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Managerial Work Revisited: Shadowing in an IT Company

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Abstract

This master's thesis is an ethnographic study, exploring managerial work in an IT company in Finland. This study follows the model set by Mintzberg's (1973) classic investigation of managerial work, and Tengblad's (2006) follow-up study 30 years later. I collected over 30 hours of data by shadowing one IT manager and then compared the results to the earlier studies. By combining the qualitative method of shadowing and the method of quantifying information, the study offers information from an outsider's perspective. Interviews and discussion were also a part of the study, which offer the perspective of the manager.

Based on the observations of the day-to-day activities, modern managerial IT work is surprisingly similar to the descriptions found in previous literature. The work is fragmented and composed of a lot of communication. Yet, some behavioural patterns are different. Compared to the previous studies, the IT manager's work includes more desk work. This is largely due to the use of digital use in communication with people working in different locations. Instant messages and calls allow information to be passed on at a fast pace. Online tools help modern managers visualise information, enabling them to make forecasts and aiding in decision-making. It is also visible that there is a low power distance and characteristics of a feminine culture; managers look for consensus in their decision-making. The manager plans mainly for the short term, as situations change quickly in the project-based IT business. This study provides future directions and discusses its limitations. For example, the organisation was going through structural changes, which may explain the large amount of person-to-person communication.

Keywords

Shadowing, Ethnography, Management, Managerial work, Information Technology, Organisation

Supervisor

Postdoctoral researcher, Arto Lanamäki

Foreword

I greatly appreciate Dr. Arto Lanamäki's enthusiasm and support in supervising this thesis. He has been very active and helpful in giving instructions and discussing ideas with me. I would also like to thank the manager who was willing to take part in this research. Shadowing is quite an intensive and invasive method of observation; I was lucky enough to find someone willing to participate in this research. Our first contact person from the company, the HR manager, deserves thanks as well for finding a willing participant and taking an interest in the study.

Fanny Vainionpää

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Contents

Abstract	2
Foreword	3
Contents	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Background	8
2.1 Ethnography.....	8
2.2 Shadowing	9
2.3 Managerial work	12
2.4 Managerial work in Organisations.....	15
2.5 Managerial work in the IT field	16
3. Methods	19
3.1 Data collection	19
3.2 Analysis	20
4. Findings	22
5. Discussion	32
5.1 Managerial work	32
5.2 Using the shadowing method.....	40
5.3 Personal experiences	43
6. Conclusions	45
6.1 Limitations	46
6.2 Future research.....	46
7. References	48

1. Introduction

Work provides an important source of purpose in human life (Svendsen, 2008). People spend a significant portion of their lives at work, getting paid to do something for someone else. By studying the doing of work, it is possible to show how occupational members perform work tasks (Anteby, Chan, & DiBenigno, 2016), and even reveal how the occupational reality is different from assumptions or expectations (Barley, 2016). New research may help in unveiling deeper information about the nature of work. (Orr, 1996.)

Management – or *managing* or *managerial work* – is an important category of work (Mintzberg, 1973;2009). The business environment is experiencing constant change, requiring managers to take action (Todnem By, 2005). Because people spend so much time at work, it is important to study the day-to-day activities, in order to make up-to-date theories and organisational changes that adapt to the current environment (Orr, 1996).

Watson (2001) states that the word management can mean the function of steering an organisation, as activities carried out to achieve the steering of an organisation, or as a team of people responsible for the steering of the organisation through activities. Mintzberg (2009) describes managers as people who are responsible for identifiable parts of organisations and achieve things through other people. Zaleznik (1997) says that managers are problem solvers, and leadership is a practical effort to direct affairs. Korica, Nicolini, & Johnson (2017) claim that the studies in managerial work need more inductive empirical studies from current environments, as the state of contemporary knowledge is superficial. Tengblad (2017) argues that managerial work is not the precise and thoughtful process of making plans and goals that management programmes describe it as, but rather work conducted at a fast pace and in a chaotic environment.

Hofstede (1986) says the concept of management is very American, as is the empirical research and the basis of the theories. The assumption that the theories apply in other countries should not be accepted without proof. (Hofstede, 1986.) It is important to discuss culture, because ethnography is the study of cultures and societies, and a lot of the findings in this study are based on the interaction of the people within one work community. Culture affects the people who write theories about organisations, their thinking and writing is based on their own experiences (Hofstede, 1997). Because culture affects those who make the theories, it is a viable reason to research the same subjects in different parts of the world. By comparing similar studies, new information can be found and changes acknowledged, which leads to the possibility of updating the theories. When it comes to understanding culture, a direct experience of social systems can never be substituted with objective data (Papageorgiou, 2007).

Organisational theory largely rests on the field work of participant observation in the 1950's and 1960's. If the nature of work and organising is changing, it is important to study the ground level of people's working life, observing the everyday activities in organisations to determine whether current theories apply in the actual context. (Barley, 2016.) Theories regarding organising are largely made with an image of the activities they aim to clarify. Based on existing research, it could be said that grounded studies of work could facilitate the innovation of new conceptual ideas, revive old concepts of organisation, and help resolve current theoretical puzzles. The data on what people do is largely outdated, gathered and developed into concepts in an industrial era, and since then the numbers of employment in services has increased above the numbers of employment in manufacturing. When a manager establishes new organisational structures, the work

pattern is changed, and when the nature of work is changing because of technological advances and new markets, the organisational structures must change or become outdated. (Barley & Kunda, 2001.)

This thesis studies the modern managerial work in the context of an international IT company, in Finland. The manager taking part in this study is an upper middle manager, responsible for overseeing the projects in one larger business area within the organisation. The shadowing method enables the researcher to see the daily activities of a manager from an outsider perspective, and the gathered data is compared to existing literature to examine how the reality of one manager fits the existing theories or general assumptions regarding the job. The motivation of this study is to find new information about managerial work in a different context; in the IT (Information Technology) field and in Finland. The comparison to the previous studies can give contextual information specific to the time and place, revealing what the management job is in practice, and offer clues about the impact of technological developments, globalisation, and different cultures. A lot of management literature talks about businesses in general, and a lot of literature in the IT field concentrates on how to be an innovative leader in the constantly changing environment, leaving out the practical aspect of the work; the everyday tasks and requirements. The role of middle managers seems to vary largely in different organisations, industries, and the different individuals undertaking the role. The different levels of managerial roles specifically in IT companies has room for more research, as there seems to be a gap in the literature.

In 1973 Henry Mintzberg published *The Nature of Managerial Work*, which is an international empirical study of five top managers, and in 2006 Stefan Tengblad conducted a comparative study in Sweden to explore the changeability of managerial work. This thesis is compared to the two previous studies, and then discussed relative to other managerial literature. A significant difference between the studies is that the previous studies were observing several managers, which were all CEOs. This gives the opportunity of making a comparison between the upper middle manager and the executive level job. The empirical phase is conducted during over 30 hours of work, using the Shadowing method. By making a comparison to the previous studies, the use of quantitative methods can be combined with the qualitative method of shadowing. This combination of different methods can give more insight into the research subject as the two compensate and support each other.

Because this research explores managerial work, the first question is: " *What is management?*". In 1973 Geertz stated that to understand what science is, you must look at what its practitioners do. Researching what managerial work is through looking at what a manager does, the idea is to find out the practical aspects of the job. Because this research focuses on what a manager does, the actual research questions are more focused. The following questions help to define the research further:

1. Is current managerial work in IT different from Mintzberg's (1973) and Tengblad's (2006) studies?
2. What are the differences in managerial work practice?

By answering these questions with a short-term ethnographic study and then combining the qualitative and quantitative methods, the findings can give a well-rounded image of the modern managerial job. The first research question is answered through the comparison to the studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973), where the differences and similarities can be noted. The second research goes on to inquire what the

changes are, and the variables behind the changes are discussed. The focus is on practise because that is what the shadowing method is used for. The quantified information can show that there is a difference, and the qualitative information from shadowing and interviews can help deduce possible reasons behind them. The research is based on one manager in one company, and the value it brings is that it offers detailed, contextual information about the tasks and requirements of the job itself. A logical incentive for this research is the fast pace of change in the modern business environment. A lot of organisational and work related research on organisational level is outdated, and new information is needed to update organisational theories. This master's thesis is likely the first to use the shadowing method in the degree program of information processing science department in the University of Oulu, which means that the research can give insight into using the shadowing method in a thesis.

In the first chapter the general topic and motivation of the research is presented. Next the background of the study is explored, including the Shadowing method and managerial work within the IT field. In the third chapter the use of methods is described, divided into the data gathering and data analysis chapters. The following chapter presents the findings in comparison to the studies of Mintzberg (1973) and Tengblad (2006). In chapter five the results are analysed in context of the background information, and the last chapter discusses the implications of this study, the limitations, and the possible future research.

2. Background

Orr (1996) says that the word “work” is often associated with being employed, not the doing of the work. Through examining the practice of work, the question of whether the explicit representations of jobs coincide with what is really done to fulfil the goals of the employment. (Orr, 1996.) The fieldwork conducted in a modern society is often the study of a field of practice, an incursion into the life and work of people (Czarniawska, 2007). Henriksen, Nørreklit, Jørgensen, Christensen & O'Donnell (2004) state that possibility of creating interesting research is higher when data collection and documentation is based on events in real life organisations. The researcher can gain great advantages from using a large arsenal of research methods in a cautious way, making accurate notes and focusing on everyday life. (Henriksen et al., 2004.) Barley (2004) suggests that qualitative methods are most suitable for finding out “what happens” because of the involvement in behaviour, events, and the interpretations, which enables the discovery and finding patterns. The author reports that quantitative methods are most advantageous in showing that “something happened”, the research must begin with a pattern, a model, or a framework because, in order to make counting effective, the researcher must know what to count. The differences between these methods make the combined use in studies interesting, resulting in versatile analysis. (Barley, 2004.)

Korica, Nicolini & Johnson (2017) write that Mintzberg used structured observation for recording the work of five CEOs to answer the question of what managers actually do, uniting his empirical work with management theory. The authors say Mintzberg created 10 managerial roles and 13 theoretical propositions, as well as conclusions about what management is a large amount of work done at a fast pace. They say he describes work itself as fragmented, varied, and brief, consisting of a lot of interaction (with the emphasis on verbal communication) and time spent in meetings. *The Nature of Managerial Work* has been extensively referenced, in comparison with other managerial work publications. (Korica et al., 2017.) Mintzberg recognises the role that values have in the decision making, specifically in choosing coordinating mechanisms. However, he does not discuss the factor of national cultures in his writing. (Hofstede, 1997.)

Tengblad's study (2006) aims to answer the question of whether or not executive level managerial work is subject to change by creating a comparative study to Mintzberg's study in 1973. The author states that a relatively different behavioural patterns emerged in his study, including a larger workload, a pattern of contact within groups increasingly oriented towards subordinates, and the amount of time spent on conveying information was larger than the time used on administrative work. The fragmentation of time during the workday was found to be less prevalent than in Mintzberg's study. Similarities between the two studies were found in how the managers' new work practices were combined with the old, which Tengblad (2006) claims to signify that the managerial work is not becoming radically different.

2.1 Ethnography

Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) define ethnography as an approach to social research, which originates in western anthropology. At first ethnographies were descriptions of a culture foreign to the west, produced by travellers and missionaries and later becoming a model of western sociology. The authors say that ethnography also became the study of small communities in the western countries, later including studying of social life, case studies, psychology, and even human geography. Due to this complicated history,

ethnography is not clearly defined or standardised. However, the activities of ethnographers can be described. The researchers collect data by participating in people's daily lives, listening, watching, and asking questions. The research may include collecting interviews, documents and artefacts. (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007.) Ethnography is a report of a culture based on field work, the aim is not to describe the field work but to represent the culture in a narrative (Van Maanen, 2011). Clifford & Marcus (1986) state that ethnographies are tied to the social context, the rhetorics and expressive conventions, the institute of tradition, the genre of writing, politics, and history. As such, ethnographies are partial, and if the writing is self-conscious, the partiality can be a source of representational tact. (Clifford & Marcus, 1986.) Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) point out that the approach of ethnographers tends to be open-ended, beginning with an interest in a specific area of social life, resulting in an exploratory orientation. Due to this orientation, it may not always be clear where the observation should begin or what to concentrate on in a setting, but the initial research questions are usually refined as the research progresses. (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007.) Harrington (2003) discusses the nature of interaction in ethnographic research as something that cannot be predicted or controlled, and says that a theoretically self-aware research in ethnography is an "informed improvisation".

Pink & Morgan (2013) write that there tends to be the assumption that ethnography is a long-term process where the researcher spends at least a year in fieldwork. However, the authors mention the option of intensive excursions of observation into people's lives, known as Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures, which are characteristically completed in a relatively short time frame (weeks or months). The key difference with the short-term and long-term method is that the first is more deliberate, theoretically engaged, and suitable for contemporary contexts, but not sustainable over long time periods as the method is quite intrusive and intensive. One clear advantage of doing a short-term ethnographic study is the attention to detail and how the dialogue can be more intense because of the sharper focus. (Pink & Morgan, 2013.)

2.2 Shadowing

Shadowing is a non-participant form of direct observation, where the observer does not take part in activities. The method can be defined as the act of following a selected person or people for some amount of time during their everyday occupations, which means that the researcher moves with the object of observation (Czarniawska, 2014a). Shadowing produces information that is not relying on the perception of the individual being shadowed, capturing details that may seem irrelevant, ordinary, or challenging to articulate (McDonald, 2005). Shadowing is a suitable technique for studying people who move often and fast between different places when working, whereas traditional ethnography would assume that people stay in one place (Czarniawska, 2014b). According to Barley (2004), the qualitative methods enable the identification of regularities in interpretations, actions, interactions, and behaviour such as talking or writing, that may indicate the regularities. The quantitative data can take the research further by showing that the regularities exist, and possible changes happening within the patterns pointed out by the qualitative methods. Another use of quantitative methods is in showing the existence of trends, but also providing insight for ruling out alternative explanations. (Barley, 2004.) When it comes to advantages and disadvantages of shadowing studies, Czarniawska admits that these studies do not tend to benefit the object of the study, but the results may often help in practice (Czarniawska, 2014a).

Czarniawska (2014a) describes how the methodology of shadowing formed. She says that the diary method was not producing information specific enough for management research, the method only revealed where the subjects spent their time, with whom, and how they interact. There was no information on what they were doing or how. Henry Mintzberg created a solution: structured observation, which combined flexible open-ended observation and disciplined seeking of structured data. The method was constructed so that the researcher observes as the subject works, and all events are categorised by the researcher. The categories in shadowing are developed while observing, which is the key difference compared to the diary method. (Czarniawska, 2014a.) McDonald (2005) gathered all studies using the shadowing method, and by reviewing them, developed classifications of the different modes of shadowing. The author argues that there had not been any literature debating the method and studies using it did not discuss shadowing as a research method, which meant that there were a wide variety of techniques and approaches. He ended up defining shadowing as a technique where the researcher follows a member of an organisation closely for some time. The time periods are always complete work days, but they can be non-consecutive. The length of the study could be from one day to a whole month. The focus can be set on one role in several companies or several roles in one company. While shadowing, the researcher can ask questions for clarification, to reveal a purpose or the current operational priorities from the person being shadowed. (McDonald, 2005.) Czarniawska (2008) cites Brose's conclusion of the need to study new practices and structures that aim to enable living in different temporalities with no reliance on hierarchy or working in a particular order, and writes that current anthropology is attempting to tackle this challenge despite the strong traditions of the methodology.

Czarniawska (2014a) describes the main advantage of the shadowing method as the mobility of the observer and the possibility to ask questions as actions take place. Complexities arise with the pair dynamics, of the observer and the object of shadowing. The pair observes each other, establish their differences and similarities, and then there is the focus produced by the movements of the person being shadowed. Any discomfort arising from the method being used has been accepted by the research community. One important way to ease the shadowing process is to blend in for example through clothing, as it is necessary to keep the objects of the shadowing concentrated on their usual tasks and avoid drawing attention to the researcher. (Czarniawska, 2014a.) Researchers are in a better position to gather data once they have spent some time in the field, by building relationships with members of the community, learning the practices and distinguishing the hierarchical positions (Papageorgiou, 2007).

One of the advantages of shadowing can be that the observer can maintain an outsider's perspective, which provides the chance to gain understanding through the recognition of differences, instead of identifying with the subject (Czarniawska, 2014a). However, Orr (1996) points out that having experience in the field of the worker being shadowed can be beneficial for understanding what is happening. This can enable the observer to be less obtrusive as there is a lesser need for questions, but also causing the researcher to omit details thought of as obvious at the time but valuable when analysing the information. (Orr, 1996.) Mintzberg discussed the Hawthorne effect in his works about observation research, the issue of the researcher's presence influencing the subject of observation. Regarding this, Czarniawska states that in her experience, the subjects tend to be curious of the observer's presence at first but then continue with their regular tasks. (Czarniawska, 2014a.) To really see the people behaving naturally, the shadowing period should be long enough to let the object of observation relax in the situation so that they do not feel like they need to hold up a façade of a perfect employee. In fact, Leonardi states that most

ethnographers agree that in about 30 minutes people return to their normal working actions. (Leonardi, 2015.)

Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (2011) describe the making of field notes as a flexible and variable process. In addition to recording observations, the authors point out that interpretations and writing choices the researcher makes in the process result in a representation of the world. The key element of ethnography is the researchers representing what they see in written form, and yet the practical aspects of how to write the field notes are largely neglected in literature. Even the term of “field notes” can be understood in several different ways, as the record of what is learned and observed in activities of others and the researcher themselves, or only the records of what others did. The methods of writing fieldnotes can also be diverse; a running commentary on what is happening, or information organised in separate sets from sequential fieldnotes. Some field researchers may write a more detailed description of events as soon as possible after events occur, while others may create less detailed records which can be finished at the end of the day, and some may choose to leave most of the writing work until the end of the research period is complete. (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011.) Czarniawska mentions the practical issue of taking notes while being mobile and writes that possible solutions would be to write whenever it is possible to sit down, dictate reflections when alone, and writing as much as possible at the end of the day when there is nothing more to do (Czarniawska, 2014a). McDonald (2005) writes that when conducting the shadowing fieldwork, the researcher needs to be making comments continuously, marking the participants, times, and the contents of conversations, a running commentary, and answers to their questions. Specific things for the researcher to observe are body language and the mood of the person they follow. The aim is to have a comprehensive and detailed set of data, a first-hand, multidimensional picture of the key role, finding out the approach, tasks, and even philosophy of the person who is studied. The data aims to answer the questions “what” and “how”. (McDonald, 2005.)

In fieldwork, access refers to the permission to get into the organisation to make the research and build relationships which will enable access to more people and information inside the organisation (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). Feldman, Bell & Berger (2003) say that gaining access is a critical part of doing ethnographic research, the process of getting the access can affect how much and what information will be made available. Theoretically, the gaining of access can be seen as a process of relationship building where the researcher must first identify the people who can help to gain access in the first place, and then the relationship can be developed and enriched over time. (Feldman et al., 2003.) The reason why gaining access can be problematic is that the research often involves working in complex social situations (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). According to Harrington (2003), an ethnographic researcher must establish roles and relationships that are acceptable to the participants of the study, in order to gain the access. Theories of social identity and self-presentation would be appropriate in considering the social variables in the research, as they address the issues in building relationships. Instead of seeing the access to research as cooperation or exploitation, it ought to be seen as a negotiation. (Harrington, 2003.) Leonardi (2015) suggests that to gain access, the researcher should approach the management of a company and the individuals who do the work, to reach an agreement for access. Explaining the process of shadowing could also make the task less unattractive to the person being shadowed; making people feel comfortable around the researcher and not asking too many questions can ease the process. (Leonardi, 2015.) Michailova, Piekkari, Plakoyiannaki, Ritvala, Mihailova, & Salmi (2014) report that fieldworkers have a tendency to believe that getting in is harder than getting out, but exiting the fieldwork can be seen as a craft itself. Researchers can reflect on their exits and analyse to improve future work, but this may be challenging as

the process contains a lot of tacit knowledge. There are various aspects to consider, for instance: the ethical, mental, and emotional, and theoretically the dynamic communication, disengagement, and aftermath are important. (Michailova, et al., 2014.)

Morse (1994) says that in qualitative research, ethical issues can be obscure and subtle, these issues are linked to the characteristics of the methodology, the close personal involvement and observation. A differentiating factor in participant observation is that the field research is based on human interaction where the researcher is the measuring instrument. (Morse, 1994.) Johnson (2014) mentions that regarding the ethical aspects, it is important to consider how the researcher can ensure informed consent from the person being shadowed. If that person is in a powerful position, there is also the subordinates to consider; is the subordinate truly voluntarily consenting to be a part of the research? Johnson goes on to say that during the shadowing period, there may be unofficial conversation or other events in which the individual wants privacy, which can be supplemented with other methods such as diaries and interviews. Before beginning the shadowing task, it may be helpful to define the task of the researcher to gain mutual understanding and trust, but also to help be unobtrusive. As the information is very detailed, it should be considered how anonymity can be kept if the sample size is small. Finally, it is important to consider how the research can affect the participants professionally as well as personally. (Johnson, 2014.) Ethnographic writing is never neutral, it represents cultures or selected aspects of them, and the intellectual and moral consideration is the responsibility of the writer (Van Maanen, 2011).

Leonardi (2015) suggests that when studying a digitised company, the integration of field notes, recorded dialogue, and digital artefacts can give the researcher a more specific view for analysis. The author says that digital artefacts would have to be given by the person being shadowed, and for them to give these items, the researcher should have the support of management and the artefacts can be protected with a confidentiality agreement, to ensure the employee would not be in trouble for handing out confidential company information. When presenting the data and analysis of the research, there can be issues with how to keep the company anonymous if they wish to remain that way (Leonardi, 2015). According to Murthy (2008), field research is traditionally defined and limited to physical configurations. However, for much of the world, everyday life is becoming more and more oriented around technology. Social interaction is taking place online, and the digital forms of media can be a valuable addition for the researcher. It is not only the possibility to collect data online, but the possibility that the researcher can be more accountable as respondents have an opportunity of engaging on public forums. (Murthy, 2008.) Czarniawska (2008) discusses the diary technique, which can be a narrative report of events or a log of activities, and mentions the use of web logs (blogs) as an option for writing.

2.3 Managerial work

According to Orr (1996), work takes up a large portion of people's lives in modern industrial countries, consuming a significant amount of time when people do something for someone else, to earn money. Literature discussing work describes it as a source of identity or as a relationship, instead of seeing work as a practice where the focus is on what is actually done. Studying the work as practice can reveal the work to be complicated and differing from assumptions, revealing deeper information about the relations in employment as well as the role of employment in people's identities. (Orr, 1996.) For modern people work remains an important factor of our identity and a source of meaning, and the work itself will continue to transform into something different (Svendsen, 2008).

Anteby et al. (2016) say that when occupations are defined by what is done, the focus is on doing, exploring how members of an occupation perform their activities and understanding how the activities are engaged. Activities may have repercussions for the individual, the occupation, and the whole organisation. They mention that possible changes can appear in shifts of jurisdiction, status, power, and resource allocation. Members of an occupation are not only defined by who they are and what they do but also the relations they build for collaboration. The relations of an occupation show when and how the group collaborates with others to perform work or expand their social influence. (Anteby et al., 2016.)

Watson (2001) says that the word management can be used with different meanings: as a function of steering an organisation, as activities carried out to achieve the steering of an organisation, or as a team of people responsible for the steering of the organisation through activities. The process of entering managerial work is quite complicated because people tend to have an unclear conception of what the profession of managerial work is. This may be the result of people ending up in managerial work through some other profession or work, essentially gaining the stage in hierarchy of the organisation rather than an identifiable occupation. A clear association with becoming a manager is the experience of finding yourself responsible for something, answerable to people above you in hierarchy. (Watson, 2001.) Based on Mintzberg's (2009) writing, managing could also be defined as the combination of art, craft, and science; art is about ideas, craft is about connections, and science is used to find order through systematic knowledge analysis. Zaleznik (1997) states that the role of a manager is to be a problem solver and leadership is a practical effort to direct affairs. To achieve their goals, managers need people to operate efficiently at several different levels within the organisation. Managers may see work as the process of enabling, which involves combining people and ideas to build strategies and make decisions. (Zaleznik, 1977.)

Andersson (2010) found that managers experience a struggle between the organisational expectations as well as their own expectations of how to be a manager. There are various managerial identity templates, and while management training is often based on different categories of management, the practice is in fact fluid. The nature of management is contextual, and the work requires personal development. (Andersson, 2010.) Kaye (1995) says that traditionally it is the manager's job to plan, organise, make decisions, make budgets, and consider staffing, however, some studies see the functions of communication, human resource management, setting agendas, and building networks as most important. It is possible that in these cases the variations between managerial roles is overlooked; for example, a CEO and a plant foreman can both be considered managers. It is also possible that two different types of managers may fulfil the same type of roles while their functions and approaches may be completely different. In the end, the decision making in management is about choosing between different alternatives. The nature of the managerial job determines the type of information that is used, how and where it is found, and finally what needs to be done with the information. (Kaye, 1995.) For managerial work, performance information related to financial and accounting is important, but non-financial information, such as employee motivation is also essential. While the importance of information is not directly dependent on contextual variables such as the size of the organisational, the industry, strategy, competition, or environmental uncertainty, they strongly affect managerial work. (Laitinen, 2009). Hallier (2004) reports that middle managers tend to have greater influence than their subordinates on the perceptions of the senior management, enabling the distortion of formal goals of the organisation. In order to secure personal interests such as promotion and bonuses, greater priority may be given to short-term resourcing and targets of financial performance. (Hallier, 2004.) In 1990 Dopson & Stewart found that in a time of

fast-paced changes, a slimmer middle management can become increasingly important. However, the changes are complex, as are the situations in work, the backgrounds, and attitudes of middle managers. This complexity makes it difficult to make any predictions on what will happen regarding the general manager roles in organisations. (Dopson & Stewart, 1990.)

Tengblad (2017) made ten theses of managerial work based on research in several different countries, at different times, different sectors, and on different levels of hierarchy. He writes that managerial work is influenced by the expectations and pressure of performance, which can be overwhelming. The work takes place in social systems, which are environments characteristically complex and ambiguous. The work entails uncertainty and unexpected events, which disrupt plans and requires adaptation. Managerial work also tends to require long working hours and the job is done at a hectic pace. The work is fragmented, due to interruptions and varieties of tasks, which can be the cause of frustration. Generally, the work is done by making and then following plans, adapting to surprises as they appear. Managerial work is a collective effort, which means that internal interaction is an important part of the work. The job can be emotionally intense and sometime choices are based on irrational emotions. A manager must apply symbolic actions, such as the display of presence in the workplace, physical appearance, compliance with rules and requests. Lastly, managerial work involves taking part in informal activities, which can result in a stronger position, advancing career, and rewards in bonuses. (Tengblad, 2017.)

The master's degree in business administration (MBA) is the fastest growing educational format globally, and European top managers are required a higher education, specifically graduates from business schools are valued in recruitment (Byrkjeflot, 2001b). The existing knowledge about managing is mostly tacit, which is difficult to access, and the reason why the practice must be learned within the context. A manager is someone responsible for an identifiable part of an organisation, who gets things done through other people. A manager must know a lot about their field to make decisions based on the knowledge. In large organisations, the manager needs to bring out the best in the people they work with. Considering the practice, finding out what a manager does is not a problem, it is the interpretation of what is done. (Mintzberg, 2009.) Tengblad (2017) states that the work of managers varies largely, and it is done at a fast pace in chaotic environments. Tengblad claims that the picture most management books paint of the work is that of a thoroughly thought out and precise goal setting and planning, while the reality rarely meets the description. He says that the activities are rushed and fragmented, and largely reactive. This stressful working environment with limited amount of time affects how the work is done, and the plans may have to be revised or rejected. (Tengblad, 2017.) According to Czarniawska, modern management is fragmented and happens in multiple contexts, through various movements in complex patterns. The organising may happen in many places at the same time and requires moving around, but not all interactions require physical presence. (Czarniawska, 2008.)

Byrkjeflot (2001a) writes that in 1980's the Scandinavian management concept was popular, where the idea of a charismatic and communicative leadership was dominant. This constitutional management style is too far occupied with fair distribution, and cannot work in the modern, global business environment as change is constant and active leadership is required. (Byrkjeflot, 2001a.) Nordic societies are not built on hierarchy and rules as much as the USA, and there tends to be an acceptance of organisational culture (Hofstede, 1997). Byrkjeflot (2001a) reports that in Nordic countries, the management emphasizes equality and democracy. The management has been influenced by the American model of business administration in organisational settings, but originates in a

setting that is largely based on the German model. (Byrkjeflot, 2001a.) Hofstede (1997) says that feminine working cultures prefer to solve conflicts by negotiation and compromise. In masculine societies, people have been raised to value assertiveness, ambition, and competition, in working life this can be seen in the emphasis of results and rewards based on performance. In management, the masculine manager is an assertive and decisive person who makes decisions by themselves. A manager in a feminine society is more intuitive than decisive, and tends to look for consensus. The different cultural profiles tend to thrive in different industries. (Hofstede, 1997.) Individualism in culture brought the idea of the responsibility to become yourself, and work can often become a tool in the process of shaping the identity (Svendsen, 2008). Hofstede (1997) explains that the employees in individualistic cultures are expected to act based on their own interests, and the work needs to be organised in such a way that the employees' and employers' interests coincide. Whereas a collectivistic culture expects an employee to act based on the group's interests, and this may result in acting against the individual's interests. Management in an individualistic society is managing the individual workers, incentives and bonuses given are based on individual performance. Managing collectivistic cultures is managing groups of people, and incentives and bonuses are given to the group instead of selected individuals. The techniques and theories developed for management have largely been made in individualistic countries. (Hofstede, 1997).

According to Mintzberg (2009), management was introduced in 1954 by Peter Drucker, and since then Leadership has become the dominant view. While there are various stories about leaders, there is a gap of knowledge in what it means to be a regular manager. Mintzberg suggests that we should be focusing on are communities of actors, where leadership and management exist together as an intrinsic part of the whole. (Mintzberg, 2009.) In contrast, Zaleznik stated (1977) that in business the solution to the issue of leadership is management, a power ethic where collective leadership is preferred instead of the individual leader. Bush & Coleman (2000) report that leadership and management are sometimes spoken of as interchangeable concepts, which may be justifiable due to the activities being carried out by the same people. Since 1990's the two have been separated, leadership is explained as the vision and values, and management as the processes and structures. (Bush & Coleman, 2000.) Hickman (1998) also reports the use of management and leadership as synonyms in various studies. One way to differentiate is defining leadership as the use of influence, and management as the use of authority. Hickman writes that in 1977 Zaleznik wrote that the difference is in the personas and world views of leaders and managers. In the 1980's there was a trend in literature, that the management processes resulting in excellence can be attributed to leadership, and any outcome less than excellent. Some still see leadership as a separate concept from management, Bennis wrote in 1977 that there are institutes that are well managed but poorly led. (Hickman, 1998).

2.4 Managerial work in Organisations

A study found that organisational culture and leadership styles are important precursor factors in creating job satisfaction and commitment, and national culture has been found to significantly impact variables in demographic, leadership, and organisational culture (Lok & Crawford, 2004). According to Hofstede (1997), organisations can be defined as social systems, that differ from nations in that the member has some level of choice whether they want to be a part of it, and the members are only a part of the social system when they are at work. He says that the social system at a work culture of large power distance is based on hierarchy; the idea that superiors and subordinates are unequal and the subordinates are told what to do. The contacts are expected to be initiated by the

superior. In a small power distance environment, the superiors and subordinates are considered as equal, and the hierarchical system is only inequality of roles that have been established for practical reasons. With lower power distance also come a decentralised hierarchy with limited number of supervisors. (Hofstede, 1997.) Todnem By (2005) states that organisations are always changing, and the pace of change is faster than ever in the current business environment, and successful change management is important due to the nature of the environment. There is a tendency to handle organisational change reactively, discontinuously, possibly because of trouble finding an appropriate framework for successful implementation of organisational change. (Todnem By, 2005.) Hofstede (1997) says that structural change can refer to closing a department and opening another, merging and dividing activities, or moving people or groups of people to a different location. Individuals in general adapt, but groups of people bring their own culture along to the new environment. Changing processes can mean creating new procedures, and personnel changes can be new policies of hiring and promoting. (Hofstede, 1997.) Research suggests that broad involvement of the organisations members affected by the changes positively affects the success of the outcome (Lines, 2004). Waddel & Sohal (1998) suggest that resistance to change is a complex phenomenon, where the opposition may not be against the change, but the potential outcomes and uncertainty. This the managers can solve by searching for an alternative way of introducing the change, communicating and consulting the employees, giving the opportunity of providing feedback and using the resistance to the advantage of the organisation.

Arthur & Rousseau (1996) describe the division of organisations into units that can operate independently, with the corporate managements approval, was invented in General Motors in the 1920's. This way of organising lead to the roles of general managers which require competence in technical fields, governance, and commercial aspects. The management of the organisation maintains the overall career development within organisations. Careers are essentially sequences of work over a period of time, which depict the person. It is also the careers that invoke relationships within organisations. Careers are important because of the economy, where work activities are interdependent. The evolving technology has created an economy where there is opportunity, insecurity, flexibility, and uncertainty all at the same time. This causes confusion within the working community and those who make the policies. The organisational career was most dominant in the 1980's, but it is now outdated. In fact, the word organisation used to mean a legal entity that defines authority relations and property rights, while the new understanding is that an organisation is the organising through networks and value chains. (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996.)

2.5 Managerial work in the IT field

In 1981 Ives & Olson wrote that the role of an information systems manager had already evolved during the past 20 years, from managing a noncrucial technical service function of a company into the position of a general manager in charge of a department which affects the whole organisation. Based on an observational study, the authors concluded that the job at that time was closer to that of a manager than a technician; the job itself requires interpersonal skills to guide and motivate subordinates, while the technological expertise is provided by the specialists. The study also found that a vast amount of time was spent on organising and planning the general strategy of the information systems and specifically concentrating on human resources, rather than the day-to-day operations. (Ives & Olson, 1981.) An article reported of KLM's progress of moving from seeing IT as an expense to seeing IT as something that can bring business value. The company made changes in structures, processes, and relational mechanisms, which enabled them to lower

the costs of overall operations and expanded the resources put into IT innovation. The authors suggest that the significance of IT investment concerns all businesses today, and organisations should aim to engage their business unit managers in decision making regarding IT investments. (De Haes, Gemke, Thorp & Van Grembergen, 2011.)

Hansen, Kraemmergaard & Mathiassen (2011) proclaim that organisational leaders need to adapt to digital transformation and existing approaches in the modern and dynamic environments. It is possible that new leadership roles and governance emerge from engaging the business leaders and IS leaders in a participatory process. These changes can help facilitate the transformation that is happening because of digital development. (Hansen et al., 2011.) A study by Kappelman, McLean, Johnson & Gerhart (2014) examines IT trends in 2014, the authors conducted a survey of people in the highest IT position (e.g. Chief Information Officer) regarding the key issues in IT. The study found that enterprises continue to develop in further digitization and become tightly connected, changing their IT priorities and spending. While the leaders must still increase the efficiency and productivity in IT and the organisation in general, there has been an increase in the demand for creating more business value by improving the speed, agility, innovation, and security of the company. This has led to more appointments from outside organisations as well as people with no background in the IT field. These changes have also caused changes in what, how and with whom IT leaders spend their time. (Kappelman et al., 2014.)

Ross & Feeny (1999) state that information technology has become a topic of interest in most companies, and executive teams may have experienced discomfort in discussing IT issues. They say that business has become dependent on IT in terms of strategy as well as operations, which has also led to an acceptance of IT leadership within the executive team. This has led to the role of the Chief Information Officer (CIO). The role of CIOs has become a critical part of executive management, and they take part in shaping the organisational strategies. (Ross & Feeny, 1999.) Enns, Huff, & Higgins (2000) cite Maruca in saying that an increasing number of companies have included CIOs in their top management teams. They also report that CIOs must be able to influence their peers in order to develop and make use of strategic IT initiatives, and found that the use of rational persuasion and personal appeal resulted in commitment from peers, while pressure and exchange were found to be worse methods. (Enns, Huff, & Higgins, 2000.) Gottschalk (1999) also reports about CIOs behaviour, and found that personal appeal led to a more positive outcome than the use of pressure, which mainly led to resistance. An article by Carter, Grover, & Thatcher (2011) says that CIOs must have a position of power as business strategists, and their technical credibility is gained by performing tasks of the internal IT management role, which includes activities such as managing resources, evaluating subordinates, and overseeing IT projects. They also say that CIOs need to be strongly oriented towards information activities and wield influence in the company. The research provides information about the various roles of a CIO, the article concludes in the statement that successful CIOs gain an understanding of their organisations, which enables them to use the different roles with the current needs in IT leadership. They say the knowledge of when and how to take on which role is tacit. (Carter, Grover, & Thatcher, 2011.)

According to Schwalbe (2015), a project could be defined as a temporary task to create a product, service, or a result. Organisations are greatly affected by their ability to find good project managers and their ability to gain advantages from information technology. Modern organisations have largely acknowledged that to be successful, they must use modern project management techniques, particularly in IT projects. (Schwalbe, 2015.) According to Kerzner (2013), project management has become a business process, rather

than just the act of managing the process of a project, and companies are seeing project management as a mandatory part of business. He says that if the role of a project manager and a functional manager are not the same, it is the functional manager who is responsible for how the job is done, who does it, and is in the end responsible for the deliverable. The role of an executive manager would require taking part in project planning and setting objectives, resolving conflicts, setting priorities, and sponsoring the project. (Kerzner, 2013.) Munns & Bjeirmi (1996) suggest that different management techniques are needed when new projects are established. The authors cite Avot's suggestion of handling complex activities through the practise of functional divisions in formal hierarchical organisations. Projects tend to require input of several groups', including the client, the project team, the parent organisation, the producer, and the end user. The role of the parent organisation is to provide resources for the project, and project management emphasises short term targets and specific goals, while the project may have wider goals. (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996.)

3. Methods

I applied the shadowing method to observe a manager of an IT company for five non-consecutive working days. I chose this method to apply it in the context of managerial work in an IT company. The shadowing method is rare in this field or context, which makes it appealing. After deciding on the method, I conducted a literature review to familiarise with the subject. The next step was to find a suitable company and manager to take part in the research. This was a time-consuming task, but luckily the company's human resources manager helped to locate a manager willing to take part in this research.

3.1 Data collection

The company employing the manager wished to stay anonymous. The general characteristics of the organisation are that it operates in eight countries, the total revenue of 2016 was 43,5 million euros (Finland's revenue was approximately half of this sum). The organisation employs over 500 professionals from various fields and has projects in more than 20 countries. The company offers to save money and increase production efficiency of their customers through IT solutions, by simplifying and optimising processes for governments, the business sector, and healthcare. The manager shadowed is responsible for the Enterprise business area's deliveries in Finland, managing the resources and project- and service deliveries. Within the company's managerial hierarchy, the observed person is an upper middle manager, directly in charge of 17 employees, and a total of 55 subordinates. The role of the manager was changing as was the organisation, which meant that he was given new responsibilities, and the roles in the company were not yet completely defined.

The data of the shadowing period was gathered in February and March of 2017 during a three-week period. When the manager agreed to take part in this research, the first day was set. At the end of the day, the manager and I agreed on the next day that would be suitable for observation. Having this flexible schedule meant that the data gathering took more time but the aim was to give the manager the option to choose the days which seemed most suitable to him, to avoid being obtrusive. The three first days were observed consecutively, the following week one more day was completed, and during the third week, the last day was observed. The parties agreed that after five working days would be completed, there would be a review whether there is enough data.

Considering the scope of the study, the decision was made that notes written on paper would be sufficient, having video- or audio recordings, or asking for documents handled during the work day were not seen as relevant to this research. In this research, the field notes were planned to be taken in the moment as a type of running documentary, recording at the very least the people involved, the tools used, the location, and the duration of activities. I also decided to include any of my personal thoughts or comments in the notes, along with the observations of what the manager was doing. These thoughts could be useful in the later phase of interpreting and analysing the gathered information, helping to remember the moment and the thoughts occurring at the time.

Before beginning the shadowing task, an unstructured interview was held to gain background information of the manager, his opinions of the job, what type of expertise or training he sees as relevant for the job, and what type of tasks the participant would normally expect during a regular workweek. These answers could be used to examine whether the data supports the perceptions of the participant and whether the work days

observed appear ordinary, but also to break the ice and get comfortable. After the interview, there was a discussion about the aims of the study, what type of information will be recorded, and what type of information the participant would like to keep private. An agreement was made and signed, to confirm how the information will be used. These tasks preceding the shadowing period were important in creating trust, understanding, and making the participant comfortable with being observed.

We agreed that the observation days should take place when the manager would work in Oulu, as it would not be possible to follow him on business trips. Before the shadowing period, the manager had one business trip, meeting managers from the company's branches in other countries. We discussed this business trip in an interview. The manager shortly described his tasks while travelling. While this information was not observed, it gives a more holistic view of the job. There were also some parts of the observed working days where the manager would work while I was absent due to different reasons, those gaps in notes were covered with short and informal interviews about what had taken place. Because this research was done in one location, the results end up describing what the managerial work is at the office, not the whole picture of managerial work.

While observing the manager, a lot of conversations took place about what is happening and why, including personal opinions about various subjects. This information was also noted in the observations, and I used them to make deductions and statements about what the managerial work is. I would say that having these conversations fall under the categories of asking questions about what is happening, rather than taking part in the work, which means that the research method remains as shadowing and not participant observation. It would have been impossible for me to take part in the actual work if I did not start writing the managers emails for him or taking his calls. The discussions were important for understanding the organisational culture and the discussions taking place.

3.2 Analysis

After the data was gathered, the decision was made to compare the data from this study to the existing research of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973). While the amount of information was vast, a focus had to be found. The data cannot give statistical or generalizable information, but by comparing to the existing research, differences between the studies could be found and discussed, giving a meaningful context for comparison.

The observation notes gathered during the shadowing period were copied to electronic form and the actions and tasks were divided so that they could be quantified and compared to the tables of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973). The main categories are phone calls, meetings, tours (forming all verbal interaction), emails, other desk work, and travel. In some cases, it was challenging to place an action in one category, the purpose of verbal contacts being the hardest.

Barley (2016) writes that he has sorted and counted behaviour by categorising it for example by the settings or actors involved. By doing this, he used numbers descriptively to support his interpretations. Barley cites Hage and Harary (1983), stating that anthropologists have used numbers for years to support their claims. (Barley, 2016). By combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, it is possible for a researcher to compensate the quantitative data that is not possible to generalise with the qualitative data. There is also the advantage of being able to combine empirical precision and descriptive precision, combining the strengths of both methodologies. (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). To compare the data from the observations, it was necessary to quantify

the notes into tables similar as Tengblad (2006), giving the opportunity to visualise the actions in context. The reasons for the similarities and differences could then be observed and debated.

The structures of scientific papers have developed during the nineteenth century, as did the idea that science must be impersonal and the scientist must remain an indifferent observer. This has led to scientific writing in the third person, which effectively removes the writer and replaces him or her with a passive voice. Situations where the first-person narrative should be used include recounts of personal experiences, stating personal opinions, and explanations of choices made regarding the execution of the research. (Evans, Gruba & Zobel, 2011). Van Maanen (1995) writes about the conventional practices in rhetoric and narration of organisational texts and theories, stating that a personalised author and using “I” in writing is basically “*the refusal to cloak a writing in anonymity*”. The author states that while the conventional practice may appear convincing, breaking the practice of the field allows the reader to identify with the writer, which in turn increases the persuasiveness of the text. (Van Maanen, 1995). As this research is based on personal experiences and observations, the use of the first-person narrative must be the most suitable option.

4. Findings

For this research, a manager was shadowed for five non-consecutive working days in a large IT organisation in Oulu, Finland. The aim of this research was to gather data on the daily activities of a manager, which could be quantified into tables based on and compared to previous studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973). The observations were written on a paper notepad and written into electronic form for the handling of the data.

The setting of the research was the regular working environment of the manager; the office is a large open office space with cubicles for managers as well as subordinates (figure 2). To my perception, this demonstrates the Finnish culture's tendency to value equality and low power distance. Meeting rooms, a kitchen, and a sofa area were also on the same floor. During the five working days, over 30 hours were directly observed, which excludes the lunch hours and situations when it would not be appropriate for me to follow the manager, such as toilet breaks. The hours of work not observed were a morning when the manager worked from home, and a morning when he arrived to work earlier than me. These hours were calculated in the materials based on information given by the manager. Total working time amounted to 27 hours and 30 minutes of active working time, calculated based on the time spent on separate actions, excluding lunch and coffee breaks. The total observation time amounted to just over 30 hours, the difference between the total working time and the working time calculated based on the duration of activities comes from the moments between the tasks that could not be calculated into the actions in table 6. Taking this into consideration, the working hours were not long, rather less than the 40 hours which is common in Finland. The leniency in working hours is reciprocal, as there are certain freedoms to leave early or come in later if there are personal appointments, it is expected that during busy times the workers will stay over time if necessary.

During the first day of shadowing, the manager spent a lot of time in planned meetings. Differing from the previous studies, Skype was used frequently for internal communication with personnel and partners who were not co-located. Skype was used instead of emails for instant messaging, to replace a phone to make calls, and to enable a meeting with participants in different locations by using a microphone and the group call option. When the manager was not in a meeting, there was a lot of unofficial discussion over the cubicles, reviewing given information, making decisions, and giving information. This communication is not visible in the tables and neither are the coffee breaks which tend to last anywhere from ten minutes to thirty. The breaks are important for socialising, which is essential in a place where people spend a lot of their time aiming to achieve common goals. The lunch and coffee breaks are held around the same time every day, but there is no strict time reserved for them as people come and go at different times, and coffee breaks tend to be used for communicating company matters as well as socialising with the co-workers. Working hours of the managers are not strictly followed when the job is done and the performance is satisfactory.

Due to unresolved issues with the air quality in the company premises, many employees work from home part time, or full-time if they have strong reactions from the air quality at the office. The company was also going through structural change at the time of the research period, the managers had to decide on new policies and practices, and talk to their subordinates about these changes which took up a lot of time. These structural changes meant that teams were reconfigured and people got different responsibilities, which required a lot of meetings and emails. As important decisions were made in another

country (the parent company), there was a lot of discussion about cultural misunderstandings. One manager even said that it does not matter what country the other people come from, the neighbouring countries or from the other side of the world, they will see and do things differently in any case.

Table 1. Total active working time average values.

	Vainionpää		Tengblad		Mintzberg	
	h/week	share	h/week	share	h/week	share
1. Meetings	7,4	27%	45,7	63%	28	64%
2. Tours	1,3	5%	0,9	1%	1	2%
3. Telephone calls	4,1	15%	5,4	7%	2,6	6%
<i>1-3. Total verbal</i>	12,7	46%	52	72%	31,6	72%
4. Desk work	14,8	54%	9	12%	8,8	20%
5. Transportation	0	0%	11,2	16%	3,6	8%
Total working time per participant	27,5	100%	72,2	100%	44	100%

The working hours divided into meetings, tours, and telephone calls count for the total verbal communication (table 1). Planned Skype calls were counted as meetings, whereas spontaneous calls using Skype were counted as phone calls. The time spent on tours were unscheduled walks around the office to talk to subordinates and co-workers. Desk work includes emails, Skype messages, and administrative work at the manager's desk. The time spent on transportation is a zero as the company's premises in Oulu were in one location, there was no need to travel to other locations during the days of observation.

Table 2. Location of verbal contacts.

	Vainionpää		Tengblad		Mintzberg	
	h/week	share	h/week	share	h/week	share
1. Manager's office	4,8	38%	12,1	23%	12,3	39%
2. Office of subordinate	1,3	10%	1,9	4%	2,5	8%
3. Hall or plant	0	0%	2	4%	0,3	1%
4. Conference or board room	6,2	49%	15,9	31%	4,4	14%
5. Away from Organization	0,5	4%	20,1	39%	12	38%
Total time in verbal contact per week	12,7	100%	52	100%	31,6	100%

The second day was not very different from the first, except that some work was done at the manager's home in the morning, and the day ended earlier than usual because of personal appointments, decreasing the amount of observed time. There was a "coffee chat" with a subordinate via Skype, which is a casual meeting between the manager to discuss how things are going; is the workload appropriate, is the worker motivated, what projects are planned, etc. These chats are held on a regular basis, and to me they seemed like a relaxed and open meeting which enable the manager to assign his subordinates to projects in such a way that they are content and helps avoid situations where the employee

has too much or too little work to do. Having these Skype meetings shows in the number of meetings held in the manager's office, which can be seen in table two.

Most planned meetings took place in a conference room as the office is an open space with cubicles and conference rooms are the only places with privacy. The meetings would be held face to face if the person was working in the same premises, the other option would be Skype calls or phone calls. The meetings at the subordinate's office were short, the manager would walk to them to discuss an issue standing next to their desk if the talk would not take long, or invite them to a conference room when privacy was needed. The verbal contacts that took place away from the organisation consist of phone calls made while working from home. The reason why the "Hall or plant" option of the location of verbal contacts (table 2) is a zero is that the company has no plant, and discussion did not take place in the hallways, but rather always at someone's desk or a conference room.

The third day observed was a Friday. Every Friday the company offers a pastry to all the workers ("perjantai pulla"). There were several short meetings, mostly discussions with subordinates about team reconfigurations. The meetings were held one by one, and the managers would talk to the teams of other managers that they would get a new boss. The idea is that someone other than the new boss would ask whether the workers would be comfortable with the change, giving them the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns confidentially before the final decisions are made. In these meetings, it seemed apparent to me that there have been several occasions when the teams have been changed, and while no one may have issues working with specific individuals within the company, there was a general dissatisfaction in changing the teams often. The dissatisfaction came from the repeated changes, as they caused disruption in work. Every time a change took place, the team would need to build new relationships to create a functional unit. Several people expressed the wish that new changes in the team configurations would not take place very soon. From my perspective, this shows a democratic culture with a small power distance, resulting in approachable managers. During these meetings, some workers discussed other concerns that they may have regarding work, while some merely accepted the information. On Friday, there was also a meeting with the personnel who plan the company's recreational activities, where the budget and ideas for this year's activities was discussed. There was some debate about how much of the budget should be spent on activities where children are involved; some may have several children and some none, which was perceived as an unfair situation in terms of spending. The decision-making was very democratic, and in general, it seemed that everyone thought it as important that all participants in meetings have input in the discussions.

Table 3. Size of meetings / tours.

	Vainionpää		Tengblad		Mintzberg	
	no. per week	share	no. per week	share	no. per week	share
1. Manager and one person	20	80%	34	50%	32	68%
2. Manager and two people	1	4%	10	15%	4	9%
3. Manager and three people	2	8%	6	9%	3	6%
4. Manager and four people or more	2	8%	19	28%	8	17%
Total no. of meetings/tours per day	25	100%	68	100%	47	100%

Most of the meetings during the week of observation took place between the manager and one subordinate (table 3). The most significant difference between the results of this study and the two others seems to be that in the studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973), the managers spent more time in meetings with four or more people. One possible explanation for the difference is that a CEO meets a large amount of different upper middle managers at once, while the upper middle manager may meet subordinates one by one. In this case, there may have been an unusual amount of the meetings with one person due to organisational changes taking place at the time of the observation (team reconfigurations and bonuses had to be discussed). There were meetings with co-directors to discuss the changes taking place and the changes in responsibilities, plans were made on how to proceed. Some of the meeting time was spent on planning company recreational budgets with co-workers, a team working on a voluntary basis.

The fourth observed day was a Monday. The morning was mostly spent on reading and writing emails and sending messages in Skype, sometimes chatting over the cubicles with co-workers. After lunch some time was spent discussing bonuses with subordinates, these discussions were private and everyone got the chance to voice out any issues they might have. The managers had been told to divide a predetermined sum of bonus money among their teams, keeping in mind that good work should be rewarded but also any cases of being underpaid (“palkkakuoppa”) should be addressed. In the afternoon, the manager used a resource allocation tool where he had to allocate working hours to projects to make forecasts. The manager had to jump back and forth between the tool, Skype, and email, sometimes making phone calls to get information for filling in the estimates. Compared to the results of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973), the amount of time spent on phone calls is higher and the amount of time spent in meetings is significantly lower in this study, which can be seen in table one. However, considering the number of activities, the share of phone calls shown in table six are very similar in all the studies.

The organisation employing the manager has several levels of managerial jobs: the executive level, the upper middle manager in charge of several projects, and the project managers handling a single case. In addition to the executive level in Finland, there was a lot of communication with the parent company and the other branches in several other countries when cooperation was needed. There may have been an unusual amount of discussion with the parent company due to the organisational changes, which were initiated there. The upper middle managers discussed on several occasions that the management in the other country did not understand what works in Finland, and to my perception, they felt that the change was not handled in the best possible way.

Table 4. Participants at meetings / tours.

	Vainionpää		Tengblad		Mintzberg	
	h/week	share	h/week	share	h/week	share
1. Director (supervisors)	0	0%	1,6	3%	2	7%
2. Peer, co-director	3,3	45%	4,3	9%	4,6	16%
3. Client, supplier, associate	0,8	11%	3,3	7%	5,8	20%
4. Independent and others	0	0%	5,1	11%	2,3	8%
5. Subordinates	3,2	44%	32,3	69%	13,9	48%
Total time in meetings/tours per participant	7,4	100%	46,6	100%	29	100%

The participants at meetings were mostly co-workers or subordinates (table 4). Communication with CEO's or other higher executive managers was mostly taking place through Skype calls and messages, phone calls, or emails. The organisational change taking place made it necessary for co-directors to have meetings about new policies and team configurations. There was only one phone call with a partner organisation and one scheduled meeting via Skype call. Similarities between the three studies (table 4) are a large amount of time spent in meetings or tours with subordinates. The biggest difference seems to be that in the studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973) the managers spent significantly less time meeting co-directors.

The manager used several online tools during the workdays, for travel expenses, financial estimates, resource allocation, and catching up on the company news in the company's intranet. As a communication tool, Skype was used for instant messaging and for phone calls when the manager was at the desk. The mobile phone was used for calls when the person would not answer the call or message in Skype or had a "busy" status in their profile. Email remained as a more official tool for communication and relaying information within the company.

The fifth and last day of observation was a Tuesday one week later. In the morning, the manager sent emails and had a Skype call with the HRM (Human Resource Manager) about team allocations and training. The manager was in touch with the HRM relatively often, several times every day. Unlike the other days, this morning the manager joined the coffee break at nine. Usually, the coffee breaks were spent talking about personal subjects such as family, recreational activities, and rush hours, but also the company's new information security pamphlets and projects. On Tuesday, there was some discussion about the premises and what the company could do to relocate and negotiate with the current lessor about ending the contract. This was a recurring subject, as was the issue of where "idle hours" need to be logged, the issue being unresolved after three weeks of time in which the shadowing days took place. There was a long Skype call, which was a planned meeting with a Human Resource partner from abroad, to discuss performance management, company goals, and personal thoughts regarding the subject. After lunch, some emails were read and written, and Skype messages were sent discussing projects. In the afternoon, there was another "coffee chat" with a subordinate, this time face to face at the company's sofa area. The afternoon was fragmented between communication through Skype, phone, and email, and using the resource allocation tool SilverBucket and SAP. Tables one and six show that in this study the manager spent a considerably larger amount of time on desk work than the managers in the previous studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973). As I observed the desk work, it was clear that emailing took up a lot of time as chains were read and replied to, which may be a necessity in an international organisation. Emailing and instant messaging is communication, even though it is not verbal, which means that while the manager in this study spent less time on verbal interaction than desk work, he did not necessarily spend less time communicating with others. While globalisation affects our working lives by making international cooperation possible, a lot of the work must be done online to enable access and communication from various locations. In fact, most of the tools used for management are online, and there is no paper seen on a desk other than a stack of post-it notes. However, the manager also used the notepad program on the PC to leave reminders for himself.

The company has acknowledged that the field they work in is constantly developing, and their workers have very different skill sets. Because some projects may have phases when

the employees must wait, they are encouraged to use this idle time for studying. The options for studying includes some coding languages, and the manager would suggest some that the subordinates may need if they would like to work on some specific projects.

The manager spent no time in travel during the shadowing days, as the office in Oulu was the only company facility in the same city. The tours consisted of walks around the office to see how people are doing, which required no travel time. The manager would have work trips from time to time but those were not included in this study, as the researcher could not follow during the travels. Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973) found managers to spend some time for travelling, in contrast with the results of this study (table 1). Regarding the location of meetings, table 2 shows that the manager spent close to half of the time in conference rooms, the rest of the time meetings were mostly held at the manager's office as that is where he would make Skype calls which did not require the privacy of a conference room. The numbers in table 2 would largely alter if the business trips were calculated, adding to more time spent in meetings away from the organisation, bringing the results closer to Tengblad's (2006) and Mintzberg's (1973) results, where the most significant difference is.

The company has taken note of the advantages of social media, the employees are encouraged to share company related posts in their personal profiles by giving points. These points can then be used to purchase gift items from a selection, and during the time of observation, the manager received a backpack himself. This shows that the manager has taken steps to use the advantages, which can also work as a positive example for the subordinates. In fact, these items would also be discussed during some coffee breaks.

Table 5. Purpose of verbal contacts (5. Status requests, 6. action requests, 7. manager requests combined as Tengblad (2006)).

	Vainionpää		Tengblad		Mintzberg	
	h/week	Share	h/week	share	h/week	share
1. Organisational work	1,0	8%	0	0%	0,6	2%
2. Scheduling	0,2	1%	0,7	1%	0,9	3%
3. Ceremony	0,00	0%	8,2	16%	3,8	12%
4. External board work	0,00	0%	1,9	4%	1,6	5%
<i>1-4. Total secondary</i>	<i>1,2</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>10,8</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>6,6</i>	<i>21%</i>
<i>5-7. Requests and solicitations</i>	<i>0,3</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>4,3</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>5,7</i>	<i>18%</i>
8. Observational tours	0,5	4%	0,9	2%	0,3	1%
9. Receiving information	1,5	11%	11,4	22%	5,1	16%
10. Giving information	3,3	26%	10,1	19%	2,5	8%
11. Review	2,3	18%	9,1	18%	5,1	16%
<i>8-11. Total informational</i>	<i>7,5</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>31,5</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>12,6</i>	<i>40%</i>
12. Strategy (important decision-making)	0,6	5%	3,6	7%	4,1	13%
13. Negotiation	3,0	24%	1,8	3%	2,5	8%
<i>12-13. Total decision making</i>	<i>3,6</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>5,4</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>6,6</i>	<i>21%</i>
Total	12,7	100%	52	100%	31,6	100%

The purpose of verbal contacts (table 5) is a complicated matter as interactions tend to be more diverse than just “giving information” or “review”. In this case, the purpose of verbal contacts includes all phone calls, skype calls, meetings, and tours, which were placed in the most suitable categories. The division in table 5 is based on my interpretations of the interactions, and every verbal contact had to be placed in one category. In some cases, one phone call could be placed in several different categories at the same time, but one had to be chosen, and they often fell into the “receiving information” category. Meetings were mostly placed in the category of negotiation, and some in reviews as the coffee chats could be considered a type of performance review and giving information (bonus and team reconfiguration meetings). The tours were mostly observational (walking around the office to chat with employees about how they are doing), but in some cases, the manager would go to a specific person for information. Contacts were placed under organisational work when there was a discussion about how to handle an issue affecting the way work is done in the organisation (e.g. how to log hours). The difference between negotiation and organisational work and strategy (decision making) was difficult to define.

Table 6. Number and duration of activities.

	Vainionpää		Tengblad		Mintzberg	
	number	Share	number	share	number	share
Desk work sessions, number of sessions	49	51%	28	20%	36	33%
Desk work, average duration in min.	18		19		15	
Number of telephone calls	25	26%	32	23%	27	25%
Telephone calls, average duration in min.	10		10		6	
Number of meetings	15	16%	65	47%	41	38%
Meetings, average duration in min.	29		42		41	
Number of tours	7	7%	3	2%	6	6%
Tours, average duration in min.	9		17		10	
Transportation	0	0%	11	8%	?	?
Transportation, average duration in min.	0		61		?	
<i>Total number of activities per participant</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>139</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>100%</i>
Activities, average duration in min.	17		31		24	
No. of activities lasting less than 9 min.	40	42%	63	45%	54	50%
No. of activities lasting 9 to 60 min.	52	54%	59	42%	44	40%
No. of activities lasting longer than 60 min.	4	4%	17	12%	11	10%

The activities are divided into sessions of deskwork, phone calls, meetings, tours, and transportation (table 6). Desk work sessions were calculated as time spent at the desk, excluding verbal interaction (phone calls, meetings, tours). Some meetings could be divided into several shorter meetings (short discussions with employees), but as they were conducted one after the other, uninterrupted, they were calculated as one long session of activity. The duration of activities is relatively similar in all the three studies. The number of activities lasting longer than 60 minutes was near 10%, and the rest would be divided relatively equally among activities lasting less than 9 minutes and activities lasting

between 9 and 60 minutes (table 6). As the observer, I perceived the work to be fragmented among short tasks that are interrupted by calls, messages, or conversations, and subjects under discussion would be recurring through the three weeks during which the shadowing days were executed.

Reviewing the overall working time, from an outsider perspective the days observed did not seem very demanding and the working hours were quite easy going. This could be due to a quiet time of the year, choosing less demanding days for being observed, or it may be an accurate depiction of the job in general. It is difficult to estimate how much time was spent on work related communication or other activities outside of work at the office. The manager did report that while the working time is not a strict concept and allows some freedom, there are times when overtime is required to deliver to customers on time.

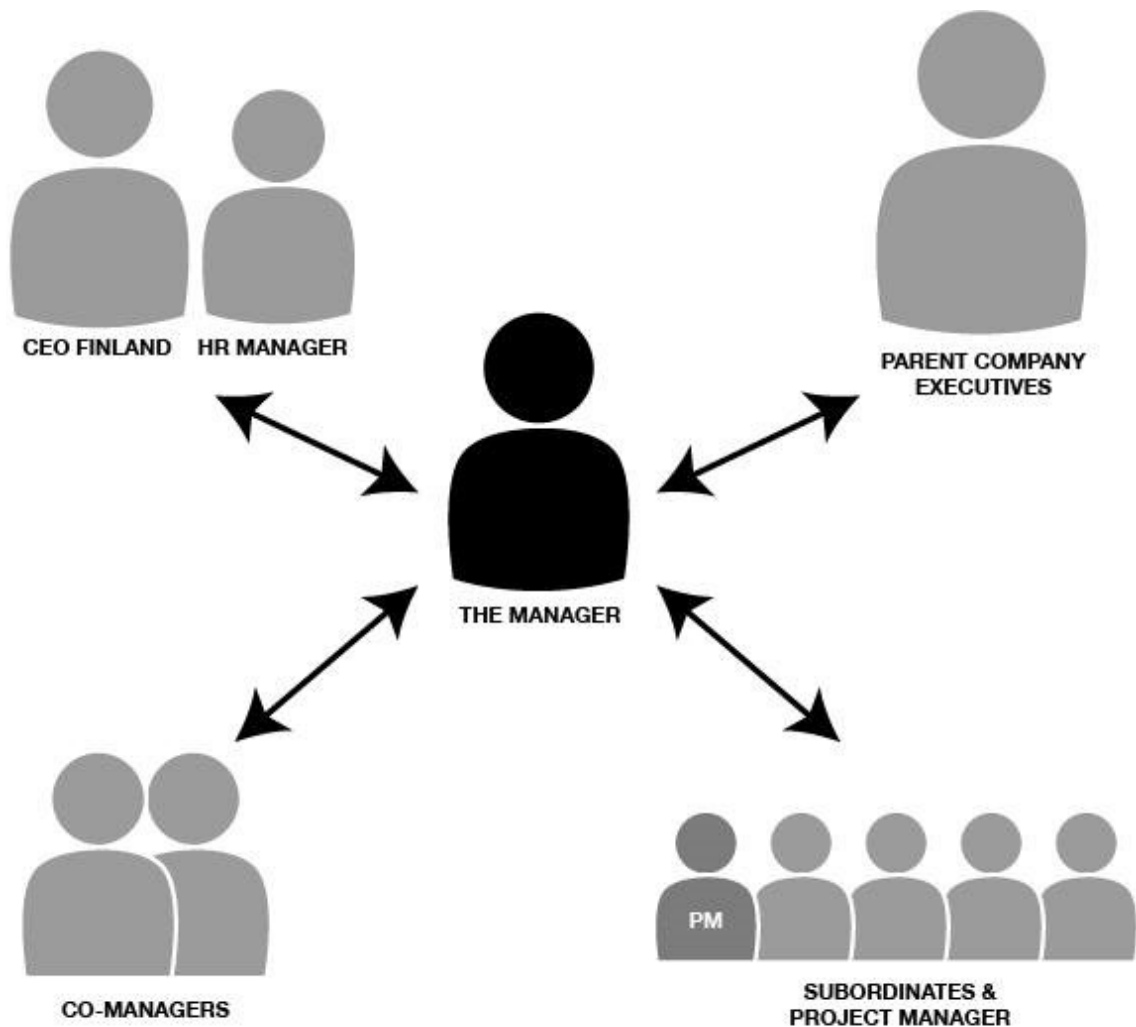


Figure 1. The coordination network.

The manager was in contact with people from different levels of the organisation (figure 1). The language used in the conversations, whether they were face to face, in an email, a phone call, or Skype messages, were often coloured with humour and a friendly tone was always kept. The use of emoticons was sparse in emails but were more widely used when sending instant messages in Skype chats.

In the interview, which was held at the beginning of the shadowing field work, the manager was asked about his work; what a typical week is like, what are the good or

negative aspects of the job, what skills are needed, misconceptions regarding managerial work or the industry, and the general requirements for the position. The manager described a typical work week as disorganised (“sekava”), the Finnish word is difficult to translate exactly because the English words have slightly different significances or connotations, but I interpreted the description as having to sort out complicated information, rather than having a lot of tasks which need to be done in a hurry. The manager described the usual tasks to be mostly reading and writing emails, having phone calls, and discussions with the team (not a lot of contact with customers). The manager likes that the job includes interaction with a lot of people, the days are always different, and the work itself is a constant learning process. The dislikes were reported to be exact reports as they can be frustrating, and useless internal discussion. With a background in industrial engineering and management education, and work experience as a buyer and project manager, the job was found through the recommendation of a friend from school. The manager has had the same job for two years, but now there will be an increased amount of responsibilities; the organisational changes are causing the need for changes in the roles of managers as well as structures. The educational skills needed in the job were reported to include leadership skills, business understanding, and experience of project work, as well as professional level language skills in English. To someone who wishes to have a career as a manager in an IT company, the subject recommends basic programming skills and education in leadership and management, and the handling of variables as one ensemble. The information in this interview was useful for drawing a picture of what the managerial work is, and in addition to this, the discussions during observation were helpful for understanding what is happening.

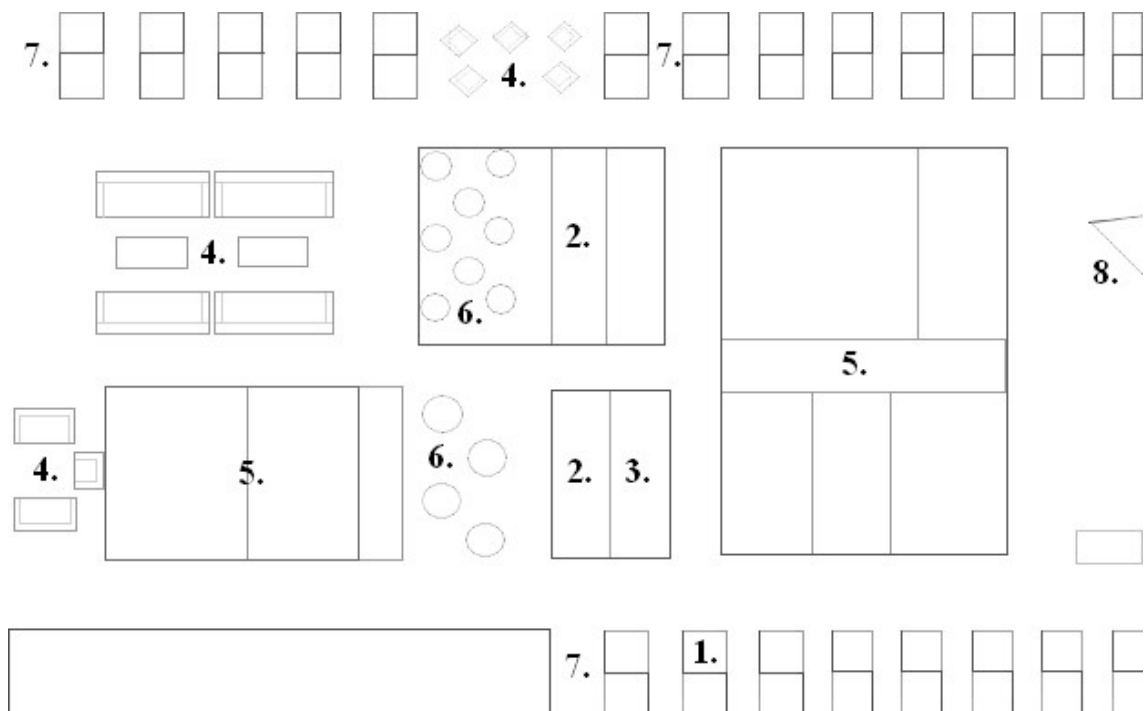


Figure 2. Approximate layout of the office: 1. the manager’s desk, 2. kitchens, 3. toilets, 4. sofas / casual seating areas, 5. meeting rooms, 6. tables and seats, 7. desks/ cubicles, 8. entrance to the office floor.

Returning to the research question “*Is current managerial work in IT different from Mintzberg (1973) and Tengblad (2006)?*”, based on the findings in this study the conclusion can be made that there are similarities in the type of tasks that must be done,

while a notable difference appears in how much time is spent on the different tasks and with whom the manager communicates. The findings in this study show that on a general level, management entails a lot of communication through various communication tools, planning, and organising the work of other people which requires social skills as well as an understanding of what the subordinates do and the nature of their projects. The second research question asks “*What are the differences in managerial work practice?*”, the aim was to find reasons for the changes with the qualitative aspects of the study, the interview and the discussion while making the observations. Based on the tables and numbers only, there does not seem to be compelling evidence to support the claim that managerial work in this study is drastically different compared to the previous studies. Based on the personal observations I made, the nature of the IT field can be seen in the constant need to arrange training in different coding languages and new technologies, the way in which projects are managed, and the tools that are used. It would be strange if a company in the IT field used old and outdated tools. The interest in learning was seen in the encouragement of employees to use any idle time for learning, which is profitable for the company as the employees have more know-how for the projects. However, it was not evident that the manager would take courses to keep up with the technological advances himself. The manager would consult subordinates or co-workers in technological issues when there was a need. The modern managerial job, in this case, is not significantly different from the descriptions in literature, what has changed are the tools that are used to complete the necessary tasks. It is very easy to contact anyone at any time in the modern working environment, as everyone carries a smartphone with them, which often includes an internet connection and the device itself is essentially a computer. This means instant access to text messages, phone calls, Skype calls and messages, emails, and the data needed for decision making. The availability also means that even if the manager left work, they might still take calls, send emails, or do some other work related tasks outside the office hours. I would not say that the relatively small number of working hours seen in this study would be sufficient to say that the managerial work in general is not busy or require long working hours. The Finnish culture can be seen in how equality is valued, and there is a real interest in making decisions based on conversations and achieving consensus, even if the final decision is confirmed by the management. Some of the differences found in this study can be explained by the hierarchical position of the manager; not working in the executive level but as an upper middle manager. To have a clear distinction between managerial work on different levels and in different fields would require further research.

5. Discussion

The aim of this thesis was to find out what managerial work in the IT field is in its current state. The shadowing method enabled the observation of everyday tasks and events over the course of five working days, over 30 hours. The data was compared to the research of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973), revealing the differences between the studies that have been conducted in a different field, in different times, and different countries. The results presented in the findings describe a job that consists of a large amount of communication, short fragmented tasks, and decision-making. It is not a simple matter to distinguish the reasons behind the changes seen in managerial work; the IT field, the managerial work itself, or the cultural context. Barley (2004) explained that using qualitative methods is best for finding out what happens, and quantitative methods can prove that something did happen. Having the qualitative information made it easier to point out what is different from previous studies, and having the detailed information in notes as well as memory gave a comprehensive picture of the work.

5.1 Managerial work

The role of the IT field in the changes happening in managerial work may be seen in the developments in the IT industry itself; new innovations and companies appear constantly. In the IT field knowledge is necessary to assign resources in the best possible way, and to understand the needs and interests of the subordinates. However, the need for understanding the field is a generally accepted requirement in managerial literature (Mintzberg, 2009), and the fast pace of change seems to be accepted in the business environment in general (Todnem By, 2005). Based on these statements, it could be said that the IT field is not unique in requiring industry related knowledge, or the fast pace of change in the environment. As stated by the shadowed manager, this specific job requires basic programming skills, but it was not discussed how elementary the required skills are, to gain an understanding with which the manager can do the work successfully. The skills regarding leadership and management were emphasised as much as the IT related knowledge. Hansen, Kraemmergaard & Mathiassen (2011) pointed out that in adapting to digital transformation in modern environments, new leadership roles may emerge. It was discussed among the upper middle managers as well as the subordinates that a lot of changes take place, and specifically in team configurations it was seen as a negative because it takes time to form the relationships among the team members and the manager. Kappelman et al. (2014) reported that enterprises continually strive towards further digitization, still aiming to increase efficiency and productivity, but also increasingly demanding creation of more business value. This change leads to more appointments from outside organisations and people from varying backgrounds, as well as changes in what, how and with whom IT leaders spend their time. (Kappelman et al. 2014.) The difference in with whom the manager spends his time in this study can be explained with the hierarchical position of an upper middle manager. In the interview the manager himself deemed background in IT and project work important in his position. The continual strive for digitisation can be seen in how much of the work is done on the computer; reports, meetings, and phone calls are done through online tools. When a company offers IT solutions to their customers, it may be important to show that the company itself is using the latest technology and has an understanding of the best possible tools, to look credible in the eyes of the customers.

Ives & Olson (1981) wrote about the role of information systems managers, stating that the position had shifted from non-crucial technical service functions to a managerial position in charge of whole departments, affecting the whole organisation. Effectively the role had changed from a technician to that of a manager, the necessary information being provided by experts. (Ives & Olson, 1981.) The manager in this study did indeed ask for information from people who were more familiar with specific technologies, and seemed more concerned with tasks assigned to managerial work. The manager did feel like knowledge about coding would be important for the job, which means that the manager cannot rely completely on expert knowledge. Having to ask questions constantly would have to slow down the work process. In 2011 De Haes et al. wrote an article about KLM benefitting from a shift in their views from seeing IT as an expense to seeing it as business value, and undergoing organisational change. The authors suggested that organisations should aim to engage their business unit managers in decision making regarding IT investments. (De Haes et al., 2011.) The manager in this study was in the position of managing people and projects, and there was not a lot of discussion about technological investments at the time of the research. A lot of literature regarding the emergence and domination of information technology in business dates to the 1990's or before, which shows a clearly identifiable gap of knowledge and need for further research. It can be seen in the daily activities in work, but also in the free time, how information technology has taken over; the use of mobile phones in various tasks (banking, reading news, keeping in touch with friends, etc.), modern cars that contain 100 MB of binary code (Koscher & al., 2010), and a countless number of other aspects of daily lives. This means that there are a lot of businesses offering IT solutions, which leads to a lot of managers in the IT field. If an increasing amount of jobs are in the IT field, it ought to be sufficient motivation to do more research in the realities of working life in that area.

Ross & Feeny (1999) said that business has become dependant on IT in terms of strategy and operations, leading to the inclusion of IT leadership within the executive team, and the role of CIOs. Carter, Grover, & Thatcher (2011) wrote that CIOs technical credibility is gained by performing tasks of the internal IT management role, including activities such as managing resources, evaluating subordinates, and overseeing IT projects. The manager in this study did not operate under the title of CIO, but his tasks did include managing of resources, evaluating subordinates, and overseeing IT projects. Carter, Grover, & Thatcher (2011) also said that CIOs must understand their organisations, so they can assume different types of roles in IT leadership in the right situations, and this they say to be tacit knowledge. Different types of roles were not so clearly visible in the short period of time in this study, and the method used in this study does not reveal so much about this type of details. Enns, Huff, & Higgins (2000) reported that CIOs must be able to influence their peers, and found the use of rational persuasion and personal appeal to result in commitment from peers, while pressure and exchange did not work. Gottschalk (1999) also reported that CIOs personal appeal lead to a more positive outcome than the use of pressure, which mainly led to resistance. During the shadowing period, the manager had a lot of discussions and one was about a subordinate being offered a place in another company. He wanted to persuade the worker to stay, and used rational persuasion, in giving practical reasons to stay, and personal appeal in making the worker feel needed. In these ways the manager in this study fits the role of a CIO, and although he is not a part of the highest management, he is not far from them, and as the business is in the IT field, it could be that all of the managers are in some way Information Officers.

Schwalbe (2015) said that organisations are greatly affected by their ability to find good project managers and their ability to gain advantages from information technology. The author also writes that modern organisations realise they must use modern project

management techniques, particularly in IT projects. (Schwalbe, 2015.) Kerzner (2013) reported that project management has become a business process, and if the role of a project manager and a functional manager are not one and the same, it is the functional manager who is responsible for how the job is done, who does it, and is in the end responsible for the deliverable. The role of an executive manager would require taking part in project planning and setting objectives, resolving conflicts, setting priorities, and sponsoring the project. (Kerzner, 2013.) Considering these descriptions, the manager in this study fits the role of a functional manager; he himself said that he is responsible for the deliverables of the Enterprise projects, and he assigned people to teams based on their know-how. The role of the executive manager has different requirements, and whether the manager in this study took part in those tasks, the findings do not reveal it. Munns & Bjeirmi (1996) wrote about the different roles in project teams (the client, the project team, the parent organisation, the producer, and the end user). The authors say that parent organisation's role is to provide resources for the project, and project management emphasises short term targets and specific goals, while the project may have wider goals. (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996.) In this description the manager fits the role of the organisation, which could be taken to mean that his role is to represent the organisation.

Dopson & Stewart (1990) pointed out that the role of middle management is complex, making it difficult to make any predictions on what the role will be in the future. In the company where the shadowing was done the hierarchy included the executive level managers, the upper middle managers in charge of several projects, and lastly project managers and other subordinates. This shows that at least in this case, that the modern organisation has several levels of management and hierarchy. Hallier (2004) reported that middle managers tend to be able to influence the senior management's perceptions more than their subordinates, and the middle managers give higher priorities to short term goals as they can gain rewards from their performance. The manager in this study was in contact with the executive level management as well as project managers and subordinate teams in general, and because of the straight contact in both directions, would indeed have more influence in the company than the regular employees. The priorities were not visible in such a short research period but it seemed to me like the manager was trying to steer the company towards a better direction daily, based on the current information. It may be that work in IT is often completed in projects, and the constantly evolving business environment cause the managerial work to be relatively short term; how can long term plans be made in a constantly changing environment?

Byrkjeflot (2001b) wrote that in the modern business environment constant and active leadership is required, and the MBA degree is a globally sought after because higher education is expected of managers. The manager in this study did have a master's degree, and he was active in making the initiative to talk to subordinates, being an active member of the group of people who plan the recreational activities, and taking part in the SOME program to gather points and being an example. Andersson (2010) reported that managers experience a struggle between the organisational expectations as well as their own, of how to be a manager; there are several identity templates, the nature of management is contextual, and the work requires personal development. It is difficult to say whether the manager felt any struggle with the identity after such a short period, but it seemed to me like he knew what to do and if there was an issue, a solution could be found through discussion. The manager did report that he liked the job because he was constantly learning something new. Hickman (1998) wrote about the use of the words "leadership" and "management" as synonyms, and said that leadership is the vision and values, and management is the processes and structures. Bush & Coleman (2000) said leadership is the use of influence, and management is authority. Inspecting the work on a regular day, the job seems very ordinary, so it seems unlikely that any big visions for the future would

surface, other than in attitudes or enthusiasm. The manager did lead by example, while the work itself may have been more about management in the sense of authority and processes, the activities that he chose to do outside of the responsibilities were leading. By being an active part of creating a social environment through the recreational activities and other optional tasks, the manager was influencing the mood at the office. It is the manner in which the manager speaks and encourages employees in conversations that shows whether a person is more of a leader or a manager.

This thesis is set in the IT sector, where the use of computers is practically unavoidable, which may be the case in any industry currently. Already in 1999 Bresnahan & al. found that based on their research in firm-level data, information technology is increasingly a source of demand for skilled labour, resulting in organisational change. According to Barley & Kunda (2001) employment in services has increased above the employment in manufacturing. If there are less jobs in manufacturing and more have moved to the service sector, perhaps the conclusion can be made that more work is situated at the desk, where the job will involve using computers. In 2011 Heinonen wrote that the use of social media is increasing exponentially, resulting in new challenges in business practice as well as research. The use of social media had indeed been noted and taken advantage of in this case company. Treem & Leonardi (2012) found that social media is important to organisational communication processes as they enable new types of behaviours. The new types of behaviours can be seen in how Skype is used as a communication tool, but also the social media channels are used to the company's advantage. The research in the IT sector needs to be constant, as it is already clear that a lot of research is outdated. The modern tools enable communication through emails, instant messages, and calls on the go, with anyone, anywhere, and this allows information to flow at a fast pace. Online tools, such as resource allocation software, help modern managers visualise information, enabling them to make forecasts and aiding in decision making processes. The information can also be edited from anywhere with the right credentials, which makes it possible for managers to work together on plans, even when they are not co-located.

Originally Mintzberg wrote that managerial work is defined by certain key points, the fast pace, the fragmentation, and varied and brief tasks, including a lot of interaction and meetings (Korica et al. 2017). Tengblad (2006) found managerial work in his study to be similar in how the current work practices used were combined with the old, but differed in the emerging behavioural patterns, such as a larger workload, the patterns of contact, and how more time was spent on conveying information rather than doing administrative work. In this study, the managerial work seems to be similar in the overall description, but as with Tengblad's study, the patterns of behaviour differ. The most visible difference may be the shorter working hours, but that can be the result of many variables, such as the choice of days, timing, etc., and I would not draw conclusions that management in IT in general is not requiring long working hours. The changing of the managerial work itself can be seen in the new tools developed for conducting the job, such as new software products to communicate (Skype), manage business operations (SAP), or make plans for resource allocation (SilverBucket). The tools for planning the work day are also developing to suit the needs of a modern manager; the Outlook calendar makes it possible to see your own plans as well as the plans of those that you would like to arrange a meeting with, helping to find the best time for everyone. Then the software makes it possible to suggest a time, and the participants can reply to the meeting request. Comparing the findings of this study and the general statements in managerial literature, the nature of the jobs is the same as before; solving problems (Zaleznik 1977), steering an organisation (Watson, 2001), with responsibility over a recognisable part of the organisation (Mintzberg, 2009). Tengblad (2017) wrote that managerial work is fragmented, and done at a fast pace and plans may have to be revised due to rushed decision making process.

As an observer, the work did not seem rushed, but rather thoughtful and the environment seemed relaxed despite discontent with some internal issues in the organisation. It is possible that the manager had made plans by prioritising tasks, and the work did not appear to be rushed to the observer, or it may be that during the days of observation the manager was not experiencing the busiest days. The tasks were fragmented, as there were a lot of interruptions from communication channels, but a lot of the tasks were either fast to complete or would have to be left until further information could be acquired. Svendsen (2008) reported that work is still an important factor in the building of identities for modern people, and work will continue to evolve into something new and different. It seems that work has changed in some ways from the previous studies, and if people's identities form based on the jobs they have, there will be new types of identities. New research could find information for establishing what those new identities or roles are. The difficulty is in determining what the subtle changes mean. Anteby et al. (2016) stated that changes may appear in the jurisdiction, status, power, and resource allocation in occupations. So the new research can be used to redefine these elements of occupations or roles in companies.

Tengblad's ten theses (2017) of managerial work suggest that the job is subjected to expectations and pressure. In this study, the manager was of course expected to perform his duties, but the work did not seem to overwhelm him. To someone observing the work sessions, it did not seem like there was a hurry to complete the tasks and there was always time to discuss information. Finnish culture is often described as reserved in a way that people do not show their emotions openly. It is possible that the cultural aspects play a role in how the job is perceived, but the manager in this case seemed quite at ease. Tengblad also says that managerial work takes place in the context of complex and ambiguous environments (social systems). The social environment in this study was indeed complex, it took some time for me to draw a clear picture of who is a subordinate of whom, and one possible factor is that everyone spoke in the same leisurely tone to each other, as everyone is equal, but happen to have different roles and responsibilities at work. Tengblad's next statement was that the work entails uncertainty and unexpected events, which disrupt plans and requires adaptation. In this study, there did not appear to be very significant events which would have required re-planning, but on the whole, the job did require constant decision making, keeping the work of others from disruptions. According to Tengblad, another characteristic of managerial work is that it tends to entail long working hours and the job is done at a hectic pace. The hectic pace was not visible in this particular case; neither were the long working hours. In fact, the pace of work seemed quite leisurely. It is possible that the manager chose days for observation which would not be very demanding, which makes the observer a lesser obtrusion, or maybe the work culture in Finland is less demanding than what the literature describes in general. Tengblad's next thesis is that work is fragmented because of frequent interruptions and the general varieties of tasks. In this study, there were a great number of different types of short tasks, and interruptions from communication channels, which would suggest that the fragmentation of the managerial work holds true. The next statement of Tengblad is that in general the work of a manager is processual; it is done by making and following plans, adapting to surprises as they appear. The manager in this study did tackle surprises as they appeared, but other than following the agreed meeting times, it was difficult to tell whether there were any specific plans for work. The manager did have a list of tasks to do, and some requests he fulfilled in the moment if their priority seemed high, but further than that it is difficult to estimate the level of planning and procedures involved. In a long-term ethnography that type of information could probably become visible to the researcher. Tengblad then describes managerial work as a collective effort. Based on the amount of communication and discussions taking place during this research, it is apparent

that the decisions are made as a collective group, and the manager relies on the input of others in his work. Tengblad also says that managerial work can be emotionally intense and sometimes choices are based on irrational emotions. Emotional strain or decision making was not visible in this study, some frustration was apparent from the conversations but that was because of reasons that the manager felt he could not solve, rather than the decision making. Again, cultural norms in Finland may restrict the way emotions are displayed, but I feel like at the end of the observation the manager was quite comfortable with my presence. Regarding symbolic actions, Tengblad says that a manager needs to display for presence in the workplace, physical appearance, and compliance with rules and requests. The manager told me that a lot of the employees work from home because of the office air quality issues, he would usually be at the office at least the latter half of the day, making himself available. He would also lead by example by sharing company related posts in his social media, and gaining the rewards for the points. Tengblad's last thesis is that managerial work involves taking part in informal activities, which may advance the career, position, and gain rewards. The manager did indeed take part in the company's group that plans the recreational activities, such as ski trips or a night at the theatre.

Differences due to culture can be challenging to point out as in this case the manager and I, the observer, are natives of the same national culture and the IT field. However, I was not familiar with the organisations internal culture. The interviews and discussions helped in the task of interpreting the events. Lok & Crawford (2004) reported that organisational culture and styles of leadership are important factors in job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation, and national culture makes a significant impact on the organisational culture. The studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973) are made in different settings, and while Finland and Sweden are neighbouring countries, they have different cultures. Tengblad (2006) cited Hofstede's (1984) comparison of the cultural dimensions between USA and Sweden, mentioning that the most drastic difference is the level of masculinity; implying that Sweden values human relationships and the environment more than material rewards. The author explains that this means that Swedish people value dialogue and consensus more than the people in USA. (Tengblad, 2006.) Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov (2010) write that Finland and Sweden score relatively similarly in Hofstede's dimensions, but the masculinity score and uncertainty avoidance index stand out as higher in Finland. Finland's score in masculinity is considered feminine, which means that consensus, equality, and solidarity are valued, while status is not emphasised and managers are expected to be supportive. USA scores very high in masculinity, meaning that the culture is very competitive. The high score in the uncertainty avoidance index means that Finnish culture is not tolerant for unexpected behaviour or ideas, rules are important and being punctual is a norm. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010.) It was visible that status was not emphasised within the company, but everyone knew the other's hierarchical position. In the meetings, it appeared to be important that everyone has the chance to voice their opinion, and the manner of speaking was relatively relaxed. The manager in this study had less meetings than the managers of the comparison studies, but the desk work included a lot of communication which enabled and included decision making through Skype messages and emails. Another factor in organisational culture must be how the communication flows, and as electronic communication is taking a large part of the day, it should be noted. Hofstede (1997) said that individualistic cultures aim to create a situation where the interests of the employee and employer meet, and bonuses are given to individuals for their merits, and managerial work focuses on the individual. In this study the individualistic culture showed in how every employee was treated with the idea that they have their own interests, goals and concerns, and merits were awarded with bonuses but it was also considered important to minimize inequality in the size of

the salaries. Regarding feminine cultures, Hofstede (1997) says that negotiation is the solution in conflicts, compromises are common, and managers tend to be intuitive people that aim for consensus. The aspects of feminine culture showed in the working environment in the manner of decision making and discussion. Hofstede (1997) also says that Nordic societies are not built on hierarchy and rules as much as the USA, and organisational culture is often accepted. There did not appear to be any issues with the organisational culture on the local level, but there was some clear unhappiness with how the Finnish company was being steered from abroad but it seemed to be an accepted downside of having a parent company abroad.

Arthur & Rousseau (1996) stated that it is the careers that invoke relationships within organisations. During the observation, the manager had private conversations about bonuses with the employees, and during these conversations as well as the coffee chats, the subordinates had the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and concerns. This was how the careers of the subordinates were considered in the organisation; they were considered as individuals with different career goals. Ives & Olson (1981) wrote that the job of a manager requires interpersonal skills to guide and motivate subordinates, and Laitinen (2009) claimed that non-financial information, such as employee motivation is important for managerial work. These coffee chats and private conversations showed how the manager would begin the conversation in a very similar way each time but let the employee set the mood of the conversation, which enabled everyone to be comfortable. This action of giving information and listening in a way that accommodates different personalities showcases the interpersonal skills, as does the way any requests are made in the working environment. The question of work motivation and feelings about the work situations were frequently visited, and the discussion would for the most part be instigated by the manager. This shows that the manager was interested in personal opinions and feelings, and tried to manage the human resources in such a way that everyone is content with the situation.

The most significant difference turned out to be the large amount of desk work, a lot of that time was spent on reading and writing emails which is also communication, although not verbal. This difference could be the result of a lot of tools for communication but also management being online. Another difference in this study compared to the previous ones is that less time was spent in meetings, with fewer people. This could be explained with the position of the manager; a CEO may have more meetings with different types of people than someone in charge of projects internal affairs. As Kaye (1995) pointed out, there are various kinds of managerial jobs, possibly fulfilling similar roles but completing different functions to achieve their specific goals. There were more meetings with co-directors, but the time spent on meetings with subordinates was very similar. While the manager spent more time on phone calls, the number of calls was very similar with the previous studies considering the amount of overall activities. The contents of the conversations in the phone calls were largely about relaying information to the right recipients. The locations of verbal contacts were quite similar, but as this study excluded business trips, there were no meetings outside of the organisation. The overall durations of activities were very similar; most activities last an hour or less. Inspecting the total working hours of one week, the manager in this study had relatively short working days, but it is important to note that while the work day may be finished at some time, some verbal interaction related to work may take place. It is also possible that the specific days chosen for observation were not the busiest, with the consideration that there will not be a researcher in the way of work. Another possibility is that the time of year is not the busiest; the manager reported that there are times when overtime working is required as well. In any case, this result should not be generalised. Korica et al. (2017) say that new research regarding managerial work is needed, and they say that even Mintzberg stated

that instead of keeping to his categories, there should be completely new studies that apply to modern environments. Perhaps his categories still apply despite the constant organisational changes; while the way the tasks are completed change, the general description of the work stays the same.

According to Todnem By (2005), organisations are constantly experiencing change, and there is a consensus that the pace of change is faster than ever in the current business environment. Because of the nature of the environment, successful change management is important. However, organisational change tends to be handled reactively, discontinuously, and with a large failure rate. This could be the cause of not finding an appropriate framework for successful implementation of organisational change; there is a wide selection of theories and approaches that contradict each other and lack empirical evidence. (Todnem By, 2005.) Research supports the idea that broad involvement of the organisations members affected by the changes positively affects the success of the outcome (Lines, 2004). Waddel & Sohal (1998) said resistance is a complex phenomenon, where the opposition may not be specifically towards the change, but the uncertainties and potential outcomes of the change. One solution to this problem is searching for an alternative way of introducing the change, communicating and consulting the employees, giving the opportunity of providing feedback and using the resistance to the advantage of the organisation. (Waddel & Sohal, 1998.) As the organisational change was highly visible during the observation of the manager, and the general attitude towards change was that of reluctant acceptance through criticism within the upper middle management, the executive level of the company could have used more internal discussion throughout the organisational levels. It was clearly an issue that some problem would be discussed several times, but the issue would resurface without a solution. In my perception, this seems like a problem in the communication channels and the decision-making process; due to the changes, many employees were not sure what their new roles and responsibilities are, or when the changes will take place.

Tengblad discussed (2006) the table displaying the purpose of contacts, saying that it should be regarded with caution because the dimension is entirely based on an interpretation of behaviour instead of description. In my experience, the manager would clearly state what the phone calls or meetings would be about. The interview and discussions while observing the work make the interpretations more reliable on a general level, as the manager explained the situations. In some cases, it was very difficult to divide the information in the tables despite the clear explanation. For example; during one phone call the manager may first receive information, then negotiate what to do about it, and then give some information to the other person, then making a request to complete a task, and finally schedule a meeting with the same person. This type of definition issues and interpretations affect the results shown in the tables, perhaps making them less important scientifically, but an effective way to represent and visualise how the manager spends his time. The tables also work as a support for the qualitative findings. Mintzberg (2009) said that considering the practice, finding out what a manager does is not a problem, it is the interpretation of what is done. I find this statement to be true, and the complexity of interpretation became obvious when placing the information under different labels. If the decision of comparing to the studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973) had been made before the data gathering, it is possible that the making of notes would have been more systematic considering how the information will need to be divided. It is also possible that this would only have moved the decision making from later stages to the moment of observation, but then there would be the opportunity to ask the shadowed person how they saw the situation or ask for more details in the moment. In the end I do not think that table five is very significant considering the value of the information.

5.2 Using the shadowing method

The studies of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973) explored managerial work by examining the work of CEOs, while this study explores the work of an upper middle manager. It is possible that some of the differences could be explained with the different level of decision making; the areas of responsibility can differ greatly. For example, this manager had no need to have contact with customers, the main task was resource allocation for projects. This shows how different managerial roles have possibly similar tasks but the need to be in contact with different type of people (e.g. customer, partner, or subordinate) and there is some variation in which tasks take up the most time. Orr (1996) stated that through the examination of the practice of work, it can be said whether the explicit representations of jobs coincide with what is really done to fulfil the goals of the employment. On a general level the representations seem to hold true in this case, but the descriptions of managerial jobs tend to be made on a general level. Because the work was often the task of relaying information by calling, writing emails, or making decisions, and the information is different every day, the job is difficult to describe or pinpoint to specific tasks. Papageorgiou (2007) said that a direct experience of social systems can never be substituted with objective data when trying to understand culture. The findings of this study show the managerial work on a level that would not have been possible by using purely quantitative methods. Henriksen et al. (2004) wrote that creating interesting research is probable when data collection and documentation is based on real life, and in this case the research did reveal a lot of information, but the difficult part is how to use it and analyse it. Czarniawska (2007) said that field work in modern societies are often studies of practice, which means that people's lives and work are studied. The human life is a complicated subject to study, since there are so many variables in the mixture, and how the information is interpreted is up to the researcher.

According to Pink & Morgan (2013), short-term ethnography has the advantage of a deep focus and detailed information. Personally, I see the value in short-term observation, and a longer time spent in observation would surely have brought more data but it would have been very difficult to maintain the amount of details in the notes over a long period of time. The job of a manager is very hectic and fast paced, many small tasks take place with a lot of interruptions, which must all be noted, requiring a high level of concentration from the researcher. During a longer observation period, it would seem inevitable that the observer starts to omit some details which take place every day, as they start to seem so common that it is not important. It could be reasoned that if this thesis can answer the research questions set in the beginning, the research has brought value scientifically; describing the managerial job in an IT company. If the question is answered, then the short-term observation must have been advantageous.

Leonardi (2015) said that it takes approximately 30 minutes for people to relax and return to their regular ways of working. I partially disagree; while it was necessary to talk over the goals and aims of the research in the beginning, it seemed like the first day of shadowing was spent on both parties finding their position in the research setting. The manager would begin to work, but it took some time to set the pace and to figure out what to explain, which I saw as time taken to assess how obtrusive or critical I would turn out to be. In fact, the further along the observations went, the manager seemed more relaxed and less concerned on what was written about his actions, this would show in humorous remarks and being comfortable with silence while doing desk work. It is possible that the time needed for becoming comfortable with an observer is different depending on the culture as well as the personalities of the participants. Czarniawska (2014a) wrote that one way to ease the shadowing process is by blending in using clothing. While doing the shadowing, I wore quite normal clothes, something that I would wear to the university,

and do not think that I stood out much. In Finnish work culture, it is not often mandatory to wear suits, so the outfits can be quite casual. Several people at the office wore woollen socks, jeans, and other ordinary and casual wear. However, some managers clearly dressed in finer outfits, which may be a way to distinguish the managerial position, or they may think it is required of a manager, or it may be the personal preferences of dressing. Andersson (2010) discussed the expectations of managerial work, and the way people dress could be a sign of what they think is expected of them, or what they themselves expect of the position they work in.

Feldman et al. (2003) mentioned the importance of gaining access in ethnographic research, pointing out how critical the phase of making initial contact and creating a relationship with the right person can be, in how much information will be made available. Harrington (2003) discussed the researcher's relationship and role as something that must be acceptable to those involved in the study, enabling the access through negotiation rather than exploiting the subjects. In the beginning of this research process, after making the decision on the method and general research topic, the next task was to find someone who would be willing to participate as the subject. Leonardi (2015) suggested contacting the management of the company, and the worker who would be the subject of the study. First it took some time to find the right company, and once a contact was made with the Human Resources manager, there was a discussion about the aims and motivation of the research and me as the researcher. After establishing the contact, a promise was made on behalf of the company that someone would be found to participate in this study. The main requirement for the person would be that they are in a management position, and the higher in hierarchy the better. The first contact was made in October, and the manager willing to participate was found in January of the next year. As people in managerial positions it was not surprising to me that it took a long time to see progress; a master's thesis is not likely to be the priority of a manager. However, the first contact made turned out to be the right one; someone who can make a promise of finding the right person and then initiating the contact. Once the right person was found, I presented myself and the initial research plan through email, and the dates for observation were agreed upon. During the first day, me and the manager got to know each other, and over the course of the five days of observation the access did not seem to be a problem. Cunliffe & Alcadipani (2016) stated that gaining access can be difficult because of the complex nature of the social situations at work, but in this study the atmosphere was quite relaxed and there was only one occasion when the manager was at first apprehensive on whether I should be allowed to be in the meeting (the personal discussions with subordinates). Writing an NDA (Non-Disclosure Agreement) for the company made it possible for the manager to be at ease with whatever company information was mentioned.

Clifford & Marcus (1986) mentioned that ethnographic writing is always partial, but if the writing is self-conscious, the partiality can be a source of tact. While writing this thesis, it was always kept in mind that the writing is in some way biased, but the bias was also discussed. Van Maanen (1995) and Evans et al. (2011) wrote against scientific writing in passive form, saying that writing in first-person, the text has more value and allows the reader to better identify with the writer. In the beginning, I tried to write in passive, and the text made it sound like someone else had done the research. A decision was made to write the findings in the form of a story; describing events and days as they took place, and to keep a more accurate writing style, I used the first-person option. The tables were made based on the tables in Tengblad's (2006) study, the coordination network in figure 1 was made based on the observations. Figure 2 displays the approximate layout of the office based on my memory, so it may be inaccurate in some details, but the overall information should be correct.

McDonald (2005) pointed out that the researcher needs write comments continuously, noting everything that is happening. Leonardi (2015) mentioned the collection of digital artefacts, Murthy (2008) mentioned the possibility of collecting data online, and Czarniawska (2008) pointed out that blogs are a useful and modern tool. It would have been possible to do an online form for a survey, but in this case I decided to go the traditional way; I had a notebook and a pen, and no other documents were collected as they should not be important because of the scope and time limits of the study. At the time of observation, it was not known specifically what information would be important, which meant that every detail had to be observed. This can be a positive problem; the data can be used for inspection and analysis from a different point of view. It is another matter whether the notes are correctly understood if someone else interprets the information. During this study, it was apparent that there are no moments that can be excluded as something is always happening. Even when the manager would sit at his desk quietly and seemingly do nothing, he would say that he is thinking. Naturally there must be some thinking involved when the job is essentially about solving problems, as Zaleznik (1977) wrote. Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (2011) mentioned that some researchers choose to note only what the observed person is doing, while some choose to include the thoughts of the researcher. In this case the personal thoughts were included, which ended up easing the process of analysing the notes at a later time. McDonald (2005) suggested that the researcher needs to mark the participants, times, and the contents of conversations, running commentary, and answers to their questions. It was based on this suggestion that in this case a plan of recording at the very least the people involved, the tools used, the location, and the duration of activities was made. It turned out to be an advantageous decision to plan some key aspects to record; it was easier to decide what to write and how, helping to keep up with the pace of the work. This also helped in the interpretation of the fieldnotes; every meeting, call, and email was easy to place in the right category of the tables.

During the shadowing period, there were times when the manager thought about whether it is acceptable for me to be present as a researcher during the personal conversations with employees. This was handled in the moment by explaining to the employees what the research is about and that their personal information would not be necessary, but rather what the manager does and how. The subordinates did not object to my presence in the meetings. Johnson (2014) discussed the importance of considering how informed consent from the person being shadowed, and others which may be involuntarily involved, can be ensured. With this in mind, there was a discussion about the aim of the study, informing the manager what type of information will be gathered and why. A written agreement was also made on how the data will be handled, and stored. The ethical aspects of this study were agreed upon, giving the subject the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. The agreement enabled the manager to work in their usual manner with less concern about what will be written. Morse (1994) wrote that the ethical issues are often subtle, because the research includes close involvement with people and the researcher is the measuring instrument. This is quite easy to identify with, as the manager was not used to having someone observe his every move, and during over 30 hours of shadowing, some personal things will naturally emerge. Van Maanen (1995) also mentioned that ethnographic writing is a representation of a culture, which means that the writer has ethical responsibilities because of this. As I was writing about the observations, I was always very conscious about what I am telling, considering how the information will look to the manager, the boss, and the whole organisation. As the manager and the organisation decided to stay anonymous, there is less external pressure about the writing itself, but it is expected that someone in the organisation will read the thesis. Johnson (2014) mentioned the difficulty of keeping anonymity with a small sample-size. In this case the

people within the company will know who the manager is, but for an outsider it should not be too easy find out the personal details of the manager involved. Leonardi (2015) spoke about the difficulty of keeping the companies involved anonymous when representing the information. The details told about the company in this case include the revenue size and the general area of international impact, to give the reader an idea of the size of the company. The general idea about what the company offers to customers, and the segments in which the target customers are, paint a picture of what the company does. Further information was not necessary to give, as this would indicate the main business idea and sector within the IT field.

Michailova, et al. (2014) discuss the importance of making an exit from fieldwork, and mention that the process of analysing the exit made means the discussion of tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge seems to be generally thought of as difficult to access and challenging to process (Mintzberg 2009, Michailova, et al. 2014). Indeed, it is not easy to discuss the experiences or the exit of the shadowing research; while understanding what happened, it is not easy to put into words. In this case, the exit was made in a simple way; as the end of the last day approached, we had a small discussion about the schedule and plans for finishing the thesis, the general thoughts after the observations were made, and possible future contact regarding the work. It did not seem to me that the results of this research would be vitally important to the company, which is very understandable as it could not be clearly said in the beginning of the process what would be the “end product”. Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) said that in the beginning of the research it may not be clear where to begin or what the research questions should be but they will develop during the process of the research, and Harrington (2003) said that the nature of ethnographic research is to be unpredictable when it comes to interaction. I think this is true, especially when the researcher is unfamiliar with the subject and the method itself. This could be an advantage of ethnography and the shadowing method; if you cannot foresee what kind of information the research will offer, it leaves the decision of how to analyse or handle the data to the moment when the researcher can see the potential and choose the most interesting or fruitful option.

According to Orr (1996), having experience in the field of the worker being shadowed can be beneficial for understanding what is happening. Somewhat to the contrary, Czarniawska (2014a) saw that the observer’s outsider’s perspective is one of the methods advantages, through recognising differences. Considering the national culture, I think in this case that it was helpful to be from a similar background as the observed person; the culture is familiar and it is easier to interpret people’s behaviour. Also, the understanding of the IT field in general made it possible to understand the subjects of conversation and the nature of the managerial tasks, which meant that there was no need to ask a lot of questions and so become obtrusive. Even though the background in terms of nationality and the field were not of an outsider, as a researcher I was an outsider who does not have any knowledge about the company’s internal culture and does not work there. On the other hand, it is impossible to say whether someone with a background in a completely different field or a person from a different culture would have noticed very different things. It could be interesting if someone from a background of working in a large IT organisation, but in a completely different culture and environment conducted a similar research.

5.3 Personal experiences

Tengblad and Mintzberg are researchers in the field of management, whereas I am a student in the faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering, with a

background as a Bachelor of Business Administration. This difference in the background may affect the perspective of the researcher; noticing different type of details in the work tasks and relationships, but also how the method of shadowing is used. Our backgrounds largely define our perceptions, and any preconceptions or assumptions a researcher may have, will probably affect how the research is planned. Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) stated that in the beginning there tends to be an interest in a specific area of social life, resulting in an exploratory orientation. This statement was quite accurate for this thesis, as the focus of the study became clearer and more defined as the research advanced. After deciding to compare the data to previous research, it was easier to decide what type of information is relevant.

Personally, I learned how a manager spends their time; how the manager interacts with different people, where the discussions take place, what tools are used, and how decisions are made on the managerial level of the organisation. As Mintzberg (2009) stated, knowledge about managerial work is largely tacit, meaning that it is difficult to articulate and the reason why the practice must be learned in context. I agree with this statement, and see this as the reason why it is challenging to articulate the personal points of learning. One of the most visible points to note is how the time is spent and how tasks are done, but the how is the difficult part to describe. When writing about the observations and comparing the perceived reality to literature, the work gave me a lot of insight in terms of why things are done the way they are, and what it is to be in a managerial position in an IT company. While the reality was not far from my personal expectations, the experience of following the work offered understanding of the decision-making process and the hierarchical system within the company. I have had no work experience in an organisation of this size or in this field, so all the norms and working methods are theoretically familiar, but experiencing the practice gives the opportunity to understand the realities of everyday life as a manager. The shadowing method gave an opportunity to learn from reality, and the five working days were useful for learning about the method as well.

6. Conclusions

This thesis explored managerial work in the IT field, based on data gathered with the shadowing method, observing one manager for over 30 hours. The gathered data was compared to existing literature and the research of Tengblad (2006) and Mintzberg (1973), revealing the differences between the research conducted in different fields, in different times, and different countries. Finding out what managerial work is through looking at what a manager does can result in a better understanding of the requirements in working life. This understanding can be transferred to new theories, new research questions, and more efficient ways of working. Because work trips were not included in this study, it could be said that this work focuses on the office days of the manager. And rather than considering the work of an IT manager, this study considers the work of a manager in the IT field.

This research found the job to be in line with many theoretical assumptions regarding the overall tasks of a manager, e.g. planning, organising, and decision-making (Dopson & Stewart, 1990). The overall tasks were largely related to communication and human resource management. The tasks were fragmented in a similar way as the previous studies, with some differences in what specific tasks were most occupying. Organisational change was also visible, and some problems in the change management were evident. The extensive use of technology in managerial tasks is making a significant impact on how the work is done, enabling contact through more channels and a free flow of information. The manager in this study had shorter work days than the managers of previous studies, but this information cannot be used to describe the whole of IT management. The reason could be that the manager chose less busy days for observation, so the researcher would not be in the way too much.

The value this study brings on a general level is insight into how a manager spends his time in a modern organisation, an IT company in Finland. The results themselves may offer insight into what the job is for someone who is considering entering the managerial work, or perhaps offer ideas on how to optimise the working environment and organisational structures. This can give insight and ideas for developing the working methods towards more efficient practices, or give ideas for new types of tools for managerial work. The manager himself may find some information enlightening, and evaluate his job from another perspective. The observation notes have been made and can be reanalysed from different perspectives if there is a new point of interest.

Considering the practical implications for the organisation where the manager works, this research can reveal information regarding the opinions of organisational members. As suggested by Waddel & Sohal (1998), the organisation could use the change resistance to their advantage; finding the specific concerns of their employees, addressing them, and in turn gaining a better functioning working environment. In the conversations, some concerns were mentioned about applying the model of another country in Finland, when the people in Finland felt that their way had already been tried and condemned as unsuitable. More open discussion could benefit the whole organisation, diminishing points of concern and tension. Lines (2004) also spoke for the broader inclusion of organisational members in changes as a way to gain a positive outcome. Perhaps the organisation can find new ways and channels to support management and subordinates.

Considering that this is likely the first master's thesis using the shadowing method, the research can offer an answer to the other research questions, but also insight into the realities of using this method in a master's thesis. It can be considered whether shadowing

is a viable research method in the IT sector and where it could be used most effectively. The background section explaining the elements about Shadowing is a compact package of information for someone interested in using the method or learning what it is, and the discussion section offers some real-life experiences and discusses the lessons learned from the research.

6.1 Limitations

The limitations of this study include the scale as only one person is shadowed, which affects the generalisability of the results; the data gathered is a representation of one person's work in one company. This, however, is a generally accepted characteristic of the shadowing research. The value of the research comes from the detailed information of the day-to-day activities rather than a large sample size (Johnson, 2014). As the study considers what a manager does, it cannot explain why the work has changed, but the interview and discussions during shadowing help interpret and deduct the reasons behind the changes. The shadowing method does not only show how much of what is done, as the events can be discussed when they take place. Another aspect, which could be considered a limitation, is that the researcher makes interpretations of the events during the shadowing period (Mintzberg, 2009). The interpretation can be based on the observer's cultural background and is susceptible to the assumptions that are made in the moment. However, as the researcher is familiar with the culture and the industry, it is unlikely that very drastic misunderstandings would have taken place. The quantitative data supports the interpretations, but also the possibility of asking questions and the manager explaining the events and his thoughts help to minimize this issue. Another possible limitation is the inexperience of the researcher; having never used the shadowing method it was challenging to conduct the research. The literature research was done first, which made it easier to plan the tasks ahead, and to explain to the subject of observation what the motivation for this research is.

It was challenging and time consuming to find a manager who would be willing to take part in this study and gain access to an organisation. Access refers to the permission to get into the organisation, to do research and create relationships within the organisation (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). Access is critical in an ethnographic research because the process of gaining access (building relationships) can define how much information will be made available, and the process must begin with identifying the right person to contact (Feldman, Bell & Berger, 2003). Leonardi (2015) suggested that a good place to start is contacting the management, and the people whose work the researcher wants to observe. In this case, I contacted the human resources manager, who was immediately interested and promised to find someone. This was a great start, but it took a long time to find the person. When the manager was found, I emailed him and explained the research idea in my own words, and we agreed on the first date of shadowing. While gaining access to do the research is critical to the work, it is also the most time-consuming in a short-term ethnography, and requires patience as well as effort from the researcher.

6.2 Future research

Based on this thesis, plans for future research can be made based on some gaps in knowledge. One gap of knowledge is research about the role or work of a manager in the IT field; it was difficult to find any up-to-date information about the business sector in general. A comparison study could be done where a Finnish CEO or a project manager is shadowed, to identify differences between the different levels of managerial work. Doing

comparison studies in several countries across the globe would be interesting; exploring the many variations of managerial work in different cultures. Another type of comparison study could be conducted in other companies that operate in different fields, to clarify whether managers in different fields works the same ways as a manager in an IT business.

It is the activities that form the basis of organisational theories (Barley & Kunda, 2001). If information technology is penetrating all areas of business on some level, information processing, analysis, and communication are done on a computer across different industries, it will influence the activities. To facilitate the transformations caused by digital development, organisational leaders must adapt to the changes in their environments, which may mean the emergence of new leadership roles and governance (Hansen, Kraemmergaard & Mathiassen, 2011). So, for organisational leaders to have updated theories, there must be research in the modern environment. The everyday activities can be the key to a well-organised business. The activities are an important factor in the well-being of the employees who in turn profit the business. This means that up-to-date information about the activities is important in various ways. Korica et al. (2017) point out that Mintzberg has spoken out for the need of inductive studies, rather than studies continuing to rely on the categories he created. Using the old categories may be common because they are still useful and applicable, but doing research with the aim of finding new ideas could offer unexpected information and bring the field up to date. Korica et al. (2017) also describe the different ways the concept of managerial work has been understood, the four different approaches to research in the field; looking for the essence of the work, creating general categories of behaviours, analysing management as power, conflict and control, and lastly researching the meaningful ordinary activities of managerial work. As there are so many ways to look at the subject, different types of studies are needed to form a well-rounded picture of managerial work.

7. References

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