, which have been made during the project. Further, at some occasions check which use and meaning the project has for its interested parties. The checking process is used for changing the work, so that the project also fulfills a function for its interested parties after the project (Christensen & Kreiner, 1997 from Larson, 1997).

4.2.4 Project Formulation and Project Implementation Phase

In our delimitation above we distinguished between the project formulation and the project implementation phase. According to the company presentation above the SEB project is in the stopover phase, i.e. the project implementation phase. Are there any characteristics typical for this phase, which can help use to distinguish challenges in the SEB project group?

Project Implementation Phase

Lundin & Söderholm (1995) develop four sequencing concepts, describing how actions are organized in the Temporary Organization. The third sequence, “the Planned Isolation” does according to Lundin & Söderholm (1995) focus on the execution phase of the Temporary Organization. This is the phase when predetermined action according to plans is supposed to be executed in order to complete the task. The minimization of any disturbance to plans or other threats to the action imperative is achieved by deliberately isolating the organization. The authors further write that the Temporary Organization moves from relative openness to relative closed ness. Feedback loops to renewed planning can never originate from the action phase unless very strong signals are received from the environment of the Temporary Organization. From the authors we also find that once the plan has been agreed upon, the whole operation should proceed like a train moving at high speed toward the end station without any unwanted stops.

The authors further write that plans also become “common knowledge” among the participants and are thus available for them to make use of, they also provide information on evaluation and control procedures for those who are actually responsible for execution. However, it is not necessary to fulfill plans in every detail. Plans may be poor descriptions of actions that are actually carried out, but they are nevertheless important as providing “space” for action. Plans thus carry a symbolic meaning in addition to any instrumental functions they may have. Plans are important as action generators, but not primarily in an instrumental way. Symbolic connotations are as important as the instrumental ones. Plans thus support rationality, which, at least in western societies, is one of the most valued attributes of successful managers. Plans make the world easier to handle, since their very existence reduces uncertainty. In this perspective plans can be seen as necessary facilitators of action (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995).

Further, once people agree that implementation is to start, these plans become the rhetorical arguments needed to secure action and a guard against any upset, to protect the core of the Temporary Organization. Planned isolation thus means that certain guarding mechanism come into force, further restricting the Temporary Organization contact with other organizations or people. This is not to say that Temporary Organization exists in a vacuum. However, other influences are seen as "disturbances" that need to be eliminated. Guarding, in this framework, is a mechanism that participants use to improve their chances of acting to the plans of initial intentions. The challenge is top secure the path outlined by the plans, and to keep control over any changes that have to be made. Guarding is of course not always called for. There may be disturbances that must be attended to, and perhaps changes have to be made, but these are normally seen as further arguments in favor of guarding rather than as arguments for a more open relationship with the environment (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995).

Another characteristic typical for projects is termination. We can imagine that this concept is central to take into consideration during the project work, i.e. the implementation phase. This sequence does according to Lundin & Söderholm (1995) include bridging, whereby experiences gained during the lifetime of the Temporary Organization are transferred to other Temporary Organizations or permanent organization. Termination also calls for some transmission of experiences; comparisons between expectations, execution and outcome may generate new insights about how to deal with particular problems in the future.

Now we have discussed concepts from an intra organizational perspective, i.e. among the project members. Below we discuss concepts from the inter-organizational perspective, i.e. how external partners, sponsors, influence the project group.

Inter-Perspective

The Project Network Approach develops a conceptual framework for the analysis of inter-organizational relations. Central concepts in this approach is legitimacy and commitment building towards external partners, sponsors. According to Hellgren & Stjernberg (1995) there are no common goals in the network in the traditional business sense. Instead there is an array of coexisting, partly supporting and partly conflicting individual goals. Above we discussed the goal formulation in Temporary Organization among the project members; here the different actors are organizations (partners and sponsors) instead. Projects are not grounded in a shared view or an obvious task, rather projects are based on many different actors' perspectives, since all of them have different interests in the project. Therefore the basic idea in projects is based on several internal and external goals, often contradictory (Sahlin-Andersson 1991; Lövendahl, 1995; Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995; Sverlinger, 1996 from Larson, 1997).

The Project Formulation Phase

Above we discussed the project implementation phase, and characteristics typical for that phase. The network theory helps us to understand characteristics typical of the project formulation phase. These characteristics are valuable for us, since they help us to understand challenges that origin in this early phase of the project, including the partners and sponsors connected to the SEB project.
From Larson (1997) we find that unspecified goal formulations can be a way to get support for the project, as it can take different interests into consideration. Goals visible in formal documents are usually unspecific, as they shall represent all actors taking part in the project. An unspecific goal formulation creates space for many different interpretations and interests. This makes it possible for the different actors to fill in the goal formulation with their own ideas and wishes about the goal (Sahlin-Andersson 1991; Packendorff, 1993 from Larson, 1997).

Hellgren & Stjernberg (1995) distinguish between the design and the implementation process in projects, and emphasize that the design process is critical:

"To know what to do, i.e. designing, is both more difficult and more important to the success than getting things done, i.e. implementing" (Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995).

Hellgren & Stjernberg (1995) write that the project leader's major power resource is control over the implementation process. Hence, by acting rather than asking the project leader can avoid political processes that could block implementation. But how can this way of acting rather than asking be achieved? One way according to Hellgren and Stjernberg (1995) is that the actors controlling the project leaders' resources already have made their decisions in the design phase. They further write that the key task of the design process is the formulation of visions capable of linking different interests into common use of resources. The basic principle is to mobilize commitment for decisions as a ground for actions. The main problem here according to the authors is to make decisions that can be implemented. The key task of the implementation process on the other hand is according to Hellgren and Stjernberg (1995) a coordination of resources and routines. The basic principle here is to transform the decisions into a concrete action coordination of resources and routines. The main problem here is to acquire legitimacy for such actions that have to be taken.

Hellgren and Stjernberg (1995) continue this reasoning by writing that it is important that the design process produce explicit decisions. According to these authors one cause of uncertainty is the deliberate balance that each actor strikes between his own costs and benefits of the network as a whole. For example, dependence on other actors in the network, many actors may be partners with one another in some respects and competitors in others.

Larson (1997, 2001) has introduced a metaphor for a project network, the *Political Market Square*. This concept introduces a political perspective, in the analysis of relational interaction in a project network. The metaphor, the political Market Square, does according to Larson emphasize the structure of the event project network as an open arena for loosely and tightly coupled actors to act and interact upon. The author writes that the actors engage themselves in the event in order to further their own interests. Therefore, political processes are present within the relationships between actors (Larson, 2001). Larson (2001) proclaims that the relationships involving political processes can be understood from a consensus and a conflict perspective. According to Larson (2001) mutual commitment, trust and conversation are important ingredients in the consensus perspective to build fruitful relationships. From a conflict perspective on the other hand, tensions, conflicts and power games are considered unavoidable aspects of social interaction, which create change and renewal.

According to Larson (2001), the degree of legitimacy seems to contribute to understanding whether political processes within relationships in project networks constitute predominantly conflict or consensus aspects. The studies made by the author, show that a low degree of legitimacy leads to political processes based on the conflict perspective, whereas high degree of legitimacy leads to processes based on consensus. Sahlin-Andersson (1989) refers to *maintenance of vagueness* as a strategic way of managing project networks when many different interests have to coexist. Increased clarity in the process can be avoided. Ambiguity was in the case kept alive by avoiding meetings between different interests in the interaction between actors. Goals and strategies e.g., at the initiating phases of the project, are formulated in a diffuse and wide-ranging way in order to make as many different actors as possible committed (Sahlin-Andersson, 1989 from Larson, 1997).

The concepts above are the ones that we used to identify challenges within the SEB project group. These theoretical concepts in connection with the method used in this thesis[11] including observations and interviews helped us to distinguish challenges in the project group. The challenges will be presented in the analysis chapter, by an illustration of a meeting in the project group. The challenges in the SEB project group are very much a product of the fact that the group recently had entered phase two, the Stopover phase. *Coordination* between the Home- and the On-Site organization is the core of the challenges that the group faced. Key words in this coordination dilemma are different perceptions of the task among project members', role descriptions, responsibility areas, planning tools, contracts with partners and sponsors, etc. The theoretical discussion above emphasized the importance of talking about *processes* rather than given prerequisites while trying to understand the working situation in projects. For example the discussion concerning goal and strategy formulation, which pointed out the importance of reformulation and formulations *during* the project work, is an ongoing process. Our discovery from the observations at our case company made it clear for us that it was the ability to handle these ongoing processes that was crucial. Below we discuss three main discourses, which we perceive to be suitable for meeting these challenges: Communication, Shared Understanding and Collective Competence.

4.3 Tools to Meet the Challenges – Communication, Shared Understanding and Collective Competence

4.3.1 Communication

To be able to create a common picture of the task, it is necessary for the group to communicate. Communicating is an obvious thing to do for people, but the problem is that everyone does communicate differently. Something that is very clear for someone could be very unclear for another person. The reasons for why we interpret things we hear and talk about differently, could be many things, for instance it could depend on the culture, previous experiences, background, personalities or languages.

Our own experiences from the Master year, in our group works were that it was very hard to have a good dialogue between the members. Everyone in the group had their own ideas and different ways to express them, and it did not make it any easier when none of the members talked their mother tongue or did not have the same experiences or backgrounds.

[11] As described in the methodology chapter on page 11.

According to the above, findings from observations and interviews in our case made us go further into the communication study. We saw the need of a comprehension of communication and also to find factors that affected the communication within a group.

There are many factors that affect a group's communication. One thing is that there very seldom is a common base of experiences (neither common conception) in a group in the beginning of a project. Problems that can arise because of this are for instance obstacles for the communication in the organization. One way to meet these obstacles in the communication is to let the project members explore their different conceptions, which implies that they describe their way of working and underlying assumptions for each other. One way to understand communication in a project is to see how conceptions are expressed, received and developed (Müllern, 1994 from Wikström, 2000).

Christensen and Kreiner (1997) are two other authors that claim that to be capable of steering a group it is important to manage and balance the contextual uncertainty and the operative uncertainty. The contextual uncertainty appears when changes in a project's environment occur. Here the communication between the project and its surroundings is noticed. Further, the operative uncertainty is a central concept while studying and understanding communication in groups. This uncertainty arises within a group when different members with unlike conceptions are to solve a unique task. The uncertainty within the group is mainly about the capability of formulating visions (Christensen & Kreiner, 1997 from Wikström, 2000).

The authors further explain that overarching plans and visions shall be seen as latent rather than fixed. If you see them as fixed, they will make "scene information," which the members will act after. If seeing them as latent instead, the member does see the importance of a continuous working with the conceptions in the communication. This in line with the experiences the members make when they work over-time (ibid.).

To achieve motivation and a good communication within the group it is necessary, according to Lundin and Söderholm (1995), that the group and the project members build up obligations between them. This is very important since the building of obligations is central in relations between members and their group.

We sum up this reasoning by the illustration below.

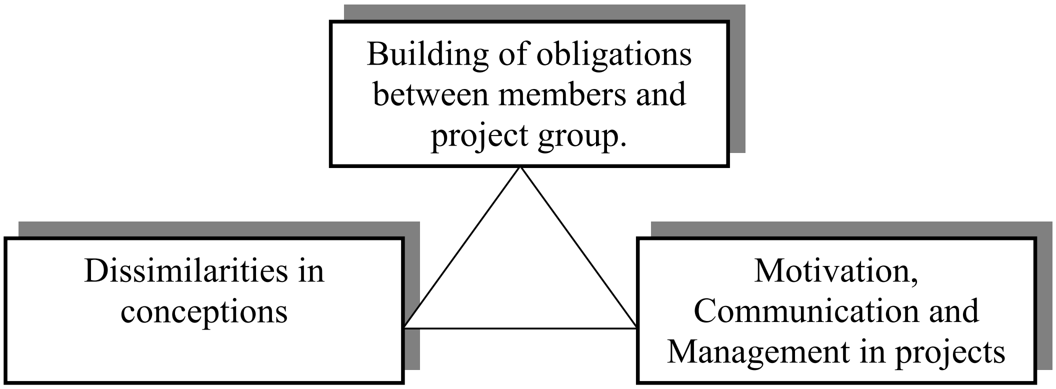


Figure 17. Differences in conceptions, building of obligations and project organizing (Wikström, 2000).

After we had studied different authors and had got many good explanations of things that could affect and contribute to a good or to a bad communication within a group, we decided to look into different studies concerning communication.

There are different definitions of communication depending on what study you look at. According to Wikström (2000), all studies that have been made can either be connected to the information-oriented communication approach or the dialogue-oriented communication approach.

From Deetz (1992) we found that different communication studies are divided into the two communications' approaches depending on the interest in knowledge. He splits the interest in knowledge into two comprehensions. The first interest is to *find better ways of management and control of the conceptions,* and the other is, *member participation and interplay of the conceptions.* Studies according the first knowledge interest focus on:

- Strategy
- Consent

While studies according to the other pay attention to

- Involvement
- Participation

To describe the four different approaches according to their knowledge interest and their vision of reality, we present this illustration:

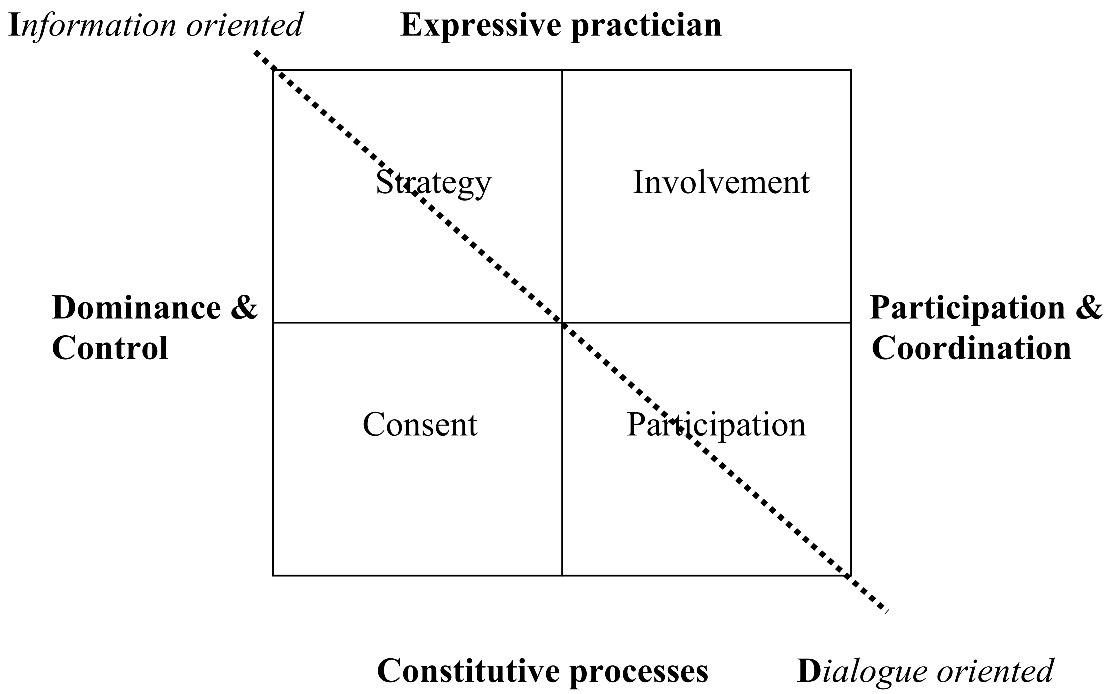


Figure 18. The position of the theoretical traditions, concerning knowledge interests and views on the reality (Deetz, 1994 from Wikström, 2000).

According to Deetz (1992) there are two different types of communication, the Productive and the Reproductive one. He further writes that the reason for using communication is to get through a person's own formulized conceptions. The author separates between *process subjectivity* and *fixed subjectivity.* Depending on which communications type you use, you will either get process- or fixed subjectivity (Deetz, 1992 from Wikström, 2000).

The Productive communication, where conceptions are questioned and worked through, is the center to receive process subjectivity (a continuous question and creation of conceptions) (ibid.).

To get a fixed subjectivity it is the Reproductive communication type that is to be used. In this communication type the members in the project group do recreate the conceptions, in other words, they agree/get their permission to the prevailing conceptions. This results in a fixed subjectivity (ibid.).

Deetz (1992) writes that it is essential to have a productive communication in a group, but to be able to get that the group members must have a common engagement for a specific task/subject, a response and absorbed experience (ibid.).

Productive communication

- A common engagement for a specific subject.
- Response
- Absorbed experience

Figure 19. The three parts in productive communication (Wikström, 2000).

A Common Engagement for a Specific Subject

The concept "a common engagement for a specific subject" does according to Wikström (2000) consist of three parts; furthermore it is important not to exclude any of these, since it is necessary to have them all included when studying openings in communication.

In total "common engagement for a specific subject" implies that a person apprehend himself as involved in the work with the question or the situation and also be present in the work with the task together with the others (ibid.).

Engagement is *presence*. The engagement implies a continuous presence. The engaged work together with others is a world of presence in the task, where you apprehend yourself open to and concentrated on solving the set of problems. It is the presence and the concentration that creates the prerequisites for productive communication with the other members (ibid.).

Another important thing in order to reach productive communication is, according to Wikström (2000), that the person involved apprehends the task or the situation as personal. The desire to identify and "personify" oneself with the task is central.

Response

Response is a distinctive mark of the other person's engagement in a question put forward by someone else. Response does not necessarily mean that the other person agrees. To give and comprehend a response demands trust. A building of trust can be erased by letting separated strategic interests being heard (Wikström, 2000).

Plainness is another concept that gives the response a content, and that encompasses partly to be able to mediate its conceptions, partly to be able to understand other peoples' conceptions (ibid.).

The Meaning of Absorbed Experience

The absorbed experiences people make in their work are also central in the productive communication, just like the other two parts are. It consists of giving comfort and also of absorbed experience that exists in the organization. It is an experience in all people, which can be seen as "latent" and this latent experience could be transformed and be activated through communication around a common engagement for a specific subject (Wikström, 2000).

4.3.2 Shared Understanding

The communication part above discussed the important role of communication to create shared meanings of the task and things that could affect and contribute to good or bad communication within a group. We will now continue our theoretical discussion by investigating whether theories in the area of learning organization can facilitate coordination in our case study.

Learning Organization

Below we discuss how Senge' (1995) five disciplines could be a way to simplify the complexity in projects.

Definition of a Learning Organization:

"...a shift of mind-from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to connected to the world, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something out there, to seeing how our own actions create the problems we experience. A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality, and how they can change it."
(Senge, 1995)

According to the discussion above projects are unpredictable and complex. These characteristics are recognized by Senge (1995) since he writes about dynamic complexity, i.e. that it is essential to understand that the same action has dramatically different effects in the short and in the long run. Furthermore there can be different sets of consequences in another part of the system; obvious interventions produce no obvious consequences.

Further Senge's (1995) metaphor "*the blind men and the elephant,"* illustrates a common situation in groups, including the fact that each member see his/her own reality, are acting more like individuals than as an aligned team. It is common in groups that all group members work extremely hard, but the efforts

are not efficiently translated into a team effort. The individual energies are not in harmony, a lot of energy is wasted and it is difficult to create synergies.
The opposite of this group situation is according to Senge (1995) an aligned team:

”When a team becomes more aligned, a commonality of direction emerges, and individuals energies harmonize. There is less wasted energy; in fact a resonance of synergy develops. There is a commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and understanding of how to complement one another’s efforts. Individuals do not sacrifice their personal interests to the larger team vision; rather the shared vision becomes an extension of their personal visions.”(Senge, 1995)

Senge (1995) further writes that alignment is the necessary condition before empowering the individual will empower the whole team, since empowering the individual when there is a relatively low level of alignment worsens the chaos and makes managing the team even more difficult.

How is this Alignment Achieved?
According to Senge (1995) a valuable tool to meet this complexity is a “language” that simplifies reality, Systems thinking. This System thinking does according to Senge (1995) simplify the complex reality by forming a language that describes a vast array of interrelationships and patterns of change, it helps us to see patterns that lie behind actions:

”Systems thinking forms a rich language for describing a vast array of interrelationships and patterns of change. It simplifies life by helping us see deeper patterns lying behind the events and details.” (Senge, 1995)

This system thinking seems to be a valuable way to mange the complexities in projects, to meet the challenges in our case study. According to Senge (1995), systems thinking is one of the “*five disciplines”* to achieve individual and team learning. Below we discuss the cornerstones in these disciplines.

The base is according to Senge (1995) *”The five Disciplines.”* Three of those are individual learning disciplines. The first is *systems thinking,* and according to the discussion above this discipline represents the ability to understand how complex phenomena are interconnected and how they have impact upon each other. The second discipline is *personal mastery*, to create an individual vision and see surroundings as they really are, for example that each individual in the project group reflects upon their own expectations with the project they are entering. The third, *mental models* includes the fact that experiences from one area create prejudices in another, further that we are acting according to our prejudices. Senge writes that this discipline includes structures, of which we are unaware, that holds us as prisoners. Further, individuals can learn to see these structures by beginning a process of freeing us from previous unseen forces and ultimately mastering the ability to work with them and change them. The remaining disciplines are *team learning*, the collective ability in a group of individuals to develop together and to create a shared vision.

Which is the Content in the Team Learning Disciplines?

Senge (1995) explains that the key to seeing reality systematically is seeing circles of influence rather than straight lines. He means that you can trace arrows that represent influence on another element from any element in a situation, the structure causes the behavior. Certain patterns recur again and again. Senge calls them "systems archetypes" and means that they embody the key to learning to reflect on structures in organizations. Further that they reveal simplicity underlying the components of complex management issues.

How to use these Archetypes?

From Senge (1995) we find that one must start with understanding "feedback", this feedback shows how actions can reinforce or balance each other. Senge distinguishes between *reinforcing feedback*, i.e. accelerating growth, and *balancing feedback*, i.e. decline. Senge writes that the different kinds of feedback rarely occur in isolation. According to Senge these archetypes can be helpful in order to find leverage, find ways to remove limiting conditions. We chose to discuss how these archetypes could be used, by illustrating with an example: How to find leverage in a situation where the group wants to become more aligned, create a shared vision?

First, can the reinforcing process be identified?
The reinforcing process is expectations in a group that the whole could become greater than the parts.

Second, which are the *limiting factors?*
Limiting factors could be diversity of views, which in turn can dissipate the group focus. There can be an inability to allow diversity to be expressed, which in turn can lead to the situation when polarization increases. This in turn reduces the clarity of the shared vision and limits the growth of enthusiasm. Further losing of focus of the vision is very time-consuming, and takes time away from solving crises, diminishing the focus on managing the current reality. Lastly, connections to one another can also diminish and defensive routines might increase.

Where to find the *leverage,* ways to weaken or remove the limiting conditions? According to Senge (1995) the first step could be the personal mastery (one of Senges individual learning disciplines discussed above). The group members can while entering a project ventilate their different backgrounds. Then can also be time for each individual to find out what he/she *really* expects, his/her personal vision, this can create enthusiasm for a personal goal.

Second, according to Senge a shared vision shall include answers to the questions: what do we want? Why? How? Senge writes that it is important to spend time to reflect and interpret the meaning of these questions among the group members. For example, if the group members agree upon that an open attitude is critical, it is critical taking time to think about the meaning of the words. This can for example be a way to avoid polarizated discussions, defending routines among the group members. It is very common in groups that the members speak "their own language," they are not listening to each other; the focus is rather on showing and defending own ideas and ways of thinking. This defending behavior is described by Argyris (1985):

"Defensive routines form a sort of protective shell around our deepest assumptions, defending us from the pain, but also keeping us from learning about the causes of the pain." (Argyris, 1985 from Senge, 1995)

Another important leverage according to Senge (1995) is to learn dialogue techniques. These communication skills were discussed above in the "communication" part. Senge discussed dialogue techniques by distinguishing between *discussion* and *dialogue,* the former is a "ping pong game," the purpose of the game is normally to win, to have one's view accepted by the group. The latter on the other hand, gives the group access to a larger "pool of common meaning," and Senge means that in a dialogue no one is trying to win, and that if the dialogue is done in the right way, everyone wins.

4.3.3 Collective Competence

The phrase collective competence is not easy to grasp, and among studies, there are many different approaches to it. Hansson's (1998), dissertation *"Collective Competence – A study of Competent Interactive Action"* focuses on interaction of individuals in small groups, how the group works towards a task and studies these phenomena in practice[12] (Hansson, 1998). This approach must be seen as a valuable tool to meet the challenges that we distinguished in our case study.
Our aim in the text below is first of all to understand what is included in the phrase, collective competence. Further, to get a picture of which factors

[12] The interpretative-interactionist perspective (Hansson, 1998, pages 26-28)

influence the development of collective competence, by discussing the concepts that are included in a conceptual framework created by Hansson (1998).

What is Collective Competence?

Hansson's (1998) definition of Collective Competence:

"Collective Competence as a term has not been frequently used before, and usually just as passing reference rather than the main objective. The term collective competence is a theoretical one, as collective does not imply a more exact size. Competence refers to the ability to perform a certain task."
(Hansson, 1998)

The phenomenon is easier grasped by considering one of Hansson's (1998) practical situations. According to Hansson (1998) it is in the *interaction* of the team members that the collective competence becomes visible. One situation that Hansson describes takes place on a sailboat in which the necessity of collective competence is apparent. This situation concerns the interaction among its crewmembers and the need for a collective agreement while turning around the boat with a spinnaker, under the pressure of other surrounding boats. What kind of competence is required to create such a collective situation? The task is a collective one, i.e. one that would be impossible for one individual to accomplish, or possibly one that would take extensive effort and time to complete. This ability of the group is called collective competence. The phenomenon competency is referred to as the ability to work together as a collective towards a task. Collective competency is conclusively the phenomenon of a group or organization of people to work towards a common task in a sufficient way (Hansson, 1998). In the situation above the challenge among the crewmembers is that all of them must do the *right thing* at the *right time* and at the *right occasion*. Each crewmember must have a specific location, do a specific action and in correspondence with the other members' actions. Hansson (1998) further writes that there must be a flow in this process. This is accomplished by interaction among the crewmembers, creation of mutual understanding among the members for the context they are acting in. The members must have preparedness for acting in new situations, skills to apply competencies into different contexts. In other words the sail crew must possess both sail and cooperation competencies. The latter is according to Hansson (1998) impossible to be taught in a book or a theoretical lesson. The question is, are there any ways to achieve this coordination knowledge?

To be able to answer that question (if possible) we first continue to find out more about this coordination competence.

Hansson (1998) describes that an optimal group lacks overlapping actions and has the ability to adjust to different contexts among its members.

Which help can we get from the use of different perspectives by the researchers to investigate collective competence? From Cook and Yanow (1993) we find that actions and the creation of shared meaning, cooperation of competencies can be understood from a cultural perspective, i.e. symbols, conceptions and action patterns. The authors have studied a few flute makers, and how they keep the organizational competence within the company, in spite of people being exchanged over the years, the flutes still have their particular sound that the brand is renowned for. (Cook & Yanow, 1993 from Hansson, 1998).

The researchers Weick and Roberts (1993) use a cognitive perspective to study actions in a collective, they see action as a product of shared meaning. According to these authors cognitive mental processes can be understood from focusing on the interrelations between the members in the group. The authors study failures in organizations, how groups are rebuilt, and virtual role taking. Weick and Roberts write that those failure situations can be managed by building up a "collective mind," a shared meaning in the group as to how situations shall be understood and managed.

"Collective mind is conceptualized as a pattern of heedful interrelations of action in social systems" (Weick & Roberts, 1993 from Hansson, 1998).

Other explanations to this rebuilding of groups is according to these authors a good inter subjectivity and the "triangle of trust" including confidence, honesty and self-respect:

"Mind is a noun similar to nouns like faith, hope, charity, role and culture conclusively it is a disposition term that denotes a propensity to act in a certain manner or style" (Weick & Roberts, 1993 from Hansson, 1998).

However, explanations to actions in groups from cultural and cognitive perspectives are limited (Hansson, 1998). Blumer's (1962) words:

"Structural features, such as culture, social systems, social stratification or social roles, set conditions for their action but do not determine their actions-that is acting units-do not act towards culture, social structure or the like, they act towards situations." (Blumer, 1962 from Hansson, 1998)

Hansson (1998) has created concepts that relate individuals to collective action in a specific context, the ***Competent Interactive Action*** paradigm. This perspective focuses on processes instead of static phenomenon, (e.g. crossways studies of culture and cognitive maps). However, Hansson applies empirical studies and discussions from the cognitive and cultural approaches in his chosen paradigm (Hansson, 1998). Below we aim to understand the content in this paradigm, and hopefully the development of Collective Competence.

Development of Collective Competence

Hansson (1998) has developed a matrix that includes different concepts applicable to study the phenomenon of collective competence. In the discussion below our interview (01-10-24) with Hansson has been very valuable, since it helped us a lot to clarify the complexity in these concepts and their interrelationships. Below an illustration of Hansson's matrix:

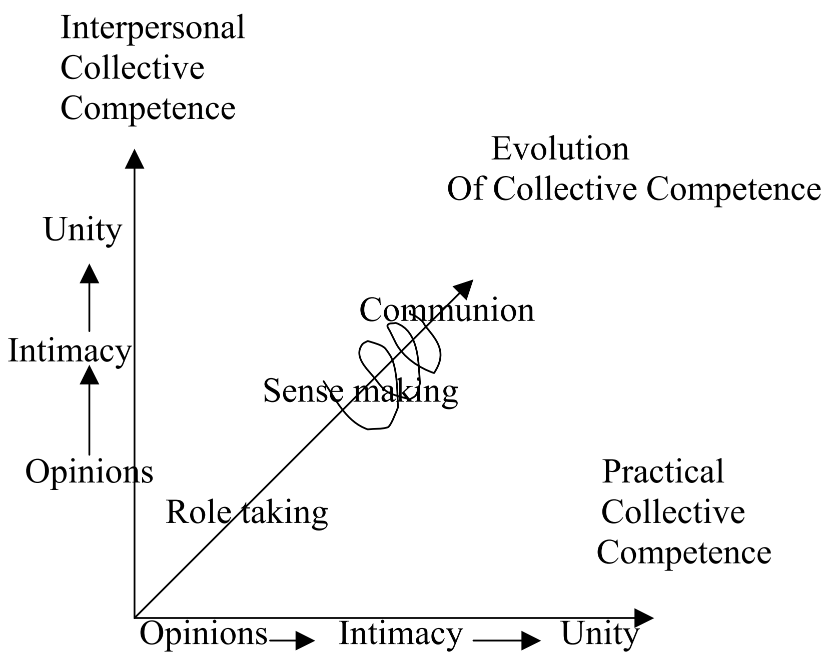


Figure 20. A matrix illustrating Collective Competence and its concepts (Hansson, 1998).

Above, in the sail crew example, we discussed the importance of the ability to relate each crewmember to collective action in different *contexts*. We also discussed Hansson's *process perspective* in contrast to a static perspective (cognitive and cultural approaches). These aspects are central in the model above. The spiral on the axis in the matrix above illustrates the process perspective. According to Hansson this process perspective tell us that the level of collective competence in-groups fluctuates, depending on the other concepts in the matrix and their interrelationships. Hansson told us that there is a constant movement on the axis. Hansson gave us an example of a situation that could change the level of collective competence at our case company. We imagine that the project group feel very comfortable with their planning program, Microsoft, suddenly the board of SEB introduces a new planning program, Lotus notes. An unexpected incident like this should affect the level of collective competence (it should shrink) in the project group.

In the matrix above Hansson (1998) distinguishes three stages of interaction within a group: *opinions, intimacy and unity*. These stages are named, based on the primary means of exchange of meaning within the group.

Opinions are at the first stage, where the group or new individuals in the group have to adapt to the common norms and values created. To make this happen the sharing of meaning is done both verbally and through experience, but it is an *explicit exchange*. The predominant process in this stage Hansson refers to as a transfer of knowledge, role-taking. This process includes new members' adaptation to a collective competence or a new team's formation of one. Challenges here are how to be part of a team and form common sense with its members and with the task of the group. Here gestures, symbols and language are viewed as a carrier of role taking and sense making, as it is through this media they are transferred.

Intimacy is the stage where the values of the group have been accommodated in the individual as well as the group. The exchange of meaning is more suitable and also more mutual, since the relation between individuals is more symmetrical. The primary focus at this stage is sense-making. This sense-making process follows role-taking, and the meaning created in the sense-making process is the basis for the action the group performs. Hansson (1998) writes further that this step includes the development of *selecting principles* in groups. A group meet a myriad of different outcomes from an action, to be able to handle this there is a need for some kind of selecting principle, the ability to sort out unessential information from the immediate action, a familiarity with the task. This ability to have a general overview in different situations makes it easier for the group to sort out unessential information, this in turn shortens the rational process in the group.

Unity is according to Hansson (1998) an ideal stage, where the group acts as a unit. In this stage there is little or no need for verbal clarification. The interaction within the group has a *precognition* of where the group is in space and time as well as what is to be done. This stage is communion, and describes a further strive towards collective vision.

The figure below illustrates these different stages of collective competence.

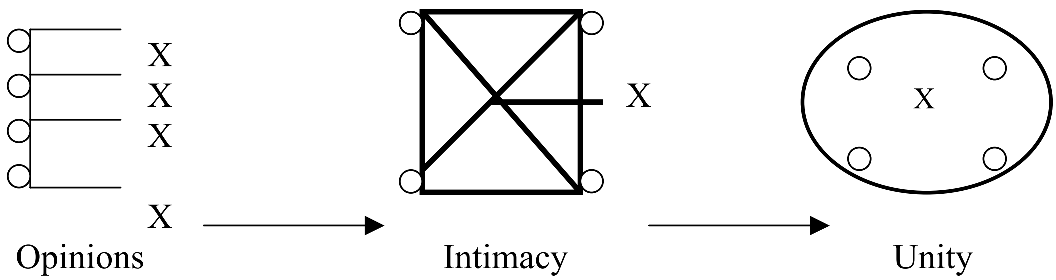


Figure 21. Relationships between different stages of Competent Interactive Action (Hansson, 1998).

According to Hansson (1998), 0 = the individual and X = the task. The opinion stage includes verbal exchange among the individuals in the group. They are not doing different tasks (X: s) but the perceptions of the tasks are different among the group members. In the intimacy stage exchange of opinions is not needed to the same extent, since there is a deeper and shared understanding for each other and the tasks. At the unity stage the group is acting as a unity towards the tasks, the understanding for each other and the task is shared, a unity is created.

In our interview with Hansson (2002), he said that to reach a high level of collective competence, the unity stage in the matrix, the competencies in the group to meet new situations is crucial. The collective ability to interact in different situations, to understand that it is the small differences that make the difference, is the key.

Hansson means that no big changes are needed to create a total new situation, context. This fact creates a possibility for the team to outline a shared preparedness for future situations. This can according to Hansson (01-10-24) be achieved by taking the time to discuss and reflect upon the experiences in the group. Earlier experiences can constitute a ground for a creation of scenarios, a simulation of possible future situations; preparedness can be achieved among the group members. Hansson (01-10-24) emphasized that it is important to be aware that this ability to create preparedness, is based on the known reality, you can never create an instrumental preparedness for new situations. However the knowledge you posses can be organized, by reflection and experiences.

Hansson (2002) writes that a central dilemma, concerning the organization form, project is that they are temporary and time-limited. This often results in the situation that collective competence seldom is enriched, since little time often is prioritized to create preparedness, by reflection and sharing of experiences. The figure below illustrates how individual's reality is formed.

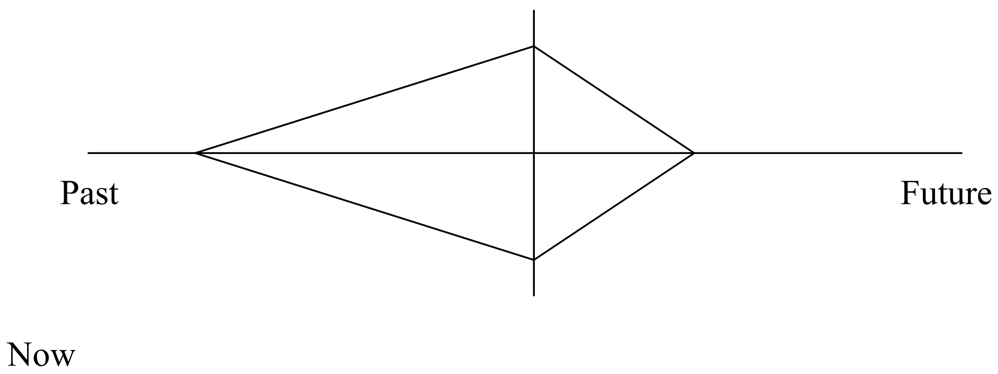


Figure 22. Influences on perceived reality (Hansson, 1998).

Experiences and expectations have a large impact upon an individual's perceived reality. Therefore according to the discussion above it can be valuable to reflect and take time to discuss experiences and expectations, so that a shared preparedness can be created.

According to Hansson, the preparedness discussed above can prevent the collective competence in the group from decrease on the axis (01-10-24). To understand how, we continue to investigate the concepts in the matrix and their interrelationships.

Hansson (1998) defines competence to be a trinity: *practical, interpersonal and sympathetic competence*. The former two are related to the working situation whereas the sympathetic is merely socializing without any particular purpose

In our interview with Hansson (01-10-24), we discussed possible impacts from sympathetic competence on the level of collective competence. According to Hansson social competence can be valuable, but not necessarily. He meant that sympathetic competence does not relate to the working situation, and that it can be precarious. Hansson gave us some examples when sympathetic competence can be risky: in a social event, e.g. climbing, a group member who is unaware of this climbing activity and is afraid of heights, can create a situation with discomfort feelings for the group member. On, getting drunk at a social activity can create behaviors that disturb the working process later on.

Hansson (1998) describes the practical competence as the ability to handle the assigned task in a proficient manner. This competence involves the physical approach to the object, i.e. the interaction with the task in all aspects but also how to interact with the others in the group, to be able to execute the task

Hansson (1998) further relates the interpersonal competence to how proficient the ability to interact with the others in the group is. This includes all social interaction with the purpose of performing the task at hand. Hansson writes that the practical and the interpersonal competence make up the collective competence and skillful interactive action.

In our interview with Hansson (01-10-24) he said that it is common with a shortage of interpersonal competence in a group. And that by organizing practical competence, space for interpersonal competence can be liberated. Hansson means that much of the daily tasks are a matter of routine. By organizing the practical competence, more effort can be put into the interpersonal competence. Hansson also said that there is a tendency among companies today to be negative towards structures and routines, companies tend to call for meetings first when problems occur. This could according to Hansson (01-10-24) be due to the fact that society often is misperceived as characterized by instability and changeability, a more realistic picture is, rather, that our society never has been so stable and secure as it is today.

Above we discussed that there is a constant movement (process perspective) on the axis in the matrix, the level of collective competence is affected by the concepts and their interrelationships in the matrix. We asked Hansson whether this process could be speeded up and if so, how? Hansson's answer was that the speed of the process and its direction is dependent on the level of practical and interpersonal competence. If that level is high the process goes much faster. The group can influence the speed of the process by taking time to create preparedness (according to the text above). This preparedness does depend upon the level of practical and interpersonal competence in a group. The group can increase this level and as a result speed up the process, by choosing new members with practical competence that "fit" the group (in our case company, the competencies in the area of organizing events, knowledge concerning characteristics typical for "event situations"). The group can also employ members with high interpersonal competence (the ability to cooperate with other members, to interact towards a goal) and this indicates that practical competence is to be developed over time.

5. Analysis

Since the SEB project is in its second phase, the Stopovers, it is very important for them to have a well structured and a common platform since the work later on will be integrated with each On-Site organization at the Stopovers from the home organization. To meet the challenges included in this phase, an ongoing communication, collective competence and a shared understanding are necessary among the members.

The analysis is based on participant observations and interviews,[13] and considers the two objectives stated in the purpose (1.3):

1. Distinguish challenges typical for projects
2. Ways to meet the challenges

5.1 A Clarification of the Two Objectives

5.1.1 Distinguish Challenges Typical for Projects

As we have discussed in our theoretical framework, there are five concepts (Time, Task, Team, Transition and Networks) that are typical for projects. These concepts are decisive to have an awareness of, in order to understand and distinguish challenges in the SEB project. By using and discussing around these concepts in our interviews and meetings, we could identify challenges within the project. The challenges we distinguished are; pucks, deadlines, team mix, the role of the project leader, waterproof contracts, the internal legitimacy and termination. This identification could not have been made if we had not had an awareness of the theoretical concepts.

5.1.2 Ways to Meet the Challenges

While discussing these concepts and challenges we understood the importance of having a good and on-going communication between the people involved. The reason to have an on-going communication, could be that a project is an on-going process and unpredictable things happen around the project all the time. An on-going communication within the project has an impact on the level of the collective competence and also nourishes the reflection concerning the challenges. It is therefore important to upgrade the comprehension of the challenges that possess a project, since the challenges also change along the way.

[13] As developed in methodology chapter on page 11.

5.2 An Illustration of the Identification Process of Challenges

We choose to present the challenges that we identified, by illustrating situations that appeared at a project Council meeting. Why we select to illustrate this in particular, it is because the people at the meeting discussed the On-Site organization at the Stopovers. The distinguished challenges became even clearer at this meeting, since the people argued about how to integrate and coordinate the home and On-Site organization.

The project leader and the five sub-leaders did all attend at the meeting. These Project Council meetings are scheduled once a week, mainly for discussing how every one is doing and if they keep their deadlines and are on track. This Council meeting turned out to include many discussions related to the situation the project team was situated in. It was only a few weeks left until the SEB boat would reach the next Stopover in Cape Town, and the pressure and the time was limited for all the preparation the project team had to face. Another reason could be that the first Stopover at Southampton, where they had got their experiences and answers of how good they had prepared and integrated the On-Site organization, turned out quite chaotic. This situation appeared since everyone did everything and therefore overlapped each other. Also because they did not have a clear understanding for each person's role not either for their responsibility areas.

The degree of activity and engagement were high among the members during the meeting. We felt that they had a pretty open dialogue and did not hesitate to express their opinions.

One interesting situation that appeared was when one of the members brought up a discussion about a misunderstanding between her and one of the external partners. They had had a discussion about something concerning the partner's contract, and it showed that she had not been aware of how the contract was regulated. She got confused about how to handle the situation and who to talk with. If she had had an insight and awareness of the regulations and of her colleagues' roles, maybe the situation could have been avoided, and therefore have saved much valuable time.

A similar situation came up when one project member did not know who to turn to, concerning a delivery of parasols. She had a deadline, and it was important that they were delivered on time. A consequence here could, according to us, be that related things become affected negatively.

At the meeting a discussion arose between the project-leader and the On-Site sub project leader. The discussion was very intensive, and concerned their responsibility areas. The On-Site leader had a clear picture of what his role and responsibilities were, but according to the project leader it looked different. He meant that there was no distinction between the home and the On-Site organization concerning his responsibility areas. He still had the main authority. In contrast the sub-project leader perceived his role as the leading one while he was at the Stopovers. That was not the case: for instance partner contracts were not his concern, his authority was more in areas like hotel booking and catering. The members therefore saw the necessity for reformulating and clarifying their roles. A clear structure and an ongoing communication between the two leaders could have avoided the situation at hand.

One group member brought up a question concerning a "Boat exhibition" which was about to take place in a few weeks. It showed that the member thought that he had the responsibility for the exhibition, but this was not the case. The project leader clarified that this type of happening just did not concern him (operative level), it had to be discussed by the whole project team, on a strategic level. If a misunderstanding like this had been eluded, the group would have gained lot of valuable time. By making checklists and maps over each responsibility area, much confusion could have been avoided.

Something that we felt was interesting was the project group's discussion about the so-called "pucks". These pucks are unpredictable things that appear along the project and can not be avoided or foreseen in advance. Since they cannot be predicted, a prioritization is necessary, and the hard part is to know which one to focus on. Here we see the importance of having previous experiences of selecting since this type of challenge is time consuming.

One "puck" that had emerged was the attack towards the World Trade Center in New York, which affected the whole project. During the meeting there was a discussion about the different alternatives that SEB's so called crisis group had simulated. We were surprised that some of the members were unaware of something that important. Pucks are related to projects, and therefore it is crucial to be aware of the *scenarios*, which could be seen as preparations for crises.

These illustrations above show some of the challenges that we identified to be central for the SEB project. In order to solve these identified challenges it is essential to find a set of tools suitable for this task. These tools are: Communication, Shared Understanding and Collective Competence.

5.3 Discussions around the Challenges

Below we discuss communication as one central tool, when meeting the challenges and to achieve a common understanding for the platform and its nuances. Since projects are characterized by an on-going process, the nuances in the platform must be reformulated; this could be done by a continuous communication.

According to one of the group members, communication represents the core of events, since an event includes many details. Since communication is a complex phenomenon, metaphors could therefore be valuable tools to use while dialoguing. One respondent uses the so-called "shrimp sandwich" as a metaphor:

"If I say shrimp sandwich to you, you have one perception, and I have another one. There are so many ingredients; butter, kind of bread, how many shrimps, with or without mayonnaise etc."

Even if there is a correspondence about the basic ingredients, there are so many nuances and details concerning the shrimp sandwich, which can be perceived in different ways among the project members. An open climate and a straight dialogue between the project members are very valuable in order to create a shared understanding for these nuances according to the respondent.

As explained, the discussion at the Council meeting concerned coordination between the Home and the On-Site organization. The group member told us that it is crucial to take time to discuss these coordination issues. Since the work in phase two is divided between the On-Site- and the Home organization (the project group at the Stockholm office) a large challenge is to coordinate the different sub areas before each Stopover. Above we could read that a big challenge with this coordination was to clarify the roles and responsibilities among the members in the On-Site organization, to avoid that everyone wastes a lot of time and energy. We see that the challenge with this *coordination* is not only to make the produced work from the different sub-groups to fit in, it is also essential to get a good *interaction* among the members, since they have to adapt to phase two.

According to one of the group members, they met the different perceptions they had of the project platform, by letting each group member give a personal explanation of how they comprehended the task. This creation of a shared view on the overall platform took about half a year to create among the team members, according to the respondent. However, according to the respondent it is after reaching the overall shared platform that an upgrading process must start. The member meant that, after the creation of the platform it is essential that the members communicate continuously with each other. The reason for that is that since it is an ongoing process, with all the changes (nuances) included, they must update each other to be able to keep a shared picture of the platform. During the Project Council meeting we realized that since they recently had entered the second phase, the Stopovers-phase, and just had had one stopover event, the roles were pretty unclear for almost everyone in the group. They did not know how the roles were divided at the Stopovers, in the On-Site organization. One of the members told us that they should have had more clear discussions before the first Stopover in Southampton. This verifies the necessity of having a clear and a common picture early in the project, according to us. The more shared the picture is, the easier the members could adjust to changes.

According to us the above findings does show a lack of ongoing communication after the creation of the platform. Our interpretation is that it is essential to meet these coordination challenges by ongoing reformulations among the group members concerning: goals, strategy, roles and responsibility. It is also important that time is taken to ventilate and reflect upon different comprehensions among the members regarding these reformulations.

In our theoretical discussion we found that it is central to see projects as a process and to practice reformulation during the project. From Packendorff (1993), we could see that constant reformulation and updates of the goals are needed. Further, we found that it is hard to predict situations that will influence the project work in the future. Ways to act and respond to new situations should rather be developed by the actors *during* the project work (Packendorff, 1993 from Larson, 1997).

Further, from Sahlin-Andersson (1996) we could see that it is reasonable to regard initial prerequisites and goals as preliminary as this apprehension (development of goals *during* the project) creates occasions for development and learning during the project work (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996 from Larson, 1997). Mintzberg’s strategy discussion also emphasized the importance of reformulation during the project, by stating that strategy does not necessarily have to be formulated *before* action, i.e. rational formulation before implementation (Mintzberg, 1989). According to Larsson (1997) this tells us that some strategies are better formulated gradually, out of the actions and experiences in the organization.

According to another member, the group did not have discussion and meetings about each member’s expectations and how they looked upon the project. The respondent believes that having knowledge about each person’s expectations and of everyone's area of responsibility is very central. The respondent perceives that the key for a successful project is that the group has a shared picture of each member's different expectations of the project, since every member has its own area and is incredibly focused on that one. The importance of discussing different expectations among the members can also be understood from Sverlinger (1996) who writes that each individual has his or her own goal-picture when entering the project (Sverlinger, 1996 from Larsson, 1997).

Another member describes the importance of documentation[14] as an answer to our question: "how to reach a shared understanding." The member told us that the documentation could be used to drill the details and nuances into each member's head.

From our interviews and observations we noticed something interesting. The members had different perceptions of whether the group had a shared picture or not. Further, the members had different ideas about how this picture is reached. Some of them thought that documentation is the best way, others that verbal communication is the key, ventilating different perceptions and expectations among them, others that a mix of them is the best way.

We question whether there is *one* way to create a shared understanding in projects. However, from Senge (1995) in our theoretical discussion above, we found valuable tools to achieve a shared understanding. According to us, Senge's (1995) illustration of a group, in which the energies of individual members work at cross-purposes, can be connected to our case study. Since SEB has difficulties with the clarity in roles and responsibility areas an overlapping between the members appear:

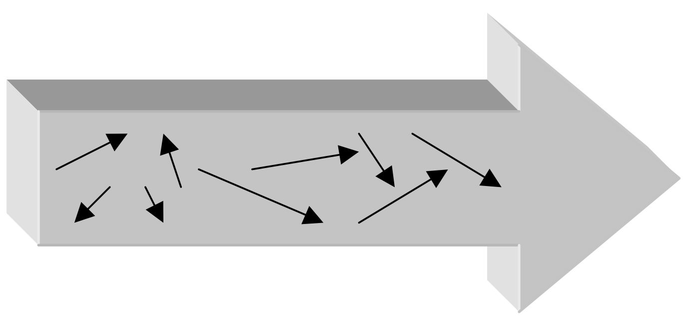


Figure 23. People with different degrees of "personal power," who are heading in different directions (Senge, 1995).

[14] As developed in the planning part of the analysis.

"The fundamental characteristics of the relatively unaligned team are wasted energy. Individuals may work extremely hard, but their efforts do not efficiently translate to team effort. By contrast, when a team becomes more aligned, a commonality of direction emerges, and individual" energies harmonize. There is a less wasted energy. In fact, a resonance or synergy develops, like the "coherent" light of a laser rather than the incoherent and scattered light of a light bulb. There is a commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and understanding of how to complement one another's efforts." (Senge, 1995)

The opposite of the unaligned team is according to Senge (1995), the aligned team, which is illustrated below:

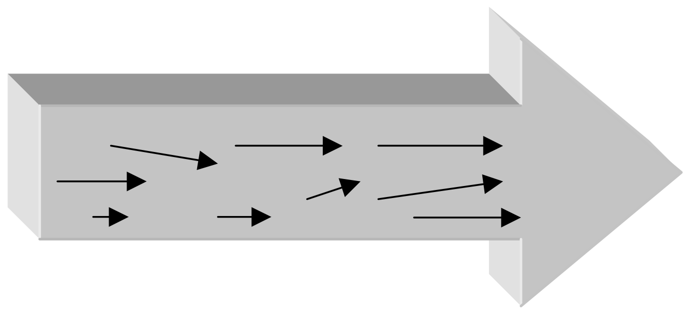


Figure 24. People's "personal power" is heading towards the same direction (Senge, 1995).

According to Senge (1995) unpredictability and complexity are characteristic for projects and can be avoided by systematic thinking, since it simplifies the complex reality by forming a language that describes a vast array of interrelationships and patterns of change. From our observations and interviews we have distinguished the possibility to see patterns in situations that appear in the daily work of projects. For example, if an unpredictable and urgent problem appears, there are certain ways to go. Who shall I turn to and who is responsible for this problem? Which are the communication ways? We perceive that the members can learn these "ways" by taking time to first of all to become aware of them, and to reflect upon them.

Senge's (1995) archetypes are according to us a valuable tool to achieve this learning. The first step in this archetype could be to state the question, which are the factors that limit coordination between the Home- and the On-Site organization? Diversity of views among the group members concerning their roles and responsibility areas, which in turn dissipate the group focus, could be the answer according to us. Discussions rather than dialogue techniques could also be a factor. The next step is to find leverage, ways to weaken or remove these limiting factors. First of all, according to the respondent above, sharing the different expectations upon the project and its tasks among the members, for example, giving each member time and opportunity to describe his or her picture of a successful event, could in return create enthusiasm for personal goals. It is also important that time is taken to ventilate different perceptions upon different aspects in the working situation. For example, which meaning do I give to the word effective, does it include saving money, using too little time, listen to the partners, customers, or something else? A critical factor in the leverage factors above is to have a good communication. Senge (1995) distinguishes between discussion and dialogue. The former can be compared to a “ping pong game,” an exchange of opinions; the latter on the other hand is according to Senge (1995) a “pool of common meaning,” a conversation in which everyone wins.

One member explained different dialogue techniques to us, which we perceived valuable to develop. The member told us that it is always important to dare questioning, ”do you mean like this?” The best way to achieve this is first of all to confess that the communication skills need to be developed. Second, to tell colleagues to keep asking questions instead of remeining silent. Thirdly, to use the other group members as advisors in communication questions and finally to be aware that coordination meetings play an essential role, according to the member. Further, coordination meetings[15] have played a central role for the improvement of communication and to the development of communication skills, according to the respondent.

According to one member, *social activities* within the group have contributed to an improvement of the shared meanings during the project. The member told us that while entering the group in the middle of phase one, the Christening, there were feelings like not having a good relation towards each other, everyone knew way to little about their teammates. In the Christening phase the respondent felt the importance of gathering the group for trying to reach a common understanding and goal setting. This would have to be done to make the hard assignments they had ahead of them. The whole group made a one-day trip to Långholmen where they discussed the different goals and pictures that the members had, but this did not help enough. In the end of the first phase many of the team members felt burned out. The pressure had been too hard and the structure and the goals had not been understood or integrated properly.

This was the turning point for the group. They did realize the importance of trying to understand and also to get to know each other outside the project. This was not easy as the project is very demanding and the members have to work late at nights, according to the respondent. After a long and tiring day many of the members just feel like going home to their families, they do not want to be with their team members, at night, too. This is a large problem within projects,

[15] Further developed below.

since the members need the time outside the project with their families but also need to get to know each other, to be effective enough to manage the deadlines and the goals within the project. What happened to SEB's project team, when they entered phase two, the Stopovers, was that they started to spend more time together. Today they have dinners together and other activities that pull them closer. We see that these social activities have been very valuable for the creation of shared meanings among the group members.

However, from our theoretical discussion we found that it is important to be aware of some risks connected to social activities. These social activities are according to Hansson (1998), connected to sympathetic competence. Hansson defined competence to be a trinity: practical, interpersonal and sympathetic competence. The former two are related to the working situation whereas the sympathetic is merely *socializing without any particular purpose*. In our interview with Hansson (01-10-24), we discussed possible impacts from sympathetic competence on the level of collective competence. According to Hansson social competence can be valuable, but it does not necessarily have to be so. Hansson gave us examples of when the aim to create sympathetic competence can be risky. For instance, imagine seeing your boss drunk, would not you think about that the next time he or she had a serious presentation? Hansson (01-10-24) meant that socializing and seeing a person's other side than the one he or she shows at work, can be risky. According to us it is necessary to socialize, but it is important to be aware that awkward situations could appear and therefore choosing activities that are less risky.

Among the project members we could distinguish different feelings for how useful these social activities are for the actual project work. According to one group member:

*"I get to know a person by **working** close to him/her."*

This respondent told us that the social activities have different functions among the group members, that it is more useful for some of them. One respondent told us that social activities do not only create a good spirit, motivation, it also causes good relations.

5.3.1 Pucks

Below we analyze the so-called "pucks," i.e. unpredictable challenges that we distinguished in the SEB project. They are very time-consuming and a prioritization process is therefore necessary. Ways to meet these pucks could be different planning tools as checklists, scenarios and meetings. By using these tools, a practical competence and space for creativity is achieved.

"Pucks" was a repeated phrase during the meeting. None of us had been in contact with this meaning of the word before, and reacted to how important these "pucks" seemed to be. While projects are very dependent on external factors, such as the weather, partners or other factors, it is necessary to have the ability to manage these unexpected things that can happen along the way. In the daily work of a project many "pucks" like these will appear, therefore it is decisive to have the ability to sort out which pucks that are important and give them the right time-prioritization. During our interviews the respondents agreed upon the central role of the "pucks" in the daily work. They also told us that difficult "pucks" could be valuable to bring up at meetings, with the aim to get help from the others how to manage them. The first point at the meeting was that each of the members reported where they were. If they had any "pucks" they were brought up at the meeting. We perceived that the time affected the discussions about the pucks, which unfortunately resulted in that sometimes instead of getting an answer, more confusion arose.

The SEB project is unique and the group members have not been working together and neither have the majority of the group members worked with a similar task before. This could be a reason for the importance of taking more time to solve and discuss these "pucks" together, both for future situations and also to get a shared picture of them. Out of our own experiences about how to manage "pucks," one of the project members confirmed that it is important to discuss these unpredicted things with others, since it sometimes is difficult to know which "puck" to concentrate on. In the beginning of the project one member felt frustration over these unpredicted "pucks," but after a while the member understood, after having consulted an external consultant, that *"instead of seeing the "pucks" as something that sticks out, see it as something included in the work."*

Another type of "puck" arose during the meeting, this was one that affected the whole group. The terrorists had recently attacked The World Trade Center in New York, which had an impact on the whole event: the Volvo Ocean Race. This "puck" did not just concern the participants; it could jeopardize all people that took part in it. It was interesting to observe their discussion regarding how to deal with the situation, many reflections were made. There were millions of ways to meet this puck, both in terms of extent and time given to it. We were surprised how little time they dedicated to it. It almost felt like they had a discussion about something as simple as were to have lunch. But on the other hand, this time-limited discussion did result in a shared and concrete decision. In this case the decision turned out to be good, but what had happen if they had not come to a shared result. Had they left the question and moved on, as they had many points on their agenda? Here we understood the significance of prioritizing the right "pucks," because of the time limitation. From later interviews we got explanations for our amazement over the little time spent on this "puck" during the meeting. The project group has backup plans for different possible crises; a hierarchy of different plans that functions as a preparation for different future scenarios.

A project is very sensitive towards external factors; hence the project team must be prepared for such things. SEB has created a so-called crisis group. This group has worked out crisis plans, which are used when very difficult and unpredictable things happen that affects the project as a whole. The "puck" described above is one of many "disturbance moments" that the project have backups for, and this World Trade Center attack is such an occasion where a discussion whether they should use the crisis plan or not arises.

Another observation we made concerning the terror attack was that some of the project members knew more about the crises plans than others. Our interpretation is that it is significant that all members have a shared knowledge about the plans and their content. This since they first of all need to know about their content before deciding whether to use them or not, and further to be prepared for how they will fall out in practice.

We also see that these backups must be extremely valuable for the team, since events according to the above are dependent upon many unforeseen factors. These backups can be compared to the creation of preparedness among the team members in the theoretical framework above (Hansson, 1998). In our interview with Hansson (01-10-24), he said that to reach a high level of collective competence, the unity stage in the matrix[16], the group's competence in meeting new situations is crucial. The collective ability to interact in different situations and to understand that it is the small differences that makes the difference is the key.

Hansson means that not much change is needed to create a totaly new situation, this fact makes it possible for the team to create a shared preparedness for future situations. Hence, discussions and reflections upon the experiences can achieve preparedness among the group members. Scenarios are something that

[16] See page 63

can simplify this process by making simulations of the future (Hansson, 2001). These simulations of the future can be compared to the narrative approach, which has no means of knowing, and no ambitions to know the future. It only helps us to understand what mechanisms are at work (Czarniawska, 1997). Narrative is a mode of communication between the collective members. Through stories, the reality is enacted and the social order maintained or changed. Though the narrative tells the story of the past, the narrative implication is for the future. Thus, the way in which people tell their life story is always directed towards coming events (Gergen, 1984).

Hansson further argues, that you can never create an instrumental preparedness for new situations, however reflection and experiences can organize the knowledge you have. A central dilemma here, concerning the organization form, is that projects are temporary (Packendorff, 1995) and time limited. This in turn often results in the situation where collective competence seldom is enriched since time to create preparedness by reflection and experiences often has low priority (01-10-24). Our interpretation is that backups at our case company *are* very valuable, but more time should be taken to discuss these backups among the group members. We also see that it is meaningful for the creation of a shared pictured, to take time to use these backups to a larger extent and also to reformulate them during the project process.

Since The Volvo Ocean Race is a challenging and a long-time project, the preparations are essential. To be able to manage all the "pucks," problems, employees and externals the people involved in the project must be very clear about what it is that has to be done. To be that, clear guidelines and patterns must be designed as regards how to carry the project through, and this demands thorough structure.

Since SEB never earlier has been a part of a large project as the Volvo Ocean Race, they do not have any actual experience of how to manage it. Even if they can take part of other companies' experiences and hire consultants, they have, in contrast to other projects and events which are recurring, no earlier experiences to base the project on, as example The Swedish Match Cup which is managed by GKSS. This event is short and recurring, and includes many volunteers, which make some of the conditions different in comparison to SEB. GKSS can make the evaluation process after the event, in contrast to SEB as it proceeds over a long time span. SEB has to make continuos evaluations during the project to achieve an on-going learning. Ways to do these evaluations could be practiced by reflection and feedback sessions.

To be effective and to be able to keep their deadlines, **checklists** were integrated into the project members' daily work. The project leader emphasized that **planning** is decisive to manage all "balls" showing up during the project, since it includes so many different areas. This planning includes for example, guidelines, different report channels, checklists and working documents. On our question whether these planning tools have changed or been developed during the project process, the project leader answered that they have been clarified during the process, but that the foundation is the same.

The clarification of these tools was very much a result of a new member entering the group. He entered the group one-year after the project started, his area of responsibility was to coordinate and understand the Stopover process, phase two. From our interview with him we understood that his entrance to the project group had been important for the clarification of the planning tools. This is what he said about his entrance in the project:

"I have inherited many good things, but if I had been a part of the project from the beginning I would have done some things different."

We asked him how he perceived the atmosphere in the group when he entered. He told us that in the beginning he wanted a picture of the members' roles, responsibilities etc., to get to know their situation and therefore he took time to walk around and talk to the members. He summarized his interpretation of the groups' shared understanding of the platform as: *"There was no shared platform - it* ***was there*** *but not communicated."*

He got the feeling of that the focus had been more strategic than operative, and this had created feelings among the group members that there was no end, everyone knew what to do but not *how*.

Explanations for this could, according to him, be that after you have done something for a long time there will be a risk that you take for granted that everyone knows. As a base for the project there were many documents, which were very detailed. However, they needed to be clarified and include clearer guidelines to each group member. This clarification made the documents more operative and easier to implement. The guidelines were presented to the group members at a kickoff, one month before the first Stopover at Southampton. We asked whether this clarification process, one year after project started, felt uncomfortable for the project members to face? The member meant that this process was facilitated by the natural change of phase, i.e. the project was on the way to phase two when the clarification process was introduced.

According to the above, it was on the initiative of the project leader that the "new" member was hired into the project, and the knowledge he should add was the coordination function, to prepare for the Stopover phase. With this background it is easy for us to understand that the project leader immediately responded to the new member's demands for clarification of the guidelines. Maybe he felt that they needed to be more structured to be able to enter phase two. Perhaps he needed someone who was good at communicating through checklists, guidelines and meetings. The reactions from the other group members were according to him that they welcomed the guidelines, as they felt that the clarification made them feel safer in their roles and responsibility areas. On the other hand there were some reactions like "no more guidelines," please.

In phase one, each one had been so much into his or her working task, and now in phase two, they were faced with a new coordination challenge. There was a need to discuss the different views on roles and responsibility areas. For example: "X views your responsibility area like this, which is your picture?" According to us, it is very important to integrate external people along the project, since they come with new and fresh eyes and ideas. They also see things easier that have to be developed or changed, since the others are so used to them and live after the same old pattern.

Meetings have been central for the project group since the start of the project. However, according to the "new" group member the clarification of guidelines and working descriptions have contributed to some changes in the content of them.

During our stay at SEB's project group in Stockholm we observed both a coordination (operative planning) and a project Council meeting (strategic planning). According to the introduction of this analysis chapter the focus is based on the project Council meeting, in which we observed a very interesting discussion about getting a shared platform. We wrote above that this discussion origins from the new coordination challenges included in the entrance to phase two, the Stopover-phase. However, our interpretation is also that the openness and characteristics of this discussion is influenced by the clarification of guidelines. These clarifications were presented at the kickoff, and we perceived that these encouraged a valuable reflection process among the members (roles, responsibilities and tasks) that had impacts upon the character of the project Council meeting that we observed.

At the coordination meeting, (including more detailed planning regarding the On-Site organization), we observed that checklists had a central role during the meeting. The agenda followed the points on the checklists. While we observed the meeting we could see the mixed feelings and reactions towards the checklists among the group members. On the one hand they seemed to feel very comfortable and safe with clear directions, on the other hand they made jokes about “all these guidelines” and called the “new” member “the administrator.” We can imagine that these mixed feelings towards planning tools can depend upon the high workload and time pressure in projects. If you are not used to them in earlier work, they can at first seem as an extra workload. However, after a while we can imagine that they get valuable in the daily work, since they clarify the complexity. The respondent further meant that the work with creating a shared platform, working descriptions, continues as *“ it is an on-going process.”*

We once again recognize this reasoning from our theoretical discussion above. Larson (1997) emphasizes the importance of seeing projects as an on-going and a dynamic process. Further, Christensen & Kreiner (1991) write that visions should be formulated in the beginning and that reformulation should take place during the project work (Christensen & Kreiner, 1991)

One way SEB has tried to create a shared platform for phase two, is by having all project members present at the stopovers to see and feel their roles in reality. The “new” member also said that the group learns contiuelly which things to do and in which order. For example, as there are some documents that shall be written before each Stopover, these can be prepared in advance. He further believes that by developing the planning tools, the project can become a “self-playing piano” in the future. He has heard from similar projects how planning tools can clarify the platform, so that everyone has a clear picture of what to do in the project. Here, he clarified that a “self-playing piano” can be both positive and negative. The positive aspect is that space for being proactive against competitors and for being more innovative is achieved by having a solid ground (good planning). The negative aspects concerns just have to carry through the plans without intruding on creativity. He meant that by having a good structure you could go outside the frames: *“the only way to create creativity is through structure.”* According to him, SEB's project group definitely has the potential to become a positive “self-playing piano.”

He further said that a total “gross-list,” a more detailed control plan, had been the ultimate tool to have from the start of the project. This had created a more solid platform, and it had been easier to delegate and control. However, he also emphasized that the project is “alive” the whole time, it is impossible to plan everything and there is not enough time, either.

According to our theoretical discussion this planning can be connected to organizing practical competence Hansson (01-10-24). The practical competence here is the working routines that can be established to organize the event, by e.g. guidelines, checklists. Above, the researcher Hansson (01-10-24) was critical towards companies not prioritizing planning and structures and calling for meetings only when problems occur. Our case study apparently realizes the importance and usefulness of planning and meetings. The team find planning and structure as the foundation for their project work, which they try to clarify and reformulate during the on-going project process. Further, they have Project Council and Coordination meetings on a regular basis. A positive outcome from organizing the practical competence through planning, structure and meetings is that space for the interpersonal competence is created Hansson (01-10-24).

According to the above we observed that group members perceived that these tools were useful, but sometimes, they seemed to feel that there were to many of them, and that they became a workload instead of help. We can imagine that working in this time limited climate can create these reactions towards planning tools. However, we perceive that they are very valuable for the project team and it is important that the tolls continue to be a solid ground in the project work. You must allow time for the planning process. According to Hansson (01-10-24), all teams should organize their practical competence, nevertheless, we see that the need for our case study company to do this is central. This because, the big challenge that the project team has to manage is phase two, the coordination between the On-Site and the Home-organization. This coordination demands a lot of space for the development of interpersonal competence, a focus on developing the interaction skills towards different tasks, coordination. According to Hansson (2002) this interpersonal competence is developed by taking time to develop preparedness in the group, reflect and use the experiences and to simulate future situations, create a collective coordination in different contexts.

At our case company we discovered that time is taken to develop these interrelation competencies. Since the project team went into phase two, they have taken a lot of time to discuss the coordination issues between the On-Site and the Home-organization. At the meeting we observed that a lot of time was spent on discussing coordination issues, including the different views among the members concerning different tasks. However, as discussed above, the views appeared to be everything but shared among the members. They seemed to become quite surprised over these heterogeneous views among them. Reactions like, "but, it says in my responsibility description that I shall do that..." "Yes but that mean…" We interpret these reactions and behaviors as signals for even more time to reflect and discuss each and everyone's pictures of the tasks included in phase two. According to Hansson (01-10-24) creating scenarios is one way to create preparedness for future situations and different contexts.

We observed that time is taken to ventilate different pictures of the tasks and other issues concerning roles, responsibilities. However, our interpretation is that even more time should be taken for this ventilation. We exemplified situations that we perceive need more time for ventilation than others need, these are the ones concerning "pucks." We interpret that it is time-efficient in the long run to bring order into each of these "pucks" that are brought up, as a consequence of the new phase. From Hansson (1998) we found that by doing this, the intimacy with "new pucks" can increase and shared selective principles for future "pucks" in the new phase can be developed among the team members. Our interpretation is that the structuring of practical competence is immensely important for the group in order to create a shared platform. However, we also see that it is important to develop the interpersonal competence by creating a collective preparedness for different contexts. Therefore, the space liberated by the planning tools should be used for developing the interpersonal competence in the first place. Taking time at meetings, for simulating future situations together could for example do this. We interpret that the group ability to be innovative and proactive towards competitors grows out of the development of interpersonal competence.

We recognize the dilemma, not taking enough time to refection and discussions from Packendorff (1995). From Packendorff we found that time is a central dilemma in temporary organization (Packendorff, 1995). This characteristic does, according to Hansson (2002), result in the situation that time for reflection seldom is prioritized in projects. Sometimes time is taken to reflection after the project is terminated, if prioritized at all. This lack of reflection in projects makes it difficult for the collective competence to develop. The important skill to develop a shared preparedness among the group members is not often encouraged (Hansson, 2002).

5.3.2 Deadlines

Deadline is a typical challenge for projects. To be able to keep a deadline, a clear structure and an ability to select is essential.

Since there are several **deadlines** included in a project, it would simplify the working process if there was continuity in it. The members also have to have an ability to sort out the most important things to be able to keep their deadlines. According to us there are different definitions of what a deadline is, but to make it easier while discussing deadlines we will focus on two types, the individual deadlines that includes the everyday work, and the main deadlines that encompass the whole project. To keep the main deadlines it is important that the everyday deadlines work out. If not these small but important things work out, many main endings could fail in the project. During our observation we did see that many of their "small" and individual deadlines were not discussed and appointed enough. Among the project members there were many questions about their own work and they were aware of the fact that certain things would have to be done within a short period of time. This situation caused many of the members problems regarding their ability to focus on the questions put forward by other members since they needed an answer to their own questions. We do not think that this is an unusual incident, since the time is limited and there are too many questions compared to the amount of time. Since there is nothing to do about the time or all the deadlines, it is necessary to be effective at all meetings. To be effective at a meeting is easier said than done, but one solution could be to reduce each member's time for their reporting of their area, so that everyone could be sure that there will be time left for their presentation too. A consequence of this could be that everyone listens to each other, while they know that their turn will come. Another outcome could be that the members get a better overview of each member's area, since they are more concentrated and calm while listening to the reports of the others.

5.3.3 Team Mix

A challenge in a project is that individuals have different experiences and expectations while entering and then during a project. Ways to meet this challenge could be different competence mixes and a creation of a shared understanding, a climate where the project members are brought closer to one another.

In-house

In-house is an expression that has been created by SEB. It means that almost everything concerning the entire project has been prepared, planned, organized and carried through by internals. An advantage of this in-house concept could be that they have a common base of what SEB stands for and what its image is. A disadvantage could be that the project members do not have much experience of similar projects.

A characteristic in our case study is that the competencies in the project group to a large extent are "in-house." The competence mix among the project members consists of about 60% internals and about 40% externals (for instance consultants). According to a respondent it is valuable to have many in-house competencies in a project like this. We feel that this in-house majority, is inline with SEB's purpose with the race, which is to create a worldwide image. Not to forget, that external competencies have been important for SEB; in the areas of structures, coordination and Events and Logistics.

The respondent further told us that sometimes the input of a consultant has too much influence on the organization. The respondent thought that SEB has succeeded with a good mixture. Our interpretation here is that an internal control of the project must be a prerequisite for the ability to create a shared picture among the project team members. How could this picture have been created if an external firm of consultants managed the project for SEB? He also emphasized the importance of a strong internal support (analyzed below) for the project leader. But which is the right mix between internal and external competencies? Probably there is no right answer to that question, or at least we do not have one.

The project leader also pointed out the “in house” character of the project by saying that there is no distinction in the project group between the external and internal members. Before they entered the group they were competitors, but since they were “selected” from their original consultant work, they are a project group members and nothing else.

From Lundin & Söderholm (1995) above we found that temporary assignments normally mean that individuals have other ”homes” before, during and after being involved in a Temporary Organization, which means that the team is dependent on other organized contexts besides the current Temporary Organization. Further we also found from Lundin & Söderholm (1995) that individuals carry their own set of expectations and experiences with them into the team. Moreover these may resemble the expectations and experiences of the other team members to a greater or lesser extent (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Our interpretation is that our case company put a lot of focus on creating an “in-house” climate. For example, the team members are not part time members. Instead, all of them work full time in the project and have a shared “work base.” They are all working in the same building, located close together and can easy ventilate different issues directly with each other. Additionally, during our observations at the project office, (formal meetings, interviews and informal lunches, discussions) we did not even think of any distinctions between the group members in terms of, externals and internals. This absence of barriers between in- and out competencies, a “we are all project group members” climate, is according to us a vital base for the creation of a shared picture among the project members.

Another vital factor concerning creating correspondence between the individual’s different expectations and experiences is the recruiting process at our case company. From our interviews at SEB, the respondents told us that the project leader has a sensitive feeling for what kind of competencies and individuals that the project group needs. The project leader in our case company suggested which individuals should be included in the project team. He appreciated that no one told him which individuals to choose or not. According to the project leader there are some fundamental issues to take to consideration while employing team members; core competencies, experiences from working in similar projects, an ability to work in tight team situations and communication skills.

He also told us that you have to act much faster in a project, as there is no time for pampering, like in a linear organization. It is essential to be direct in the dialogue from day one, “are you sure that your boy-friend accepts that you are away for two and a half years?” or “You cannot refer to anything” or “no one really knows what this project will look like” or “maybe you have to cancel your holiday plans if the project is near a deadline.” Issues like these have to be confronted and discussed at day one.

When the team is formed the next step is to get a tight group. Working routines, planning and structure is according to the project leader important, just to keep the group together. Further, it is important to experience some fun things together. According to him the project group must go through the project life cycle much faster, compared to a permanent organization.

According to Hansson (01-10-24) in our theoretical framework, it is important that the team members have both practical and interpersonal competencies. Practical competence concerns in our case the skills to organize an event, and the latter the competence to interact, co-operate with the other team members (Hansson, 01-10-24).

5.3.4 The Role of the Project Leader

A common challenge in projects is that the leader does not always share his/her knowledge and information enough with the members. A way to manage this is to communicate more and not to be afraid of repeating oneself.

The project leader told us that the high percentage of “in house” competence in the project team of SEB is unusual in traditional business projects. Also a project like this has never taken place at SEB, since it spans over divisions and national borders. The words of the project leader:

“We have together built up the project from the ground by ourselves, we own every moment in it, hence we know that it is our project, we can stand for it.”

The project has had an "in house" focus since the very beginning of the project. The board and the Steering committee of SEB gave the project leader, who is an earlier SEB employee, the assignment to make a task description and to form a project organization (the task was not handed to external consultants). Hence the project leader, with an internal SEB background has had a central role and a lot of responsibility since the beginning of the project. In one interview a project member also emphasized the importance of having a project leader who has a strong internal support.

Our view is that a central project leader who has been in the project from the beginning brings a security to the project group. In the interviews and from our observations it is obvious that all project members perceive him as very central and decisive for the success of the project. All project members emphasized the important role of the project leader, and complimented his work very much. Comments from the members of the project, illustrate his central role:

"He has created a very good climate in the group built on direct and honest dialogue"

"One key factor for the success of this project is that he grasps all problems, he is an extremely good problem solver"

"He is good at identifying individuals with the right competence for the project"

These perceptions and feelings among the project members, of course, create a lot of safety and stability. However, in our interviews and observations we noticed a tendency, a risk that the role of the project leader becomes *too central*. One group member told us that he (the project leader) has a very clear picture about all details in the project. The explanation is that he has been involved in the project from the start and has formulated the task description. However, this creates a risk that he unconsciously takes a lot for granted and as a result the communication between him and group members will be insufficient. A group member expresses another risk with this central role of a project leader: *"Many group members do not take a decision without his participation, this is a problem."*

From our observations and interviews with different group members, and other project leaders, we have found out the importance of repeating yourself over and over again. This could be expressed by a "parrot" metaphor. One group member about the role of the project leader: *"The backbone is to go over again and again what is to be done."*

Once again we pinpoint the central role of taking more time to communicate in different ways, now from a project leader perspective. We advocate taking more time during the meetings to delegate the different parts in the clear picture that the project leader possesses. Many respondents commend the project leader for having a direct, clear communication, so why not use it to a larger extent?

Since the project is in phase two, and the project leader at some occasions will be situated at the On-Site organization, this problem will be even more apparent. How shall decisions be made when he is not at the Home-organization? As expressed by one respondent: "*Of course there are communication tools, but, what if a sudden decision has to be taken?*"

However, the respondent clarifies that the group has a substitute for the project leader and also that the home-organization has much to fall back on, as to help them to know how to act.

We recognize the dilemma of the central role of project leaders from Hansson (2002). In many projects centralization is a fact according to Hansson (2002). The project leader often has the overview, and the other members work with their part. The negative outcome of this is that synergy effects and collective learning of the whole is lost (Hansson, 2002).

An additional reason for the central role of a project leader is according to Hansson (2002) that prerequisites for learning are negatively affected by the heavy workload distributed to the project leaders. Hansson writes further that this creates a dilemma, since project leaders have to prioritize between reaching traditional project restrictions; time, cost and quality or the individual learning. Hansson (2002) further writes that money and time in projects are limited, this in turn often leads to short-term -- rather than long-term solutions.

According to the project leader his biggest ambition is to create acceptance and trustworthiness for the project. This high level of ambition is not only a characteristic typical for the project leader. We also distinguished this characteristic among all the project members. This high level of ambition among the members and the leader, is according to us, a force that creates a feeling of belonging in the team, a good shared platform. According to our theoretical framework above we perceive that this high level of ambition in the team is a good coordinating force for the different expectations and experiences among the different individuals in the team (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). However, we assess that it is crucial that the project leader is aware of all knowledge and information that he possesses and delegates more of it.

5.3.5 Waterproof Contracts

A challenge SEB has to face in this project is the one towards its external partners. Since many companies are involved in Team SEB it is essential to make waterproof contracts, first to avoid misunderstandings and second for SEB's sake so that the external partners act according to SEB's interests. To be able to formulate waterproof contracts it is helpful to use people who are familiar with SEB's goals and purposes, both with their participation in the Volvo Ocean Race and also their future ones. Also the communication concerning the content in the contracts does play a central role, both towards the partners and the project members.

One interesting sequence of the meeting was when the discussion turned to how one of SEB's partners had misunderstood some guidelines in their **contract.** Many things do contribute to this situation. It is important that SEB makes clear agreements, i.e. waterproof contracts with their external actors from the beginning. This is a hard part of the project, since it is a key factor. While entering a large event as the Volvo Ocean Race, as the principal partner, it is essential for SEB to find partners. It is important to enter agreements with partners, sharing the values of SEB. Further, that the partners meet the goals that SEB has stated in their project description. When formulating the contracts it is necessary to consider the different expectations of the actors. To have something written down is not the same when you talk about things with your partners. It is important to make all the partners feel that they get something out of it -- more than just their name on a boat. Therefore, it could be very useful to have seminars that explain the role of SEB and the partners in the event, just to make the partner's employees interested and motivated for the event.

SEB has many different sponsors in this project. SEB has to a large extent chosen their partners. As mentioned earlier it is a syndicate company, Global Team AB, who draws up and concludes the contracts with SEB's sponsors. The reason for using a syndicate company, according to the project leader, is that the syndicate has more knowledge and experience of how to make contracts more waterproof than the one SEB has.

According to one of the members there are problems connected with the use of external partners when it comes to finding the right set of contracts with the right clauses. Along the project, questions often arise about matters written in the contracts. Since the people who were involved in the signing process do not take part in the project, many discussions often arise about how to interpret the guidelines written in the contracts and this results in loss of time. Further the member points out that reasons for having these discussions often depends on the fact that the sponsors have not made their "homework," they have not read through their contracts thoroughly. To avoid misunderstanding, according to us, could be to be accurate while mailing or telephoning them. Partners always have their own goals when joining an event, and will therefore unconsciously or consciously relate in a way that best fits their company. Another way to avoid these misunderstandings from the project members' point of view could be to create a general awareness and knowledge of the content in the contracts among them.

For SEB the sponsors are not milk-cows to pay for the Volvo Ocean Race, they are also potential partners for SEB in the future. Since one of SEB's purpose with joining this project, is to profile itself as a leading player within e-banking, it could be important for them to have partners that could help them to improve their e-banking just to be able to keep their high standards in the future. As this project is a good opportunity for SEB to find these potential future partners it is substantive for them to really be fastidious and accurate in their selection process and with the contracts.

Another issue that was discussed was how SEB communicates with their external actors. SEB has a daily contact with them either via telephone, meetings or via e-mail. The foundation of the contracts therefore is the key factor to easier understand each other. It is easy to misunderstand each other in any case, so if there is a common base to rely on, the comprehension between them hopefully does evolve much easier.

In the beginning of the collaboration process with the partners, SEB made presentations for the external companies' employees just to make them understand what SEB's purpose with the role as a principal partner was. They also clarified what the external companies' gain of being sponsors for SEB would be. Ericsson and Investor are SEB's two main sponsors. Ericsson has had and has many changes within the organization; that is one reason why SEB did not have any presentations for Ericsson's employees. This is a lack, according to us. Since all the 15 companies in Team SEB must feel as a team it is meaningful that the employees in all companies feel solidarity. Each employee must understand the reasons for participation to do that.

After our observations and interviews at SEB we almost dare saying that waterproof contracts are essential for the project groups efficiency. Since projects are very time-consuming it is important that SEB has illuminated all possible things in the beginning of the project. One way of doing this is to formulate clear guidelines and directions with the sponsor, as many problems will occur along the project anyway, problems that origin from different interests among them. Our strong belief in "waterproof" contracts even became bigger to the background of theoreticians statements that projects are based on many different actors' perspectives, since all of them have different interests in the project (Sahlin-Andersson, 1991; Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995; Sverlinger, 1996 from Larson, 1997).

Hellgren and Stjernberg (1995) emphasize the importance of the design phase (the formulation of the project). Clear and detailed decisions in this design phase, simplifies the working situation since the members can act rather than ask. Further they state that it is important, in the design phase, to formulate visions that can link different interests. Hansson (2002) also points to this reasoning, where he says that it is significant to consciously create common symbols and goals, to get solidarity within the networks. One strategic way to meet these different interests is according to Sahlin-Andersson (1989) the maintenance of vagueness. This means, formulation of diffuse and wide-ranging goals (Sahlin-Andersson, 1989 from Larson, 1997).

5.3.6 Internal Legitimacy

Another challenge for the project is to get internal legitimacy. Ways to get this acceptance could be to communicate with the employees and also creating internal networks.

In a large and a long time-lasting project, as the Volvo Ocean Race, SEB must legitimate the message of why taking part in the race in an accurate way to all employees. Since the project costs much money it is significant that this integration makes well.

One of SEB's main purposes with the project is to involve all parts of the SEB organization in order to strengthen internal unity and commitment. Therefore it is important to get a good atmosphere, a common interest and a feeling of solidarity among the employees. To get that, SEB's project organization has made many presentations, events and has also installed an internal internet site. For this purpose all employees can follow the boat and other activities that happens around the project. Except that, they also have an internal intranet where every employee can read news-letters about the race on a daily basis.

SEB's internal network includes 15 people, who are responsible for integrating the goals with the internal network:

- To cooperate between the business areas
- Mediate the purposes to the SEB employed
- Create better customer relations by activities

These 15 people consist of one person per responsibility area and country. The purpose with the network is to reach out to all SEB employees. To achieve the goals and purposes, one of the project members who is responsible for the internal network, has presentations, meetings and other electronic communication with the responsible persons. Since many of SEB's business areas have thick walls between them, it is important to look over them and cooperate to be able to succeed. This is done by working together and using each other's knowledge and creativity.

5.3.7 Termination

A challenge in a project is to prepare the members for the termination. Ways to manage this dilemma is for instance to have a preparation for how to transfer the achieved knowledge and learning from the project organization to the permanent one. Further it is essential to have a plan for the members when the project ends.

SEB's purpose with this project is, as already mentioned, to unite the group under one name and one identity. Furthermore, to establish SEB as a strong trademark in Europe; involve all parts of SEB in order to strengthen internal unity and commitment and to profile SEB as a leading player within e-banking. This is the transition they want to have accomplished after the project ends.

What happens with the project after it ends?
From Lundin & Söderholm (1995) in the theoretical discussion above we could read that experiences gained during the lifetime of the Temporary Organization (here the SEB project) should be transferred to the permanent organization (here SEB). Also that termination calls for some transmission of experience; comparisons between expectations, that execution and outcome may generate new insights about how to deal with particular problems in the future. However, many companies seem to forget what to do after the project when the goals and the purposes hopefully have been fulfilled. Some companies have no plans worked out for the people included in the project, neither any plan for how to proceed with their marketing process nor ideas for the next event. How come when it is significant in today's organizations to create and take charge of the learning? A reason for this could, according to Hansson (2002), be that the organizations not do utilize the collective competence during and between the projects. A consequence in turn of that could be that the organization makes the same mistakes again since the experiences they got from a project do not lead to any learning (Hansson, 2002).

Since SEB's project organization work together for a long period, it has a plan for how to proceed after the project started to be developed. The initiative has been taken from the project leader. According to him it is essential to have something to show for the project members, what is going to happen with them and also how SEB will go on with the material and output the project members have worked out during the project. He has just started to work on this plan together with an external consultant, which they will put out for the SEB's board later on. To get the project members motivated and alert in the stressed climate it is, it is valuable for them to feel that others appreciate their work, and that there are future plans for the material they are working out.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter we have analyzed the different challenges SEB has to face and varying ways to meet them. The challenges are many and it is essential to be aware of, have knowledge and ideas of how to meet them, especially in SEB's case. The reason for this in SEB's case has to do especially with the integration process of the On-Site organization and its earlier integration from phase one, the Christening-phase into phase two, the Stopover-phase.

Since SEB's project embraces events, and therefore includes integration phases between the Home and the On-Site organization, the communication and the collective competence must work. If not, the group has a shared understanding for what they do, it does contribute to a more difficult integration process.

What is important, is to be aware of the "right" challenges and the "right" ways of using the tools (communication, collective competence and shared understanding), when managing them. A project is an ongoing process and the challenges must hence be meet regularly with reformulated and ongoing tools.

6. Conclusion

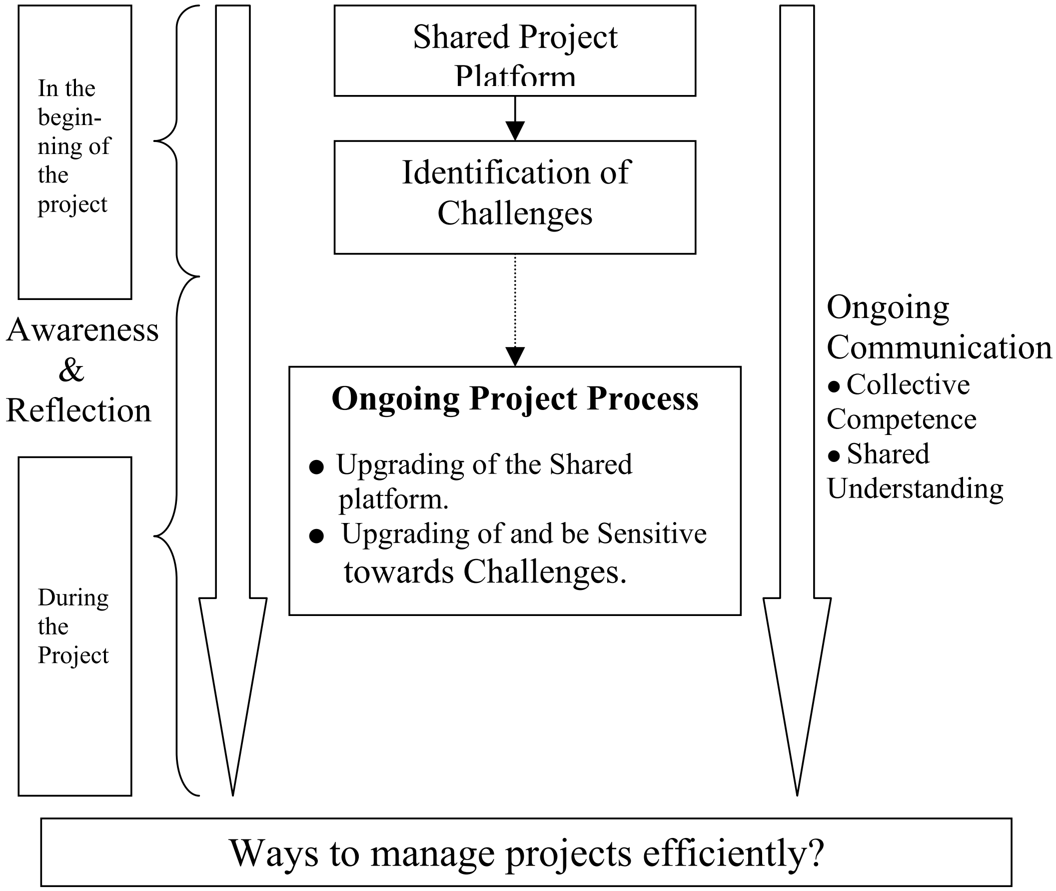


Figure 25. Ways to manage a project efficiently (our own model).

As we stated in the beginning of our thesis, projects are very complex and there are no right or wrong answers as regards how to manage them. However, there are some "lodestars" for projects to follow.

Since every project has its own challenges and different constellations of members, it is important to take this under consideration and start from "scratch" every time a new project starts.

A shared platform is essential to establish, in order to interact and understand each member in different situations. It is important to create this platform in the beginning of the project since all members have their own expectations, experiences and knowledge. Many see this process as something time-consuming, but if not dealing with this, the project will lose efficiency and synergy effects in the long run.

To be able to create this platform, communication is the central tool. Communication contributes to awareness and reflection of your own and others' behavior, interpretation and perceptions. Communicating is not an easy thing to do; many times you have to repeat and also express yourself in a way that makes other members understand. It is here the importance of the project leader's role is apparent. He/she has to encourage the team to communicate and express their understanding for different issues concerning the project. Targama and Sandberg (1998) have a similar reasoning; they emphasize the importance of the manager taking the members' different perceptions and understandings of a specific task into consideration. And to take time to discuss in an open dialogue and to practice active reflection (Targama & Sandberg, 1998).

After have got a shared platform within the group, the next step is to identify challenges (for instance deadlines and contracts). The reason for identifying them after you have a common view is because it makes this process easier. Here we want to clarify the essence of taking time for this process, and not only adopt old challenges to it, since every project has many new challenges. Many of these are of course recurrent from one project to another, but not all.

One valuable way we found to use in the identification process was to discuss characteristics that are typical for projects, Time, Task, Team, Transition and Networks. They are general to their nature, hence applicable on most situations. Ventilating issues, related to these characteristics can uncover patterns consisting of certain challenges. In addition to using this "method", an external observer could be vital, since the members in a group often become "blind" to their own problems. As Senge (1995) expresses it: *"The blind men and the elephant."*

Since the project is an on-going process it is important that the group all the time upgrade its platform and the challenges, with an ongoing communication. This could sometimes be difficult since being in the project, time is a decisive factor. Therefore the group members often prioritize the assignments they have to accomplish for that day, instead of taking time to upgrade its platform. A product of this could be that they lose the power of the collective consensus, as missing valuable inputs for the project, space for collective creativeness and innovativeness and/or miss the learning between each other.

It is significant to keep and stimulate the learning process. This could be done by continuos evaluation sessions after each stopover among the group members. Feedback and reflections during these sessions, could lead to an avoidance of making the same mistakes and find new innovative ways for future events.

This could be avoided by the project leader, by his/her encouraging the members to reflect upon the members' actions in different situations during the working process. Metaphors could be a useful tool to use while reflecting. Morgan (1993) states that metaphors could be used to catch and clarify situations. This in turn could stimulate imagination among the members; they will get the space to question their present understanding (Morgan, 1993 from Targama & Sandberg, 1998).

To summarize this process which according to us is a way of managing projects efficiently is to be aware that every project has its own challenges. It is vital with formulation and reformulation of a shared platform. The creation of this platform is dependent upon taking time to an on-going communication, awareness and reflection among the members.

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David Schnill, Event manager, SEB, 01-10-11
Agneta Kahlmann, Deputy manager, SEB, 01-10-11
Mikael Jiffer, Managing partner , SEB, 01-10-11
Henrik Hansson, Ph D, School of Economics and Commercial Law at Göteborg Universitet, (01-10-24)
Peter Klock, Event Manager, GKSS, 01-10-18
Toomas Tartu, Marketing manager, SCP String, 01-10-19

Appendix

SCP String

SCP String's head office is located in Gothenburg and is a part of the Grey communication. They view sponsorship as an important part of a company's total communication, and work to strengthen the brand and improve relations, both externally and internally. Their business concept encompasses developing strategies and communication solutions within sponsorship and events. Their unique arrangements combined with sophisticated measuring methods produce precision and quantifiability within all forms of sponsorship, events and event marketing. The process is based on an internationally accepted method developed in collaboration with Sifo research and consulting.

According to SCP String sponsorship is an integral part of the corporate communication strategy. The string model is based on strategy and evaluation, and their role is as objective advisors for those investing in sponsorship. Their specialist knowledge enables them to identify the image-creating activities within produce the greatest effect for your company.

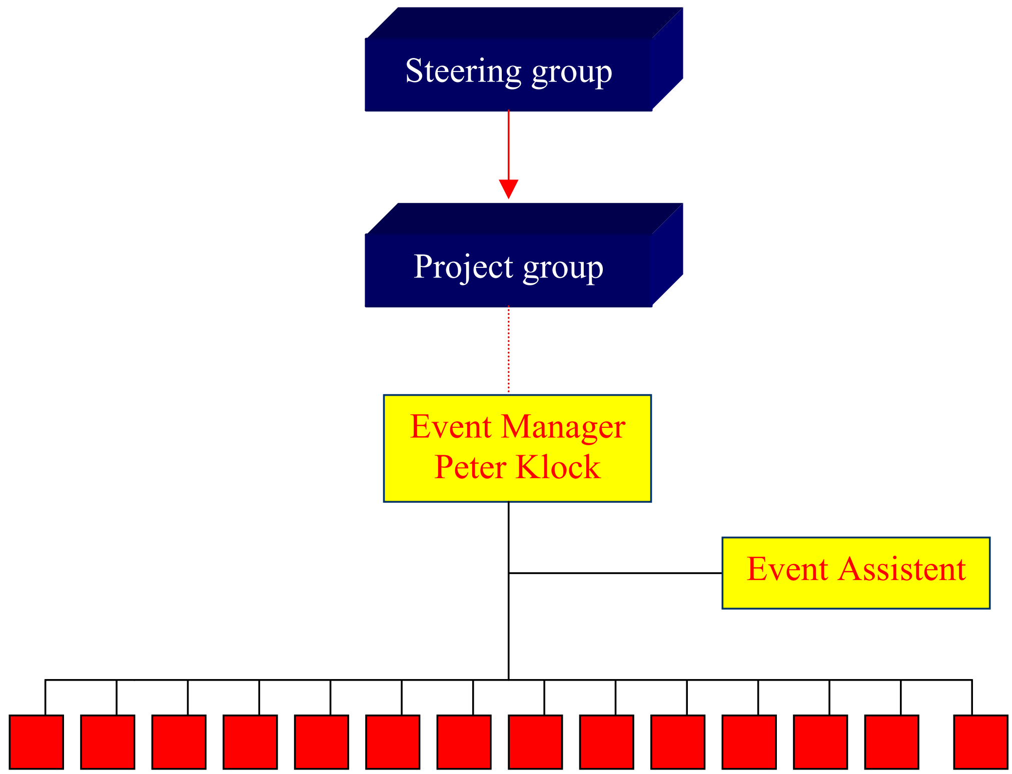
GKSS (Royal Gothenburg Yacht Club)

GKSS is located in Långedrag and was grounded in 1860. Today it is one of the largest sport clubs with a total of 3800 members. GKSS is in charge of The Swedish Match Cup, which is a competition that is placed at Marstrand. The competition is once a year in the beginning of August, where the world's leading sailors are competing.

Peter Klock who is the event manager for GKSS, manages The Swedish Match Cup, together with an assistant. To his help there is a steering group that comes with ideas and the practical questions. The project group is divided into fourteen different areas, which are managed by one group leader per area. All staff included in the competition are volunteers, except for Peter Klock, his assistant and the members of the Steering group. Peter and his assistant work the whole year with the preparations for the race.

Since the staff only consists of volunteers they have other jobs beside the race. This contributes with the importance of having people, especially the group leaders, with experience and knowledge about the race. Peter Klock has a meeting with the group leaders once a week and with the rest of the staff twice a year.

The figure below illustrates GKSS project group in the Swedish Match Cup.



14 different areas

Figure 26. GKSS project group's (our own model).

SEB

SEB is one of the largest financial groups in Sweden. 46 per cent of the Group's revenue comes from the Swedish market and 9.800 of the Group's 21.500 employees work in Sweden (SEB material, 2001).

The Swedish market are situated in the Divisions Personal Banking Sweden, Corporate and Institutions, and Investment Management & Life as well as a number of IT and support functions (ibid.).

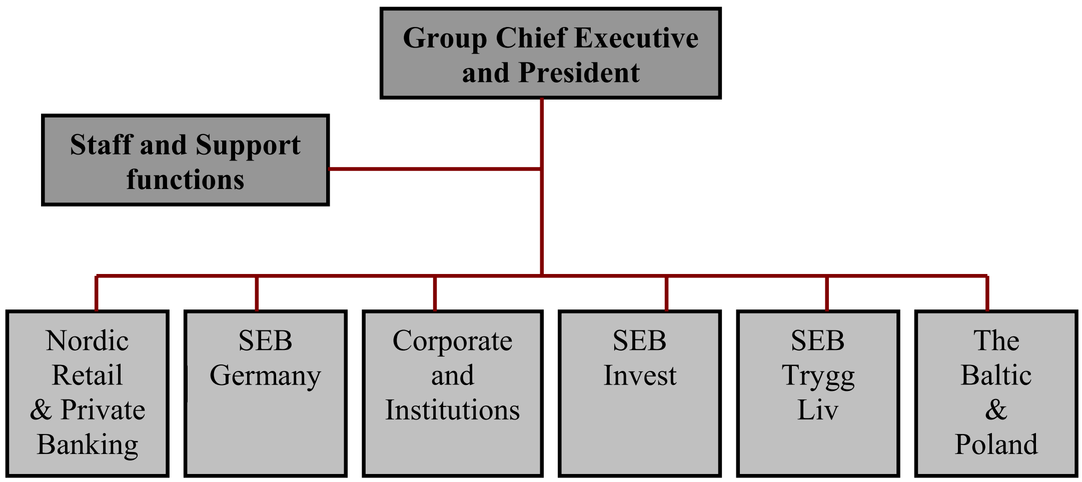


Figure 27. SEB's Business concept, vision and financial goals (SEB material).

SEB's business concept is to create value for customers and shareholders through leading competence and long-term relationships.

The vision of the Group is to be the leading "e-centric" customer-driven supplier of financial services in Europe. The financial goal is to achieve a lasting return on equity of 15 per cent after tax (ibid.).

Briefly about SEB's Activities

Today SEB has slightly over 200 branch offices in Sweden, after having closed about 50 during the spring of 2000. This as a result of customers' increased use of the Internet. Approximately one third of the Swedish private customers are using the Internet services of the bank, which is one of the highest customer penetration figures in the world (ibid.).

At year-end 2000 SEB had more than half a million e-customers in Sweden, of which 38.000 were small and medium sized companies. SEB occupies a leading position in the world within the integrated e-banking and e-brokerage of equities, a lead that the bank is using for its expansion in the area of Internet in European bank market (ibid.).

For a long time, SEB has had a leading position as a bank for international companies, growth companies and financial institutions with Nordic-related activities in Sweden and the rest of the Nordic area (ibid.).

SEB's long tradition as a bank for Swedish multinationals has led to the development of a series of services that can be used by both large and smaller companies within and outside Sweden, not least as regards electronic cash management services and trading (ibid.).

A) Styrgruppens Perspektiv

Task (Uppgift)
Har Ni gemensam uppfattning om; Mål, Syfte, Uppgift?
Hur har Ni arbetat fram detta?
Hur har Ni sammanställt det, genom; Klar-, Detaljerad-, Punkt-, eller Generell struktur?
Hur kommunicerar Ni till Team SEB?

Time (Tid)
Hur lång tid innan började Ni planera för Volvo Ocean Race?
Hur planerade Ni tiden för Team SEB? (Tog Ni; Stress, Övertid och/eller Sociala aktiviteter under betänkande?)

Team (Grupp)
Vad ligger bakom sammansättningen av teamet? (Hur tänkte Ni?)
Hur fick Ni den kompetens som var nödvändig?
Vad är rätt kompetens för Er?
Har Ni blandat teamet med externa medlemmar? (I sådana fall varför?)

Transition (Omvandling)
Ni har tillsatt en utvärderings grupp?
Vad är syftet och målet med denna?
Om vissa förändringar måste göras enligt denna grupp, hur skall då Team SEB kontra detta, om de redan fått klara direktiv för hur uppgiften skall skötas, enligt styrgruppen?

Network (Nätverk) → (Syndikat bolaget; Global Team AB)

Externa Nätverket
Varför lämnade Ni över ansvaret på ett Syndikatbolag?
Hur kommunicerade Ni Mål, Syfte samt riktlinjer med projektet, till syndikatbolaget?
Hur bemötte Ni frågor som uppkom i utförandet av det Externa nätverket? • Hur hanterades eventuellt olika intressen, som de Externa aktörerna hade? • Hur hanterades kommunikationen med de Externa aktörerna (förhandling, gemensamma mål…) • Förtroende (Hur byggdes detta upp?) • Beslut (Hur fattades dessa?)

Interna Nätverket
Hur kommunicerade Ni Mål, Syfte samt riktlinjer med projektet till Era egna (SEB-anställda)? (Var/Är det via e-mail, presentationer..?)

B) Gruppens (Team SEB:s) Perspektiv

Task (Uppgift)
Har någon av Er jobbat med något liknande förut?
Hur uppfattar Ni uppgiften? Är den klar eller generell?
Har Ni kommunicerat om uppgiften inom gruppen? Hur i sådana fall? (Möten, diskussion med annan kollega?)
Har Ni (var och en) gjort en egen mall över Er uppgift?
Har någon omdefinition av uppgiften gjorts någon gång under projektets gång? (I sådan fall Hur?)

Time (Tid)
Hur är Er relation till Linjär tidsuppfattning? (Hur hanteras detta?)
Hur är Er relation till Tidsplanen för hela projektet? (Är den realistisk eller snäv?)
Om den inte är realistisk, hur hanterar Ni då detta?

Team (Gruppen)
Er bakgrund och tidigare erfarenheter? (Är du van vid att ha; Feedback Sessions, Öppenhet, Dialog, Blandat Externt och Internt, En viss typ av uppgifter?)
Är Era förväntningar och mål på Er själva och grupp olika? (Vill ha jobbet för att det är en bra merit, älskar segling..?)
Har Ni några möten och diskussioner om Era olika mål och förväntningar? (Har detta utvecklats till vissa grupp normer eller /och en viss grupp kultur?)
Hur bemöter Ni förändringarna i gruppsammansättningen? (Nykomlingar eller de som slutar)
Känner Ni att Era relationer påverkas på något sätt av att Ni kommer att upplösas då projektet är avslutat?
Vad har förändrats (arbetssätt och arbetsklimat) sedan den nya organisationen (Från Dop- till Hamnstoppsfasen) implementerades?

Transition (Omvandling)
Hur bemöter Ni eventuell feedback från utvärderingsgruppen?

Network (Nätverk)
Anser Ni att samarbetet med de Externa aktörerna fungerar? (Är besluten väl genomtänkta/genomförda?)
Tas irrationella beslut? (Utvärderas alternativa vägval eller "kör" Ni bara på?)
Om det finns några problem med de Externa aktörerna? Hur bemöter/ behandlar Ni då detta?