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Pro Bono in the Business of Management Consulting

*Why and how do Companies within the Business of Management
Consulting work with Pro Bono?*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate why and how companies within the business of management consulting work with *pro bono*. Four management consulting companies were interviewed to investigate for what reasons they engage in *pro bono* projects, and what kind of projects they choose. The result from the study showed that the reasons for why companies engage in *pro bono* projects depend on the individuals within the companies, and that they engage for altruistic reasons, but also because the companies use this as a part of their marketing strategy. The study also showed that because of the wide definition of *pro bono*, many different kinds of projects can be included. The study resulted in a suggestion for a best-practice for the management consulting companies' work with *pro bono*.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This section aims to give insight in why we have chosen to study how and why management consultants work with pro bono. Pro bono is a type of charity that is knowledge based, where consultants use their expertise within a particular knowledge area to help organizations, without getting paid for it. This section will give background information about Corporate Social Responsibility, pro bono and management consulting, and how these concepts are related. The purpose of this study is described and the previous research is discussed. The problem that will be analyzed is also discussed and stated. The last part of this section is the project outline, which aims to give an overview of the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 Background

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is often discussed in the society of today, especially if one is working, or studying, within the business world. It is an important and interesting subject, and we instantly knew that we wanted to write our dissertation within this area. The definition of CSR is very wide, and therefore it was necessary to choose what parts of CSR that would be investigated in detail. Since the society has expectations on companies, most companies take some sort of social responsibility today. Even though the area of CSR receives a lot of attention, not all companies care about the work with *pro bono*, or even know what it is. Working with *pro bono* means that companies engage in social projects where they provide their services for organizations in need, without charging these organizations.¹ Research has been done within the area of *pro bono*, but not as much as the research within CSR. *Pro bono* is included in the definition of CSR, but the work with *pro bono* is more based on the companies' competences. Some work within CSR, for example the work with the environment, requires that the company invests more resources before they can start working with it, since this kind of work requires that companies acquire knowledge of a new area. Even though *pro bono* means that companies often work with other organizations than the ones they usually work with, such as aid organizations, they can still use the knowledge that they already possess to make a difference in society.

¹Weibel, Betty. (2011)

The work with *pro bono* started in the law business.² Since these services are based on competences, just like the services within management consulting, the work with *pro bono* has expanded to include also management consulting services. When engaging in *pro bono* projects, management consultants can, by using their knowledge within different areas, help organizations develop in a way that the organizations normally cannot do on their own, without support from someone professional. The result of the service that the management consultant provides often depends on the implementation in that particular organization, which means that the results differ depending on the type of organization. The results also differ since they depend on the management consultant.³

In our society, there are many management consulting companies that are working with *pro bono*. The question is what companies actually gain from this kind of work and why they should spend time on it, since it is not guaranteed that it gives them anything in return. It is sometimes difficult for the board to decide how much time and money the company should spend on *pro bono*, and if they should work with it at all, since it is hard to measure the effects from it and, therefore, define the final result.⁴

The dissertation is written from the companies' point of view, and the aim is to give companies answers and directions about what the optimal solution is when it comes to their *pro bono* work. The recipients of *pro bono* work tend to get only the benefits from it, although looking from both the recipients' and the companies' point of view, *pro bono* can also result in negative effects.

The study will investigate how management consulting companies implement the work with *pro bono* in their everyday activities. The study will also investigate how much time and money companies spend on *pro bono*, and what they gain from it. The reasons for why management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* work will also be investigated. If the study shows differences between the companies, these will be discussed, and an analysis will be made to try to explain why these differences exist.

² Waller, D.S. (2010)

³ Armbrüster, T., (2004)

⁴ Mitchell, V-W., (1994)

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate why and how companies within the business of management consulting work with *pro bono*. The study will investigate four different management consulting companies to see if there are any differences between them in their *pro bono* work. The companies and their different kinds of work and strategies with *pro bono* will be described, and the reasons for why they engage in this type of work will be investigated. The study will also show how their *pro bono* work affects their external and internal relationships. The companies' views on the future work with *pro bono* will also be discussed.

1.3 Previous Research

Previous research has been conducted within the area of *pro bono*. Studies have been made to investigate many of the factors that also have been studied in this dissertation, although there are some differences.

One of the differences that have been noticed is that the previous research has focused on the work within CSR, and not specifically on the area of *pro bono*. Another difference between the previous research and this dissertation is that the studies within the *pro bono* area have investigated the work within the businesses of marketing and law, and not the business of management consulting. Even though studies have been done within management consulting, the focus was not on the work within CSR or *pro bono*. The previous studies about *pro bono* have mostly been done in the USA, and no studies have been found where *pro bono* work has been studied in Sweden. This means that this study will differ from the previous research.

1.4 Problem Discussion

There is a need for comparison between different management consultants and their work with *pro bono*, and that is why this study will be made. Trends are often followed in the business of management consulting, and this study will investigate if the work with *pro bono* is done because the companies want to be good citizens, or if it is just

another trend that companies have to follow to stay up to date and fulfill society's expectations.⁵ The question is if the *pro bono* trend is here to stay or not.

There are theories about specific reasons for the companies to engage in projects in order to take their Corporate Social Responsibility. It could be for propaganda reasons, to get legitimacy from different stakeholders, or for altruistic reasons where the company just wants to do good.⁶ It is important to investigate for what reasons companies engage in *pro bono* work.

We believe that all the management consulting companies will be very interested in getting to know the reasons for why management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* work, and the different strategies and everyday activities within this type of work. There seem to be different definitions of *pro bono*, which lead to different projects, strategies and attitudes about the subject, and it is difficult to know what activities that are the most effective for each company.

Another factor to investigate is what the employees think of the work with *pro bono*. The question is if they actually want to work with it, or if they do it just because they have to. Maybe the companies have expectations on the employees that they should take their social responsibility, just like society expects the companies to take their social responsibility.

The study will also investigate how the companies think that the future work with *pro bono* might look like, and if its importance will increase or not.

1.5 Statement of Problem

The main question of the dissertation is:

Why and how do companies within the business of management consulting work with pro bono?

This question includes studying what the companies receive in return for their *pro bono* work. Even though quantitative factors will be investigated, the qualitative factors

⁵ Perner, Frida (2008)

⁶McKinsey & Company. (2009)

within this type of work are even more interesting to look at in order to understand the reasons why the management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* work.

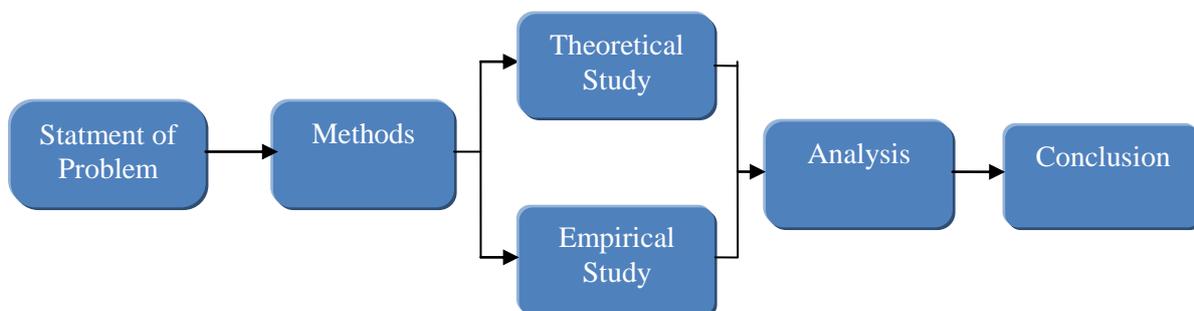
1.6 Delimitations

At the start of this dissertation, we knew that we wanted to write about Corporate Social Responsibility. *Pro bono* is a part of this responsibility, but this area has not been investigated in detail previously, at least not in Sweden. Since we are studying management, we are very interested in the management consulting business and how they work in their everyday activities. Studying how and why management consultants work with *pro bono* seemed like a good way to combine our interest for both *pro bono* and management consulting.

In the section on methodology, we have chosen only to discuss methods that will be used in this dissertation, and the reasons for why those particular methods have been chosen.

1.7 Project Outline

The figure below shows the outline of the dissertation.



2 METHODS

The methods that have been used have been chosen on the basis of the purpose of the study. They are relevant and helpful in investigating the problems of the study and answering the overall questions. In this section, the methods that will be used to collect the necessary data are described. The research approach, the study approach and the scientific approach that will be used are discussed, together with the motivations for why these approaches have been chosen for this study. After that, the survey method and its technique will be described. At the end of this section, the validity and reliability of the study will be discussed together with source criticism and anonymity.

2.1 Data Collection

There are different ways to collect data when a study is made. The qualitative research method can be divided into observation, ethnographic fieldwork, discourse analysis, textual analysis and interviewing. Interviewing is the fastest way to collect the data in order to learn how companies perform their everyday activities, since the questions will be answered immediately.⁷

The companies' views on the work with *pro bono* must be studied, which will be done through personal interviews or telephone interviews with at least one representative from each of the four different management consulting companies. These companies will differ when it comes to the size of the companies, which includes the number of employees, and the year that the companies were founded. The aim with the study is to get the information needed from these interviews to get insight in what kind of *pro bono* work the companies do, and how they do it, and from this information analyze the result. The analysis will include the companies' motivation behind *pro bono* work.

Since expert knowledge is crucial for this study, the interviewees are chosen based on their expertise and knowledge within the area, which means that the non-probability sampling will be used.^{8, 9} We chose the four companies based on our knowledge of the companies and their work with *pro bono*. The method that was used

⁷Travers, Max (2001)

⁸Bloor, Michael & Wood, Fiona (2006)

⁹Lundahl, Ulf & Skärvad, Per-Hugo (1999)

could be called convenience sampling, since it was also based on our contacts and the companies' geographical location.¹⁰ We asked six companies for interviews, where two of them said no. One of these companies did not have time for an interview, but referred to Company 3 instead. The other company said no to an interview because they did not want to reveal their strategies behind their *pro bono* work.

Previous research has been taken into account, and the information gained from this research will be used in the analysis of this study. This information will hopefully be useful in order to draw new conclusions within the area.

The aim is to get insight on what basis they make their decisions about what kind of *pro bono* work, if any, to concentrate on, and to study how the companies implement *pro bono* work in their everyday activities. By collecting information about these four companies, the aim is to compare their work with each other to see the big picture and draw conclusions about *pro bono* within the business of management consulting.

2.2 Research Approach

To relate theory to empirical studies, there are different approaches that can be used. This study is based on the inductive approach. This approach uses the empirical study, more than the already existing facts, to interpret the study. In this study, the information from the interviews will be analyzed to interpret how management consulting companies implement *pro bono* work in their everyday activities. The inductive approach is used because it gives the opportunity to see how these projects work in practice, more than in theory.¹¹

There are also several approaches related to the purpose of the research. The diagnostic research is used to investigate the cause of a certain phenomena and the reason for why things happen. Another approach is the evaluation research, where the effects of the phenomena are evaluated and measured. In this study, the diagnostic research approach is appropriate to answer the question why companies engage in *pro*

¹⁰ Trost, Jan (2005)

¹¹ Patel, Runa & Davidson, Bo (2003)

bono work. The evaluation research approach will also be used to answer the questions how the companies perform their *pro bono* work, and what they gain from it.¹²

2.3 Study Approach

In social science literature, two research methods are described; quantitative and qualitative research methods. There are some differences between the two methods. The quantitative method is based on scientific research, while the qualitative method normally is more focused on words than on numbers. The theory that is developed from the qualitative method is based on the practical results from the research, which means that the method has an inductive point of view. The qualitative method also has a knowledge-based, epistemological point of view, where the understanding of social reality is based on how participants within a certain environment interpret this reality. Another important difference between the methods is that the qualitative method is ontological, which means that it is the interaction between people, and not the phenomena that affects the people from the outside, which results in different social properties.¹³

Since it is difficult to measure *pro bono* work in quantitative terms, for example in terms of profitability, this dissertation is written on the basis of the qualitative research method looking at how management consulting companies work with *pro bono* and for what reasons. A prominent disadvantage with qualitative research method is the fact that it is harder to compare the results from the different companies. In this study, some quantitative factors will be studied as well, in terms of money spent and the amount of time the companies are working with *pro bono*. This is made to increase the comparability between the four companies.

¹²Lundahl, Ulf & Skärvad, Per-Hugo (1999)

¹³Bryman, Alan (2011)

2.4 Scientific Approach

The scientific approach that will be used in this study is the hermeneutic approach. With this approach, what is studied is interpreted in order to understand human existence. The hermeneutic approach collects more qualitative data, where the results are open for interpretation and subjective views, and the aim is to see the big picture. This study aims to investigate the management consulting business as a whole, and therefore the hermeneutic approach is used. Since the data from this study is more qualitative than quantitative, the hermeneutic approach is more eligible.¹⁴

2.5 Methods of the Survey

The study will be based on interviews with four different management consulting companies. The strengths with using interviews are that they focus directly on the topics of the study, and they are also insightful since they give perceived causal explanations and conclusions. The weaknesses with interviews are that the result could be biased because of questions that do not always link to the purpose of the study. The result could also be biased due to incorrect transcription of the interview. Another problem is that the interviewee often says what he or she thinks that the interviewer wants to hear, which makes the result unreliable.¹⁵ Since interviews have some weaknesses, awareness of these are necessary. Although, since the study will be qualitative and the aim is to study the companies' views of how and why they engage in *pro bono* work, it is still interesting to look at their own subjective views. The results have to be critically analyzed to come up with a conclusion about the companies' reasons for the *pro bono* work, which will be related to existing theories.

2.6 Interview Technique and Procedure

There are two common ways to perform interviews; standardized and non-standardized interviews. When standardized interviews are used, the questions are defined in advance and the same questions are used in every interview. This is often used in quantitative studies. For qualitative studies, non-standardized interviews are more common. When this technique is used, the interview is allowed to be more flexible, since the questions

¹⁴Patel, Runa & Davidson, Bo (2003)

¹⁵Yin, Robert K. (2009)

are not defined beforehand. Between these two types of studies there is something called semi-standardized interviews, which is a combination of the techniques, allowing follow-up questions. In this study, the standardized interview technique will be used to create structure in the study, and for us to be well prepared before the interviews. If the beforehand defined questions are not satisfactorily answered, the semi-standardized technique will be used to get more information.^{16, 17}

The interviews will be recorded and transcribed to minimize the risk of bias in the interpretation of the information.¹⁸ The results from the interviews will be analyzed, and the differences and similarities between the companies' work with *pro bono* will be discussed.

2.7 Validity and Reliability

The reliability would have been higher if more than four companies were interviewed, but because of the limited time frame of the dissertation we decided to interview these four companies. We believe that we could do a deeper study of the companies since only four companies were interviewed, and that we received more qualified answers because of this.

2.8 Source Criticism

The information on the companies' websites will be studied before the interviews, and it has to be taken into account that this is the picture that the companies want society to have of them. In order to understand the real reasons for why companies engage in *pro bono*, the interviews must be studied in a critical way. Also, the people that are interviewed have studied basically the same subjects as us, which means that their answers might be similar to previous research.

¹⁶Lundahl, Ulf & Skärvad, Per-Hugo (1999)

¹⁷ Svensson, Per-Gunnar & Starrin, Bengt (red.) (1996)

¹⁸Trost, Jan (2005)

2.9 Anonymity

Some of the questions in the interview structure can be sensitive for the companies, since they reveal some parts of the companies' strategies. Not all companies want this information to be spread to the public, and in order to get more information from the companies, anonymity will be used in this dissertation. Therefore, the names of the companies and the exact years that they were founded will not be used, and their *pro bono* projects will not be described in detail, since this would reveal which companies that were interviewed.¹⁹

¹⁹ Trost, Jan (2005)

3 THEORETICAL STUDY

In this section, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Corporate Social Performance (CSP), pro bono and legitimacy will be described, since these concepts will be used throughout the dissertation. The development of CSR and pro bono, and the positive and negative effects that result from both of these concepts, will be discussed. Since this study is based on the pro bono work within management consulting companies, the business of management consulting will also be described in this section.

3.1 Definitions

Since different concepts that are very similar are discussed in this dissertation, it is important to clarify the differences between them. Therefore, the definitions of Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Social Performance and pro bono will be described. Legitimacy is a concept that has often been discussed in the previous research within these areas, and therefore it is also necessary to have a definition of this concept.

3.1.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The European Commission defines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis."²⁰ Companies are today pressured to live up to societies' expectations about social responsibility, and this responsibility has become so much more than just maximizing profit to please the shareholders.²¹

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines CSR as "the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of local community and society at large."²² Besides economic, social and environmental responsibilities that are stated in the definition made by the European Commission, ethical responsibility can also be included in the definition of CSR.²³

²⁰European Commission. (2011)

²¹Rövik, Kjell Arne (2008)

²²Wright, Mike (1999)

²³Cerne, Sofia (2009)

McKinsey Quarterly states that there is “no single accepted definition of CSR”, and that this fact makes it difficult for the companies to define it themselves. Sometimes it can be hard for the companies to act as good citizens because of economical or business reasons. If one is looking at the companies’ work within CSR in a cynical way, it is difficult to know for sure if they do it for philanthropic reasons, or just for propaganda reasons.²⁴

3.1.2 Corporate Social Performance (CSP)

Corporate Social Performance (CSP) includes different types of actions that companies can take, in order to take their social responsibility. Investments in the community, environmental awareness and global issues are a few to be mentioned. Other areas include diversity within the organization and awareness of the employees’ well-being, which includes making them feel involved and important. CSP also includes ensuring that the company’s products are safe.^{25, 26}

3.1.3 Pro Bono

In an article written by David S. Waller, he states that “The term *pro bono* comes from the Latin phrase ‘*pro bono publico*’, which means ‘for the public good.’”²⁷ In the business world, *pro bono* work is a type of project that companies are engaged in to create benefits for the society, where the companies do not charge anything in return for their services.²⁸ An example of this is the campaign that the US Government has launched where the aim with *pro bono* work is to try to meet the needs of the community, and to reach a higher scale of sustainability.²⁹ According to National Pro bono Resource Centre, the term *pro bono* can be defined in different ways depending on the context and the purpose of the project.³⁰

²⁴McKinsey & Company. (2009)

²⁵Schmidt Albinger, Hannah. Freeman, Sara. (2000)

²⁶Wood, D.J. (1991)

²⁷Waller, D.S. (2010)

²⁸Weibel, Betty. (2011)

²⁹U.S. Government . (2011)

³⁰National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

3.1.4 A Clarification of the Differences between the Concepts

While CSR includes the responsibilities that companies are expected to take, CSP is more about the actions they actually take to fulfill these expectations. Therefore, CSP is included within the definition of CSR. *Pro bono* is a type of activity companies can engage in to take their corporate social responsibility, and therefore, the definition of *pro bono* is included within CSR and CSP.

The definition of CSR means that companies engage in projects to improve social and environmental conditions.³¹ The question is if this work is performed for philanthropic or propaganda reasons.³² The definition of CSR includes *pro bono*. The definition of *pro bono* states that the work is performed for the public good, and not for the company itself.

3.1.5 Legitimacy

Legitimacy often defines what is socially accepted and what society's expectations are.³³ When legitimacy is related to power, the definition states that a person who tries to use his power in a way that is illegitimate or irresponsible often loses his power.³⁴ This means that legitimacy is very important for companies in order to retain their power, and to be able to influence and keep their dignity.

³¹ European Commission. (2011)

³² McKinsey & Company. (2009)

³³ Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R & Wood, D.J. (1997)

³⁴ Davis, K. (1973)

3.2 Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has grown to become an important part of companies' operations. CSR has been developed through increased affluence and awareness of ecological sustainability, together with globalization and society's increased expectations on the companies. There are a lot of arguments to why CSR should be a part of the companies' operations, but it can also lead to negative effects and these will be investigated. Another term that is sometimes used instead of CSR is Corporate Social Performance (CSP), and therefore CSP will be discussed within the framework of CSR.³⁵ The definition of pro bono is included within the definition of CSP and CSR, and in order to fully understand social responsibility and pro bono, CSP and CSR will also be discussed in this dissertation.

3.2.1 The Importance of Corporate Social Responsibility

Even though CSR is not a new concept, and companies have taken their social responsibility for a long time, it has usually been to support humanitarian activities in their home country. Disasters, such as the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, have affected people all around the world, which has led to a globalization of the different philanthropic projects that companies engage in. A company can take its responsibility by being engaged in CSR projects that at the same time can be used as a part of the company's marketing strategy, which might improve the reputation of the company.³⁶

Werther and Chandler (2006) have defined four trends of the 21st century that are believed to increase in importance. The first trend is the increasing affluence, where consumers are willing to pay more to buy brands that they can trust. If the affluence increases on the global market, the work within CSR will increase even more, since the consumers can afford to pay for it.³⁷

The second trend is that society has changed its expectations on companies. Scandals in the business world have made it even more important for the consumers to know that they can trust the companies.³⁸

The third trend is the increased awareness when it comes to ecological sustainability. Companies are expected to take their environmental responsibility. If not,

³⁵ Schmidt Albinge, H, Freeman, S.J. (2000)

³⁶ Tomasini, Rolando M. & Van Wassenhove, Luk (2009)

³⁷ Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

³⁸ Ibid.

they are subjected to criticism which may cause negative publicity and cost them their legitimacy.³⁹

The fourth trend is the globalization. Because of different cultures, the expectations when it comes to social responsibility differ, but one thing is clear: multinational companies must engage in work within CSR in some way. Since some corporations have an economic power that is greater than some nation states, the companies can make a great impact on societal issues. Because of the fact that many companies can afford it, society expects them to take their responsibility.⁴⁰

Globalization has further led to a free flow of information. The development of the communications technologies makes it easier to always keep track on companies and their work within CSR. If they are not taking their social responsibility, media instantly spreads this to the public.⁴¹

3.2.2 Positive Effects from CSR

CSR is an important part for companies, since it affects all their operations.⁴² When companies take their social responsibility, they show that they have a high level of moral and ethical awareness.⁴³ CSR can have a lot of positive impacts on the company. One impact is that CSR can strengthen the brand. Because of the globalization that is going on today, it becomes even more important to make sure that the brand stays strong, in order to get competitive advantages.⁴⁴ CSR itself can also be seen as a competitive differentiator.⁴⁵

CSR can strengthen the organization internally. It increases the company's credibility, both within the organization, and externally. This can attract new customers and also create loyalty between the company and its customers.⁴⁶

Another purpose with CSR is to maximize profit.⁴⁷ The focus today is not only to benefit the shareholders, but also to think about the benefits for all the stakeholders. This has led to an increase in the amount of work within CSR that companies engage

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Turban, D. B. and D. W. Greening. (1997)

⁴⁴Cerne, Sofia (2009)

⁴⁵Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

⁴⁶Cerne, Sofia (2009)

⁴⁷Hultén, Pernilla & Wijkström, Filip (2008)

in.^{48, 49} CSR can combine the business interests of the company with societal expectations and values, and create a long-term relationship between the company and society.⁵⁰

The reason why companies often engage in projects for the society is that they are trying to avoid that the government puts up regulations by law, since law requirements often cost a lot of money and also can decrease the flexibility of the decision making within the company.⁵¹

Improving society has the effect of decreasing the crime rate, which leads to decreased taxes since the police will not need as much money. Less money also needs to be spent to protect property. If companies take their social responsibility, this leads to a better society, which in turn leads to a better business environment for the companies. It is better to start taking actions early, to prevent that the amount of work that needs to be done in the future increases.⁵²

Society expects that the companies take social responsibility, but the companies must also be seen as respectable in the eyes of their current employees. This is also important in order to attract new employees. One part of the work within CSR is to work with non-profit and non-governmental organizations. If companies can do this to achieve common goals, they can be seen as attractive partners.⁵³ Further, CSR can motivate the employees since it can create a sense that they are working towards achieving common goals. This increases the quality of the work that is performed and creates a sense of well-being.⁵⁴ It has become more important for employees that their social views are in accordance with the organization. The values matter due to the fact that it has become more common that their employees identify themselves with the organization. If the organization takes social responsibility, the employees feel proud of their workplace, and since they are a part of the organization, they also feel proud of themselves. Since one person often can feel that he or she cannot make that much of a difference on his or her own, that person can instead contribute to the society through the organization. The

⁴⁸Lekunze, Ransom (2007)

⁴⁹Davis, K. (1973)

⁵⁰Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

⁵¹Davis, K. (1973)

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

⁵⁴Cerne, Sofia (2009)

impact on society that a whole organization can have is often greater than the impact from one individual.⁵⁵

As previously stated, the definition of Corporate Social Responsibility also includes the definition of Corporate Social Performance (CSP). Results have shown that people applying for jobs that have a high level of job options, and therefore have a lot of jobs to choose between, tend to be attracted to employers that have a high organizational CSP. The results have also proven that this relationship does not exist for job seekers with a lower level of job choices. If a person only can get one job offer, the CSP of the company is normally not the most important factor to look at. The job seekers that do not have that many job options often have a lower education and fewer competences, and might be in need of work urgently because of unemployment. This often means that they cannot afford to be picky, and therefore CSP becomes less important for them when choosing an employer.⁵⁶

The importance of an employer's level of CSP is different for different types of populations when they are applying for jobs. Factors such as education and life experience may affect people's values. This means that the importance of CSP differs, depending on the individual. It is also important to have in mind that an individual's choice of employer also can depend on the corporations' communication about their CSP. Companies can affect what kind of job seekers that they want by targeting their communication to a certain type of people.⁵⁷

Surveys have also been made to investigate if companies that have a high level of CSP, and take their social responsibility, are a more attractive employer in the eyes of undergraduate senior business students. The results from these surveys showed that the students thought that the companies that have been rated higher in CSP were seen as more attractive employers. Students also seem to accept to get a lower salary if they can work for a company that is engaged in social responsibility work. This has been proven by a study made by Students for Responsible Business, where MBA students were asked if they would accept a lower salary, and 64 % of them said that they would.⁵⁸

⁵⁵Rodrigo, P. Arenas, D. (2008)

⁵⁶Albinger, H. Freeman, S.J.. (2000)

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Dolan, Kerry A., Munk, Nina. (1997)

A conclusion can be made is that companies that take their social responsibility and perform according to this, are more attractive to more qualified employees. Therefore, when an organization wants to attract highly educated people, their CSP is of high importance. This is often used as a competitive advantage within the area of human resources.

3.2.3 Negative Effects from CSR

Even though social responsibility gets a lot of attention in today's society, some people, like Milton Friedman, argue that the whole idea with social responsibility is against the view of a free market. A company with profit maximization as their primary goal would only meet the minimum law requirements when it comes to social responsibility. Other people argue that someone must pay the costs that are associated with social responsibility.⁵⁹ Since the companies often have the resources to make a real difference, this leads to expectations on the companies that they should take this responsibility. A company that takes its social responsibility performs work that goes beyond the legal requirements. This is required in order to maximize the profit in the long run.⁶⁰

If a company is involved in social matters, this might split the leaders' interests, since they have different priorities. It might also reduce the focus on economic productivity, and therefore the company's position on the market may deteriorate. This in turn leads to a weakened role in society, both economically and socially. If the productivity decreases for the company, this also affects society as a whole, and the company's role in the society might become unclear.⁶¹

If a company engages in projects to take their social responsibility, and their productivity decreases, this often leads to higher product costs. Also, when companies take social responsibility, this means new projects, which often leads to increased costs for the company. This often has effects on the consumers, since the result of increased costs also leads to increased product prices. If a company has businesses globally, it is

⁵⁹Davis, K. (1973)

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

competing with international companies that might not have these additional social costs, which means that the company will get a competitive disadvantage.⁶²

Another argument against companies taking their social responsibility is that they often have a lot of power in the society as it is, especially the ones with a lot of resources that are the ones most likely to engage in social issues. If they would engage in these projects, they would gain even more power.⁶³

Not all people are made for working with social responsibility, since they might have only economical goals. Even though business people might be very competent within their working area, they do not always have what it takes in terms of skills, to perform in projects for society. They might not feel comfortable working with these kinds of issues. Since these issues are of such high importance, it is risky to rely on people that might not have the right competence for the projects. It is also risky to give business people the responsibility in these projects, since they are not accountable when it comes to social issues. Society needs to create a system where social accountability is included. Until then, it might not be a good idea for companies to engage in social projects at all.⁶⁴

Many groups want companies to increase their social responsibility and engage more in projects for society, although some groups in society might not think that it is a good idea at all. This might lead to conflicts among groups with different views on the matter, which in turn might decrease the possibilities for the companies to contribute to society. If the guidelines for companies' social responsibility were determined, the companies would be obliged to include social values in their activities, and this means including the values within the decision making process of the company. This should be done in a vigorous manner, because if a company acts in an indecisive way, or decides not to engage in social projects at all, they will lose the trust of their customers and the public as a whole.⁶⁵

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Davis, K. (1973)

⁶⁵Ibid.

3.2.4 A Summary of the Positive and Negative Effects from CSR

One of the most important positive effects that come with the work within CSR is that the company creates a good image, which in turn can lead to new clients. It often creates long-term relationships, which increases the profit in the long run. Another positive effect from the work within CSR is that it strengthens the company internally, since these kinds of projects can motivate the employees. The company can be seen as an attractive employer, which leads to qualified employees. The work within CSR especially attracts newly graduates when they are applying for jobs.

There are many positive effects that come with the work within CSR, but there are also some negative effects. Some people doubt if the consultants have the knowledge that it takes to make a real difference in these kinds of organizations, and question whether the consultants should engage in these kinds of projects at all. These projects might give the management consultants a responsibility that they cannot handle. The projects can also lead to new costs for the companies, and if people have different views on this kind of work within the companies, this could be negative, since not all employees are working together towards the same goals. This might in turn decrease the possibilities for the companies to make a contribution to society.

As previously stated, if the consultants have the right competences for the projects, they can make a real difference in the organizations, but it is important that the consultants only engage in projects that correspond to their competences.

3.3 Pro Bono

The focus in this dissertation is to investigate pro bono within the business of management consulting. Since the research field about projects that management consulting companies engage in within the area of pro bono is limited, pro bono work within law firms and marketing agencies is also discussed in this section. The reason why the effects from pro bono will be compared between these business areas is that all of these services are similar, since the pro bono work is based on the knowledge and expertise within the companies.

3.3.1 The Development of Pro Bono

As previously stated, *pro bono* has developed as a part of the work within CSR. In the work with *pro bono*, the companies' competences and expertise are used to give other organizations consultancy services without any fees.⁶⁶ Even though *pro bono* was associated with law firms for a long time, advertising agencies are today also offering these kinds of services. Advertising agencies that engage in CSR work have tended to increase their *pro bono* work within the area of CSR. This dissertation focuses on management consulting companies, and although advertising firms and management consulting companies are within two different business areas, the effects from *pro bono* should have a great deal in common.⁶⁷

It is common that companies cooperate with humanitarian organizations, and both parties have realized that through cooperation, and by using new technologies and the companies' resources, all the involved actors can develop and gain experiences. The companies can learn from the humanitarian organizations in terms of being flexible and adapting in difficult situations. Both parties are pro-active when it comes to investigating what kinds of partnerships that can be beneficial, both from their own point of view and from societies' point of view. This has led to an improvement in the communication between humanitarian organizations and the private sector, which in turn leads to exchange of information, ideas and best practices. Through this, the competences can be developed and the efficiency within the organizations can be improved.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Weibel, Betty. (2011)

⁶⁷Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁶⁸Tomasini, Rolando M. & Van Wassenhove, Luk (2009)

3.3.2 Why engage in Pro Bono?

Pro bono is about moral and professional responsibility, but it also includes much more than that.⁶⁹ Companies can engage in *pro bono* work both for pragmatic and for altruistic reasons.⁷⁰ In the advertising industry, as well as in the legal, medical, accounting and educational industries, companies engage in *pro bono* work to do something good for the public; in other words, for altruistic reasons.⁷¹ The company's accounting reports do not only include financial performance, but also environmental and social factors are included and are of high importance.⁷²

Michael Gonring, *pro bono* Coordinator at Quarles and Brady, states that it has become more important for the clients that law firms act as good citizens, and *pro bono* is a way of doing something good for society.⁷³

By using the experiences that people gain from working with *pro bono*, the effectiveness in helping organizations in need can be improved. The knowledge within the area has to be used in order not only to do good but do better.⁷⁴

3.3.3 Time spent on Pro Bono work

On average, lawyers engage in *pro bono* work for 140 hours per year.⁷⁵ The recession has had some effects on the work that large companies are willing to commit to *pro bono*. The recession showed that private charities often suffer during these periods.⁷⁶ One would think that the recession has also decreased the amount of hours spent doing *pro bono* work, but it has actually increased in some companies thanks to the recession. Since there was not that much to do during that time, *pro bono* work was used to keep the young lawyers busy, according to Michael Gonring, *pro bono* Coordinator at Quarles and Brady.⁷⁷

⁶⁹ National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

⁷⁰ Cummings, S. L. (2010)

⁷¹ Waller, D.S. Lanis, R. (2009)

⁷² Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁷³ Taylor, S. (2011)

⁷⁴ Cummings, S. L. (2010)

⁷⁵ Taylor, S. (2011)

⁷⁶ Cummings, S. L. (2010)

⁷⁷ Taylor, S. (2011)

3.3.4 Positive Effects from Pro Bono

Agencies that help non-profit organizations want to be seen as good citizens, but there are also business reasons for engaging in this kind of work. *Pro bono* gives the agency exposure and increases its visibility and publicity, which can improve the image and reputation of the company. It can also look good in the eyes of the society to be associated with a popular charity, or charity celebrity.^{78, 79, 80, 81} This can lead to new contacts, both within their own business area, but also within others. *Pro bono* work can also improve the reputation for the professional area as a whole.⁸² In other words, even if organizations sometimes just want to use their ability to do good, they can also get things in return from working with *pro bono*, for example increased profit.⁸³

Pro bono can also be used as a part of a company's strategy to develop new tactics.⁸⁴ The company can try new methods which might not be as easy with a "traditional" paying client, since they might be more conservative, and therefore not willing to take that risk.⁸⁵ It also gives an opportunity to try technologies that are not normally used in their everyday activities. This means that *pro bono* projects can lead to innovation and creativity, both internally for the staff, but also for the company as a whole.^{86, 87, 88, 89}

When helping people in need, there is a personal satisfaction that comes from it. For lawyers, the opportunity to develop their skills, within the area of the law business that increases social justice, can be one of the most important factors for them in order to feel that they are accomplishing something in their professional life.^{90, 91}

This is in accordance with Anthony Taaffe's view, associate creative director at Extreme Group within the marketing industry, who states "I like doing pro bono work. ... it appeals [to] my altruistic side, the part of me that thinks I am actually using my talents to do something good, something a little noble, at least in my insular world.

⁷⁸Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁷⁹Pratt, L. (2003)

⁸⁰Lister, L. (2008)

⁸¹Cummings, S. L. (2010)

⁸²National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

⁸³Cummings, S. L. (2010)

⁸⁴Weibel, Betty. (2011)

⁸⁵Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁸⁶Weibel, Betty. (2011)

⁸⁷Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁸⁸Pratt, L. (2003)

⁸⁹Lister, L. (2008)

⁹⁰Cummings, S. L. (2010)

⁹¹National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

Using my communication skills to create awareness, solicit action or raise funds can be enormously satisfying.”⁹²

It can also enhance their confidence and improve their morale. This can benefit the organization, but also the employees on a personal level, since it can give a sense of personal satisfaction to help others. This benefits the company since it might make it easier to keep the staff in the organization and since it creates working experience for the employees.^{93, 94} *Pro bono* can also improve the relationships between the employees.^{95, 96, 97}

The *pro bono* work can be a way of motivating the employees within an agency since the employees can get a more varied workplace and get an opportunity to practice their skills. The experience that the *pro bono* projects give the employees can develop their skills, but also create new skills.^{98, 99, 100, 101} This is also in accordance with law firms, where they have noticed that the employees gain confidence through the projects and improve their morale.¹⁰²

By working with *pro bono*, the company is perceived as a more attractive employer.¹⁰³ For people seeking jobs, especially among new graduates, organizations that engage in *pro bono* work seem to offer interesting career opportunities, and opportunities to develop competences.^{104, 105} They also have the opportunity to get more responsibility in cases where they work with *pro bono*. Therefore, *pro bono* work leads to both personal and professional development.¹⁰⁶ The fact that *pro bono* work can lead to a sense that the employees within that organization can make an impact on society with their contributions can make it easier for companies to attract new employees.^{107,}

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⁹²Taaffe, A. (2007)

⁹³Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁹⁴National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

⁹⁵Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁹⁶Pratt, L. (2003)

⁹⁷Lister, L. (2008)

⁹⁸Waller, D.S. (2010)

⁹⁹Pratt, L. (2003)

¹⁰⁰Lister, L. (2008)

¹⁰¹Waller, D.S. (2010)

¹⁰²National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

¹⁰³Cummings, S. L. (2010)

¹⁰⁴Taylor, S. (2011)

¹⁰⁵Cummings, S. L. (2010)

¹⁰⁶Taylor, S. (2011)

¹⁰⁷National Pro bono Resource Centre. (2004)

¹⁰⁸Taylor, S. (2011)

3.3.5 Negative Effects from Pro Bono

As has been showed above, there are a lot of positive effects from the work with *pro bono*, although some negative effects can be seen. Even if it gives a chance to develop the competences for the employees within the company and to show creativity, the objective of the client still has to be achieved, no matter if the work is related to issue of awareness or fund raising. If the *pro bono* clients get too much exposure and win all the awards, a negative effect can be jealousy from the paying clients.¹⁰⁹

The companies also have to be able to reconcile the goals of the company at the same time as they take their social responsibility.¹¹⁰

3.3.6 A Summary of the Positive and Negative Effects from Pro Bono

One of the most important positive effects that come from the work with *pro bono*, just like with the overall work within CSR, is that the company creates a good image, which can lead to new contacts and increased profit. Another positive effect from the work with *pro bono* is that it strengthens the company internally, since these kinds of projects can motivate the employees. This kind of work can result in a personal satisfaction for the employees since they gain experience and can develop their knowledge. The company can be seen as an attractive employer, which attracts new employees.

One of the negative effects that could come from the work with *pro bono* is that the paying clients can become jealous if the *pro bono* projects receive too much attention and exposure. Also, it is very important that the other goals of the company are achieved, and not only the goals within social responsibility. Even if *pro bono* leads to positive effects for the employees and creates a good image for the company, it is important that the *pro bono* projects do not steal all the attention from the goals of the company or from the paying clients.

¹⁰⁹Waller, D.S. (2010)

¹¹⁰Cummings, S. L. (2010)

3.4 The Business of Management Consulting

In order to investigate how the business of management consulting works, this business must first be described. This section will describe what a management consultant is and does. The quality of the service that the consultant provides and how to measure this quality will also be discussed.

3.4.1 The Definition of a Management Consultant

The world of today is becoming more globalized, and this is one of the reasons why the world seems to become more complex. Exogenous factors, like global competition, affect the demand for consultants within management. Executives do not always have the knowledge in all areas that is needed in all situations, and therefore the need for consultants has increased. This can be one explanation to why some big management consulting companies have succeeded and grown so much.¹¹¹

The Swedish Association of Management Consultants (SAMC) is a trade association that develops the business of management consulting by representing the management consulting companies in Sweden.¹¹² SAMC has defined that giving advice in an independent way regarding management problems, is considered to be management consulting. A management consultant identifies and investigates problems and possibilities within organizations, and his or her job is to come up with a solution and recommendation that is suitable for that particular situation.¹¹³

Consultancy services are very abstract, and therefore they are often called “intangibles”. The services within management consulting can be everything from small services, for example guidance for managers, to the implementation of big changes in an organization. Consulting services are constantly changing and, since they are hard to define and specify, it is difficult to measure and evaluate the effects of these services. Therefore, it is not easy to answer the question what management consulting actually means, and what a management consultant does. Clark (1995) states that management consulting companies have to follow trends and be flexible, in order to adjust to their customers’ needs. It can be seen as positive that there are no standards for how management consulting companies must work since it makes the profession flexible.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ McKenna, Christopher D. (2006)

¹¹² Sveriges Managementkonsulter. (2010).*Om SMC*.

¹¹³ Sveriges Managementkonsulter. (2010).*Vad är en managementkonsult?*

¹¹⁴ Perner, Frida (2008)

3.4.2 The Quality of the Service

Since there are many different areas within the business of management consulting, the consultants have different levels of competence. It is hard for the clients to know the quality of the services, which makes it difficult to choose between management consultants.¹¹⁵ If the management consulting company is unique and complex, this can lead to a competitive advantage.¹¹⁶

Since the clients do not know what they are paying for, there are financial risks associated with management consulting services. Clients often choose which management consultant to hire based on previous relationships with consultants that have done a good job. By using this strategy, the client knows what to expect from the management consultant. This can also be a risk, since this does not always mean that that consultant is the best one for this particular project.¹¹⁷

Management consultants that charge a higher fee for their services can sometimes be seen as more competent, but reputation or recommendations from colleagues are often more important factors when choosing a consultant than factors like price and terms of contract.¹¹⁸

In order to compete with all the management consulting companies that exist today, it is important that the companies have a clear marketing strategy and nurture the relationships with their clients, to ensure that organizations pick them as their management consultant. The communication and collaboration between the client and the consultant must be working properly, in order to find out the clients' needs. This is sometimes difficult, since the client does not always know exactly what the problem is, or what needs to be done in the organization.¹¹⁹

3.4.3 Evaluation of the Service

Since it is difficult to know the quality of the service, evaluations of the projects are important. Consultants often work as counselors, and they analyze what has to be done to solve a problem within an organization, but they do not always help to implement the solutions to the problems. The employees within the organization have to make use of the ideas that come from the consultants, in order to implement the solution within the

¹¹⁵ Armbrüster, T., (2004)

¹¹⁶ Perner, Frida (2008)

¹¹⁷ Mitchell, V-W., (1994)

¹¹⁸ Perner, Frida (2008)

¹¹⁹ Mitchell, V-W., (1994)

organization.¹²⁰ The consultants have to contribute with the solutions, but the interpretations of these can be different depending on the organization and their employees.¹²¹

Since it is not clear who is responsible for the final result, it is difficult to know whom to blame if something goes wrong.¹²² The clients can sometimes think that the consultants are more competent than themselves, which means that it can be even more difficult for the clients to determine the consultants' work achievements.¹²³

In order to learn from the projects, evaluation of the work is necessary. This can lead to experiences and to an understanding of what parts of the project that were good, and what parts that should be improved. However, not that many explicit evaluations are made in reality, since it often requires a lot of resources, and it can be a sensitive issue to evaluate people this way.¹²⁴

The evaluation is affected by different criteria, which makes it difficult to know what should be measured. In what step of the project the evaluation is made also affects the estimation of the positive and negative effects from the project, and how the final result looks like.¹²⁵

3.4.4 Pro Bono within the Business of Management Consulting

Management consulting companies have not previously seen that they can learn anything from non-profit organizations in terms of organizational knowledge. They have been seen more as organizations that need to be improved, or as opportunities for management consulting firms to increase profit. To have a view where non-profit organizations are seen as a type of organization that cannot bring anything valuable to the management consulting companies can give the result that important knowledge is overlooked, and possibilities to develop new ideas can be lost.¹²⁶

Even though the management consulting companies have realized that the cooperation with non-profit organizations can give them something in return, it is also important to look at the projects from the organizations' point of view. The consultants

¹²⁰Pemer, Frida (2008)

¹²¹Røvik, Kjell Arne (2008)

¹²²Sahlin-Andersson, K., (1989)

¹²³Pemer, Frida (2008)

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶McKenna, Christopher D. (2006)

must have competences so that they can make changes that respond to the needs of the organizations, but the quality of the management consulting services is hard to measure. The organizations must be careful when they choose what management consultants they work with, if not, the positive effects from the *pro bono* projects can turn into negative effects.

4 EMPIRICAL STUDY

This section includes the empirical study of the four management consulting companies. First, general information gained from the website and the interviews, about each of the four companies, will be presented, together with information about their pro bono projects. The companies' different strategies behind their pro bono work, and the reasons for why they engage in pro bono projects, will be presented and compared, together with their views on how the pro bono work affect their external and internal relationships. This section also describes the companies' thoughts about how the future work with pro bono will look like.

4.1 The Companies and their Pro bono work

4.1.1 Company 1 - General Information gained from the Website

One of the companies interviewed, the company that from now on will be called Company 1, has a vision where they want to help organizations to make a real difference through a development process. The development process is based on the theories about leadership and has its roots in Scandinavia. Humanitarian values are very important for this organization.

According to company 1, the definition of *pro bono* is “without, or for a reduced, fee”. Company 1 state on their official website that they are constantly engaged in some kind of *pro bono* work, and that this type of work is very important for the organization.

4.1.2 Company 1 - General Information gained from the Interview

Company 1 was founded at the end of the 90's. This company only has operations in Sweden. The central office is stationed in Gothenburg, where the company has 40 employees. There are also three employees in Stockholm. The study of this company is based on an interview that was made with one of the management consultants from the office in Gothenburg. She started working for the company in 2008.

Company 1 has had different types of *pro bono* work since the company started. The first *pro bono* project was announced when they were working with a worldwide emergency response organization. This project was aimed to increase the knowledge about malaria, and the role of Company 1 was to assure the quality of the organizations

that were involved in the project. The second project was with the same organization, with the aim to increase road safety. The role of Company 1 was to find successful working methods. These first two projects were based in Europe, while the third project was in Sweden. This project was with a non-profit organization that aimed to increase the cooperation between the stores within this organization and to develop a store concept and strategy that would be the same for all the stores. The *pro bono* projects can be used as cases to show potential future clients what Company 1 can do.

Company 1 spends around 100-300 hours per year working with *pro bono*. The projects are based on the costs of the project, and the company is not supposed to make a profit out of the projects. The company does not have a strategic financial plan for the work with *pro bono*. The cost is based on the amount of hours a management consultant is working with the project, and therefore it depends on that consultant's salary. This means that there is an opportunity cost associated with the projects, since the time spent doing these projects could be spent doing projects with paying clients. The timeframe with each of the three projects has been generous, and spread out over a long period of time. Company 1 states:

“We believe that the longer you work with a client, the higher is the possibility to really contribute with something. It is more difficult to make a difference with shorter projects. But if we were to do a project over a week, for instance, a carnival or a sport event, then it would just be for that week. But I think that it is far from our business idea to help with those kinds of projects, or with something that does not matter for the company in the long run.”

4.1.3 Company 2 - General Information gained from the Website

The second company that was interviewed, the company that from now on will be called Company 2, wants to see the possibilities within each organization. In order to improve and develop the strengths of the organization that they are working with, they use analyses to get to know the organization. The ambition is to create a personal relationship, where the client and Company 2 can trust each other, which in turn can create success through cooperation. Company 2 believes that it is important with motivated employees who work together and create a culture within the company, and

where there is room for new ideas. Their job is to help the clients to gain courage to make changes within the organization, in order for their clients to reach their full potential.

4.1.4 Company 2 - General Information gained from the Interview

Company 2 was founded during the 80's. This company only exists in Sweden and has its central office in Gothenburg. Company 2 has 25 employees in Gothenburg and five employees in Stockholm. The study of this company is based on an interview that was made with one of the management consultants from the office in Gothenburg. He started working for the company in 2008.

Company 2 has worked with *pro bono* since the company was founded. The largest project that the company is involved with is a project where they help a multi-cultural integration carnival. The role of Company 2 is to hold seminars and to help with the project management. Company 2 has also always worked closely with universities, where they often hold seminars. Another *pro bono* project that the company is engaged in is to help a consultant company that is driven by students. The aim is to act as a coach for the students in the operations in that company.

Company 2 spends around 100-150 hours per year working with *pro bono*, where about 40 hours constitute the work with the student consultancy company. Since the work with the universities is a part of their everyday activities, it is difficult to say exactly how much time that is spent on this type of *pro bono* work. There is no strategic financial plan for the projects. The cost of doing *pro bono* work is the amount of hours that the management consultants are working with the projects, which means that it is based on the salary of those consultants. Company 2 does not require anything in return for their *pro bono* services.

4.1.5 Company 3 - General Information gained from the Website

The third company that was interviewed, the company that from now on will be called Company 3, has focused their operations on the public sector. All of their consultants have experience from this sector in some way and they state on the website that they use this expertise to offer services based on the clients' actual needs. The company's vision is to improve the public sector, by being a partner that can help decision-makers to develop organizations through changes.

The company sees their knowledge in the public sector and their employees' community involvement as their key to success. They have chosen to focus on this while they aim to be "the good company", and encourage their employees to engage in more activities for a better society.

4.1.6 Company 3 - General Information gained from the Interview

This company was founded only a couple of years ago. It has eleven employees in total, where nine of them are management consultants. Since the company is stationed in Stockholm, the interview was made over the phone with the CEO and founder of the company, together with one of the management consultants. This consultant is also responsible for public relations and for the *pro bono* projects. She started working for the company in 2010.

The CEO of the company had thoughts about doing *pro bono* work before she founded Company 3. She states:

"There is a lot to do for organizations that cannot pay for these kinds of services. When we started this company, we felt that it was important that we could work to be the "good company". This was an idea that was with us from day one when the company was founded. This idea started to grow even more when we started to discuss what it means to be the good company, and *pro bono* was a natural part of this. During the spring last year, we posted on our website that we were looking for our first project."

The management consultant from Company 3 states:

"Another part is that we cooperate with universities, where we always have an intern or someone that writes a dissertation for us. We also try to work with non-profit organizations. These projects are a bit more personal. This kind of work could be holding lectures in schools for students and teachers, or being a mentor. Private and personal interests decide what we work with, but the employees have the chance to do

this during their working time. In the biggest project every year, all of us are working together.”

Since Company 3 was founded recently, the company has only had one project. In this project, they helped an organization that is working to improve the living conditions for people with certain diseases. The aim was to supervise and help them in the changes that were going to be made within the organization. The projects can become more international for the company in the future, but they say that they need to have the base of the projects in Sweden. The company is in the process of deciding what project to engage in after the summer of 2011.

As it says on the official website, the company invests about 60 hours per year doing *pro bono* work. “Last year it was a bit more, because we felt that we were handling an issue that was hard to let go. So it is at least 60 hours, because the aim is that we invest enough time so that something good can come out of it. Project management is very important to achieve a good result, and it is important to specify the purpose and limitations and things like that.”

The amount of money that is invested depends on the amount of hours. Company 3 says:

“We normally charge between 1300 to 1900 SEK, but it depends on the agreement. And then we calculate what a reasonable amount of hours could be. If you have 60 hours, you have time to do a good analysis or start a strategy, depending on the needs of the client. If we have less time than that, we probably have not done that much for the organization. It is all about delivering something valuable for them.”

The only thing that the company requires to get in return from the organization is the time that it takes to carry out the whole project, since one of the common tasks within the project is that interviews need to be made. “It is important that they give us the time that is needed. There could also be PR around the project, even if it has not been that much of it previously. But if, for example, a journalist wants to write about the project and interview the organizations, it is appreciated if they can do this.”

4.1.7 Company 4 - General Information gained from the Website

The fourth company that was interviewed, the company that from now on will be called Company 4, states on their website that they use their business strategies and their expertise in consulting, technology and outsourcing, to help clients perform at their best and to make sure that the results are sustainable. By using their expertise, they can identify different trends and develop solutions for their clients.

Corporate citizenship is important to Company 4. In order to make a difference in the long run, the company works with this on different levels in the company. By doing this, the company wishes to have an impact on communities and individuals all over the world.

4.1.8 Company 4 - General Information gained from the Interview

The fourth company that was interviewed has previously had another structure, but the company as it is today was founded at the beginning of the 21st century. This company is bigger than the other companies that have been interviewed, with its 215 000 employees around the world, where about 1000 people are employed in Sweden. Most of the Swedish employees, around 850 people, are working at the central office in Stockholm. About 100 people are working at the office in Gothenburg. The person that was interviewed is a management consultant, and she is also responsible for the work within corporate citizenship in Gothenburg. She started working for the company in 2008.

Company 4 has operations globally, especially in the USA, where the work with *pro bono* has come much further than in Sweden. The company has different parts when it comes to the work within corporate citizenship. One part is a program where they mostly work with developing countries. This is a partnership program, where Company 4 and the organizations that they are helping are sharing the costs of the project. In these projects, the management consultants can decrease their salary with up to 50 % of their ordinary salary. The company states: "A lot of people do these projects because they are actively engaged in this type of issues." Another part of their operations is voluntary work, and a third part is the work with *pro bono*, which is separated from the other work within corporate citizenship. When it comes to *pro bono* work, Company 4 does not demand anything in return, and they also pay all the costs of the project.

The company started their work with *pro bono* in Sweden in 2004, but the work that is performed globally started over 20 years ago. One example of the projects is when they were helping an aid organization. The aim with this project was to develop key ratios and to develop a system in order to control the costs. The company has also worked with this organization in another project, where the aim was to give structure in a business case. A third project was with another organization within the same area, where Company 4 helped with customer relations. The projects within corporate citizenship are performed globally, but the projects within *pro bono* are normally more local. The work with corporate citizenship within this company aims to help people to develop their skills, in order for them to increase their chances of getting a job.

Company 4 spends 300 000 hours doing *pro bono* work every year. The company spends around 15-20 million US Dollar on the global work with *pro bono* each year, but there is no financial plan that says that a certain percentage of the profit should be spent on this type of work. Company 4 states: "Our main priority is not to give money. We want to contribute with the knowledge that we possess."

4.2 The Strategies behind Pro Bono

4.2.1 How the Companies choose their Pro Bono Projects

The projects that Company 1 has been engaged in have been chosen randomly. It has been based on the contacts that the employees within the company have with other organizations: "We always keep our eyes open for new projects," states Company 1. The company always works with the organization during the whole process, from the creation of ideas to the implementation in the organization. The *pro bono* projects have only been with non-governmental organizations (NGO's); although, this is not an active choice or a strategy, these projects have been chosen based on the employees' contacts with the organizations. Since the company's employees have had these contacts before the project started, it has made the communication between the company and the client clearer, making it easier to meet the clients' needs.

The *pro bono* projects that Company 2 is engaged in are based on long-term relationships. The cooperation with these organizations has been going on for a long time and is now a constitutive part of the company's operations.

Company 3 posts on their website every year that they are looking for a new *pro bono* project. After the organizations have applied, the company bases its decision on

what project that they can contribute with something valuable to, during the given time period. This means that it depends on the project, but the application is open to different kinds of organizations. They state: “We want to fulfill the client’s wishes,” Company 3 indicates. “Otherwise it might turn into a disappointment. Therefore it is important that we have the knowledge that the project demands.” The company has also asked around 30 organizations directly if they would like their help. “We need it to be structured. This leads to possibilities for the organizations that we would see as good partners, but also for organizations that can apply through our website. We want them to feel that they can be helped, even if they do not have that many possibilities to do these changes on their own.”

Company 4 is also looking for long-term relationships and partnerships with the organizations that they are working with. Long-term relationships are important in order to develop their knowledge. Company 4 states: “Our experience decides what projects we choose to work with.” These organizations tell Company 4 if there is a project where they need help, and then the company decides if they have the right competence for that particular project. The projects are normally with NGO’s. It is difficult to motivate *pro bono* projects within the public sector, since this is normally a paying client for the company. According to Company 4, “one person works full-time with these issues, and he is always looking for new partnerships for the company where we can build a long-term relationship. But it takes a couple of years to create this partnership, and before you speak the same language and can fully understand each other.”

4.2.2 How the Companies adjust to the Economic Situation

The time spent doing *pro bono* work does not decrease if there is a recession in the world economy. As Company 1 states: “I would like to say that there is more work with *pro bono* during a recession. The work with *pro bono* is not supposed to affect the ordinary operations, and if there is a high pressure and we have a lot of projects, it is more difficult to make the *pro bono* projects our priority.”

The management consultant from Company 2 says that they always engage in *pro bono* projects, no matter how much other projects they have. “If there is a lot to do, there is just more to do, but we always work with *pro bono*.”

Company 3 says that the clients can always say when they would like to have the project during the year, but since the demand for their services is usually not as high after the summer, this is when they choose to engage in *pro bono* projects.

“The reason why we have these projects after the summer vacations is that there should be a separation between a paying client and a *pro bono* client. The time before the vacations is the busiest time of the year for us, but all of these projects are normally finished before Midsummer. We do not have as much to do in August, and therefore we have felt that if we are going to have any kind of predictability during the year, that is the best time to have *pro bono* projects. But it also depends on who is working with the project. We have not noticed that there is a difference between the amounts of time spent doing *pro bono* during recessions, compared to a boom. Since we are working a lot with the public sector, we are not as affected by that. We try to focus on when the clients need our help.”

Company 4 states that the amount of time spent doing *pro bono* projects is not affected by the global economic situation.

4.3 Why work with Pro Bono?

4.3.1 Reasons for why to engage in Pro Bono

There are different reasons for why companies engage in *pro bono* work, but all the companies seem to think that it is an important part of their operations. Company 1 states:

“There are some individuals that think that *pro bono* is very important, and these people are the ones who push these questions forward. The company as a whole believes that *pro bono* is important, and if someone comes up with a good idea, there are opportunities to develop this idea. It is in accordance with the business idea that we want to make a real difference and do things that matter. This means

that this has to be a component, since there are organizations in the society that need our support, and cannot afford to pay for it. The *pro bono* work could obviously have a bigger part of our operations.”

Company 1 also says that it is a good opportunity for the consultants to see how other organizations work, and learn from them.

Company 2 states: “The reasons why we work with *pro bono* are that we think that it is fun, and because we want to believe that what we do is important. It creates networks and new relationships, just like all the projects that we are involved in. These questions are important to us, it does not matter if we get paid or not.” They also think that it is very important to have a good relationship with the universities, since this can give the business of management consulting exposure. The cooperation can also increase the knowledge for the consultants.

Company 3 says that the reason for why they work with *pro bono* is that it is a part of their profile. The employees at the company are also very engaged and want to work with these issues, in order to give something back to the society, when they get the opportunity to do it. “We learn from these projects, and we can use the projects as a reference. It gives us a lot in return, and we get the chance to see how organizations, that we do not normally have projects with, work.”

Company 4 says that the reasons for why the company works with *pro bono* today are primarily due to the goals that the board has decided when it comes to corporate citizenship. These questions have to be prioritized within the company. In order to expand and survive on the market in the long run, they feel that they need to take their social responsibility, and to try to create stability in the society.

“It is a way to give the employees value in their everyday activities. There is also a more pragmatic way of thinking about that if we are looking for the best people, and the people that we think are the best seem to be people that want to work with this type of issues. We believe that we become a more attractive employer on the market, both for students and others, but also for the employees that are already working within the company.”

4.3.2 Expectations

There are a lot of expectations in today's society that companies should take their social responsibility. Company 1 has noticed a difference between younger and older consultants. "New recruits often have more questions about what we do within this kind of work, than older consultants have." Both Company 1 and Company 2 think that it is a hygiene factor; it is strange if a company does not work with these issues at all. If one, on the other hand, does engage in this type of work, one does not get that much credit for it. Company 1 also says: "I think that there are a lot of people that want to make a difference and try, but not that much actually happens. I do not think that we are the only ones with this problem."

Company 3 says that the organizations that are applying to work with the company in *pro bono* projects do not have any expectations; they are just happy to be helped. The company does not believe that there are that many expectations from society that they should engage in *pro bono* projects, although they believe that this will increase since it becomes more important to have a profile. "For us it is a natural part of our activities, since we want to act as the good company."

Company 4 also believes that it is a hygiene factor: "The expectations from society have grown and the clients have become more aware of these issues, and are therefore demanding these types of engagements."

4.4 Pro Bono and External Relationships

4.4.1 External Communication

Company 1 says that there are not that many clients that know about their work with *pro bono*: "We have not really succeeded with the external communication; it has been secondary and not a priority, even if it could give us exposure. We only have some information on our website. We cooperate with companies in other countries regarding social responsibility, and they sometimes say something about the work we have performed."

Company 2 states that the whole business idea is that they want to get positive response from their clients, and it does not matter if the clients pay or not. The company always has to deliver good results. Positive response creates ripples and new contacts and networks, which can lead to new projects. They do not have a strategy for the

communication about their *pro bono* work, but they want to show the public that diversity is important to them.

Company 3 has used media to communicate their work with *pro bono*, although they feel that they can do this more than they have done until now. They have not shown the work with *pro bono* in their annual report. This is also because the first annual report came out before the first *pro bono* project was over, but there are plans of showing this in the report this year. Company 3 states: “We need to be clearer and show how these projects can be used, and this is something that we need to work with.” They often have a deal with the client that they can use these projects as PR. “We have ideas about how to communicate the importance of these projects, to show people how they can engage and work together towards something great. Our company is very new so we do not have a PR-department, but we have had discussions about the fact that there is a possibility that media would like to write about this. There are possibilities to give the company a profile through *pro bono* and use it as a marketing strategy, and this is also a new and innovative way of working.”

Company 4 often talks about corporate citizenship in their presentations of the company. They also show what work they are engaged in on their official website. This is a part of their marketing strategy, and they believe that the work with *pro bono* creates a good image and improves the goodwill of the company. Company 4 states: “We try to show what we do where we can and where it is appropriate, but we have not received that much response from clients.”

4.4.2 Response from the work with Pro Bono

Since Company 1 has based what projects they engage in on previous contacts, the communication between them and the clients has been very clear. Therefore, no surveys have been made to investigate how the organizations have perceived the results from the work.

Company 2 has evaluations after they have had seminars at the carnival they cooperate with, but these are evaluations of the carnival as a whole, more than evaluations of the company’s performance.

Company 3 has received positive response from their work with *pro bono*, since they have shown their work in media. They state:

“Both clients and non-clients think that it is good and fun that we are doing this, and we have not received any negative comments. We can probably communicate more so that we can show that we care about the society. We have done a small survey, where clients were asked what they think about the company and our consultants. We received the response that we are all very engaged, and *pro bono* is a part of this. If this is the most important thing for the client, it is important that we do this. Since we are a small company, we know our clients and can have a direct communication with them.”

Company 4 has investigated what students think about the company’s social responsibility in a student magazine. The result from this showed that the company had not fully succeeded to communicate their activities within corporate citizenship.

4.4.3 The Companies as Attractive Employers

An interesting question is if people that are searching for jobs look at the companies which engage in *pro bono* work. Since Company 1 does not think that there are that many people that know about their work with *pro bono*, they do not think that people look at this factor. Company 1 says: “On the other hand, the company has a lot of humane values where participation and communication between people is important. People searching for jobs probably know about this. Our engagement in *pro bono* work might have disappeared among our talk about these values.”

Company 2 thinks that people are expecting that they take their social responsibility. “If you work as a management consultant, *pro bono* work is not your main task. If you want to work only with social responsibility, it is probably better to work for an organization that has that as their main focus,” according to Company 2.

Company 3 says that it is important that you are engaged if you want to work within the company, and therefore it is important that the applicants believe that *pro bono* is important.

Company 4 thinks that this is an important factor and that the company becomes a more attractive employer, both for new employees and for the ones already working for the company, if they engage in *pro bono* work.

The research within *pro bono* has shown that it is very important for newly graduated that the company that they are applying to is engaged in this type of work. Company 1 has not noticed that this is more important for newly graduated, but the company thinks that the knowledge about *pro bono* might be higher for newly graduated. Therefore, newly graduated feel more secure when they talk about these issues and their engagement might be higher because they understand the importance of it, although the company believes that this is probably very individual. Company 1 says: “How comfortable you feel about talking about sustainability might depend on when a person has done his or her education. It is not a big deal for younger people to talk about social responsibility, because it is a part of the education system today. Older people might feel that they do not have enough knowledge within the area, and therefore feel uncomfortable talking about these issues. But we see that all people want to engage.”

Company 2 has made a survey at a university where they asked the students what the most important factors were when choosing an employer. The results showed that social and ethical responsibility was becoming more important for students.

Company 3 does not notice any difference depending on the age, but they believe that *pro bono* might be more natural for them since they have projects with the public sector.

Company 4 states: “It is mostly students that think that ethics and moral issues are important factors, and that it is positive that we believe that it is important.”

4.5 Pro Bono and Internal Relationships

4.5.1 Who works with Pro Bono within the Companies?

There is one person responsible for each project that Company 1 is engaged in, but there are usually two people involved from the company. Three people within the organization are pushing the questions forward, but there is no plan for who should be working with *pro bono*. Everybody that wants to and feels inspired can be involved. Company 1 says that “there is always room for ideas, although there are not that many suggestions for new projects.”

This is also in accordance with the view of Company 2. They state that even if not all ideas are accepted, all employees can always come with a suggestion. In the carnival project that Company 2 is engaged in, they rotate who is responsible for the project. Who is responsible depends on what competences that the client demands.

Within Company 3, there is one person responsible for the advertising of the work with *pro bono*. Who is responsible for a particular project depends on the competences that are needed. There are always two people working with the project, just like in other projects, but it could be up to four people. “If you have time for it, you can become more engaged. We encourage people to do it if they want to. This is very individual, but when we hire new people, they need to be aware that this is a part of our business idea. We often talk about the good company, and a lot of people are engaged.”

Since last year, Company 4 has had one person in Stockholm who works full-time with corporate citizenship. The person that was interviewed has been responsible for the projects that the office in Gothenburg is engaged in. The company states: “Everybody can get the chance to be engaged in the projects if they want to, but it has to be the right competence for the projects.” The company has about 20 people in Sweden that are working with the projects, although more people than that are engaged to contribute with their knowledge within different areas. “When it comes to voluntary work, there is no limit for how many people that can be working with the project. Everybody can be involved as a resource of competence.” The company provides internships in the summer, which last year included working with *pro bono*. The intern has to be supervised by the person that is responsible for the project.

4.5.2 Methods used in Pro Bono Projects

For Company 1, the methods that are used when working with *pro bono* are the same as when working with regular projects. They say that the only difference is the way that decisions are made within the organization that they are working with. In companies, there is usually someone with the responsibility to make the decisions. The organizations they work with in *pro bono* projects do not always have the same structure when it comes to decisions, and therefore it often takes longer to make decisions.

Company 2 says that the risk to get a bad reputation is as high when working with *pro bono* as with paying clients. Therefore, the same methods are used in all projects, even if they often try new methods. This is also how it works within Company 3.

Company 4 states: “Some people think that it is easier to work with NGO’s than with our usual clients, but I would say that it is actually more difficult. We have the

same ways of working with NGO's, but there are other challenges. It is as important for us to deliver good results when working with these organizations as with paying clients."

4.5.3 The Employees Views on the Pro Bono work

If the company is engaged in *pro bono* work, the employees can feel proud of working for that organization. It can also make the employees feel good about themselves to do something good for the society, and be developing for them, both in a professional and a personal way. Company 1 says: "I think that the employees think that it is fun, and that they are quite proud of it." The question if the employees actually want to work with it has never really been brought up in Company 1. "But we have had meetings where everybody has had the chance to say what they think about it, and if there is something that they think is a bad idea. Although, I do not think that it is accepted to think that a *pro bono* idea is useless. If people think so, they have not said anything about it. This kind of work is a part of the company culture."

Company 2 says that different people think that different projects are more fun than others. They state: "*Pro bono* work is a natural part of what we do. It is a part of our operations, and it is a part of the culture. Nobody has ever questioned this work. This is just the way it is." It is as important for them to deliver good results in these projects as when working with paying clients, and they hope to hear from the clients that they did a good job. Company 2 also says that it would be surprising if a management consulting company did not work with *pro bono* at all.

Company 3 states that the employees that are working with *pro bono* projects do not get these projects in addition to other projects. They state: "It is just like any other project, and the hours that are spent are worth as much no matter if we get paid or not. This means that these projects are not a stress factor for the employees, and that they do not get more to do just because they are working with *pro bono*." Everybody wanted to participate during the last *pro bono* project that the company was engaged in, since the employees get the opportunity to work with something out of the ordinary projects. Company 3 has not done any surveys on what the employees think about the projects, but they say that they have very open communication within the company.

According to Company 4, their employees enjoy working with *pro bono* projects. The employees think that the company takes its responsibility, and this is also

a very important factor for them. The company states: “The employees can give something back to society in a different way by working with *pro bono*. This is important to communicate, also within the company to the employees. They need to understand why *pro bono* is important. Some people do not understand that it is important that they do something that they are good at.”

4.5.4 Company Culture

The company culture is affected by the values of the company. Company 1 says that the values within their culture include the importance of social responsibility. Even though there are not that many projects that they are actually engaged in, they often have meetings where they talk about potential *pro bono* projects and the company’s role in the society. Even though people have different views of what social responsibility means, everybody seems to think that it is important. The projects that they actually engage in also get a lot of attention in periods of time when they are working with it.

Company 2 states that it is always an important part of their operations. They state: “The question has never been brought up, it is a non-existing question if it is important or not, or if we should do these kind of projects or not. This is what we do, end of story. When you work for this company, this is a part of the activities.”

Company 3 thinks that *pro bono* definitely affects their company culture, especially since the engagement in society is a part of the company, and a part of who they are. They say: “*Pro bono* is both a part of the culture and it helps to create the culture. It is not just a band-aid, it is an important part of who we are and the values that we have.”

Company 4 says that it is a part of the company’s culture that these questions are important to work with, but the employees are not forced to believe in something that they do not believe in. The company does surveys where the employees are asked what they think about the company’s work within *pro bono*, but the company has not noticed that people are against it in these surveys.

4.5.5 Recruitment and the Awareness of CSR

When it comes to the recruitment of new employees, Company 1 states that the awareness of CSR is not the most important factor to look at. They look at the

applicant's engagement and own ideas and the willingness to push these questions forward.

Company 2 also says that this is not a key factor too look at when hiring new employees. It is more important to be competent and to have the willingness to help others. They state: "We just presume that people are aware of sustainability issues."

Company 3 looks at the engagement in these issues when hiring. They state: "When we hire new employees, the applicants normally talk about it, but if they do not, we bring it up. If someone would say that they do not believe that *pro bono* is important, it would be very difficult to take that person further in the hiring process."

Company 4 does not demand that people are engaged in these kinds of questions when hiring new employees. "If you want to work with these kinds of projects and think that these issues are important, there are opportunities do to that within the company. But if you do not want to, you do not have to work with it."

4.5.6 Positive effects from Pro Bono

The work with *pro bono* leads to positive effects for the employees. Company 1 sees it as internal development projects within the company. They state:

"The people that have been involved in these projects are really happy and feel that they have been able to make a difference in a different way than with usual projects, and that they have gained knowledge. It also creates a feeling that we do not exclude any type of organizations, but that we can work with different types of activities. It is also an opportunity to show the employees that are not that active in these questions that we need to take the social dimension into account."

Company 2 thinks that the positive effects from the work with *pro bono* are that it is a good way for them to meet new people and create new contacts. The employees can learn from the clients' experiences and increase their knowledge.

Company 3 thinks that *pro bono* gives an opportunity for the employees to work with other organizations than what they are used to. They can learn new things and help organizations that could not do these projects without them.

Company 4 says that: "The positive effects are that it feels good for the people working with these projects, since they contribute with something outside their usual

working field. They feel that they can make a difference for society. It can also be developing for them.”

4.5.7 Negative Effects from Pro Bono

Company 1 says that the negative effects for the employees could be that there is no strategy. This means that the people that push the questions forward have to make sure that they work with it in a structured way in order for the ideas to survive. If they have a lot to do with other projects, this means that these questions are not prioritized. If they are going to work with *pro bono* at all during these periods of time, this means that the employees have to put in a great deal of overtime.

Company 2 cannot really see anything negative coming out of the work with *pro bono*. If they have a lot of paying clients, the employees just have more to do. The amount of work with *pro bono* is not affected. Company 2 states: “It is important that there is an acceptance within the company when it comes to pro bono work. Both the board and the employees have to think that all projects are of the same importance. All projects must be as important in order for us to be successful.”

Company 3 does not really think that there is anything negative with the projects, but it could be more difficult to work with organizations that are not used to working with consultancy companies. They state: “We try to handle this by being clear about the expectations and limitations from the start.”

Company 4 cannot really see any negative effects coming out of the work with *pro bono*, although some parts of the work within corporate citizenship is not included in the employees’ working hours. This can be stressful if the company has a lot of projects during the same time period, since this means that the consultants have to do it during their free time. “If you are doing *pro bono* work, you are involved in a project that you are supposed to work with, and this does not make it as stressful.”

4.6 Future work with Pro Bono

When it comes to future work with *pro bono* within their organization, Company 1 thinks that the importance of CSR will increase.

“I am hoping that it will become more structured. I hope that we will have a plan for the financing of the projects, and a strategy for how to find new projects. I also hope that the project costs will have legitimacy. Since it depends on the engagement of the individuals, this means that this needs to become a priority on my agenda. This means that I might have to work overtime or do it during my spare time.”

Company 2, on the other hand, thinks that the importance of these questions will remain on the same level and that there will still be expectations that companies need to do this kind of work. They also say that since the competition is increasing, companies need to find new ways in order to differentiate themselves among all other companies. It is becoming more important for clients to be able to identify themselves with the organization, and therefore, this kind of work is necessary. It is also important for employees to be able to identify themselves with the organization that they are working for. This kind of work can make them feel proud of the company. Company 2 always tries to improve and develop the processes within the company. They invite their customers to the carnival, and in order to do this they need to deliver good results. They also state: “We can see that our company is expanding, and as we are getting bigger we will probably also increase the amount of *pro bono* work that we are engaged in. As we are expanding, we will get more resources and more time within the company to spend on this kind of work.”

Company 3 also believes that the work with *pro bono* will increase as the company expands. They state: “The future work with *pro bono* will not decrease. When we expand, our work with *pro bono* will probably increase. There are nine employees in the company. If there were 30 employees, we probably would have been able to do more. The organizations that are applying to work with us in *pro bono* projects will probably be more used to applying for this in the future.”

Company 4 thinks that the importance of corporate citizenship will increase:

“I hope, and think, that the importance of this kind of work will increase. NGOs have a lot of focus on their core operations and they have a lot to learn when it comes to efficiency and strategies. This is an area where we have good knowledge. We need to take our social responsibility and we can stabilize society by learning from the organizations. We hope that the cooperation between management consulting companies and non-governmental organizations will be improved, and that both parties seek to work with each other. Society has expectations on the NGO’s that they start to motivate their investments. Society has also increased their expectations on the companies when it comes to social responsibility. Through the cooperation, the expectations from the society can be fulfilled, at the same time as the activities of both parties can become more effective. This can in turn increase the profit for all parties. Social responsibility should increase even more in importance, since there is a need of it, and there are incentives for it.”

4.7 Comments to the Empirical Study

In the empirical part of this dissertation, four companies were studied, where their work with *pro bono* was compared. We found many similarities among the reasons for why companies engage in *pro bono* work, but there were also differences, especially in the different types of work that they are engaged in. The table below shows a summary of the information gained from the interviews. This information will be interpreted and analyzed in the next section of the dissertation.

4.7.1 A Summary of the Results from the Interviews

	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Company 4
Age of Company	≈ 10 years	≈ 20 years	< 5 years	≈ 10 years
No of Employees in Sweden	43	30	9	1000
Total hours spent on pro bono/year	100-300	100-150	60	300 000
How they choose projects	Randomly	Long-term relationships	Pro-active searching	Combination between 2 and 3
Projects during recessions	More projects	The same amount	More projects	The same amount
Why work with pro bono?	Individuals' engagement	Part of company operations	Part of culture	Strategic reasons
Expectations	Hygiene factor	Hygiene factor	Society has it, NGO's have not	Hygiene factor
External Communication	Not a priority	No strategy	Marketing strategy	Marketing strategy
In what way does pro bono attract employees	They get the right people	No effect	They get the right people	They get qualified employees
Students views	They understand the importance of pro bono	Ethics and moral overall important	No difference between ages	Ethics and moral overall important
No of employees working with pro bono projects	2 people (1 responsible)	2 people (1 responsible)	2 people	20 people
% of employees working with pro bono	4.7 %	6.7 %	22.2 %	2.0 %
Recruitment and awareness of CSR and pro bono	Not a key factor	Not a key factor	Important	Not required
Pro bono in the Future	Increased importance, hopefully more in the company	Same level, but will develop their work	Increase projects when company expands	Increased importance in society

5 ANALYSIS

The purpose of the study was to investigate how and why companies within the business of management consulting work with pro bono. The study has investigated four different management consulting companies and the differences and similarities between them in their pro bono work. Both the theoretical study and the empirical study have resulted in a great deal of information. We will now focus on the most important parts of this information, and based on this, we will analyze the most important similarities and differences between the companies.

5.1 General Analysis of the Interviews

5.1.1 Reflections

Overall, the interviews have been very satisfying. It has been easy to cooperate with the companies and they have answered our questions as well as they can. If they have not been able to answer some of the questions, most of them have investigated it by asking colleges.

Something that has been difficult throughout the process of writing this dissertation is that the definition of *pro bono* seems to differ between the companies. The definition of *pro bono* within the business world includes projects that companies engage in where they do not charge anything for their services.¹²⁷ Their projects aim to create benefits for society.¹²⁸ We would like to describe *pro bono* as a type of knowledge based charity. None of the companies charge the organizations in their *pro bono* projects, but the types of projects that are included within the area of *pro bono* differ between the companies. Company 2 and Company 3 include the cooperation that they have with the universities. This does not have to be wrong, since this type of cooperation is based on the consultants' knowledge and expertise, which is in accordance with the definition of *pro bono*. Also, previous research has shown that the term *pro bono* can be defined in different ways depending on the context and purpose of the project, which means that *pro bono* can include many different types of projects.¹²⁹ The interviews we had with the companies can also be seen as a part of their *pro bono* work.

¹²⁷Weibel, Betty. (2011)

¹²⁸U.S. Government . (2011)

¹²⁹National Pro bono Resource Centre, (2004)

Even if the companies do not demand to get paid for their services in *pro bono* projects, it is common that they are allowed to use the projects as cases, to show potential clients what the company can do.

5.1.2 Source Criticism

The answers from the interviews were satisfying, but not too surprising. First of all, the answers from each of the companies had much in common with the information that was gained from the companies' websites. There is no doubt that the employees within the companies have been trained in what the company stands for, which includes the culture and the vision of the company. The information on the websites is the picture that the companies want society to have of them. There is a risk that the answers from the interviews are in accordance with what is stated on the websites, even if this is not a part of the actual company culture. The culture within a company should exist throughout the whole organization, although this is not always the case. Company culture can sometimes just be a picture of the company that they want to deliver to external stakeholders. It is difficult to know if the answers actually are in accordance with the company culture. If this is the case, it is positive that the employees think in accordance with the culture.

The answers also seemed to be in accordance with the previous research that has been made within the area of Corporate Social Responsibility and *pro bono*. The question is whether the answers are similar to the research because the research shows a perfect picture of the reality, or if the people that were interviewed have studied the research. The interviewees have studied basically the same subjects as us, and therefore is it likely that they know what the previous research says, even if they do not think about this themselves.

We have tried to see beyond what they say, and try to interpret what they actually mean, think and feel about the work with *pro bono*. We need to be able to read between the lines, and therefore we have tried to be critical throughout the whole process of writing this dissertation.

5.1.3 Differences between the Interviewees

The answers that were received during the interviews may have been different depending on the person interviewed. In Company 1, Company 3 and Company 4, the

person that was interviewed was responsible for the *pro bono* work within the company. It might be easier for a person that is responsible for this type of work to motivate their work with *pro bono*. In the interview with Company 3, the CEO of the company was present. She is also the founder of the company, and therefore the values were represented by the person who came up with them from the start, which gave a clear picture of what the company stands for.

5.1.4 Differences between the Companies

Company 4 also has a very structured strategy for their work with *pro bono*, but since this company is very big, they probably have a great deal of expectations from society. They have many resources to really make a difference. They also have businesses globally, especially in USA, where the work with *pro bono* has come much further than the work with *pro bono* in Sweden. Since there are expectations that they engage in these types of projects in USA, it is natural that they also have these projects in Sweden.

When the founder of Company 3 was interviewed, it sounded like one of the reasons that one starts a company is that one can do whatever that person wants to. In this case, they can engage in *pro bono* projects. In this interview, they say “when we started the company”, which makes it sound like all the employees have worked together to build the company, which also includes working with *pro bono*. This means that *pro bono* seems important for everybody. It might be easier to work together in small companies to build a sense that these issues are important and to work towards common goals with *pro bono*, than it is in bigger companies.

5.2 The Strategies behind Pro Bono

5.2.1 How the Companies choose their Pro Bono Projects

Company 1 does not have a strategy when it comes to the way the *pro bono* projects are chosen, while Company 2 has long-term relationships with the organizations that they are working with. Company 3 is pro-active in searching for new *pro bono* projects, and they change projects every year. Company 4 combines long-term relationships with the search for new projects. This company is both older and larger than the other companies, and we suspect that the way they choose *pro bono* projects has to do with the fact that they are more experienced. This company has found a way of combining

the new knowledge and contacts that is the result from new *pro bono* projects, with the long-term relationships where it is easier to make a difference, since both parties know each other and therefore can have a more clear communication. This is also in accordance with what Company 1 said; when you work longer with the client, you can make a real difference. Therefore, we believe that it would be good for the companies to follow the footsteps of Company 4, which means combining new relationships with long-term relationships.

What does this say about the companies? Company 1 relies on the contacts that individuals within the company have. This is a reflection of their work with *pro bono*; there are only a few individuals that are working to push these issues forward, although, the culture encourages people to engage in *pro bono* projects.

Company 2 has long-term relationships, which makes it easier to help the organizations. Since the company rotates the person responsible for the carnival each year, we believe that the company might lose some of the benefits with *pro bono*, since new relationships have to be built every year between the organization and the new consultant responsible for the project. We also believe that Company 2 might gain more knowledge and increase the creativity if they would search for new projects. Company 3 searches for new projects every year, which shows that the employees are enthusiastic about the work with *pro bono*. Since the company was founded recently, it is good to create new contacts, but it is difficult to say if this will be positive for them in the long run.

5.2.2 How the Companies adjust to the Economic Situation

In Company 1, the individuals that are pushing the work with *pro bono* forward have more time to engage in this type of issues during recessions, which means that the amount of time spent doing *pro bono* work increases during recessions. Another reason for the increased work is that the consultants do not have as much to do overall, and they have to do something to keep busy, which gives opportunities to develop their work with *pro bono*. This is also in accordance with the previous research that said that *pro bono* work increases in recessions.¹³⁰ If the company has less to do during certain periods of the year, maybe *pro bono* work also could increase in these periods.

¹³⁰Taylor, S. (2011)

Company 2 and Company 4 both said that they are not affected by the global economic situation in their work with *pro bono*. They have the same *pro bono* projects no matter if there is a recession or a boom, and no matter if they have a lot of other projects or not. Company 3 says that they are not as affected by recessions since their projects are done within the public sector, although the other three companies also work within the public sector, which means that this should be applicable to them as well. This is also in accordance with what the companies say, that they are not affected by recessions, with the exception that Company 1 says that their *pro bono* work increases in recessions.

Company 3 also said that most of their projects occur right before the summer, since the clients want the projects to be done before the vacations. Therefore, they have chosen to work with *pro bono* projects right after the summer. They take the workload into account, which means that the projects do not create as much stress for the employees. Company 2 has their biggest *pro bono* project right before the summer. In periods of time where they have a lot of paying clients, it seems to be very stressful for the employees to add *pro bono* work to the workload. Because of the project's timing during the year, we question if this project really is the most optimal one for the company.

5.3 Why work with Pro Bono?

5.3.1 Reasons for why to engage in Pro Bono

All the companies that were interviewed seem to think that *pro bono* is an important part of their operations, although the forces that are driving each of the companies' *pro bono* work differ. In Company 1, the *pro bono* work is depending on a few individuals. These individuals must be very engaged to be able to push through these issues within the organization so that they have *pro bono* projects at all. It is in accordance with the business idea in Company 1 to make a real difference. There is also a focus on humanitarian values within this company, and therefore it would be logical that they engage in projects where people really need help. Since the *pro bono* work within Company 1 depends on a few individuals, *pro bono* does not seem to be a big part of the strategy within the company. It seems contradictory that the company that has humanitarian values as one of their top priorities does not prioritize this type of projects.

In Company 2, this type of work has always been a part of their operations, which means that not as much energy has to be spent on pushing the issues forward. They engage in *pro bono* to create new contacts that they would not get in their usual projects. It is a part of the company culture, which is also the case for Company 3. The aim for Company 3 is to always be the good company, and *pro bono* has been a part of the company's strategy from the start. This company wants to do something good for society, but they do not try to hide the fact that this is also a part of their marketing strategy. They are open with the fact that they do *pro bono* work for both altruistic reasons and strategic marketing reasons.

Company 1, Company 2 and Company 3 all say that the *pro bono* projects develop their knowledge, which is in accordance with previous research.^{131, 132, 133, 134} The cooperation with the universities is valuable for the students, but it can also be a strategy since the companies can stay up to date within new research.

Company 4 said that they do this work to improve their image and increase their goodwill. They need to deliver good results to keep their good reputation, especially since they have a global goal when it comes to *pro bono* work. This goal seems risky, because if they do not succeed with the goal, they will get negative publicity. The company believes that they attract more qualified employees when they are taking their social responsibility, which is in accordance with previous research.¹³⁵

5.3.2 Expectations

All the companies said that they believe that the overall expectations from society about companies' engagement in *pro bono* have increased. They say that social responsibility is a hygiene factor, which is in accordance with previous research.¹³⁶ Since the competition increases on the global market, it becomes more important to have a clear profile.¹³⁷ We therefore believe that the requirements for what counts as a hygiene factor will be higher within the area of social responsibility.

As stated previously, we think that it is contradictive that Company 1 does not prioritize *pro bono* in their operations, considering the values of the company. Company

¹³¹Waller, D.S. (2010)

¹³²Pratt, L. (2003)

¹³³Lister, L. (2008)

¹³⁴Waller, D.S. (2010)

¹³⁵Albinge, H. Freeman, S,J.. (20009)

¹³⁶Davis, K. (1973)

¹³⁷Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

3 only has nine employees, but spends 60 hours per year on *pro bono*, which means that each employee spends on average 6.7 hours on *pro bono* work each year. This company is very new and has been born into the era of *pro bono*, and they therefore realized from the start that this needs to be a part of their strategy. When it comes to Company 4, they take their social responsibility, but considering that each employee only spends on average 1.4 hours per year on *pro bono* work, this work can probably increase. Since this company is very big, we probably have higher expectations on them.

Company 3 states that the organizations in the *pro bono* projects do not have any expectations, and that those organizations appreciate whatever help they can get. We have learned from previous research that if they trust the management consulting company too much, there is a risk that the organization does not get the help that they need.¹³⁸ The cooperation with these kinds of organizations is not widespread, and there is no guarantee that the consultant has the knowledge that is takes to solve the organization's problem.

No matter for what reasons companies engage in work with CSR, or if they actually want to do these kinds of projects or not, the term Corporate Social Responsibility is pretty clear; corporations have a social responsibility because of societies' expectations, it does not really matter if they like it or not. This should be the same for *pro bono*, since the definition of *pro bono* is included in CSR. The fact that society expects them to take some sort of responsibility is probably the reason why they have this responsibility today, or at least one of the reasons. In other words, the expectations create the responsibility. Today there is no law that says that companies have a responsibility that they must engage in *pro bono* projects. We believe that this is a part of the problem; since the consultants are not accountable, it is difficult to blame them if they do something wrong in the *pro bono* projects.¹³⁹

5.4 Pro bono and the External Relationships

5.4.1 External Communication

Company 1 and Company 2 have not had the external communication about the *pro bono* work as their top priority. Company 3 and Company 4, on the other hand, use their *pro bono* work as a part of their marketing strategy. We are wondering if the lack of

¹³⁸ Perner, Frida (2008)

¹³⁹ Davis, K. (1973)

communication indicates that the companies engage in *pro bono* work for altruistic reasons. This does not have to be the case, since they all want to act as good citizens, and it is difficult to say what underlying reasons there are for their *pro bono* work. Also, the external communication does not have to be just because the companies want to improve the profile of their companies; it can also be because they want to communicate the importance of these issues to the public. Some of the companies want to improve their communication about *pro bono*, but we question how much they actually can communicate. We believe that there is a risk that the companies lose their legitimacy if they have too much communication about the *pro bono* work. People might think that they only do it for marketing reasons. Company 4 says that they show their work with *pro bono* where it is appropriate, which indicates that there are situations where it is not appropriate. The companies have to be careful so they do not brag about this work, in order to keep their legitimacy and image. This is also important to take into account when they do surveys to investigate what external stakeholders think about their work with *pro bono*. These surveys can be interpreted as if they are admitting that it is a part of their marketing strategy, since it can be seen as marketing surveys.

5.4.2 The Companies as Attractive Employers

Company 1 and Company 3 believe that by showing that they think that humanitarian values are important, and by acting as the good company, they attract the people with the right values; people that they want in their organizations. Company 4 is more focused on getting the most competent employees, and they have noticed that these people are attracted to employers that take their social responsibility, just like the previous research has showed. According to Company 4, *pro bono* projects can be challenging; even more challenging than usual projects. Qualified employees might therefore apply for jobs in companies that engage in *pro bono*. This is also a way of keeping the employees that they have today.¹⁴⁰

Company 2 says that if you think that it is very important to work with social responsibility you should probably work within that kind of organizations, and maybe not within a management consulting company. On the other hand, *pro bono* work is included in the company, which made us question if the employees really want to work with it. We also started to question if there is anyone that do not want to work with *pro*

¹⁴⁰ Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

bono, and came to the conclusion that there probably are some people that do not think that *pro bono* is important. Among those people, there are individuals that think that the only goal for companies should be profit maximization. Milton Friedman is a man of this opinion, and he thinks that *pro bono* only is an obstacle for the free market.¹⁴¹

Surveys done in previous research, and surveys done by the companies, have showed that it is important for students that the company that they are working for takes its social responsibility. Therefore, students often apply to companies that engage in *pro bono* projects.^{142, 143}

5.5 Pro Bono and Internal Relationships

5.5.1 Who works with Pro Bono within the Companies?

In Company 1, Company 2 and Company 3, one to two people are working with the *pro bono* projects at a time, and there is one person responsible for the project. In Company 4, there is one person that works full time with CSR. The company has about 20 people that are working with the projects in Sweden, but the number of employees within the companies has to be taken into account. If the number of employees that are working with *pro bono* projects are divided by the total number of employees within each of the companies, the result shows that the percentage of the employees within Company 4 that are working with *pro bono* is not that high. If you look at how much time management consulting companies spend on all projects every year, they spend a very short amount of time on *pro bono* projects. *Pro bono* has existed within the law profession for a longer time than in the business of management consulting, and within the law business, each person spends on average 140 hours per year on *pro bono* projects.¹⁴⁴ The empirical study has showed that within the interviewed companies, each person only spends on average one to seven hours per person working with *pro bono*. Only 2 % of the employees within Company 4 are working with *pro bono*, while 22.2 % of the employees in Company 3 are engaged in these projects. In Company 1 and Company 2, 4.7 % respectively 6.7 % of the employees are working with *pro bono* projects. Imagine what an impact a company as big as Company 4 could do in society if

¹⁴¹ Davis, K. (1973)

¹⁴² Taylor, S. (2011)

¹⁴³ Cummings, S. L. (2010)

¹⁴⁴ Taylor, S. (2011)

the percentage of employees working with *pro bono* was as high in this company as in Company 3.

5.5.2 The Employees Views on the Pro Bono work

All the companies say that the work with *pro bono* is a part of the companies' cultures. In Company 4, there are many opportunities to work with *pro bono* for the employees, but they do not have to if they do not want to. Even if the employees are aware of the fact that the company works with *pro bono*, they may not know that much about it. The size of the company might make it more difficult to communicate the importance of *pro bono* to the employees.

Company 3 does not hire people that do not think that social responsibility is important. Because of this, all the employees care about these issues which makes the culture more homogenous. This probably makes it easier for them to prioritize *pro bono* in their activities, since all the employees are motivated to work with it.

Even though a company can have a message that they want to deliver to the public, like for example that they do *pro bono* because it gives an opportunity to develop the employees' knowledge, or because it is simply fun with this kind of work, this differ between the employees within the company. Company 2 said that people think that different kinds of projects are fun; all people do not like the same kind of work. Company 1 said that if you would ask anyone in their company, everybody would think that these issues are important. This makes it sound like the employees are expected to care about these issues. Company 4 has asked the employees what they think about the company's work within social responsibility, but no surveys seem to have been made by any of the companies where they ask if the employees want to work with *pro bono* or not, or if they actually care. It seems like the society expects the companies to take their responsibility, and because of this, the companies in turn expect the employees to care about these issues. We are wondering if it would be accepted that they employees would say that they do not think that *pro bono* is important.

The work with *pro bono* is probably more appreciated in the companies that adjust the *pro bono* work to the employees' workload. That way, this type of work does not have to be a stress factor. When people are applying for jobs, the research has shown that social responsibility is an important factor, where the most important part of this is that the employers take care of their employees. The employees must feel that the

company cares about them, in order for them to feel motivated and do a good job. Therefore, the company has to take the employees' well-being into account when they decide why and how they should engage in *pro bono* projects, in other words; when they decide the strategies for their *pro bono* work.

5.5.3 Positive versus Negative Effects from Pro Bono

Both the theoretical and the empirical study show that *pro bono* leads to an improved image for the companies and that it creates new relationships, which in turn can lead to new clients. This shows that the companies get important benefits from this kind of work, and that it can lead to an increased profit.¹⁴⁵ Since these factors are important to increase the profit, the companies are probably aware of these effects, and therefore they engage in these types of projects. If increased profit is the reason for engaging in *pro bono*, this means that *pro bono* is not against the view of a free market, which is in contradiction to what Milton Friedman says about social responsibility.¹⁴⁶ In order for the board to approve of *pro bono* projects, there probably has to be proof that the company can make a profit out of this type of work. We would like to say that *pro bono* is a good marketing strategy, and therefore, the companies should make use of this opportunity. There are several surveys that have proven that companies that take their social responsibility also become more attractive employers, and that they get more qualified employees.^{147,148} This proves that this marketing strategy is working, since it attracts both clients and employees.

Both the theoretical and the empirical study also show that *pro bono* work results in several positive effects for the employees. They get personal satisfaction since they can gain experiences and develop their competences. It feels good to contribute with something to society and make a real difference. We believe that the companies must take a responsibility to make sure that the work with *pro bono* is not just a stress factor. The employees must enjoy working with these projects, so that there is room for development of the knowledge that the employees gain in the projects. The empirical study shows that a negative effect with *pro bono* work is that the employees can feel

¹⁴⁵Cummings, S. L. (2010)

¹⁴⁶Davis, K. (1973)

¹⁴⁷Werther, William B. & Chandler, David (2006)

¹⁴⁸Albinger, H. Freeman, S.,J.. (2000)

stressed, since the workload might get too high, which shows that this is an important factor to take into account.

If the consultants have the right competences for the projects, they can make a real difference in the organizations, although the consultants must only engage in projects that correspond to their competences. Some people question if they really have the competences that are needed to help non-profit organizations, and if they know what issues that should be prioritized in society. It could be seen as more of a political process to make the decisions about what projects that are important, where ethical and moral issues also have to be taken into account. The question is if the consultants are the right people to make this kind of decisions.

We do not believe that there is any doubt that the consultants have the right competences to make a difference in the organizations. They are very competent within different areas, and after all, management consulting is what they do. No matter if it is *pro bono* or not, they can make a real difference in organizations. The fact that the definition of management consultancy services is very wide creates a flexibility, which means that a management consultant can provide many different services. The management consultants are used to adjust to different kinds of situations and projects. Because of this, we believe that they can make a real difference and help the organizations in the *pro bono* projects.

Although, we do believe that it is important to have the right consultant working with the right *pro bono* project, just as the companies that were interviewed stated. The consultants can inform the organizations what they can do for them, but we think that it is up to the organizations to decide whether this is the help they need or not. Therefore, an open communication between the organizations and the consultants is necessary.

The question is if the companies have to work with *pro bono* to be a good citizen. Does not a management consultant contribute to a better society, just by being a management consultant? This is what they do best, and if they can contribute with something to the society by doing what they do best, this is probably the optimal work to engage in when it comes to social responsibility.

5.6 Future work with Pro Bono

Most of the management consulting companies that were interviewed believe that the importance of *pro bono*, and the amount of time spent on *pro bono* projects, will increase. *Pro bono* might be a trend today, and therefore, the amount of time spend on *pro bono* is increasing. Based on the empirical study, where *pro bono* work is seen as a hygiene factor, we believe that this trend is here to stay.

5.7 Future Research

There are several theories about the work with *pro bono*, and researchers seem to agree about what positive and negative effects that the work with *pro bono* can result in, although we think that the negative effects from the work with *pro bono* needs more research. Research should also be made to investigate the negative effects that consultancy services can result in. Society seems to be in a very great need of someone taking social responsibility, which means that organizations might not always investigate if the help that is provided is the right help for them; they often receive all the help they can get with open arms. Maybe more research needs to be made in order to find out if someone external, with expertise knowledge within certain areas, but not necessarily when it comes to those kinds of organizations, can help the organizations or not.

The theoretical and empirical studies show that students choose to work for companies that engage in *pro bono* and take their social responsibility. Some companies believe that by engaging in *pro bono*, they seem like an attractive employer, and that they receive applications from the most qualified job seekers. It would be interesting to see if these theories are true, maybe by doing observations. Another area can could need further investigation is that the students often belong to the younger generation, and although surveys have been made in this generation, no surveys seem to have been made to investigate what the older generations think about *pro bono*.

There is also another factor that would be interesting to investigate, which also might require observations. Company 4 said that the office in Stockholm seems to have more soft values and that the work with *pro bono* is more focused on integration, while the company in Gothenburg is more focused on strategic work within organizations. They

have also noticed that there are more females within the company that are working with *pro bono* in Stockholm, and that the *pro bono* work in Gothenburg involves more men. This is an interesting observation, and the question is if this is a coincidence, or if the type of *pro bono* is influenced by what gender that works with these issues. If there are more soft values at the company in Stockholm because more females are working there, and if their *pro bono* work reflects this, it would be very conservative. It would also be very conservative if the strategic work in Gothenburg reflects the values of men. This would be interesting to investigate further, but we have chosen not to focus on that in this dissertation.

6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate how and why companies within the business of management consulting work with pro bono. In this section, the answer to the question why management consulting companies engage in pro bono, and the answer to the question how they work with pro bono, will be answered separately.

6.1 Why Management Consulting Companies work with Pro Bono

The first question is why management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* work. It is difficult to know the underlying reasons for this type of work. The theoretical and empirical studies that have been made in this dissertation have showed some of the reasons for why the companies engage in *pro bono*. We have noticed that the companies work with *pro bono* both for altruistic reasons and for marketing reasons. The altruistic reasons are, among others, that some people just want to do good because it makes them feel better about themselves. Employees often feel that what they can make a real difference through *pro bono* work, and they seem to enjoy working with *pro bono* projects. It is very developing for the people working in the projects since they get personal satisfaction at the same time as the people can develop their competencies. The employees can feel proud that they are working for a company that cares about society and takes its social responsibility. This is also used as a marketing strategy within the companies, since it makes it easier for the companies to keep their employees. The companies are also seen as a more attractive employer for potential employees, and they attract more qualified job seekers. Another reason for why companies engage in *pro bono* projects is that these projects can be used as cases for potential clients, where the management consulting companies can show what they can do in organizations where the financial situation normally is not the most optimal. One of the most important reasons for why management consulting is that there are expectations from society that companies should take some sort of social responsibility.

The reasons for why people engage in *pro bono* work are very individual, and different companies have different individuals, which mean that there are differences both within and between companies. Because of this, it is impossible to come up with a conclusion that only includes one reason for why companies engage in *pro bono* work. Since there are so many different individuals within each company, it is also very hard

to generalize and say that a certain company engages in *pro bono* projects for only one reason. This dissertation has shown some of the reasons for why management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* projects.

6.2 How Management Consulting Companies work with Pro Bono

The second question is how management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* work. It is difficult to come up with one conclusion that gives a general answer to how the companies engage in *pro bono*, especially since the definition of *pro bono* seems to differ between the companies, although we feel that we can draw a conclusion towards what we believe would be best-practice for the companies. Therefore, we have come up with a suggestion to a solution for how the optimal company would work with *pro bono*. This company will from now on will be called Company 5.

6.3 Company 5

6.3.1 The work with Pro Bono within Company 5

	Company 5
Age of Company	Does not matter
No of Employees in Sweden	Does not matter
Total hours spent on pro bono/year	As many as the financial plan allows them to
How they choose projects	Combination of long-term relationships and pro-active searching for new projects
Projects during recessions	More projects to keep the employees occupied
Why work with pro bono?	Should be a part of the company strategy and culture
Expectations	Hygiene factor
External Communication	Part of the marketing strategy
In what way does pro bono attract employees	They get more qualified employees that are engaged in social responsibility issues
Students views	Students apply to companies that are engaged in social responsibility issues
No of employees working with pro bono projects	As much as the financial plan allows them to
% of employees working with pro bono	As much as the financial plan allows them to
Recruitment and awareness of CSR and pro bono	Include social responsibility in recruitment process
Pro bono in the Future	Increased importance in society overall and part of companies' strategies

No matter the size of the company, or the number of employees, we think that the amount of hours spent and the number of employees that are working with *pro bono* projects should be as many as the financial plan allows the company to. This is our opinion, which reflects that we believe that *pro bono* work is important, but this opinion obviously differs depending on the individual. In order to work as much with *pro bono* as the financial plan allows the company to, there has to be a financial plan within the company. This does not seem to be that common within the business of management consulting. In order to get structure in the companies' work with *pro bono*, it is important that *pro bono* is a part of the overall strategy within the company. As with all projects that must be approved, the board must believe that *pro bono* is important. That way, *pro bono*, and the costs that come with this kind of work, becomes legitimate within the company.

Since it is difficult to define what a management consultant does, it makes it hard for the clients to know what kind of help they can get. The clients do not always know what they need help with, and in order for the management consultant to help the client, it is important with an open communication. Since it is often different to work with the organizations that are being helped in *pro bono* projects than the usual projects that management consultants are engaged in, it is especially important that there is an open communication between the management consultants and the organizations in *pro bono* projects. This kind of open communication can be achieved through long-term relationships. Some of the companies that were interviewed choose new organizations to help for every new *pro bono* project. New projects can result in the creativity that it often takes to motivate the consultants, and in order for them to develop their knowledge. Since long-term relationships and new projects have different strengths, we think that the *pro bono* projects should be chosen based on a combination of the companies' long-term relationships and the pro-active search for new projects.

If the company would include their work with *pro bono* in the company strategy, it does not have to be a stress factor for the employees, since it would be legitimate to work with these projects. The workload during different periods of the year should be taken into account when deciding when the company should engage in *pro bono* projects. The *pro bono* projects should not be added to the workload for the consultants, since this can make the employees feel that the projects are stressful. The projects will then be seen as something they have to do, instead of something fun and developing, which means that some of the positive effects with *pro bono* projects will be lost. These

projects should be seen as any project to create legitimacy; there should not be a difference between these projects and projects with paying clients. In order to keep the employees occupied and motivated during recessions, the time spent on *pro bono* should probably increase during these periods.

In the management consulting companies of today, not all of them use *pro bono* as a part of their marketing strategy. We believe that *pro bono* should be included in the marketing strategy, since it can create new relationships for them, and since the company can be seen as an attractive employer. We have learned from the theoretical and empirical studies that this can lead to more qualified employees for the companies, and that students often apply to companies that take their social responsibility. The companies in the empirical study believe that it will become more important for companies to differentiate. We believe that if the companies have the right strategy for this type of work, they will get a competitive advantage, and get all the positive effects from the work with *pro bono*.

We would like Company 5 to have *pro bono* work as a natural part of their company culture, in order to increase the awareness and engagement in *pro bono* among the employees. We believe that it would be easier for the company to include *pro bono* in the company culture if social responsibility would be included in the process of recruiting new employees. That way, they do not have to spend energy to try to motivate employees to work with these projects, since the employees already believe that social responsibility is important.

We would like to see that the importance of *pro bono* will increase in the future, and that companies engage more in *pro bono* projects. The more the management consultants engage in *pro bono* projects, the better they will become in helping these organizations. In other words: practice makes perfect.

The future work with *pro bono* will depend on the future definition of *pro bono*. There is no clear definition today, and it will probably change, but we hope that the *pro bono* work will become more structured and that it will be similar to the *pro bono* work described within Company 5. The reasons for why management consulting companies engage in *pro bono* projects differ between the companies, but we believe that the main reason is that *pro bono* has become a trend within the business of management consulting. Since there are expectations that the companies should work with *pro bono*, it has become a hygiene factor. Therefore, we believe that the *pro bono*

trend is here to stay. We believe that, from now on, *pro bono* will always be a part of the management consulting business.

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8 APPENDIX – INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

1. Vad är din position i företaget?
2. När började ni arbeta med *pro bono*? Varför började ni arbeta med *pro bono*?
3. Vilka slags *pro bono*-uppdrag tar ni? Kan ni ge exempel på tre stycken? Hur väljer ni ut dem? Sker arbetet endast i Sverige eller även globalt?
4. Hur mycket tid lägger ni på *pro bono* varje år? Hur många projekt arbetarna ni med per år? Hur mycket pengar läggs på denna typ av arbete? Hur finansieras detta?
5. Vilka är anledningarna till varför ni arbetar med *pro bono* idag?
6. Hur kommuniceras arbetet ut till kunder samt övriga externa intressenter?
7. Vad har ni fått för respons från externa intressenter? Följs effekterna av arbetet upp genom någon slags mätning?
8. Kräver ni något i gengäld för ert *pro bono*-arbete?
9. Vilka arbetar med *pro bono* inom organisationen?
10. Hur tror ni att de anställda inom organisationen uppfattar *pro bono*-arbetet? Har ni gjort några undersökningar på detta? Är det av betydelse för er att era anställda tycker att arbete med CSR är viktigt? Har ni märkt av att arbetssökande söker sig till organisationer som tar samhällsansvar?
11. Hur tror ni att det framtida arbetet med *pro bono* kommer att se ut i samhället i stort samt inom er organisation?