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Leading a Professional Service Firm Without Formal Managers

An explorative study of the co-created leadership model at Centigo

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to in depth study and describe a leadership model in a Professional Service Firm. This is important since the society is becoming more knowledge intensive and information intensive, a fact that is strengthened by the increased number of knowledge intensive firms. This has created a need for new leadership models, which challenge the traditional leader-centric view on leadership. The study has a social constructionist approach to leadership, which means that leadership is viewed as socially constructed through relationships in a social network. The Swedish consultancy firm Centigo communicates that they apply collective leadership and that everyone at the firm is a leader, why the firm is a suitable case in order to in depth study and describe a leadership model. It was found that Centigo's leadership model is co-created. Furthermore, it was found that the organisational structure, the fundamental principles and the core values provide an effective guidance for the consultants and steer how the leadership model is played out in practice. It was concluded that this is the reason for why formal managers are not needed in Centigo's organisation. The risk of that the consultants misinterpret the leadership model was found to be the main factor that makes the leadership model vulnerable. An important implication of Centigo's leadership model is that the consultants conduct tasks that are generally associated with a formal manager. Thus, in Centigo's leadership model everyone is not only a leader at Centigo, but also a manager.

Keywords: Leadership model, professional service firms, social constructionism, shared leadership, distributed leadership, self-leadership, self-directed work teams

Supervisor: Ingalill Holmberg

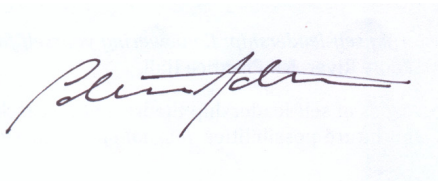
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Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Leadership as a co-created activity.....	3
1.3 Focus of the study.....	4
1.4 Purpose.....	4
1.5 Research questions	4
1.6 Clarification of concepts	5
<i>1.6.1 Knowledge intensive firms and Professional Service Firms</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>1.6.2 The difference between leadership and management.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>1.6.3 Formal managers versus the manager role at Centigo.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>1.6.4 Leadership models and organisational systems.....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.7 Disposition	7
2. DESCRIPTION OF CENTIGO	9
2.1 A Swedish consultancy firm.....	9
2.2 Wanted to create a company without formal managers.....	9
2.3 The fundamental principles	11
2.4 The core values	11
3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN	13
3.1 Social construction of reality	13
<i>3.1.1 A qualitative, explorative and abductive study.....</i>	<i>15</i>
3.2 Case study research design.....	15
<i>3.2.1 Case selection and design</i>	<i>16</i>
3.3 Collection of data.....	16
<i>3.3.1 Collection of data through semi-structured deep-interviews.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>3.3.2 Interview setting and selection of respondents</i>	<i>18</i>
3.4 Categorising and analysing data	18
<i>3.4.1 Work step 1: developed an overview of the empirical material.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>3.4.2 Work step 2: developed codes and themes.....</i>	<i>19</i>
3.5 Limitations and the credibility of the study.....	21
3.6 Ethical considerations	24
4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	25
4.1 Managing the Professional Service Firm.....	25
4.2 An alternative approach: Leadership as a co-created activity	27
<i>4.2.1 Shared leadership</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>4.2.2 Distributed leadership with emphasis on self-leadership</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>4.2.3 Self-Directed Work Teams</i>	<i>32</i>
5. EMPIRICAL RESULTS	34
5.1 Background	34
<i>5.1.1 The professional backgrounds</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>5.1.2 A culture driven by values.....</i>	<i>35</i>
5.2 The leadership model.....	35
<i>5.2.1 Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>5.2.2 Individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of your actions</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>5.2.3 Collective decisions beyond the individual responsibility</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>5.2.4 More hierarchical in projects.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>5.2.5 Different ideas of what collective leadership is, yet similar in practice.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>5.2.6 Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning</i>	<i>41</i>
5.3 Organisational systems.....	43
<i>5.3.1 A compensation model that sends out signals of how you should behave</i>	<i>43</i>

5.3.2 A solid recruitment process to find the right people	44
5.3.3 An organisational structure based on an internal market.....	46
5.3.4 Partner ownership structure is a prerequisite for independency.....	48
6. ANALYSIS.....	50
6.1 The leadership model.....	50
6.1.1 Clear elements of distributed and self-leadership	50
6.1.2 Shared leadership in the Partner Council	54
6.1.3 The leadership in projects has similarities with Self-Directed Work Teams	55
6.2 Confusion accompanied with the concept collective leadership	57
6.2.1 Match between the individuals' identities and the organisational identity.....	58
6.3 Organisational systems create conditions for the leadership model.....	60
6.3.1 The compensation model creates incentives for collaboration	61
6.3.2 The solid recruitment process preserves a sense of organisational identity	61
6.3.3 The internal market encourages strong personal relationships.....	62
6.3.4 The ownership structure, absence of status symbols and avoidance of mergers.....	63
6.3.5 Centigo manages to avoid the weaknesses of a One-Firm Firm system.....	64
6.4 Factors that make the leadership model vulnerable	65
7. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	69
7.1 Conclusions	69
7.2 Implication of conclusions	71
7.3 Applicability	73
7.4 Future research	74
REFERENCES	76
APPENDIX 1 – Interview guide	80
APPENDIX 2 – Overview of interviews	82
APPENDIX 3 – Overview of quotes, codes, links to existing theories and themes ..	83

- Figure 1.** Centigo's organisational structure puts the consultants in the very centre
Figure 2. The process of externalisation, objectivation and internalisation (Berger & Luckmann, 1991)
Figure 3. Developed categories and themes
Figure 4. Work steps for categorising and analysing data
Figure 5. The One-Firm Firm system (Maister, 1993)
Figure 6. Example of shared leadership
Figure 7. Example of distributed leadership
Figure 8. Example of a Self-Directed Work Team
Figure 9. The co-created leadership model at Centigo

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The conditions for leadership have changed as a result of that the business environment is changing in an ever-rapid pace. In turn, this has created a need for leadership models that challenge the traditional leader-centric view on leadership. Therefore, a central and highly relevant question is: what leadership models are suitable in this new business environment?

The present business environment is changing in an ever-rapid pace. As a result, the conditions for leadership have changed, which in turn have created a need for leadership models that challenge the traditional leader-centric view on leadership. Therefore, a central and highly relevant question is: what leadership models are suitable in this new business environment?

Globalisation is a fact, so is digitalisation. New technology, with the Internet in the forefront, has brought new ways of accessing and distributing information within organisations. In addition, our society is becoming increasingly knowledge and information intensive (Barley & Kunda, 2001). With an increasing number of well-educated employees, in combination with the ever more competitive and global environment, knowledge has become a key success factor. Organisations and firms of today have to find new ways to make use of the competences of their employees in order to stay competitive. This is of such an importance that the EU has, in the Treaty of Lisbon, launched a strategy for how the EU can improve knowledge intensive work, as knowledge is seen as the engine for sustainable growth.

Given the changed business environment, there is a greater need than ever before to have a flexible workforce, to reduce the organisational response time and to fully utilise the knowledge inside the firm in order to stay competitive (Pearce, 2004). This becomes prominent in the growing number of *Professional Service Firms* (PSF). PSFs are built on the different competences of their employees and the individual employees are often said to be the key resource in PSFs. Therefore, since many of the leadership models and management principles are developed for product-based industries, they may not be applicable in PSFs.

1.2 Leadership as a co-created activity

A consequence from the society becoming ever more knowledge and information intensive is that it has become increasingly difficult for one single person to be an expert in all knowledge areas within an organisation (Barley & Kunda, 2001; Pearce, 2004). As a result, new organisational models have emerged that do not look anything like hierarchical pyramids (Bennis, 1999), as well as a new alternative approach to leadership where leadership as a co-created activity seems to be preferred.

According to Bennis (1999), a top down approach, in which managers are telling the subordinates what to do are no longer a sufficient way to lead. The reasons for this are many; a change in the dynamic relationship between leaders and those who lead being one of them. Moreover, the leader is no longer the only source of vital information, primarily because the employees nowadays can access information also from other sources. Therefore, the ones who are led are no longer dependent on the leader to the same extent (Brown, 2003). In addition, due to the increased level of education, one could expect that the followers sometimes are even more competent than the leaders, which also may challenge the dynamic relationship between the leaders and those who are led.

Manz and Sims (2001) argue that the new approach to leadership emphasise teamwork, open and distributed information systems, and empowerment of the employees. Also, all employees, regardless of their formal positions within the organisation, can be part of the leadership (Jackson & Parry, 2011). Bennis (1999, p. 74) states: “exemplary leadership and organizational change are impossible without the full inclusion, initiatives and cooperation of followers”. Thus, there is an on-going discussion when talking about leadership, in which focus has shifted from the dominating leader-centric approach to leadership as a co-created activity.

The question of what constitutes a leadership model that is built on co-created leadership is still a relatively understudied theory field. The theories in the new approach to leadership have in common that they all describe leadership as a constantly on-going process between people. However, the theories are somehow overlapping, which indicates that the theory field is emerging and that similar concepts may have been researched under different labels (see the theoretical framework in section 4).

1.3 Focus of the study

Given the on-going discussion regarding whether leadership should be regarded as an individual or a co-created activity, in combination with the emerging theory field, it is interesting to study companies that have an ambition to lead in an alternative way. Therefore, in order to generate more knowledge about the alternative leadership models, we want to study a contemporary PSF that seems to have a leadership model that diverges from the dominating leadership discourse. The Swedish consultancy firm Centigo AB (hereinafter Centigo) communicates that they have collective leadership and that everyone at the firm is a leader (see the description of Centigo in Chapter 2), which indicates that the leadership at Centigo is co-created. Therefore, the firm is a suitable case in order to in depth study and describe a leadership model.

1.4 Purpose

Given the background provided above, the purpose of this study is to:

- *In depth study and describe a leadership model in a Professional Service Firm*

1.5 Research questions

In this study, leadership is viewed as a co-created activity that is socially constructed through interaction between the leaders and the led in a particular context (see the methodology in Chapter 3). Therefore, the research question can be formulated as:

- *How can a leadership model in a Professional Service Firm be constructed and played out in practice?*

A sub question related to this is *what* factors are pointed out as important in the construction of the leadership. As indicated, this study is a case study of the consultancy firm Centigo. Thus, focus lies on which the factors are that develop and sustain the leadership model at Centigo, and in what way they do it. The sub question can consequently be formulated as:

- *What factors develop and sustain the leadership model at Centigo?*

As the purpose of the study is to in depth study and describe a leadership model, the second sub question concerns what makes the leadership model vulnerable:

- *What factors make the leadership model at Centigo vulnerable?*

1.6 Clarification of concepts

In order to facilitate for the reader, clarifications of frequently used concepts will be outlined in the following section.

1.6.1 Knowledge intensive firms and Professional Service Firms

In the late 1980s the concept of *knowledge intensive firms* was introduced both in practice and in academic circles (Alvesson, 1995). There are different meanings about how this category of firms should be defined and about what type of work should be considered as knowledge work. However, in this study, we believe it is sufficient to emphasise that focus lies on knowledge intensive operations, as opposed to capital-intensive or labour-intensive operations (Alvesson, 1995). This is because the operations of management consultancy firms are based on the knowledge of the individuals and hence are considered as knowledge intensive operations.

As indicated, the concept of knowledge intensive firms is linked to PSFs. Maister (1993) stresses that PSFs differ from other business enterprises in two distinctive ways: first, services are highly customised. Second, professional services involve the skills of individuals and are highly personalised. Thus, many of the management principles developed for product-based industries are not applicable in PSFs (see section 4.1).

1.6.2 The difference between leadership and management

A general perception is that in the ever rapidly changing business environment, leadership is increasingly needed from, and have to involve, more people from all levels in the organisational hierarchy. In this study, several leadership theories will be touched upon in order to understand the leadership model at Centigo. However, the difference between the terms *leadership* and *management* is often forgotten or mixed up, even though leadership and management serve different, yet essential, functions. Kotter (2013) argues that the most common mistake people make when talking about the two terms is using them interchangeably, which indicates that they do not see the crucial

difference. Another common mistake that people make is using the term leadership when referring to the people at the very top of hierarchies, and then referring to all the layers below them as management. In addition, people often think about leadership in terms of personality traits. Thus, according to Kotter (2013), all of these are misleading perceptions of leadership.

A distinction that we find useful in this study is the one of Maccoby (2000, p. 57): “Management is a *function* that must be exercised in any business, whereas leadership is a *relationship* between leader and led that can energize an organization”. Consequently, the biggest difference between managers and leaders is how they motivate the employees who work or follow them. The manager’s function includes tasks like planning, budgeting, evaluating and facilitating for subordinates, whereas the leader’s relationship with followers includes motivating, coaching and building trust (Maccoby, 2000). It was confirmed that Centigo share this view as Fredrik Palmgren, who is of the co-founders of Centigo, pointed out that a manager mainly steers and controls, while a leader’s role mainly is to inspire and coach (Svenska Dagbladet, 2011). Furthermore, leadership is about visions, about empowerment and about producing useful changes (Kotter, 2013). Maccoby (2000) also stresses that companies need both good management and great leadership, as it results in an efficient functioning organisation with an energising leadership. Typically, bureaucracies are over-managed and under-led (Kotter, 2001). In contrast, entrepreneurial businesses are often intensely under-managed and intensely led, which for example results in unplanned problems, overspending and missed deadlines. Thus, leadership and management go hand in hand in a successful business.

1.6.3 Formal managers versus the manager role at Centigo

As will be presented in Chapter 2, Centigo describes themselves as a consultancy firm without ‘managers’ in the meaning of the reasoning above. In other words, without managers who steer and control. Yet, Centigo has roles that are labelled *Team Manager* and *Client Manager*, which may cause some confusion for the reader. The Team Manager role and the Client Manager role at Centigo respectively refer to someone who is responsible for different responsibility areas, and not to someone who steers and controls (Palmgren, 2013). Thus, in this study, when referring to the more traditional manager role described above, we will use the expression *formal manager*. In Swedish,

the term formal manager would be translated to 'chef'. However, as will be discussed later on, the absence of formal managers does not imply that there is an absence of steering and controlling functions at Centigo.

1.6.4 Leadership models and organisational systems

In this study, we view *leadership models* as structures that provide effective guidance and decision-making within organisations in order to predict behaviours. As indicated, different theories on what constitutes such leadership models have emerged over the years when focus has shifted from the dominating leader-centric approach when talking about leadership, to leadership as a co-created activity. To clarify and relate back to the difference between leadership and management, we view the leadership model as overarching, under which both leadership and management is exercised. In turn, different leadership models go hand in hand with different theoretical concepts.

Moreover, *organisational systems* refer to the components in an *organisational structure*. The compensation model and the recruitment process are examples of organisational systems that are integrated in the organisational structure in order to accomplish an overall goal. In this study, much focus will be on the organisational systems as they may steer and control the behaviour of the consultants. Given that they steer and control, we relate the organisational systems to the function of management discussed in section 1.6.2. Therefore, organisational systems can be viewed as included in the overarching leadership model.

1.7 Disposition

After this introductory chapter, a description of the consultancy firm Centigo will be provided in Chapter 2. In the subsequent Chapter 3 the methodology will be presented. The methodology chapter covers the research approach with the underlying standpoints, the research design and the collection of data. This chapter also covers how the data were categorised and analysed as well as a discussion of the potential limitations of this study. Chapter 4 covers the theoretical framework, where relevant theories are described. In the subsequent Chapter 5, the empirical findings of the case study are presented, which are then analysed in Chapter 6 by using the theory presented in the theoretical framework. The conclusions drawn from the analysis are outlined in

the final Chapter 7, where the implications of the conclusions also are discussed. Lastly, suggestions on future research are provided.

2. DESCRIPTION OF CENTIGO

In the following section a background description of Centigo will be presented. The description includes the foundation of the firm and the organisational structure as well as the fundamental principles and the core values.

2.1 A Swedish consultancy firm

Centigo is a Swedish founded consulting firm that "helps leading businesses and organizations through critical change projects" (Centigo, 2013). Their mission is to "inspire and lead people to create healthy and vigorous enterprises and organizations", which they call Business Wellness (Centigo, 2013). With a long-term perspective in mind and an ambition of building a firm growing with profitability that would survive, its founders Fredrik Palmgren, Johan Waller and Kristian Liljefors founded Centigo in 2002 (Palmgren, 2013). Centigo has a partner ownership structure with 20 partners, and all together there are around 180 consultants. As of today, they have offices in Stockholm and Malmö as well as associates in China and India. Centigo is a part of the The Business Wellness Group AB, which previously was called the Centigo Group AB. The Business Wellness Group AB includes the companies Accigo AB and Sapigo AB besides Centigo and all together there are about 220 consultants.

2.2 Wanted to create a company without formal managers

In 2002 the recession was a fact, which gave the founders time to reflect and plan for starting up Centigo. Early on in the process, they decided that they wanted to create a company without formal managers with (Palmgren, 2013). As stated by Johan Waller in an article by Fjällborg (2012), at Centigo they do not use the Swedish word 'chef' at all. Besides not having formal managers, there are no written down rules or fixed structures for knowledge sharing, distribution of information and feedback at Centigo. Instead they rely on that the consultants act in accordance to the fundamental principles and the core values (see section 2.3 and 2.4). As stated by Palmgren (2013), the founders believe that formal managers and hierarchies hinder the development of individuals, since individuals who only do what the formal manager tell them never become really successful (Palmgren, 2013). In an article by Ahlström Jensen (2012), Fredrik Palmgren explained that the one who is closest to the business situation and the client should be the one who makes the decisions in order to be responsive to the changing business

environment. Thus, hierarchical firms in which the operational decisions are made farther away from the business situation and the clients, often tend to become static and inflexible (Palmgren, 2013). When designing what Centigo's organisational structure should look like, the founders drew upon their previous experiences from different consultancy firms. This resulted in that an organisational structure best described with circles rather than as a hierarchical pyramid was developed, which is illustrated in Figure 1. below:

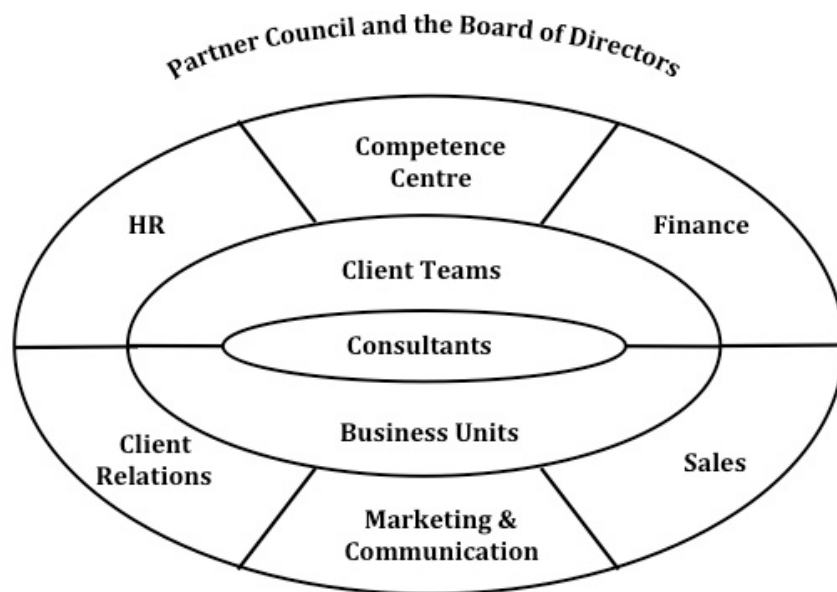


Figure 1. Centigo's organisational structure puts the consultants in the very centre

The inner circle illustrates how the individual consultants¹ are put in the very centre, which emphasises a high degree of individual responsibility and a mandate to make their own decisions (Palmgren, 2013).

The second circle is often referred to as *the internal market*, where supply and demand of competence steer the allocation of projects (see the empirical results in section 5.3.3). This refers to the supply and demand between the *Client Teams* and the *Business Units*. The Client Teams consist of consultants who temporarily work together with a client. *Client Managers* typically coordinate the work in the Client Teams, but ultimately *Client*

¹ When using the term consultants, we refer to everyone working at Centigo except from the four persons with administrative roles.

Partners are responsible for the Client Teams and the relationships with the clients. The clients vary in both size and industry and together they make up a heterogeneous client base. Within the Client Teams, there can also be *Project Teams* led by *Project Leaders*. In contrast to the Client Teams, the Business Units are fixed units that gather competence in a certain field, for example within Retail, Strategic IT and Change Management. Within the Business Units, there are *Team Managers* who are responsible for a group of individuals and their professional development. Ultimately, *Managing Partners* are responsible for the Business Units. However, *Associate Partners* can also be ultimately responsible, both for the Business Units and the Client Teams. When the firm grows, new Business Units and Client Teams are added, which represents an organic growth.

In addition to the Client Teams and the Business Units, the third circle includes six leadership dimensions: *Client Relations*, *Sales*, *Marketing & Communication*, *HR*, *Competence Centre* and *Finance*. There is always a Partner who is responsible for each dimension. Ultimately, the Partner Council and the Board of Directors deal with questions that have consequences for everyone in the firm.

2.3 The fundamental principles

Centigo has three fundamental principles: collective leadership, independence and an ambition-driven approach. On Centigo's website it is written that *collective leadership* means that the responsibility and decision-making is delegated and distributed to the individual as far as possible and that it is only delegated to the management board as a last resort. *Independence* from external owners implies that Centigo always should be profitable enough to be self-financed and owned by people involved in the company. This allows Centigo to focus on their two key stakeholders: the client and the consultants. Lastly, the *ambition-driven approach* means that Centigo develops by the sum of individual ambitions of the consultants. There must always be someone who is willing to take responsibility for every single question, in order for Centigo to be successful. (Centigo, 2013)

2.4 The core values

Centigo states that they are a value-driven company, which means that their values steer the direction of their actions and development. The values are based on the shared

fundamental principles presented above and include: professionalism, an entrepreneurial spirit and balance. *Professionalism* refers to that Centigo always delivers what they promise in client projects, and also to the way the consultants treat each other. Centigo states that they dare to challenge given truths, thereby they have an *entrepreneurial spirit* and a desire to develop good ideas into good businesses. The final value is *balance*. Balance refers to the maintenance of balance between several important factors such as professionalism and entrepreneurial spirit, people and company and work and life. (Centigo, 2013)

A description of the fundamental principles and the core values that we found useful is that the fundamental principles are the DNA of the consultants working at Centigo and the core values are their personality (see empirical results in Chapter 5).

3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The following section will start with a presentation of the social constructionist approach to leadership that is used as an underlying standpoint in this study. Furthermore, the research design will be outlined, which includes the data collection and the data interpretation. Finally, potential limitations and the credibility of the study will be discussed.

3.1 Social construction of reality

With point of departure in the need for new leadership models, a social constructionist approach to leadership is an attractive way to think about our society - the approach enables us to view leadership as *constructed* through social interaction within a particular context (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Thus, in an attempt to make sense of the social world, knowledge is viewed as constructed as opposed to created. Meaning is shared among individuals through social interaction and thereby constitutes a taken-for-granted reality, which is perceived as objective (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). As a consequence, leadership may have different meanings in different contexts. In addition, since common sense is negotiated between people, institutions and human significations will be a part of the objective reality.

The social constructionist approach became prominent with Berger and Luckmann's book "The Social Construction of Reality". The book was first published in 1966 and has been associated with the post-modern era in qualitative research (Andrews, 2012). Today, there is a growing body concerning the social construction of leadership, which draw upon a variety of definitions, approaches and methods (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010). Most of the theories on leadership with point of departure in the social constructionist approach avoid the traditional leader-centric view, which means that it is not the leader's personality traits and behaviour that primary influence the followers' thoughts and actions (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010). Instead, emphasis is on leadership as a co-constructed reality, which goes hand in hand with the alternative approach to leadership as a co-created activity. In particular, outcomes and processes of interaction between and among people are central. Given the emphasis on social interaction, language and communication are recognised to have fundamental roles.

There are three coherent key concepts within the social constructionist approach that explains the process of constructing leadership; externalisation, objectivation and internalisation, which is illustrated in Figure 2. below. According to Berger and Luckmann (1991), the institutionalised world cannot be understood by just observing it. Instead, one must go out and actively *externalise* the institutionalised world, which results in externalised products of human action. In this study, this is understood as when ideas about collective leadership at Centigo are expressed in talk and action, both internally and in projects. *Objectivation* is the process where these externalised products attain the character of objectivity. In other words, this is when the externalised products are perceived to be what constitutes the objective reality. Paradoxically, this means that the humans create a world that they later experience as something other than human-constructed. Finally, *internalisation* is the moment when the objectivated social world, or objectivated events, is individually interpreted and assigned personal meaning. This process involves the integration of attitudes, values and standards as well as the opinions of others into one's own identity. In this study, this is understood as the process of how the consultants interpret Centigo's fundamental principles and core values. (Berger & Luckmann, 1991)

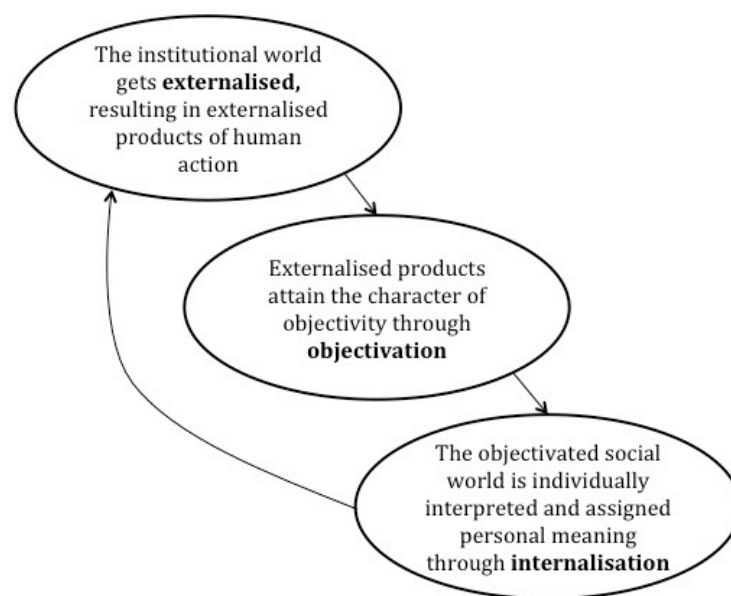


Figure 2. The process of externalisation, objectivation and internalisation (Berger & Luckmann, 1991)

3.1.1 A qualitative, explorative and abductive study

As mentioned, Berger and Luckmann's book "The Social Construction of Reality" has been associated with the post-modern era in qualitative research (Andrews, 2012). The approach has essentially emerged from the limitations and critique of quantitative research approaches. These include difficulties in describing social interaction and putting norms and values into context (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011). Therefore, a *qualitative research* approach is suitable when aiming to describe and provide an increased understanding of a phenomenon in a certain context (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2011). Hence, the qualitative research approach will help us to fulfil the purpose of this study (see section 1.4).

The study can be considered to be *explorative*, as it aims to describe an emerging concept and thus contribute to the exploration and understanding of new leadership models. The explorative character is often associated with an inductive approach, where broad generalisations are made from observations. However, this study does not only include inductive elements, but also deductive elements since research already has been done within chosen study field. For example, concepts like distributed leadership and shared leadership have already been studied (see theoretical framework in Chapter 4). Simultaneously, new perspectives within the field will be explored. Given that the researchers work from two different angles at the same time; from empirical observations and from theoretical understanding from previously studied concepts, the understanding will grow gradually. Hence, the study can be labelled *abductive* (Alvesson & Sköldeberg, 1994).

3.2 Case study research design

As we in this study intend to describe a social phenomenon within a particular context, designing the study as a case is an attractive alternative. What constitutes a case study has been a matter for debate. However, Yin's (2003, p. 13) definition is commonly used: "*A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident*". Thus, a case study is well suitable for qualitative research from a social constructionist approach, as it allows for a deep understanding of the social

phenomenon at hand. In addition, the case study method is suitable when few previous studies have been made within the research area (Benbasat, Goldstein & Mead, 1987).

3.2.1 Case selection and design

The conventional answer to how a case should be selected is that it should be representative for the phenomenon under investigation. Gillian and Cassell (2012) argue that researchers should consider choosing cases that, for example, represents extreme situations, critical incidents and *polar types*, where the experience of the phenomenon is intense and visible. As we wanted to study an alternative leadership model, a first criterion was to find a company or organisation that communicates that they apply an alternative leadership model. Such company or organisation can be considered to be a polar type. Another criterion was that the company or organisation is situated in Stockholm, so that we would be able to conduct face-to-face interviews (see section 3.3). With this in mind, we came in contact with one of the consultants at Centigo, who responded positively to our request of doing a case study.

Buchanan (2012) states that a case study can be predefined in focus and scope, but that it also can be emergent and self-defining. Initially, we believed that a second case study would be necessary in order to interpret and compare the empirical findings from Centigo with a company or organisation that face similar challenges. However, as the research progressed, it became clear that the social phenomenon at Centigo was highly complex and seemed to be both visible and intense. Consequently, the case could be considered to be a polar type. Given the scope and the purpose of the study, we decided to go deeper in this particular polar type case. By doing so, we believed that we would be able to draw stronger and more interesting conclusions.

3.3 Collection of data

During the collection and interpretation of data, we found support in *grounded theory*, which is a qualitative research approach developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Grounded theory is a discovery process, where the researchers attempt to extract theory from the data itself rather than from a predisposed hypothesis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As this study is of a somewhat explorative character and aims to describe a leadership model in an emerging theory field, instead of verify existing theory, one could consider that the study goes in line with the grounded theory approach. However, we cannot

claim that the observations in this study were unconditionally explored as some research already has been made within the field. Nevertheless, we found support in grounded theory when structuring our data collection and interpretation of data. In the discovery process of grounded theory, the second observation or data collection is influenced by the analysis of the first observations, which implies that the data collection and analysis goes hand in hand and that new discoveries along the way steer the direction of future work.

3.3.1 Collection of data through semi-structured deep-interviews

Interviews are central in social science research and are probably the most commonly used technique in qualitative research (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011). Interviews are a way of gaining knowledge about social circumstances and are thus suitable when a social constructionist approach to leadership is used. In this study, we conducted semi-structured deep-interviews in order to gain more focused information, as they allow the interviewer to ask more specific questions than in unstructured interviews (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011). However, we did not want to conduct structured interviews, as we then would have to strictly follow predetermined question. Hence, semi-structured interviews were preferred as the respondents then still have the flexibility to design the answers in his or her own way and that the interviewer still can ask questions other than the ones predetermined.

Semi-structured interviews support the usage of an interview guide (see Appendix 1). The use of focused interview questions is in line with the grounded theory approach (Duffy, Ferguson, & Watson, 2002). However, focused interview questions are generally not used until later on in the data collection process as the analysis of data from unstructured interviews has shown to be more suitable at an initial stage as it gives more direction to subsequent semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the interview guide was updated with more specific question as the interview process progressed. This is in line with the emergent and self-defining case study mentioned above, and motivates the move to more focused interviews questions as the understanding grew.

Other alternatives of qualitative methods that could have been suitable when studying the construction of leadership at Centigo are focus groups and direct observations. However, the question of accessibility limited our alternatives. As the majority of the

consultants spend most of their time at the client's office, both focus groups and direct observations were found to be difficult to arrange, which may be a potential weakness of this study (see section 3.5)

Accordingly, in this study, the main data was collected from 15 semi-structured deep-interviews that became more focused as the research progressed. In addition, we used secondary sources, in particular articles and Centigo's website, to compare and confirm what was said in the interviews.

3.3.2 Interview setting and selection of respondents

Deep-interviews imply longer meetings between the interviewer and the respondents, where the goal is to establish an open atmosphere in order to gain knowledge about the respondent's personal feelings and reflections (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011). Thus, the 15 semi-structured deep-interviews ranged from one to two hours in length, in average about one and a half hours. The interviews were recorded and both of us also took notes. Moreover, the interviews were conducted face-to-face at Centigo's office at Vasagatan number 7 in Stockholm and were held in Swedish in order to create an open and comfortable atmosphere. To enhance the explorative potential and to reduce the risk of individual bias, both of us were present at each interview (Voss, Tsikritis, & Frohlich, 2002). As recommended by Yin (1994, p. 56), our intention was "to ask good questions, to be a good listener, to be adaptive and flexible, to have a firm grasp of the issues being studied, and to be unbiased by preconceived notions".

As previously stressed, we wanted to in depth study and describe the alternative leadership model at Centigo, which is subject to be interpreted, described and understood in different ways by the individual consultants. Therefore, in order to obtain many perspectives, we interviewed individuals who have different backgrounds, experiences and roles at Centigo. We came in contact with the different persons through our contact person at Centigo, which could be perceived as a potential limitation or distortion of our results (also see section 3.5).

3.4 Categorising and analysing data

Generally, qualitative methodologies lack clear procedures of how to handle the large volume of empirical data. As this study finds support in grounded theory, all data was

divided into themes that describe the social phenomenon in the particular context at Centigo. The data was then further revisited as new data was collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In the following, we aim to provide a detailed description of the work steps for categorising and analysing the data.

3.4.1 Work step 1: developed an overview of the empirical material

Shortly after the interviews, we compiled our individual notes and made comments about words and expressions that brought spontaneous interpretations and questions to our minds. Hence, in accordance to grounded theory, the analysis started already when the first data was collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). However, the interviews were not analysed in depth in this work step, as we first wanted to get an overview over the whole material. To get an overview, we divided distinguishable aspects of the interview material into *categories*, which resulted in a first division of the empirical findings. We did not transcribe the interviews entirely, as we left out the parts that we found irrelevant. For example, we did not transcribe the parts where we introduced ourselves and talked about the purpose of the study. The transcriptions facilitated for the interpretation and enabled us to exemplify the empirical findings with exact quotes, which increases the transparency of the research (Alvesson, 2011).

The first division of the empirical findings resulted in the following categories, which also represents the outline of the empirical results in Chapter 5:

- Background
- The leadership model
- Organisational systems

3.4.2 Work step 2: developed codes and themes

After the first division of the empirical findings into categories, it was time to more fully explore why the respondents expressed themselves the way they did. This was done through a deeper interpretation of the material and a review of our previous spontaneous comments and thoughts. In this step, we found support from Glaser & Strauss's (1967) method for data collection. In their method they emphasise *coding* of the empirical findings, which is done by labelling or summarising each transcribed sentence or text fragment in every possible way, called *open coding*. For example, the

quote "Leadership is not only included in the role of the project leader. Everyone at Centigo is a leader, all the time." (Client Manager 1), was assigned the code "everyone is a leader" (see all quotes and codes in Appendix 3). This step is in line with an inductive approach. However, as this study is abductive, the codes were then linked to theories (see theoretical framework in Chapter 4), in order to see to what extent the codes could be integrated with existing theory. Gradually, we were able to find patterns in the categories, which enabled us to consolidate the codes into *themes* with similar or related codes linked to existing theories. Accordingly, the data that was collected during the later interviews was only transcribed and coded if it was considered to be relevant for the previously developed themes, which is called *selective coding*. This can also be linked to the fact that the interview guide was updated with more specific questions as the interview process progressed. The following Figure 3. presents developed themes:

Categories	Themes
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional background and why choosing Centigo - A culture driven by values
The leadership model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers - Individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of your actions - Collective decisions beyond the individual responsibility - More hierarchical in projects - Different ideas of what collective leadership is, yet similar in practice - Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning
Organisational systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A compensation model sending out signals of how you should behave - A solid recruitment process to find the right people - An organisational structure based on an internal market - Partner ownership structure is a prerequisite for independency

Figure 3. *Developed categories and themes*

Eventually, we experienced that we reached a *theoretical saturation* since nothing that came up in the later interviews or found in secondary data neither was new to us nor surprising. Figure 4. on the following page provides an overview of the conducted work steps:

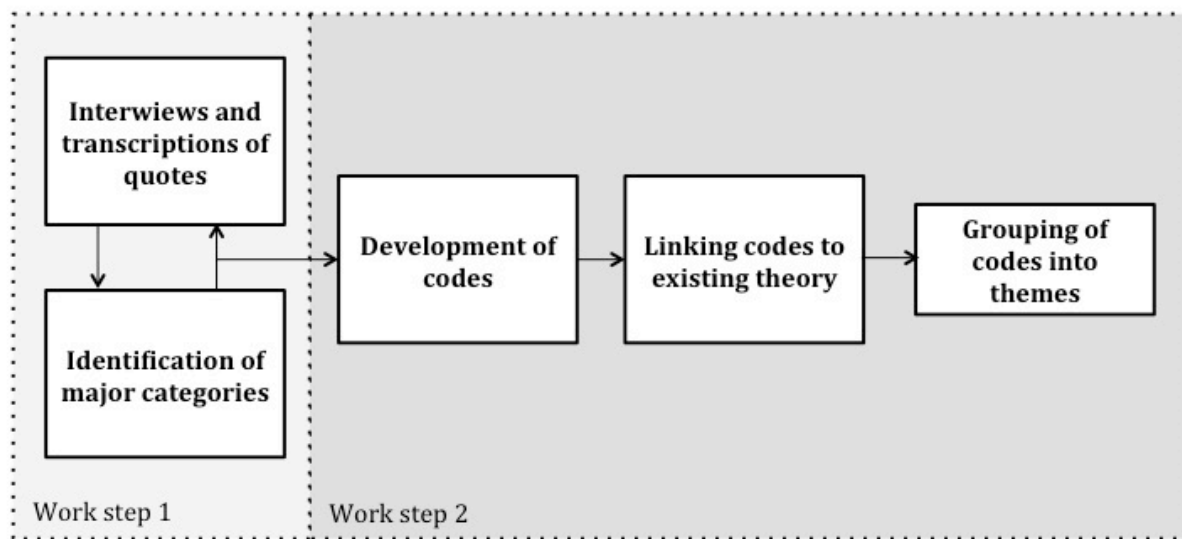


Figure 4. *Work steps for categorising and analysing data*

3.5 Limitations and the credibility of the study

Qualitative research and case studies are not universally accepted, even if they are well established and often used in organisational research. Buchanan (2012) argues that debates and critique of the qualitative research are not essentially about the designs or methods; they arise from a conflict between positivistic and constructivist epistemologies. The challenge is to ensure that the approach is valid and valuable across the research community.

As a first critique, the researchers' choice of theoretical perspective, interview questions, interview techniques and samples, may be a potential distortion of the results of the research (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011). For example, a limitation in this study could be that we came in contact with all of the respondents through our contact person at Centigo and hence, we were not able to ask the respondents for recommendations of whom to interview next ourselves. What is important to have in mind is that power relations, traditions and resources may have influenced our contact person's choice of respondents. However, this was partly handled by together with our contact person we decided on different sets of criteria for each of the respondents in order to ensure that we got to interview a broad mix of consultant from Centigo. As mentioned, these criteria included background, experiences and roles.

Furthermore, the use of a recorder may have resulted in that the respondents become guarded. For example Kenealy (2012), suggests that interviews should not be recorded as it makes the respondents become too guarded. However, as Alvesson (2011) stresses, the respondents' sensitivity for the recorder may vary depending on how comfortable they are in the interview situation. Therefore, during the interviews we always assured the respondents that the recorded material would only be used by us, which we believe made them feel more comfortable. Also, according to us, the benefit from being able to repeatedly listen to the recorded interviews outweighed the risk from the respondent being too guarded. Another limitation worth considering is that the interviews were held in Swedish. Therefore, a caution should be made for potential accidental mistakes when translating the transcribed interviews into English.

This study is abductive, with both inductive and deductive elements (see section 3.1.1). A central element in grounded theory (and in inductive approaches), which was used as support when categorising and analysing data, is the neutrality of the researcher (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The inductive approach can be criticised as the researchers may have preconceived views and hence do not describe an objective picture of the reality. Thus, it is not likely that the researchers approach the research field as *tabula rasa*. In fact, we had previous knowledge about leadership theories. Also, it is worth mentioning that we had a preconceived picture of that collective leadership was the actual leadership model at Centigo, which was shown not to be the whole truth (see analysis section 6.2). However, combining inductive and deductive elements in this way is what makes this study abductive. The abductive approach allowed us to bring in new perspectives along the way and did not lock us in one approach, which may happen if the researcher strictly uses either an inductive or a deductive approach (Patel & Davidson, 2003). Also, by approaching the respondents in a subjective way, in this case with own understandings and knowledge about leadership, the interview setting can be seen as an asset rather than an obstacle as it enabled us to interpret and understand the research area better (Patel & Davidson, 2003). The pre-knowledge also enabled us to reason and discuss with the respondent on a higher level.

In addition, with point of departure in the social constructionist approach where humans construct the objective reality in a social context, it was neither our intention nor our purpose to determine whether the objective reality is 'correct' or not. Our

intention was instead to describe *how* it is constructed. Furthermore, describing the society through different perspectives is a prerequisite for social science that tries to take the complexity of the society seriously (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011). Different perspectives generate more descriptions of social and society phenomenon, which together gives a richer and more nuanced picture of society. This again justifies why we used a qualitative research methodology.

In addition, critics also highlight the lack of generalisation in qualitative research. That is, you cannot generalise findings from small idiosyncratic² samples and apply them on a wider population. However, as Buchanan (2012) argues: the critique towards generalisation points out a lack of understanding of both qualitative research methods and the concept of generalisation. Generalisability, or external validity, is related to the application of findings into other settings than studies. When applying it in other settings it is not clear what and who are included in the wider population, which points out a weakness of the concept generalisation itself. Going beyond statistical generalisation, there are other modes in which findings from qualitative research actually are generalisable. In the case of grounded theory, it is relevant to mention *analytical refinement* (Buchanan, 2012), which means that the findings from case studies do not imply a generalisation from sample to population, but from experience and observation to theory. Hence, it is possible to generalise findings from qualitative research to theory. Still, it is important to have in mind that we never know with certainty what would have happened if we had chosen to study an additional case (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011).

Based on the above, the challenge with qualitative studies is to create credibility. Symon and Cassel (2012) suggest that in order to gain credibility, qualitative research must address theoretical positions that shape a particular inquiry and ensure congruence between methodology and the philosophical framework. Moreover, strategies to establish thoroughness and the analytical lens through which data is examined have to be clear. Thus, by providing a detailed description of the research design, the methodology and of how the analysis was conducted, we believe that the criteria for gaining credibility were met.

² Idiosyncratic findings mean that the findings can have one meaning in one context, but another meaning in another context.

3.6 Ethical considerations

During the interviews, we were never asked to guarantee the respondents anonymity. However, in the study we have chosen not to write out the names of the respondents. This is because we believe that it does not add weight to the study. In fact, we believe that it is of more interest for the reader to know what role the different respondents have, as their role, and consequently their experience, may affect how they talk about the leadership model.

An ethical consideration that can be discussed in this study is that we never returned to the respondents in order to have them confirm their quotes. As this is a qualitative study, misinterpretations can occur, especially when translating the quotes in Swedish to English. Thus, instead of only going back to the recorded material and relying on our translations, it probably would have strengthened the study if the respondents had confirmed their quotes after they were translated. However, since we have chosen not to write out the names of the respondents and the fact that the conclusions are not based on individual respondents' reasoning, we still consider it to be ethical the way it was done.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A social constructionist approach to leadership is used as an underlying standpoint to understand how leadership is constructed at Centigo (see Chapter 3). In the following chapter, complementary theories will be outlined in order to compare Centigo's leadership model with previous studied theoretical concepts in the analysis Chapter 6. First, a background on how a professional service firm typically is said to be best led and managed will be provided, followed by theories in which leadership is viewed as a co-created activity, both on a general and on a project level.

4.1 Managing the Professional Service Firm

Maister's (1993) book "Managing The Professional Service Firm" is one of the world's most read books on the topic of how to manage PSFs. Despite the fact that the book was published already in 1993 and that organisational models have changed dramatically since then, the book is still one of a few comprehensive guides on this topic. In this study, the book provides a background and illustration of typical managerial problems in PSFs.

The book outlines different parts in the organisation that are important when managing a PSF, including the clients, the people, the management style and the partner ownership structure. The book culminates with something that Maister calls the *One-Firm Firm*. A One-Firm-Firm is a way of organising a PSF, which puts focus on the outcomes of the organisation as a whole rather than on the individuals' performance. Generally in PSFs, there can be a tension between the profitability of the whole organisation and of individual groups. This is for instance recurrently revealed when individual profit centres skip activities that could have benefited the firm as a whole. This behaviour could result in that instead of assisting other groups to contribute to the whole organisation, the individuals focus on improving the profitability of their own group. However, in One-Firm-Firms, this tension is dealt with through organising the PSF in a way that puts more focus on collaboration. The One-Firm Firm is characterised by loyalty, downplaying stardom and teamwork. It is also characterised by long hours and hard work, a sense of mission and significant attention paid on customer service. PSF that are not organised as a One-Firm-Firm, elements of individual

entrepreneurialism, autonomous profit centres, internal competition and highly decentralised, independent activities are often found to a larger extent.

The One-Firm Firm is sustained through the *One-Firm Firm system*. This implies that there is a heavily centralised recruitment, firm wide training and that the firm grows its own professionals. Firms with such a system often tend to avoid mergers, to be selective in their business pursuits and to have a compensation model that encourages the individuals to contribute to the outcome of the whole organisation. Furthermore, engagement in non-billable activities, open communication and an absence of both status symbols and a governance style with strong leaders are common. Figure 5. shows how the One-Firm Firm is sustained through the One-Firm Firm system:

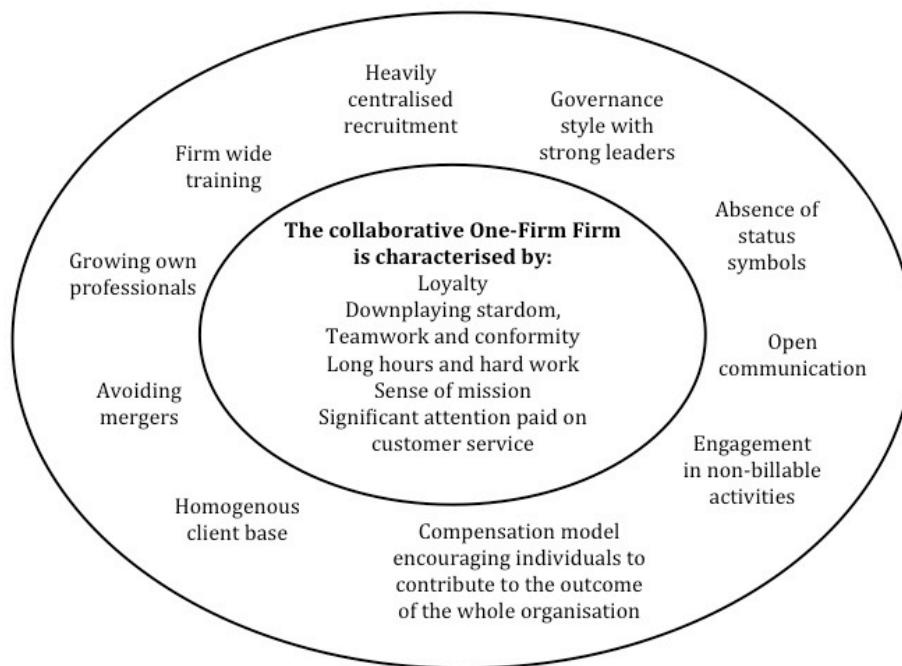


Figure 5. *The One-Firm Firm system (Maister, 1993)*

When it comes to *how* to create a collaborative One-Firm Firm, Maister (1993) stresses that there is no straight answer to the question, but that there are no shortcuts when creating collaboration. This means that, if a firm wishes to receive the benefits from collaboration, the firm has to make full-hearted investments in the system. Besides investing in the One-Firm-Firm system, Maister (1993) stresses that there are principles

that may help when establishing a collaborative firm. First, since cooperation emerges when people find an interest to do favours for each other, *long term repeated interaction between the same people* is a prerequisite. Second, Maister argues that the *durability of relationships is the foundation for cooperation*. Therefore, firms that have grown through mergers seem to have less internal cooperation. Moreover, firms must create situations where people from across the whole organisation interact frequently because *groups do not cooperate, people do*. In addition, the cooperation *must be a two-way street*, which means that both parties give and receive favours; otherwise the situation will become unstable. Finally, *to get a favour you must give a favour*, in other words a collaborative firm is built on reciprocity.

Maister (1993) argues that the One-Firm Firm system is highly successful and powerful. However, the system also has weaknesses. A key weakness is the danger of *self-congratulatory complacency*, which means that a well functioning integrated system may become insensitive to external changes in the environment as the organisation is satisfied with how the system currently is functioning. Thus, the strength of the commitment to a firm's way of doing things can simultaneously be its greatest weakness. Another possible weakness is that a One-Firm Firm may be, at least in the short run, *insufficiently entrepreneurial*. Other more individualistic firms that promote individual performance, for example PSFs without the One-Firm-Firm system, may be better at recognising emerging trends and are hence likely to be more entrepreneurial. Building on this, One-Firm Firms are seldom first movers: they rather try to be good at entering emerging markets as a late second or third.

Based on the above, it is interesting to compare similarities and differences between Centigo and Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm. Can Centigo be considered to be a One-Firm Firm? In that case, how do they manage to sustain the One-Firm Firm system and create a collaborative firm? This will be further discussed in the analysis section 6.3.

4.2 An alternative approach: Leadership as a co-created activity

There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define it. As presented in the introduction, a new alternative approach to leadership has emerged. In the approach, there are several different theoretical concepts in which leadership is viewed as a co-created activity instead of the

leadership being ascribed to one single person. In addition, the theories have in common that they all describe leadership as a constantly on-going process between people, which is well aligned with the social constructionist approach on how our society is constructed through social interaction.

In the following, theoretical concepts within the alternative approach on leadership will be presented in order to help us to understand what constitutes the leadership model at Centigo on a general level. The concepts are somewhat overlapping, which indicates that they are emerging and that similar concepts may have been researched under different labels. Thereafter, concepts related to the leadership at the project level will be presented.

4.2.1 Shared leadership

Pearce and Conger (2003) claim that leadership is a shared activity. Depending on the situation and the required skills and knowledge, an individual may step up and take the lead or step back to follow in order to achieve a set goal. Organisations that are organised in a way that they have a CEO, a COO and a CFO are good examples of when the leadership is shared. This is for instance illustrated by the fact that the one who is best suitable of them takes the lead in a particular situation. For example, the CFO will take the lead when it comes to the finance while the CEO or the COO will take the lead in other situations. In this study, this can be relevant when discussing how the Partners share tasks and responsibilities among themselves (see Figure 6.).

There are many definitions of shared leadership. However, in a majority of the definitions it is stressed that hierarchal authority plays an important role when the leadership is shared. For example, Jackson and Parry (2011) acknowledge the importance of both hierarchical authority and collaboration since the shared leadership between team members neither work or is necessary in all circumstances. For instance, this could mean that the leadership does not have to be shared in less complex situation. In addition, when Döös and Wilhelmson (2003) discuss shared leadership they do it in terms of leadership on higher levels in hierarchical organisations. For instance, they discuss the fact that an organisation can have two CEOs. Furthermore, Pearce and Conger (2003) define shared leadership as: *“a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the*

achievement of group or organizational goals or both. This influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence" (2003, p. 1). An example of this is, as stated above, the collective agrees on which person is best suitable in a particular situation to step up and take a vertically leading role. In other words, in every situation there is *one* explicit leader but leader may change over time. Hence, the roles in a group are flexible, which means that an individual's role may shift from leader to follower and from follower to leader depending on the situation (Friedrich et al., 2009).

However, some authors downplay or even exclude the vertical aspect and point out that shared leadership relies on a dynamic exchange of lateral influence among peers (Cox, Pearce & Perry, 2003). Despite the different definitions, the key idea is the same – shared leadership is a group process among several individuals and there is only one leader at the time.

Leaders engaged in shared leadership, are according to Heenan and Bennis (1999) extremely talented men and women, who often are more capable than their superiors. Moreover, a condition for shared leadership is that all members in a team both feel and are engaged to the extent that they do not hesitate to influence and guide the other team members when needed (Pearce, 2004). According to Pearce (2004), leadership is best shared when the work is complex and requires creativity and interdependence.

An aspect of shared leadership that can be its biggest strength but also its biggest weakness, is the strong positive correlation between the relationships between the individuals who share the leadership and the performance of the company. This means that if the relationship falters, the company performance will likely falter as well. It was pointed out by Döös and Wilhelmson (2003) that having common core values based on humility, mutual respect, loyalty and trust among themselves are prerequisites for the relationship between the leaders in shared leadership. They also pointed out that sharing the same core values is important. Despite the fragility of the relationship between the individuals who share the leadership, the complexity of organisations today makes it unlikely that one single leader will have influence over all members of the organisation, why shared leadership is preferred. This aspect highlights the fit between shared leadership and today's organisations (Jackson & Parry, 2011).

Example of shared leadership among Partners

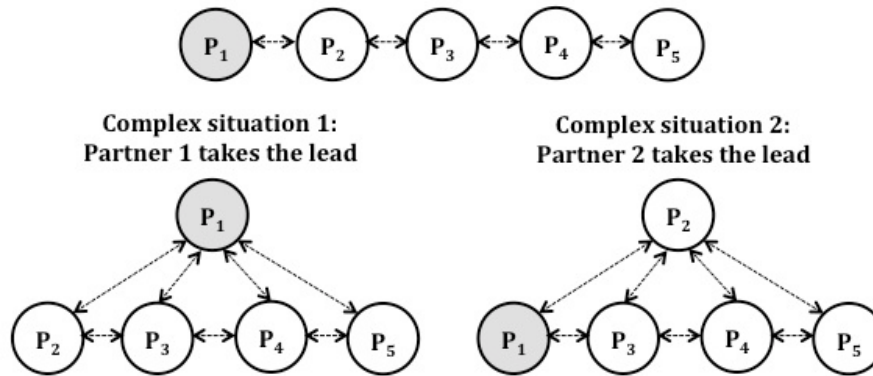


Figure 6. *Example of shared leadership*

4.2.2 Distributed leadership with emphasis on self-leadership

Distributed leadership, also referred to as dispersed leadership, departs from that leadership is a co-created activity just like the concept shared leadership does. Leadership is consequently an emergent property of a social system, in which leaders' and followers' share the process of enacting leadership. Thus, leadership is described as something that can be moved between and distributed across a number of individuals, rather than being assigned to one single leader (Gibb, 1954; Jackson & Parry, 2011).

In distributed leadership, leaders at different levels in the organisational hierarchy are responsible for clearly defined responsibility areas. In the case of Centigo, the fact that the Partners are responsible for different leadership dimensions and the Client Managers are responsible for the Client Teams exemplifies this (see section 2.2). Thus, the biggest difference between the two concepts lies in to what extent the leaders and the followers are dispersed. Within shared leadership, the roles are dynamic and flexible, which means that a person who is the leader today can be a follower tomorrow depending on the skills required in a given situation. Also, shared leadership is often found within the same organisational level. In contrast, the issues within the distributed leadership is not about how to share the leadership on a particular hierarchical level, instead the key lies in liberating the followers so that they can use their own abilities to lead themselves and others (Kouzes & Posner, 1998). Hence, in distributed leadership

the role of the leader is better described as someone who helps others to lead themselves. More specifically, the role of the leader is to develop capacity in others and to turn the followers into self-leaders. When doing so, it is of great importance that the leader explains *why* tasks should be executed, and not just state *how* they should be executed (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Consequently, the leader may be better referred to as an external leader and the followers as co-producers and self-leaders rather than recipients of leadership.

Given the leader's role, an important component in the distributed leadership is the follower's ability to exercise *self-leadership*. Self-leadership can broadly be defined as the process of influencing oneself (Neck & Manz, 2010). Self-leadership takes place when individuals align their actions with standards and norms in situations, which they have chosen to engage in (Manz, 1986). According to Manz and Sims (2001), self-leadership requires that both individuals and teams set their own goals as well as plan for and implements their own task and operating procedures. This means that each and everyone are in charge of what work is done and how it is done. Furthermore, self-leadership requires that both individuals and teams are self-observant and critical, that they solve their own problems and that they are motivated by the natural rewards associated with their work. However, a paradox is that the external leader, in other words the leader who helps the individuals to exercise self-leadership, not only is aligned with, but also a necessary component, in the concept of self-leadership. Thus, self-leadership and the external leadership are complements and not substitutes.

The effects from self-leadership are multi-folded. However, most research has pointed towards positive effects on work-related outcomes. For example, a study by Birdi et al. (2008) showed that a higher level of individual self-control, the essence of self-leadership, is one of the most effective methods to improve the employee productivity. In addition, in a review by Stewart, Courtright and Manz (2011), the authors found that several studies have shown that self-leadership reduces the level of stress and anxiety while it increases the self-efficacy, confidence and job satisfaction.

Additionally, the key to success lies in distributing the leadership across the population and not concentrating it within the workload of a few. In order to do so, the organisational structure must be made less bureaucratic so that the potential of distributed leadership can be liberated (Jackson & Parry, 2011). However, according to

Gordon (2002), deep power structures in organisations will maintain the traditional notions of differentiation between the leaders and the followers regardless of to what extent the elements on what he calls the 'surface-level' are made less bureaucratic. For instance, Gordon (2002) means that even if the hierarchy is flattened out and the responsibilities delegated, these changes on the surface will not change the deep power structures. Hence, the deep power structures will keep on serving to reinforce pre-existing leadership relativities. The following Figure 7. provides an illustration of distributed leadership:

Distributed leadership among the population

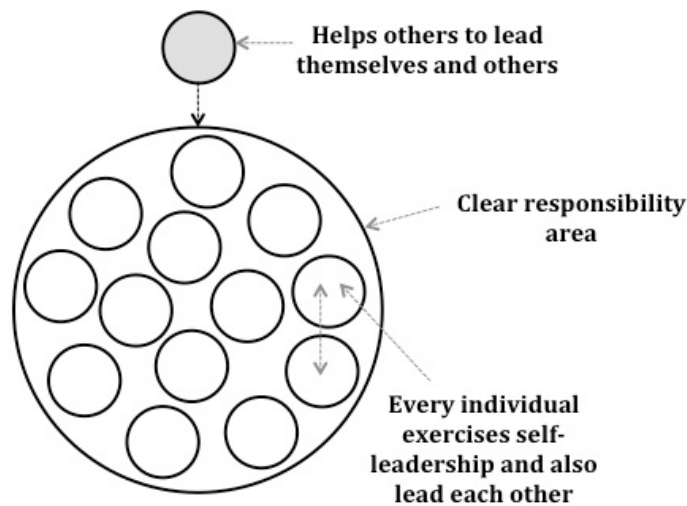


Figure 7. *Example of distributed leadership*

4.2.3 Self-Directed Work Teams

So far, shared leadership and distributed leadership have been described in order to help us to understand what constitutes the leadership model at Centigo on a general level. However, as Centigo to a large extent work in Project Teams, it is necessary to also include concepts related to the leadership on a project level. Literature on self-directed teams, or self-managed teams, relates to situations where the authority and the responsibility that usually are associated with a formal manager's or a project leader's position are turned over to the team members. Thus, these concepts propose a radical shift from hierarchical supervision to collaborative management (Barker, 1993), and are therefore relevant when studying the leadership at Centigo. For example, Barker (1993)

describes self-managing teams as instead of being told what to do by a supervisor or a formal manager, the team gathers information, takes collective responsibility and acts on its own. However, given that Centigo actually have a role called Project Leader, we will take a closer look at the theory of Fisher (2000), who indicates that a team leader's role clearly is needed in contrary to Barker (1993).

Fisher (2000) uses the term *Self-Directed Work Teams* (SDWT) in his book "Leading Self-Directed Work Teams", when describing a model that are responsive and flexible in order to compete in today's rapidly changing business environment. In similarity to Barker (1993), SDWT include members who take direction from the work itself, rather than relying on procedures and supervision. However as mentioned, according to Fisher (2000), a team leader role is clearly needed, which is indicated by that the book is targeted to leaders of such teams (SDWT-leaders). The role of the SDWT-leader is to represents the team, to procure resources, to solve problems and to coach the team, which contrasts with team leader's work in more traditional organisations (see Figure 8.). Typically, such work has similarities with the work of a formal manager, which includes activities like scheduling, coordinating department activities and implementing improvements. Now, these responsibilities lie on the SDWT instead. In other words, if relating back to the reasoning about the difference between leadership and management in section 1.6.2, typical manager tasks now lies on the team.

The SDWT-leader coaches the team

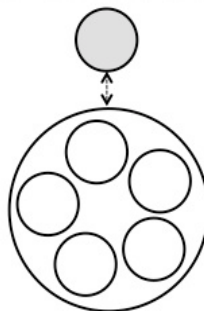


Figure 8. *Example of a Self-Directed Work Team*

5. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

In this section, the empirical findings from the data collection will be presented (also see Appendix 3). First, a general background of Centigo and its consultants will be provided, followed by a description of how the concept collective leadership was described in the interviews and in the secondary sources. Lastly, the organisational systems that were pointed out during the interviews as important factors for Centigo's leadership model will be presented.

5.1 Background

As mentioned in section 2.1, the founders' previous experiences from consultancy firms guided them when designing the firm and deciding what parts to include just as well as what parts to exclude. They wanted to build a firm with a long-term perspective where driven people would be able to work during all stages in life. They also wanted to create a firm that would be able to grow organically, which they could be proud of. To build such firm, one of the co-founders explained that they put a lot of ethics on the map from the very beginning. To do so, the fundamental principles and the core values were developed early on and have since then permeated the firm. Today, 11 years later, driven people who like being challenged and who highly value freedom work at Centigo. As written on Centigo's website (2013); "Successful companies tend to have highly motivated, competent people who act on the basis of a shared set of core value."

5.1.1 The professional backgrounds

The majority of the people who work at Centigo hold a degree in either business or civil engineering. Approximately half of the respondents mentioned that they joined Centigo directly after their graduation, while the other half mentioned that they have worked at other firms before, mainly at other consulting firm. The majority of the ones with previous work experience recurrently mentioned motives of why they joined Centigo related to how Centigo works; they emphasised the core values, the lack of external owners and the opportunity to develop in the way they want to. For instance, one of the Partners said:

"I was looking for the entrepreneurial spirit again and I knew it existed at Centigo. I knew that my own aspirations and drive would fit here, that I would get a chance to develop and make a lasting impression." (Client Partner)

On the other hand, most of the respondents who joined Centigo straight after their graduation mentioned that they mainly based their choice on their gut-feelings and the impressions they got when meeting with representatives from Centigo at different events.

"I did not really know about the details. [...] My gut-feeling told me that I should join Centigo." (Consultant 1)

5.1.2 A culture driven by values

When asking for descriptions of the culture, one of the respondents described the culture as a franchise-culture in which the consultants are franchisees. Others described the culture with expressions such as ambitious, 'I-want-spirit', lack of rules and a big portion of freedom. In addition, the majority also described the culture at Centigo as open with a high level of trust and that it mainly is built on common sense and individual responsibility. One of the interviewed Partners described the culture in the following way:

"We are a company driven by values, where the co-workers take on a very big responsibility. That is our culture. If talking in broader terms, one could say that we have a big portion of an entrepreneurial spirit, or maybe rather intrapreneurial spirit. However, it all relates back to the responsibility." (Managing Partner)

Furthermore, one of the Managers expressed that she sees a clear link between the culture and the core values.

"The culture is probably the same as our core values, so if you get the core values right and acts accordingly, then that constitutes the actual culture." (Team Manager)

5.2 The leadership model

5.2.1 Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers

When first touching upon what leadership actually is, some of the respondents described leadership as leading oneself while others focused more on what leaders do in

practice, such as inspiring and motivating. When going more into detail it became clear that the respondents share an understanding of that leadership not only is included in the role of for example a Client Manager or a Project Leader. This was pointed out in an article by Appel and Kronblom (2012), where it also was written that a central aspect of Centigo's leadership model is that there are no formal managers, but for that sake not said that there are no leaders. In addition, almost all of the respondents said that at Centigo, everyone is a leader all the time. One of the Partners explained how this is played out at Centigo:

"It is not like we have the leaders and the co-workers separated. Everyone has to be leaders, but then you may be leader for yourself, for others or for everyone."
(Managing Partner)

However, even if everyone is a leader, one of the Managers explained that experience does matter in an organisation such as Centigo. For instance, the ones with more experience are often leaders for others and not only for themselves.

"There are no formal managers, but it is not entirely unimportant with titles. After all, age and experience matter." (Team Manager)

In addition, one of the Partners said that he thinks that the fact that everyone is said to be a leader is a prerequisite for the model to work.

"The thing with our model is that everyone takes responsibility and that everyone acts like leaders. Without that, our model would not work." (Managing Partner)

5.2.2 Individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of your actions

Clearly, the distributed responsibility is central when talking about the leadership at Centigo. In fact, a handful of the respondents focused just on the distributed responsibility when they described the leadership model at Centigo. For example:

"The leadership is fully decentralised, the leadership lies on an individual level. The consequence is that you make your own decisions. It is ambition-driven. The responsibility is distributed in the whole organisation." (Client Manager 3)

The reasoning above can be related to what was said by one of the co-founders in an article by Ahlström Jensen (2012) where he explained that in a leadership model without formal managers, as much decision power and individual responsibility as

possible should be decentralised. During the interviews it was described that Centigo is organised in such a way that there is always someone who is responsible for every question – ‘for every single atom’ - at Centigo.

The individual responsibility is reflected in both small and big things. It can be everything from taking the responsibility for emptying the dishwasher or making sure that a conference room looks nice when leaving it, to that you as an individual ensure that you get certain information or take the responsibility to act in a professional way. Furthermore, it can also be about that you ask for feedback and that you point out the direction of your career. For instance, instead of evaluating an individual’s development with pre-set goals, Centigo has what they call ‘ambition talks’. In the ambition talks, the individual consultant set his or her own ambition and goals and discuss them with a Team Manager. In this way, the responsibility of the personal development moves from the Team Manager to the individual, who in turn becomes responsible for pointing out in which direction he or she wants to develop. Simply, Centigo wants its consultants to be driven by their own ambitions and of what they want to do themselves (Fjällborg, 2012).

A key that makes it possible to have such big portion of individual responsibility is that the individuals always have to stand for their own actions and to take responsibility for the consequences. This was confirmed in article by Fjällborg (2012), in which one of the co-founders stated that Centigo’s philosophy is to foster people to take responsibility for what they are doing and the consequences of it. Consequently, it is not ok to blame mistakes on others, a behaviour that often was referred to as being ‘under the line’. The individual responsibility also enables the individual to say no to a project. However, being free to say no when being asked to work in a project does not mean that you only can do projects that are ‘fun’. Several respondents stressed that you sometimes have to do more boring yet instructive projects in order to develop, to gain experience and to learn how to act professionally, especially as a Junior Consultant. Also, one of the Associate Partners emphasised that if a consultant have said no to a project once, he or she might not be the first one who the Client Manager ask when another project comes up.

An additional example of how the leadership model is played out builds on the quote below by one of the Client Partners. Even though the responsibility is distributed to the individuals, there are always support and guidance to get. However, the support and

guidance do not necessarily have to come from an assigned leader or formal manager, which is common in more traditional firms. Instead it can come from anyone in the organisation, which relates back to the fact that everyone is considered to be a leader at Centigo.

"When I use the word leader I don't mean a position, but an individual. A new-recruit can exercise leadership just as well as a more senior person, it's about personal traits, and how you take responsibility for yourself." (Client Partner)

To be able to distribute the responsibility, one of the co-founders pointed out the importance of courage, transparency and dialogue in an article made by Svenska Dagbladet (2011). This means that the consultants must have courage to trust each other and that the information is transparent so that the individuals can make good decisions. In addition, there has to be a constant dialogue between the consultants in order to be able to put things in a context and to make others understand why things are important. Associate Partner 2 confirmed the importance of trust:

"[...] leadership builds on that you are brave enough to let go of control and that you let the individuals make decisions. And, you can only do that if you are a tight group who understand each other, who trust each other and who have the same view on how to work towards the client, and how to work internally." (Associate Partner 2)

5.2.3 Collective decisions beyond the individual responsibility

Whom a decision has consequences for determines who is included in the decision making process. Hence, some decisions are too big to be made by an individual as they affect more than one person. Sometimes this can cause discussions and slow processes, at the same time as the discussions may make the decisions better as arguments will be shared and more perspectives brought into the picture (Consultant 1).

The respondents seemed to agree on that Centigo does not want to have formal managers as it would imply a risk of becoming static. As it is now, the distributed responsibility gives the consultants freedom and influential power, which in turn creates an organisation full of ideas and an entrepreneurial spirit (Universum, 2012). One of the respondents even said that what you lose in effectiveness, you gain in flexibility and dynamism. However, several of the respondents indicated that it sometimes can be a bit messy without a formal manager and that it can be frustrating that no one can tell

anyone else what he or she should do. A good illustration of this is done by one of the Partners:

"The model has no drawbacks, but consequences. Sometimes the decision-making is slow [...]. The person who is responsible for a big question cannot make the decision. Instead his or her task is to anchor the decision. Therefore decisions take time. We also make decisions later than many others. We do not make decisions that do not have to be made. Concluding one can say that [the individual] decisions are quick and big [collective] decisions are slow." (Managing Partner)

5.2.4 More hierarchical in projects

During the interviews it became clear that the leadership works slightly different in projects than at the overall internal level. For example, one of the Client Managers explained that some clients may perceive Centigo's way of organising as messy. Therefore, Centigo have to shape the project organisation depending on the structure in the client organisation:

"In client projects, the client sometimes expects there to be a Project Leader. Consequently, we shape the project organisation in the way the client wants it."
(Client Manager 3)

As a consequence, there is often more reporting and documentation as well as more hierarchical out in the projects, as the clients expects that. One of the respondents used the word meritocracy when explaining how it works in the projects. This means that the one who is best suitable leads, which not always necessary has to be the person with the most experience, according to the interviewed Co-Founder.

The overarching aim is to create client value and this is done by 'working with the client, not for the client'. In order to create value, each member of the team is expected to take a big portion of individual responsibility for the tasks. Hence, everyone is still expected to also lead him or herself even though there is a Project Leader in the projects. The project teams normally consist of people both from Centigo and from the client.

5.2.5 Different ideas of what collective leadership is, yet similar in practice

As written in the general description of Centigo, collective leadership is one of Centigo's three fundamental principles. However, during the interviews it was unclear whether

collective leadership also is the label on Centigo's leadership model or not. While some described collective leadership as the fundamental principle it actually is, others described it both as a fundamental principle and as the leadership model. An example of the unclearness is that it is written on the Swedish version of Centigo's website that they govern and manage the firm based on the concept collective leadership. At the same time, the term distributed leadership is used on the English version of the website. In addition, in an article by Svenska Dagbladet (2011), it is written that collective leadership is rooted in strong values and based on individual responsibility. Consequently, the concept collective leadership was described in several different ways, which indicates that it by some is seen as something more than just a fundamental principle.

This was confirmed during an interview, this time with one of the Partners. He used the term 'distributed leadership' to describe what collective leadership is. Just like on the English version of the website, the following quote illustrates the perspective where collective leadership is seen as something more than just a fundamental principle:

"Collective leadership is... distributed leadership. Some think that collective leadership means that everyone can take part in every decision, but that is not the way it works. The collective leadership builds on the fact that there are very well defined areas of responsibility." (Managing Partner)

In addition, the interviewed Co-Founder explained that, according to him, collective leadership cannot be isolated from the other fundamental principles.

"Everything goes hand in hand. It means something to us, but you cannot isolate it from the rest of the context" (Co-Founder)

As clearly indicated, the understandings of what collective leadership differ among the respondents. In the analysis in Chapter 6, the potential implications from this will be discussed. However, as described in section 5.2.2, the respondents described how to behave in practice in similar ways. Thus, despite different ideas of what collective leadership is, the individuals act similar in practice.

5.2.6 Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning

All the respondents, in different ways, explained that the strong presence of the fundamental principles and core values enable for the decentralisation of responsibility and allow for a big portion of decision freedom. In fact, one of the Client Managers expressed that he thinks that the shared fundamental principles and core values are what hold everyone and everything together. Consequently, learning about the fundamental principles and the core values at Centigo was pointed out as key to know how to act despite the presence of clear structures, written down rules and formal managers. During the interviews, the respondents often referred to the same catchy phrase, namely that ‘the fundamental principles are our DNA and the core values are our personal traits’.

When asked about how the consultants first learned about the fundamental principles and the core values, the answers somewhat differed depending on whether it was a junior or a more senior person. While the Junior Consultants attend the Junior Consultant School during their first six weeks at Centigo, the ones who are recruited to a more senior position are thrown out into the organisation more directly and are hence learning by doing to a greater extent. Generally, the juniors get extra support during their first three years. Some of the respondents expressed that they think Junior Consultants typically adapt more easily to Centigo’s environment than seniors. Reasons such as ‘they get it into their blood’, ‘they don’t have any other references’ and ‘projects are allocated to them’ were repeatedly mentioned.

According to one of the Managers, who was recruited to a senior position, it takes about two years to crack the code. In addition, she brought up the different introductions for juniors and seniors:

“Nothing like the ‘Junior Consultant School’ is required [for the seniors], but seniors may need help to build their internal network. We had half a day of introduction and a dinner where the founders discussed how Centigo was founded and the vision they had.” (Team Manager)

During the interviews, in particular during the interviews with Partners, the importance of telling why things are done in a certain way was stressed, instead of only telling what and how:

"We always have discussions and explain why Centigo works in a certain way [...]. If you only answer the questions what and how, it will not work. Comments like 'that is just the way it is' will not take us anywhere." (Managing Partner)

Conferences are held quarterly where all the consultants meet and discuss what Centigo stands for. Generally, discussions and reasoning play a big part when learning about the fundamental principles and the core values. According to one of the Partners they probably talk more to each other about the background and ideas behind Centigo than other firms do. One of the Managers confirmed this by stating "Everyone can tell the story". However, only talking about the fundamental principles and the core values are not enough – you are learning by doing.

"You can imagine what it is when they tell you about it, but it [the learning] is in the experience." (Junior Consultant)

Several respondents expressed that it is a challenge when consultants misinterpret what Centigo's leadership model stands for. A common misinterpretation that was mentioned was that everyone can be part of the decision-making and are free to do whatever they want. One of the Associate Partners stated that it easily becomes 'hallelujah', given the big portion of freedom. In the same spirit, another Associate Partner also highlighted that Centigo not is a "playhouse". In addition, one of the Partners pointed out that the 'I-want-spirit' does not mean that the consultants can do whatever they want to:

"The misinterpretation may be our fault, that we have communicated it in the wrong way. Responsibility and free will are not related. Responsibility and consequences are related. You cannot just say 'no, I do not want to'. 'I-want-spirit' means that you have a drive, an engine. The use of the right words is very important." (Client Partner)

Several respondents also said that if everyone starts to interpret what the fundamental principles and the core values stands for in practice in his or her own way, the organisation may become spread out. At the same time, one of the Associate Partners stressed that Centigo does not want to tighten up because then "we lose what is so cool about it".

A question related to this is how Centigo can maintain the fundamental principles and the core values when growing. The majority of the respondents mentioned that Centigo

probably would be able to grow as long as they keep on recruiting the 'right people' and continues to have on-going discussions about the fundamental principles and the core values. On the same topic, one of the Client Partners stated that the culture is superior the growth, and that the values lies in their culture. Thus, Centigo should be able to grow as long as the values are sustained:

"Through values, that is how you relate to things. As long as we can find people who share our values then we will be able to grow. If we start to compromise with our values in benefit for growing, then it will go fast downhill." (Client Partner)

However, when growing, more engagement and maintenance of the fundamental principles and the core values will likely be required:

"As we grow it requires more time to build the collective, or distributed leadership. It demands more engagement". (Client Manager 4)

5.3 Organisational systems

5.3.1 A compensation model that sends out signals of how you should behave

A Junior Consultant at Centigo starts with a fixed compensation for three years. Thereafter, when becoming a Business Consultant, a flexible part is added, which is based on the consultants own invoicing. When then becoming a Manager, the compensation model is once again changed. A Client Manager's compensation consists of three parts: a fixed part, a percentage of his or her own invoicing and a percentage of the total invoicing by the other consultants in their team. A Team Manager has a fixed part and a percentage of the result of their Business Unit. As one of the Client Managers explained, each individual can be seen as a profit centre that gets a percentage of his or her own profit. Consequently, the individuals are responsible for both the income and the costs associated to their profit centre.

"If a consultant wants to take a course, then he or she has to stand for the cost. Probably, the course will be beneficial for the workers profitability in the long run."
(Managing Partner)

One of the Co-Founders stated that he thinks that the compensation model fosters an 'economical thinking' and makes the workers act more as business managers. The majority of the respondents confirmed the importance of the compensation model and

how it creates incentives to perform well and sends out a signal about how to behave at Centigo. According to the interviewed Co-Founder, the compensation model plays a big part in explaining why Centigo can delegate the responsibility to the individual consultants to such a vast extent.

In addition, one of the Managers explained that the compensation model also could explain why there is little internal competition at Centigo. As the compensation is built on how it goes for everyone, it simply creates incentives for the consultants to collaborate. For example, Team Managers get a percentage of the result of their Business Unit, which means that the Team Manager will get a higher compensation if the others also perform well.

However, the compensation model may not suit everyone. As the Junior Consultant explained, self-confidence is needed when having this model, as you have to believe in yourself and in that you will be asked to work in projects. In addition, Associate Partners 1 pointed out that there is no 'overall fairness' in the system and that people sometimes 'get stuck in between' projects. Hence, for instance, if you have bad timing and do not get any projects you will not get the flexible part of the compensation.

5.3.2 A solid recruitment process to find the right people

All the respondents stressed that the recruitment process is crucial, as the consultants are seen as a key resource at Centigo. Finding the 'right people' who share Centigo's fundamental principles and core values and who have the right personality traits was repeatedly mentioned during the interviews. For example:

"There is no difference whether you come in as a junior or a senior. It is all about sharing our values. You can develop knowledge, but values are static. You get your personal values at a young age; you have them already when you come to Centigo."

(Client Partner)

Besides being entrepreneurial, ambition-driven and having an 'I-want-spirit', many of the respondents highlighted the importance of having strong social and personal skills. According to Client Manager 4, a typical Centigo consultant is extrovert, likes challenges and is both reflective and analytical.

The recruitment process is solid and includes several interviews. The recruitment of Junior Consultants includes five steps: application, a mini-case with personal interview, another case, a group-case and then a final meeting in order to decide who should be the applicants' Team manager. However, Centigo does not only recruit many juniors but also some seniors. The reason for this is, according to Consultant 1, that seniors can bring in competence that has not been built internally. In addition, Client Manager 1 stressed that the CV is especially important during the recruitment of seniors, in order to ensure relevant experience. In total, the seniors have to go through four interviews where depth in competence, width in competence and personality are observed before a final 'meet and greet' interview. The respondents, who have been involved in the recruitment process of seniors, stressed that they strongly emphasise what it is like to work at Centigo in order to ensure that the applicant feels confident in that he or she will be successful in such an environment. As one of the Associate Partners put it, it is important not to 'sell in' the concept of Centigo in order to recruit consultants who believe that they can become successful at Centigo.

"First interview: monologue from my side, not dialogue. I tell them how it is, then the person can go home, think, and decide whether it suits or not." (Associate Partner 1)

In the end of the day, the actual decision about whom to recruit is based on the gut feeling, both when it comes to the recruitment of Junior Consultants and of consultants to more senior positions.

"At least three Centigo people will meet with the applicant. There need to be a good gut feeling saying 'I want to work with this person'. If the person [one of the interviewers from Centigo] says no, then that is enough to say no. In this way, we ensure that the person who gets in at Centigo has the right attitude and likes the model." (Associate Partner 2)

The solid recruitment process that favours entrepreneurship, has resulted in that the consultants who are working at Centigo are on the borderline between wanting to work hard in a group and wanting to work on their own. Even though it is positive if the consultants are entrepreneurial, think in new ways and are creative, the interviewed Co-Founder emphasised that a big portion of entrepreneurial spirit also can be a challenge. According to him, this is because persons who work best individually may not get

energy from the collective. After telling us about a group of three consultants who took leave of absence and then quit and started their own business, Associate Partner 2 continued by saying that they do not want the consultants to be too entrepreneurial. According to her, they wish for an entrepreneurial spirit within the context of Centigo. One of the other Associate Partners shared an illustrative description of this.

"We encourage entrepreneurial spirit, but there is also a limit. There are those who always want to run their own business, who do not want to work in a collective. Do they want to work hard in a group or not? It is a fine borderline in that." (Associate Partner 3)

5.3.3 An organisational structure based on an internal market

As presented in Chapter 2 where Centigo is described, the organisational structure is better referred to as different circles rather than to as a hierarchical pyramid. When designing the structure, the basic idea was to have Business Units (also referred to as Competence Units) on one side and Client Teams on the other side, as it creates a situation on the internal market where supply and demand of competence steer the allocation of projects. Associate Partner 1 highlighted that it is 'a healthy game' that creates a balance between the clients and Centigo. In addition, the interviewed Co-Founder explained that the Business Units are like firms that market and sell their competence to the Client Teams. The Client Teams, in turn, are built on client relationships and have to acquire the competence from the Business Units.

During the interviews, it was brought up that building your 'internal network' is important on the internal market. Most of respondents used the terminology 'market yourself in the internal network' when describing how to become successful and to be requested for projects. This was described as important, as working in a project or not affects the individual consultant's compensation. One of the Partners explained why marketing yourself may be more important at Centigo than at other firms:

"The internal network has a great impact and plays a bigger role than at other firms. Maybe that is because we are like entrepreneurs. If you run your own business, then you are also very dependent on your network." (Managing Partner)

In addition, one of the Client Managers explained:

“We don't have a HR- department [...]. To get a project, you have to know what is in the pipeline and you have to let the responsible person know that you are available.”
(Client Manager 1)

As mentioned, Centigo looks for consultants with strong social skills. With the following quote, one of the Partners further developed the logic why this is important.

“You have to market yourself. It is not always the best person who becomes most successful here. It is easy to think ‘it is only what I have done in the past that matters’, but then you forget how important it is to be social and spend time with people. That is truly an important thing. You have to be a genuine and nice person. It is related to leadership, to be able to lead and being led. Then other people want to work with you.” (Client Partner)

During the interviews, going to conferences, daring to say what you think and taking the opportunities to make your voice heard were all mentioned as ways of how to market yourself. It was also mentioned that the need for personal marketing creates incentives for knowledge sharing and distribution of information. For example, one of the consultants highlighted that he share knowledge in order to signal to other people that he is an expert within a certain field. Moreover, participating in internal projects was also mentioned as a good way of marketing yourself in the internal network.

“Expectations in the internal network affect what project you join. You have to market yourself and join internal projects. Taking that extra step. You build your brand in here.” (Associate Partner 1)

All of the respondents mentioned that they have been involved in internal projects. Besides that it is a good opportunity to market yourself, some respondents said that the reason why they have been involved in internal projects is because it is a fun and an easy way to get to know people internally. In addition, it is an easy way to keep an eye on who is working with what at the office. However, one of the Partners mentioned that for him, the main reason for joining internal projects is not the opportunity to market himself, but the opportunity to be able to steer the direction of the internal projects and in turn the direction of Centigo.

What seemed to be a general perception among the respondents was that it is easier for seniors than for juniors to market themselves due to their specific competence at the same time as juniors get more 'for free'.

"Might be easier for a more senior person who understands the importance of building up an internal network. But juniors get more 'for free', as they start at the same time as many others." (Client Manager 3)

A challenge related to this, is the fact that it may be more difficult for newly recruited seniors to find projects straight away and to break in to the internal network and understand whom they should talk to.

"It can be tougher to come in as a senior than a junior, especially the social part. You have to create your own internal network, walk around and present yourself to everyone, go on lunches with people, understand whom the others are." (Associate Partner 2)

Something else that was brought up as a challenge was the retention of the balance on the internal market. In other words, retaining the balance so that none of the Business Units and the Clients Teams get too strong. As the interviewed Co-Founder said, disagreements of what is right and wrong when it comes to the allocation of projects can create a tension between the Business Units and the Client Teams. He also stressed that one of the most difficult situations is when a consultant have worked in a Client Team for so long that the client does not want to let go of the consultant, which exemplifies a situation where the client side has grown too strong.

5.3.4 Partner ownership structure is a prerequisite for independency

During the interviews the respondents were in agreement that the partner ownership structure is important for how Centigo works. The interviewed Co-Founder explained that the partner ownership structure enables Centigo to be independent from external shareholders. Consequently, there are no external shareholders who have more power than the consultants at Centigo, which would go against Centigo's philosophy. He also linked the partner ownership structure to the aim of building a long-term firm:

"The partnership structure is very important. It makes us have a long-term ambition, the company is supposed to survive longer than us. As a result, we have to foster and educate the ones that will take over after us. The company has to grow. I

am planning to be here another 20 years and I have to think about how I can support my colleagues and make them become better than I am.” (Client Partner)

The fact that everyone gets the opportunity to become a Partner, given that the person has the competence and interest needed etc., was also stressed as an important consequence from the partner ownership structure. This may decrease the internal competition:

“In hierarchal companies, where higher positions are few, not everyone has the opportunity to reach the top. At Centigo new [partner] positions are created, which decrease the internal competition, as there is no limitation for the number of partners.” (Associate Partner 1)

6. ANALYSIS

The following analysis starts with applying theories from the alternative approach to leadership on the case of Centigo, in order to describe their leadership model. Thereafter, a discussion regarding the interpretation of the concept collective leadership will be outlined. Focus will then move to the impact from the organisational systems in the light of Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm. Finally, the factors that make the actual leadership model vulnerable will be discussed.

6.1 The leadership model

In the empirical findings, almost all of the respondents pointed out the fact that there are no formal managers at Centigo. It was also said that everyone is a leader, despite his or her role. For instance, the quote by the Client Partner in section 5.2.2, who said that the word leader not refers to a certain position but an individual, illustrated this. Thus, it seems like a leadership model without formal managers not implies that there are no leaders. This is well aligned with the alternative approach to leadership outlined in Chapter 4, why the theoretical concepts from this alternative approach will be applied on the case of Centigo. This will help us to describe Centigo's leadership model. First, theories that are applicable to the overall leadership model will support the analysis, followed by theories that are applicable to the project level.

6.1.1 Clear elements of distributed and self-leadership

The empirical findings showed that a handful of the respondents used the word *distributed* when describing the leadership model on an overall general level. However, even though they used the label of one of the outlined leadership theories in Chapter 4, it is not clear whether they referred to the actual theory behind the distributed leadership or if they for instance referred to the distributed responsibility that plays an important role at Centigo. An example of this is that when they said distributed leadership they often mentioned the distributed responsibility in the same sentence, which indicates that they may not have had the theory in mind. The fact that they used the term distributed leadership when talking about Centigo's leadership model is not strong enough to be able to draw the conclusion whether that this is the case or not. To be able to conclude if that is the case or not, a more thorough analysis has to be done.

A first observation that indicated that Centigo has a distributed leadership model is that it has clearly defined responsibility areas. A fact that exemplifies this is that Partners are responsible for different leadership dimensions and Team Managers are responsible for the development of the consultants within their Business Units. If drawing this to its extreme, when responsibility is distributed to the individual consultants. In other words, into the very centre of the organisation, the individuals can be said to be responsible for his or her own individual responsibility area.

According to the theory, the leader's role in distributed leadership is not about handing down leadership to followers, but of helping them to lead themselves. Supporting others is hence a central task for the leader (Kouzes & Posner, 1998). The empirical results showed that even though the responsibility is distributed to the individuals, there are always support and guidance to get. This indicates that the atmosphere at Centigo is supportive, which is coherent with the distributed leadership theory. Also, as Pearce and Conger (2003) stress, it is important that the leader explains *why* tasks should be done and not only *how*. It became prominent that this was the case of Centigo, as no one at Centigo has the mandate to tell anyone else what to do. For example, it was shown that a person, who is responsible for a certain question that has consequences for many, has to anchor the decision in the organisation and cannot make the decision on his or her own. In other words, the person has to explain *why* things need to be done in a certain way and not only *how*.

The empirical findings showed that there are similarities between the role of the leaders at Centigo and the role of the leaders described in the distributed leadership theory. In other words, it seems like the leaders at Centigo are just as supportive and helpful as the leaders described in theory are. At Centigo, this kind of supportive role can especially be associated with the role of the Team Manager. For instance, it was showed in the empirical results that the Team Manager holds ambition talks with the consultants in order to help them develop. During an ambition talk, the individual's ambition and goals are outlined and discussed. Instead of evaluating the personal development to pre-set goals, the ambition talks are designed in a way so that the responsibility of the individual's future development moves from the manager to the individual. Building on this reasoning, it was described in the theory that an important component in the distributed leadership is the follower's ability to exercise *self-leadership*. As Manz and

Sims (2001) stress, self-leadership requires that the individuals set their own goals and plan for how to reach them, which is done in the ambition talks. Furthermore, the fact that the responsibility is distributed to the individuals to a great extent at Centigo, implies that the individuals can act on their own as long as they take the consequences for their actions. Thus, in accordance to Manz and Sims (2001), the individuals at Centigo stand for and implement their own tasks.

As pointed out in the empirical results, having the courage to trust each other, transparency of information and a dialogue to make others understand why things are important, can be seen as factors that enable for distributed responsibility. Thus, besides having a supportive leader, it appears like enablers for distributed- and self-leadership also can be found deeper down in the organisation. This can be related to the interdependent relationship between the leadership model and organisational systems (see the discussion in section 6.3). Nevertheless, in the empirical findings it was said that Centigo's culture has a big portion of freedom and a high level of trust, which confirm that there are structures embedded in the organisation that enable for the distributed responsibility and self-leadership. Thus, factors at Centigo that enable for self-leadership do not only include the supportive leader, but also the whole organisation.

The clear link between the distributed responsibility and the individual decision-making at Centigo is another illustration of that there is a big portion of self-leadership. According to the theory, self-leadership requires that the individuals are self-observant, critical and that they solve their own problem (Manz and Sims, 2001). Moreover, self-leadership is said to improve the employee productivity. During the interviews, the quick decision-making process at an individual level was mentioned at several times as well as the positive effects from the 'I-want-spirit'. One could think that if you work with what you have chosen yourself, you are likely to do a better work and be more motivated, which could be expected to improve the productivity of the consultant.

Even if the empirical findings showed that the individuals make most of the decisions, it was pointed out that some decisions simply are too big to be made by an individual as they may have consequences for more than just one consultant. This fact does not necessarily go against the theory of distributed leadership, as the presence of some sort of hierarchical order is not neglected (see theory section 4.2.2). This is illustrated by the

fact that decisions with consequences for more than one consultant not is made in the very centre of the organisational structure, but is moved out one or more circles (see Figure 1. in section 2.2). Paradoxically, even if a high degree of self-leadership and individual decision-making is emphasised, there are yet many decisions that need to be taken in collaboration with others. Hence, there is a risk of misinterpreting whom to include in the decision-making process.

Distributed leadership is often associated with organisations that are less bureaucratic, as the potential of distributed leadership is liberated in such a structure (Jackson & Parry, 2011). In the empirical results, there were many indications of that Centigo not is very bureaucratic. For example, the absence of rules and the fact that all the consultants are expected to speak up and share their thoughts, irrespectively if they are Partners or Junior Consultants, strengthens this observation. In addition, the fact that the organisational structure is best described in terms of circles and not as a hierarchical pyramid (see Figure 1. in section 2.2) also indicates that the organisation not is very bureaucratic.

An interesting reflection related to this is what an organisational structure that is best described with circles signals? When the organisational structure is described with circles, it seems like information about where the decision-making takes place is lost. In contrast, it appears to be clearer where and by whom the decision are made in a hierarchical organisational structure with titles and formal managers. However, the absence of information about where the decision-making takes place in the circular structure may in itself send signals that the firm has an ambition to make decisions in a certain way. In the case of Centigo, the ambition is to let the individual consultants make most of the decisions, and not formal managers. This is coherent with the theory of distributed- and self-leadership.

What is also interesting is that the empirical results also showed that there are elements of underlying power structures at Centigo, which commonly is associated with distributed leadership. For example, it was stated that experience does matter and that it is not entirely unimportant with titles. In accordance to Gordon (2002), deep power structures in organisations maintain the traditional notions of differentiation between leaders and followers, even if the organisation is made less bureaucratic, which seems to coincide with the case of Centigo.

Based on the above reasoning, the theory of distributed leadership seems to describes Centigo's leadership model on a general level in a good way. However, as will be showed in the analysis below, Centigo's leadership has elements that are better described with the theory of shared leadership.

6.1.2 Shared leadership in the Partner Council

A part of the empirical findings that we found to be better analysed with help of theory of shared leadership than of distributed leadership, is how the Partners collaborate and divide tasks among themselves in the Partner Council. Thus, in accordance to Döös and Wilhelmson (2003), the example of shared leadership in the Partner Council represents leadership on a higher level in the organisation. Theory of shared leadership suggests that the collective agree on who is best suitable in a particular situation to step up and take a vertically leading role, given that the situation requires a leader. Nevertheless, in some situations lateral influence and collaboration is sufficient (Pearce & Conger, 2003). In the Partner Council, it is often the one who is best suitable with relevant experience and knowledge, who takes the lead and completes the task, which is in line with the theory on shared leadership. For example, the empirical results showed that the roles within the Partner Council are flexible and that the hierarchy not is fixed. Thus, in accordance to Friedrich et al. (2009), collaboration is important and the fact that the one who takes the lead today might just as well be lead by someone else tomorrow. Even though the leadership appears to be shared among the Partners, one could also argue that the leadership at the same time is distributed, since the Partners still are individually responsible for the takes they take on.

According to Pearce (2004), leadership is best shared when the work is complex and requires creativity and interdependence. If not knowing that those words were a description of a theory, one could believe that the words describe the work tasks that are facing the Partner Council. As described, the individuals have a great deal of decision freedom, but if a decision has consequences for someone else but the individual, the decision-making is moved out one circle (see organisational structure in section 2.2). Since the Partner Council constitutes the outermost circle in the organisational structure, it is likely that the nature of the decisions made in the Partner Council are complex and that they require an interdependence between the Partners. The work in the Partner Council makes a clear example of the link between Centigo and shared

leadership theory. With this said, we do not claim that the work in the rest of the organisation not is complex. If the leadership instead had been distributed in the Partner Council, one could have expected there to be more coaching such as 'you can do it, go ahead, we believe in you' from a supportive leader. Nevertheless, as it is now, it is more like 'who has the right knowledge, who will be responsible for this?' in the Partner Council. This indicates that the leadership in the Partner Council generally is better described as shared than distributed, even if there are elements of distributed leadership.

6.1.3 The leadership in projects has similarities with Self-Directed Work Teams

In the empirical findings it became evident that the leadership at the project level differs from the leadership at the overall general level at Centigo. The most prominent indication of this was that the Project Teams are organised in a more hierarchical way and that there are assigned Project Leaders in the teams. The reason for why it is more hierarchical may be that the Project Teams consist of consultants from both Centigo and the client and that the project structure often is tailored to the client's organisational structure. This could explain why the leadership structure typically is more hierarchical in the projects than internally at Centigo.

To analyse the leadership applied in the projects, a general discussion with point of departure in both shared leadership and distributed leadership will be provided. Thereafter, theories on SDWT will be used as a complement in order to understand how the Project Teams are held together.

A first reflection is regarding who can become a Project Leader at Centigo? It was showed that anyone at Centigo could be a Project Leader, despite his or her formal role but that a Client Partner is ultimately responsible for the project. Recalling what was discussed in section 6.1.2, there seems to be similarities between how the leader role is taken in the Partner Council and in the Project Teams. Namely, in both cases, the one who is best suitable leads. For example, a Business Consultant may be the Project Leader in a project in which for instance a Client Manager participates. Hence, the Project Leader does not necessarily have to be the person with the most experience. This indicates that shared leadership, in some ways, is present at the project level.

One of the respondents mentioned that despite the fact that it is more hierarchical in the projects, everyone is still expected to also lead him or herself and to take on individual responsibility. This indicates that self-leadership plays an important role also at the project level. Given the reasoning in section 6.1.1 regarding the link between self-leadership and a supportive atmosphere, it can be expected that it is important that the atmosphere is supportive also in the projects. Having that said, focus can be moved to the role of the Project Leader and how he or she should act. In distributed leadership, it is emphasised that the leader is both coaching and supportive in order to encourage the followers to exercise self-leadership. This has similarities with Fisher's (2000) theory concerning the role of an SDWT-leader, in which the leader is said to be representative for the team and to coach the team members to take directions from the work itself rather than relying on procedures and supervision. In the empirical findings, it was found that the person who is responsible for a project on a higher level, in other words a Client Manager, a Client Partner or Associate Partner, is similar to what have been stated about both the leaders described in distributed leadership and SDWT-leaders. The similarities concern that a big part of their roles is to coach and support. For instance, evidence of this was found in the empirical findings when one of the Associate Partners said that she always is out in the projects to coach and support the team.

It was not clearly pointed out during the interviews whether or not the Project Leaders at Centigo typically are more coaching and supportive than the other Project Team members. This indicates that the SDWT-leader, as described in theory, may have more similarities with the ones that are responsible for the project on a higher level than the Project Leaders. Moreover, since it was emphasised in the empirical findings that the team members have to trust each other, it appears to be similarities between the Project Teams at Centigo and the SDWT in theory. In addition, as consultancy projects typically have a high variation in both tasks and scope, it is likely that the Project Team members take directions from the work itself, rather than relying on procedures and supervision, which is also in accordance to SDWT. However, this could be something that is general in the whole consultancy industry and hence, it does not necessarily have to be specific for Centigo.

Part conclusion 1: The leadership model at Centigo seems to have influences of several concepts in the alternative approach to leadership. Distributed leadership captures Centigo's leadership model in many ways, in particular the high level of self-leadership. Shared leadership also seems to be applicable, especially when it comes to describing how the Partner Council is organised. In addition, Centigo's leadership at the project level has similarities with SDWT as well as influences from shared- and distributed leadership.

6.2 Confusion accompanied with the concept collective leadership

A belief that we had in the beginning of this study process was that the concept collective leadership was the label of the actual leadership model at Centigo. However, during the process, we experienced a confusion accompanied with the concept. For example, the empirical findings showed that the respondents have different ideas of what collective leadership stands for as well as that they interpret it in different ways. A clear example of this was that the concept collective leadership model only was used when describing the leadership model at the Swedish website, and not on the English version of the website. Also, when asking the respondents how they typically describe collective leadership someone who is unfamiliar with Centigo's leadership model, the given descriptions ranged from collective leadership being a fundamental principle to being the actual leadership model. However, the empirical results indicated that the respondents have similar understandings of what Centigo's leadership model implies – in different ways all of the respondents pointed out the importance of the 'I-want-spirit', the great deal of both individual responsibility. Also, it was indicated that the leadership model implies individual decision-making and that the consultants have to stand for the consequences of their own decisions.

The reasoning above raises the question about how important it is to have a shared understanding of what the concept collective leadership stands for. The examples given showed that no matter if the concept collective leadership is interpreted as a fundamental principle or also a leadership model, Centigo's leadership model seems to be played out in the same way in practice. To answer the question, the different understandings and interpretations when talking about the concept collective leadership, does not seem to affect how the consultant behave. For instance, the individuals take on a great deal of individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of their actions. As stated in an article by Svenska Dagbladet (2011),

Centigo stands for collective leadership, which is described as being rooted in strong values and based on the individual responsibility. The fact that this statement includes both values (fundamental principles) and one of the central elements in Centigo's leadership model (individual responsibility) can explain why it does not matter if the consultants interpret collective leadership as a fundamental principle or also the leadership model – the fundamental principles and leadership model go hand in hand. Therefore, *knowing how the concept collective leadership should be played out in practice* seems to be more important than being able to describe the concept in words. However, the empirical results showed that it does matter if the consultants start to interpret the concept in 'non-desirable ways', as it affects how the consultants act (see section 5.2.5).

A subsequent question is how the consultants at Centigo learn what the concept collective leadership stands for in practice even if the meaning not is written down? In order to deal with this question, it is necessary to understand the process of interpretation in an organisation without written down rules and formal managers. Since leadership is viewed as a co-created activity and a social constructionist approach to leadership is applied in this study, the concepts of externalisation, objectivation and internalisation can be used in order to understand this process (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). This will be done in the following section.

6.2.1 Match between the individuals' identities and the organisational identity

As Berger and Luckmann (1991) stress, an institutionalised world cannot be understood just by observing it - it has to be experienced to be understood. Relating this to the empirical results when the respondents were asked how they learn about collective leadership, the respondents stressed that they do not learn about them from reading about them. Instead, they emphasised the importance of talking about the fundamentals principles and the core values with co-workers, reflecting over them and simply learning about them by doing. It was also showed that it is not sufficient to only participate in the Junior Consultant School or the introduction days for those who are starting at a more senior position to learn and understand the meaning of the fundamental principles and the core values – it takes much longer time to 'crack the code'. In addition, it was stressed that you have to reason about how to act in terms of *why* and not *how*, which

indicates that a deeper understanding is needed in order to be able to act in accordance to the fundamental principles and the core values.

What you learn from are *externalised* products from other consultants. This means that what you learn from is institutionalised fundamental principles and core values that have been externalised in the social context. As the social construction is a co-created activity rather than an individual activity, this implies that through interaction with others, consultants at Centigo can take part of and learn about what is reasonable and legitimate in that specific context by talking and discussing with others. Considering this, it is not surprising that the importance of having a dialogue in order to put things in a context and make others understand why they are important was pointed out in the empirical results. In turn, dialogue enables for distributed leadership (also discussed in section 6.1.1).

The process where externalised products attain an objective character is referred to as *objectivation*. Simply described, this is when the consultants start to experience the externalised products as objective. In other words, this is when what is reasonable and legitimate within the context of Centigo is perceived as being the objective reality by the consultants. This can be exemplified with the fact that the respondents at several times expressed themselves in terms of that there is a 'Centigo-way' of doing things. However, the individual consultant may interpret the objectivated reality in different ways depending on the process of *internalisation*. Internalisation is when personal meaning is assigned to the objectivated reality. This involves the integration of attitudes, values and standards as well as of the opinions of others into the consultant's own identity. Therefore, the internalisation process can be understood as a process driven by how the consultants identify themselves and how they want to be identified by others. In turn, this affects how things get externalised, as their identities can be strengthened through how they are talking about and doing things in a certain way. In the light of this reasoning, it is not a surprise that it appeared to be easier for the Junior Consultants who come directly from the university to adapt to the 'Centigo-way', as they may have a higher strive to find their identities. Seniors, on the other hand, will likely question the context more and even become frustrated if their attitudes and values not correspond to the 'Centigo-way'. Thus, it is of great importance for Centigo to find individuals who

identifies themselves with Centigo's organisational identity. In other words, a match between the individuals' identities and the organisational identity is needed.

The reasoning above raises questions of what constitutes the individuals identities and what constitutes the organisational identity? The empirical results showed that the fundamental principles often are referred to as the DNA of the consultants and the core values as their personality. Together, the fundamental principles and the core values can be seen as the desired identity of the individual consultant. In addition, when asking for descriptions of the culture, it was described as entrepreneurial and ambitious, with an 'I-want-spirit', lack of rules and a big portion of freedom. The culture was also described as open with a high level of trust and built on common sense and individual responsibility. In fact, the Team Manager said that the culture probably is the same thing as Centigo's values. Thus, there is a clear link between the fundamental principles, the core values and the culture at Centigo. Considering this link, the culture can be seen as the organisational identity. Given the need of a match between the individuals' identities and the organisational identity, or culture, it is not surprising that all of the respondents pointed out the importance of finding people who identify themselves with Centigo's fundamental principles and core values (see the discussion about recruitment in section 6.3.2).

Part conclusion 2: Knowing how the concept collective leadership should be played out in practice seems to be more important than knowing if it is the actual leadership model or only a fundamental principle. Moreover, the interpretation of the concept depends on how it is externalised in the context of Centigo and on how it is internalised by the individual consultants. In that process, it is important to find individuals who have identities that match with Centigo's organisational identity in order to avoid that the consultants act in a non-desirable way.

6.3 Organisational systems create conditions for the leadership model

What has been found this far in the analysis is the importance of knowing what the concept collective leadership stands for in practice. In addition, having dialogues and matching the identities between the individuals and the organisation have been pointed out as important factors since they facilitate for similar interpretations. However, what is also interesting when discussing factors that create conditions for similar

interpretations, are factors in the organisational structure that create and preserve a sense of organisational identity. This is a cornerstone in Maister's (1993) concept of a One-Firm Firm. In the following, it will be analysed if Centigo has similarities with the One-Firm Firm system and the characteristics of the One-Firm Firm. Thereafter, the link between the organisational systems and the leadership model will be discussed.

6.3.1 The compensation model creates incentives for collaboration

In the empirical results the compensation model was pointed out as an important system, as it sends out signals of how the consultants should behave. In accordance to Maister (1993), the compensation model at Centigo is designed in a way so that intra-firm cooperation is encouraged. For instance, a Team Manager's compensation is partly dependent on the result of the whole Business Unit and on the performance of the consultants within that unit. In turn, the Partners' compensation depends on the result of the whole firm. However, the compensation model also encourages the individuals to take responsibility for their own actions, as the consultant has to stand for his or her own costs. As showed in the empirical results, there is a clear link between the compensation model, individual responsibility and decision power. Thus, besides encouraging cooperation, the compensation model can also be seen as a factor that facilitates for exercising self-leadership (also see section 6.1.1).

6.3.2 The solid recruitment process preserves a sense of organisational identity

In the empirical results Centigo's recruitment process was described. The process can best be described as being solid with an aim to find the 'right people', which relates to the fact that consultants are seen as the key resource in PFSs. In accordance to Maister (1993) and the One-Firm Firm theory, the recruitment process is heavily centralised and a significant amount of the consultants' time is invested in it. In addition, they tend to be very selective in the recruitment process and individuals with a strong entrepreneurial spirit are often favoured. Why this is important became clear when the internalisation process was discussed in section 6.2.1. As pointed out, there has to be a match between the organisational identity and the individuals' identities in order for the fundamental principles and the core values to be internalised in a way so that, in turn, the leadership model is played out in a desirable way. Also, for the consultants to become successful at Centigo's, several respondents stressed that it is important not to 'sell in' Centigo during

the interviews. Instead, the applicants themselves have to feel that they match with the organisational identity. Moreover, one may think that basing the actual decision of whom to recruit on a gut feeling instead of recruiting the one with the best CV is rather naïve. However, when taking a social constructionist approach, it is not surprising that it is the way it is since what constitutes the objective reality is negotiated between the consultants. In the context of Centigo, it was stressed that the consultants should have strong social and personal skills, in addition to an entrepreneurial spirit. Thus, the fact they recruit on a gut feeling indicates that the consultants thrive together from the very beginning.

What is also related to the recruitment process and central in the One-Firm firm system is the fact that Centigo is growing its own professionals. In accordance to Maister (1993), most of the new recruited consultants come in as juniors and not as seniors. More, the solid Junior Consultant School indicates that Centigo tends to 'make' rather than 'buy' professionals.

6.3.3 The internal market encourages strong personal relationships

Why it is important to have an entrepreneurial spirit and strong social skills can be explained by Centigo's organisational structure and the internal market. On the one hand, you need to be entrepreneurial in order to initiate own projects and to find business opportunities, especially as a senior. On the other hand, the importance of having strong social skills in order to market yourself and to build your network on the internal market to get projects was stressed in the empirical findings. The internal network can also explain why the consultants engage in non-billable activities such as internal projects. The engagement in non-billable activities is something that Maister (1993) points out as a result of the team player approach to evaluations and compensation. In accordance to what the Managing Partner stressed: the internal network plays a big role because the consultants are like entrepreneurs – and if you run your own business you are very dependent on your network. Maister (1993) does not particularly point out this type of internal market in the One-Firm Firm system. However, he stresses that relationships are crucial and that long term repeated interaction between people is a prerequisite for cooperation. By building the organisation on an internal market, Centigo has succeeded to create situations where consultants from across the firm frequently interact. In addition, the organisational

structure facilitates for the firm wide training, which also was pointed out as important by Maister (1993) for sustaining the One-Firm Firm system. As the consultants who work in projects often have a mix of competences from different Business Units, the consultants get insight in areas beyond their particular Business Unit, which can be seen as a type of firm-wide training.

6.3.4 The ownership structure, absence of status symbols and avoidance of mergers

The fact that Centigo does not have any formal managers, no external owners and the fact that everyone is a leader indicate that there are no status symbols at Centigo, which is pointed out by Maister (1993) as important when sustaining a One-Firm Firm. The partner ownership structure can be pointed out as a prerequisite for not having status symbols as it also is a prerequisite for independency and collective leadership. One of the given explanations of this was that having a CEO can imply that someone has higher power than others, which is not in line with Centigo's philosophy. By being organised in this way, each individual's success at Centigo is emphasised and seen as an important success factor for the whole firm, which may suppress the eventual status differences between juniors and seniors and hence strengthens the absence of status symbols. In addition, the fact that everyone has the opportunity to become a Partner at Centigo could be seen as another sign of the absence of status symbols. This can also be expected to decrease the internal competition. Maister (1993) points out that building a firm without status symbols is important if the firm wish everyone to feel part of the firm. This goes hand in hand with Centigo's consensus-building leadership in for instance the Partner Council where the Partners engage in extensive discussions before making decisions with consequences for the whole firm (see the reasoning in section 6.1.2).

Moreover, Maister (1993) stresses that avoiding mergers when growing plays a critical role when creating and preserving the organisational identity. This goes hand in hand with Centigo's ambition of creating a long-term profitable firm that should grow organically (see the description of Centigo in Chapter 2). This was also confirmed in the empirical results where it was stressed that Centigo probably would be able to grow as long as the fundamental principles and the core values, in other words the organisational identity, are sustained. Maister (1993) also says that a controlled organic growth and an avoidance of mergers lead to that One-Firm Firms rarely lose valued

consultants to competitors. As a result, One-Firm Firms are often able to achieve a profitable higher-leverage strategy, which seems to be the case of Centigo.

So far, many similarities between Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm system and Centigo's organisational systems have been pointed out. In the following analysis, it will be shown that not only the systems are similar, but also the characteristics of the consultants (presented in section 4.1). In the empirical results, the importance of individual responsibility and taking responsibility for your own actions was underlined numerous of times, which indicates that consultants at Centigo are *loyal* to both firm- and team efforts. In addition, being loyal and ambitious implies that you should be a good team member and not blame others if doing something wrong. In turn, these characteristics emphasise *cooperative teamwork* and *commitment*. The emphasis on teamwork can be seen as going hand in hand with *downplaying stardom*, as the consultants at Centigo view and identify themselves as a part of a collective.

Another characteristic of Centigo that is similar to Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm is the significant attention that is paid to *client service*. This became clear in the empirical results, for example when Client Manager 2 stated that Centigo is "working with the client, not for the client". However, a characteristic of Centigo that not is in line with Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm is the one regarding *selective business pursuits*. Centigo tends to have a more varied practice mix and more heterogeneous client base than suggested in theory. An explanation of this could be Centigo's entrepreneurial nature.

6.3.5 Centigo manages to avoid the weaknesses of a One-Firm Firm system

As indicated, the focus of a One-Firm Firm is on the outcomes of the whole organisation, rather than on individual consultant's performance. In a more individualistic firm, elements such as individual entrepreneurialism, autonomous profit centres, internal competition, and highly decentralised, independent activities are common, according to Maister (1993). Hence, it is interesting to analyse how Centigo have managed to create a collaborative firm with characteristics of a One-Firm Firm, but where the individual consultants still have a central role.

The internal market in combination with the compensation model may be the answer to why this is possible. As mentioned, on the internal market the entrepreneurial spirit is important, while the compensation model at the same time is designed to encourage

collaboration. As a consequence, the consultants at Centigo are encouraged to work together and yet be entrepreneurial. It seems like the importance of recruiting the 'right people' who works well in such a context and who have an identity that matches well with the organisational identity of Centigo cannot be stressed enough.

As outlined in the theoretical framework, Maister (1993) states that *self-congratulatory complacency* and being *insufficiently entrepreneurial* in the short run are weaknesses related to One-Firm Firms. However, as shown in the empirical results, the respondents at several times mentioned the importance of that Centigo not becomes static and that they do not want to write things down. Thus, it seems like the respondents were aware of the consequences from being self-congratulatory. In addition, with the great focus on recruiting individuals who are entrepreneurial, the risk of becoming insufficiently entrepreneurial in the short run seems to be small. Therefore, it seems like Centigo has managed to avoid the weaknesses of Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm. However, even if the entrepreneurial spirit has helped Centigo to avoid the potential weaknesses of a One-Firm Firm this far, the entrepreneurial spirit may cause problems in other ways, which will be discussed in section 6.4 below.

Part conclusion 3: There are many similarities between Maister's One-Firm Firm system and Centigo's organisational systems. In addition, the organisational systems create conditions for collaboration and the exercise of self-leadership. Thus, there is a clear interdependent relationship between the organisational systems and the leadership model, as the organisational systems sustain the organisational identity by facilitating for the consultants to act on the fundamental principles and the core values. In addition, Centigo seems to have managed to avoid the weaknesses in Maister's One-Firm Firm by not writing down the meaning of the fundamental principles and the core values and by recruiting the right people.

6.4 Factors that make the leadership model vulnerable

Given part conclusion 2 and part conclusion 3, how the leadership model is played out in practice and how the consultants interpret the fundamental principles and core values seems to be interdependent. Therefore, a factor that may make Centigo's leadership model vulnerable is if consultants interpret the concept collective leadership in a non-desirable way. To clarify, it is not critical if the consultants interpret the concept

collective leadership as being only a fundamental principle or also the actual leadership model, as the interpretations lead to the same behaviour. Instead, a non-desirable interpretation is when the consultants misinterpret *how it should be played out in practice*. In addition, given that the concept collective leadership and the leadership model has been shown to go hand in hand, this allows us to take the step from talking about the misinterpretation of the concept collective leadership, to the misinterpretation of the whole leadership model.

An example of such misinterpretation in the empirical results was that some respondents indicated that some consultants think collective leadership means that everyone can take part in every decision, which is not correct since decisions that have consequences for many not are made by a single individual (also see section 5.2.6). However, the given example above does not seem to have had any effects in the bigger context. This may be due to the fact that only a minority of the consultants have this view or due to the fact that the view has not been externalised to such extent that it constitutes the objective reality for others.

If referring back to what factors enable for distributed responsibility, dialogue was pointed out as important. At the same time, the dialogue (or misinterpreting the dialogue) was also something that seems to make the leadership model vulnerable, which may appear to be a paradox. This also raises the question of balance between controlling that the consultants interpret collective leadership in a similar way and trusting that the consultants actually do interpret it in a similar way. As mentioned, to have courage to trust each other was pointed out as another factor enabling for distributed responsibility. Thus, it seems like the factors that are enabling for Centigo's leadership model simultaneously can be what makes the leadership model vulnerable. Given the absence of written down instructions of how to behave at Centigo, in combination with the interdependent relationship between the leadership model and how the consultants interpret the concept collective leadership, misinterpretations may result in a non-functional leadership model. Viewing the leadership model as socially constructed supports this, since how consultants interpret the leadership model partly depends on how it is externalised by others (also see section 6.2.1). Thus, if a group of consultants start to act in a non-desirable way, in other words externalise the leadership model in a non-desirable way, this will constitute the objective reality for others. In turn,

when the consultants then internalise the 'wrong' objective reality, this could result in an imitation of behaviour that is not consistent with the organisational identity. However, as mentioned, it does not seem like misinterpretations have caused problems yet.

It was pointed out in the empirical findings that it might become a challenge to ensure that everyone interprets and understands the leadership model in a similar way if Centigo grows. Hence, the choice of not writing down the meaning of the fundamental principles and the core values may be an advantage in order not to become static, but at the same time, it clearly is a factor that makes the leadership vulnerable as it opens up for misinterpretations. As shown in the empirical result, when Centigo grows, even more engagement and maintenance will likely be required in order to sustain the leadership model.

As briefly touched upon above, a risk related to the recruitment of entrepreneurial individuals could be that the consultants become *too* entrepreneurial and hence leave Centigo in favour for starting something on their own instead. Another risk related to the recruitment of entrepreneurial individuals could be that they do not get energy from working collectively. Hence, it appears as the entrepreneurial spirit, on the one hand, helps Centigo to avoid one of the weaknesses described in Maister's (1993) One-Firm Firm system. On the other hand, it appears as having consultants with too much of an entrepreneurial spirit makes the leadership model vulnerable as they either may leave the firm or focus on individualistic tasks that not favour the collective.

Another factor that may make the leadership model vulnerable is the challenge of retaining the balance on the internal market, in other words the balance between the Business Units and the Client Teams, and making sure that none of the side becomes too strong. For example, if a Business Unit becomes too strong, this could imply that too much focus is put on the individual instead of on client. If it goes the other way around, in other words if a Client Team becomes too strong, too much focus may be taken away from the Business Unit and the development of the consultants in favour for the client. One example of this in the empirical findings was when a consultant has worked in a Client Team for so long that the client does not want to let go of him or her, which may have a demotivating effect on the individual consultant. A demotivated consultant may imply that the exercise of self-leadership decreases when not focusing on the

development of the consultant. Consequently, the 'I-want-spirit' and drive may fade out. In turn, this is likely to affect Centigo's leadership model and the firm as a whole.

Part conclusion 4: Factors that make Centigo's leadership model vulnerable include the risk of misinterpreting what the fundamental principles and the core values, and hence also the leadership model stand for in practice. This may result in that the leadership model is played out, or externalised, in a non-desirable way. In addition, there is a risk of recruiting too entrepreneurial individuals who may not get energy from working collectively. Also there is a challenge retaining the balance on the internal market, as one side may get too strong.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The following chapter will start with a summary of the part conclusions in Chapter 6 to facilitate for the reader. Thereafter, the research questions will be answered before the implications of the conclusions are discussed. Additionally, the applicability of Centigo's leadership model to other firms and organisations will be considered. Finally, suggestions of future research will be provided.

7.1 Conclusions

In the analysis, we found that theories where leadership is viewed as a co-created activity correspond to Centigo's leadership model in many ways. In particular, it was found that the leadership model mainly could be described by distributed leadership theory, complemented by theory of shared leadership and of SDWT. From this we can conclude that the leadership model at Centigo can be said to be co-created.

One of the main findings was that some of the respondents refer to collective leadership as a fundamental principle while others also refer to it as a the leadership model. However, it does not seem to matter that there are different understandings, as knowing how the concept collective leadership should be played out in practice seems to be more important than being able to describe the concept in words. Thus, the fundamental principle collective leadership and the leadership model go hand in hand and foster the same behaviour.

In addition, when comparing Centigo with Maister's (1993) concept of a One-Firm Firm, it was found that there is a clear interdependent relationship between the organisational systems and the leadership model, which creates conditions for collaboration and self-leadership. In particular, the recruitment of consultants who have an identity that matches with the organisational identity was found to be fundamental for steering the behaviour of the consultants in the context of Centigo.

Based on the conclusions above, we are now able to answer the research questions. The overall question was how a leadership model in a Professional Service Firm can be constructed and played out in practice. The sub-question linked to this was which the factors are that develop and sustain the leadership model at Centigo, and in what way they do it.

All together, we have concluded that the leadership model at Centigo is co-created. The organisational systems, the fundamental principles and the core values steer the consultant's behaviour in the context of Centigo, which results in that the consultants take a high individual responsibility. In other words, the leadership model can be seen as something that is *predicting* the behaviour of the consultants, whereas the organisational structure, the fundamental principles and the core values are what provide effective guidance and *steer* that behaviour. This can explain why formal managers are not needed in the case of Centigo. In Figure 9. the central relationships described above are illustrated:

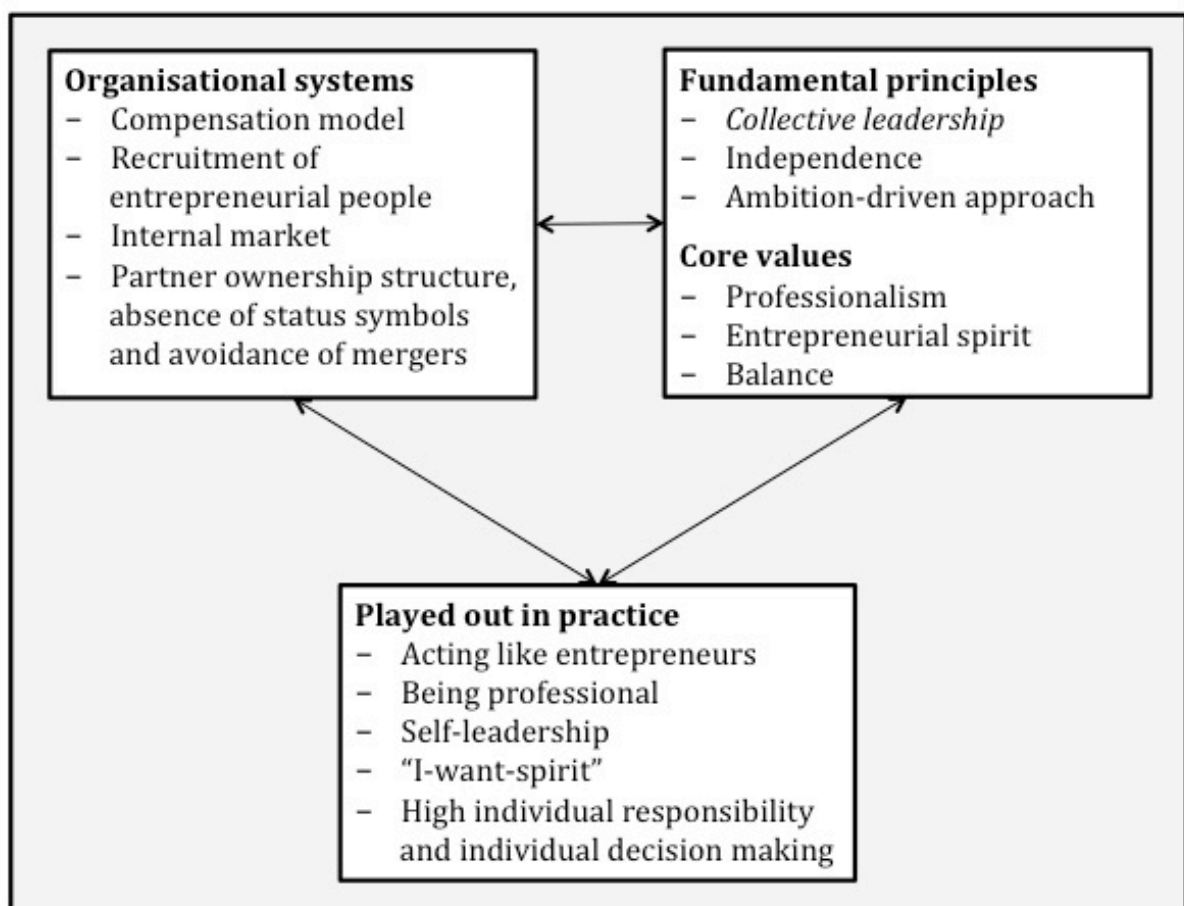


Figure 9. *The co-created leadership model at Centigo*

A direct implication of Centigo's leadership model is the risk of misinterpreting how it should be played out in practice. To clarify, in section 6.4 we took the step from talking about the misinterpretation of the concept collective leadership to the misinterpretation

of the leadership model as a whole, as it has been shown that the concept and the leadership model go hand in hand. The misinterpretation of the leadership model relates to the second-sub question regarding the factors that make the leadership model at Centigo vulnerable. Misinterpreting how the leadership model should be played out in practice could result in that the consultants act in a non-desirable way. Viewing the leadership model as socially constructed, such behaviour would in turn affect the function of the leadership model. This is because others may imitate the behaviour of those who misinterpret the leadership model and believe that they should act in the same way. In Figure 9., this is illustrated by the arrow from how it is played out in practice to the fundamental principles and the core values. Other factors that may make the leadership vulnerable are the risk from recruiting too entrepreneurial individuals and the challenge of retaining the balance on the internal market.

Based on the conclusions outlined above, we find that we have achieved the purpose of this study – to in depth study and describe a leadership model in a PSF. By that, we have also contributed to the on-going discussion concerning whether leadership should be regarded as an individual or a co-created activity, which is related to the need for new leadership models that are suitable in the ever more knowledge and information intensive society. The study is not only contributing to the academic field, but also helpful for companies, organisations, leaders and managers when developing and sustaining leadership models that diverge from the dominating leadership discourse.

7.2 Implication of conclusions

In the introductory Chapter 1, the difference between leadership and management was explained as an energising relationship versus a controlling function (section 1.6.2). Also, it was explained that in this study, we view the leadership model as overarching, under which both leadership and management is exercised. Given the conclusions above, where strong elements of self-leadership and individual decision-making were emphasised, it seems like one of the implication is a decreased need for *formal managers* in a leadership model like Centigo's. This is because the role of a formal manager seems to be unnecessary as the individuals themselves conduct tasks that are generally associated with formal managers. This can in addition be related to the question of control; how can the consultants' performance be controlled and monitored when there are no formal managers who are evaluating their performance? In theory, self-

leadership points out a high level of self-control, which in turn was found in a study to be one of the most effective methods to improve employee productivity (Birdi et al. 2008). Thus, perhaps it is wrong to claim that there is a decreased need for formal managers in a leadership model like Centigo's, as the function of a formal manager still clearly exists in the individuals' roles. Considering the reasoning above, perhaps it is no longer true to say that everybody at Centigo is a leader and that there are no formal managers. Instead, it may be more correct to say that everyone not only is a leader, but also a manager. Given the case of Centigo, this seems to have reduced the level of stress and anxiety while it has increased the self-efficacy, confidence and job satisfaction.

When saying that there seems to be a decreased need for formal managers, we do not claim that there is a decreased need for *management*. This is because we view organisational systems as management practices, which include steering and controlling functions. Thus, the function of steering and controlling still exists, but not through formal managers. In the light of this reasoning, perhaps the risk of misinterpreting how the leadership model should be played out in practice is not as big as we first thought, since the organisational systems probably will straighten out these misinterpretations.

Additionally, the implication from not having formal managers and not writing down many rules may be that it creates a dynamic and flexible firm. However, this surely has implications for the decision-making, knowledge sharing and for distribution of information. In the empirical findings, it was pointed out that the decision-making is highly effective when it comes to small decisions, as the responsibility then is distributed to the individuals. Thus, the co-founders ambition, that the one who is closest to the business situation and the client should be the one who makes the decisions in order to be responsive to the changing business environment, has been fulfilled (described in Chapter 2). However, it was pointed out that the decision-making often was perceived as ineffective and sometimes even frustrating, when decisions that have consequences for many people have to be broadly discussed. Hence, in such situation it may have been more effective with a more hierarchical structure with formal managers. Centigo also relies on that the individuals take responsibility for making sure to get the information and the knowledge needed, instead of the other way around where standardised processes are used to distribute it to them. Thus, a challenge lies in ensuring that the consultants actually do take individual responsibility for knowledge

sharing and distributing information. If no one takes responsibility for doing so, it could easily fade out since there are no guidelines for how it should be done. However, given that the internal market creates incentives for the consultants to share knowledge and to distribute information, as it is a way for them to market themselves, they are likely to do so. This can also be seen as an additional example of how the organisational systems can straighten out misinterpretations of how to behave at Centigo, in this case how to share knowledge and distribute information.

The questions of misinterpretation, knowledge sharing and distribution of information also became prominent when discussing the future growth of Centigo. The recruitment of consultants whose identities match with Centigo's organisational identity has been pointed out as crucial for the function of the leadership model. However, a growing number of consultants will likely result in an even greater need of engagement to maintain the leadership model, which may take too much focus away from the actual business. This raises the question if it will be sustainable to not write down the meaning of the fundamental principles and the core down as well as not implementing structures for knowledge sharing and distribution of information even if Centigo grows.

Another implication concerns the similarity between how the consultants talk about collective leadership and the concept of self-leadership in theory. In fact, perhaps the fundamental principle collective leadership is better labelled as 'self-leadership', given that the similarity is striking. Though, renaming the fundamental principle to 'self-leadership' could imply a risk of the consultants acting too individualistic, since it takes focus away from the collective thinking that can be found at Centigo. This could create an even bigger challenge, namely keeping entrepreneurial people within the context of Centigo.

7.3 Applicability

When reasoning about Centigo's leadership model, the question of applicability to other firms and organisations easily comes to mind. A general assumption among the respondents was that the model is not applicable to more traditional and hierarchical industries, such as manufacturing, as the characteristics of the work itself and of the consultants differ a lot from the ones found in PFSs. More, as stressed before, the importance of finding the 'right people' has been shown to be crucial in this study.

However, the question still remains whether Centigo's leadership model can be applicable to other PSFs or not?

Given that the employees have similar core values to the ones of the consultants at Centigo, there is a chance that it may work. Though, in such situation, we believe that it would take a long time to fully implement the leadership model, as the model has to come from within the organisation. If the employees do not share the same values, it will probably be needed to replace many, if not all, of them. Thus, if a PSF wishes to have a leadership model similar to Centigo's, it is important to implement it from the very beginning and grow up with the model. Therefore, we believe that for example start-ups can learn a lot from studying Centigo's leadership model.

In addition, relating back to the social constructionist approach, a concept may have different meanings in different social contexts. Thus, the expected difficulties related to the application of Centigo's leadership model to other firms are supported by the fact that Centigo's leadership is constructed in their particular context. Consequently, it is likely that the leadership model will have a different meaning in another context.

7.4 Future research

In section 7.2, we reasoned about a decreased need for formal managers in organisations where the individuals exercise a high degree of self-leadership. This is because the individuals themselves exercise tasks that generally are associated with managers. Thus, a first suggestion for future research is to study the link between self-leadership and management.

Another suggestion for future research regards what the characteristics and values of the 'right people' working in a firm like Centigo are. An interesting aspect to discuss would be whether this leadership model is particularly suitable for Generation Y or not – a generation that currently is entering business life. A general perception of Generation Y is that it is a generation full of people who are tolerant and flexible, but who also are more demanding and critical than previous generations. The importance of telling *why* and not only *how* to do things will likely increase. This is because Generation Y probably will not automatically adjust to given structures and norms. Instead they will likely question why things are done in a certain way, as well as question given 'truths'. Given

Centigo's choice of not writing down many rules and trying to avoid structure in order not to become static, we believe that Generation Y will fit well in firms like Centigo.

Furthermore, in this study, individual leadership, or self-leadership, has been pointed out as important in a leadership model like Centigo's. Thus, another suggestion for future studies of firms similar to Centigo is *how* self-leadership can be developed and maintained when growing? This brings our thoughts to another suggestion for future research, namely how big a firm like Centigo can grow before it simply becomes too difficult to hold it together?

What can be related to the question of growth and the importance of organisational identity is the origin of the organisational identity, which was linked to the culture in section 6.2.1. Hence, it would be interesting to study the importance of the founders' presence and the history of Centigo in order to develop and sustain the organisational identity and the culture. As the founders' stories tell about the origin of the organisational identity and culture, the founders and the stories could be seen as symbols that sustain the culture. Will the institutional identity and the culture be sustained also without the presence of the founders? Perhaps the culture at Centigo has become strong enough to stand on its own even without the presence of the founders, which raises another question: when and how does the culture in a firm with a leadership model like Centigo's become strong enough so that the presence of the founders no longer are needed?

All together, we believe that this study represents a new leadership paradigm that advocates a leadership based on a common understanding of values among the employees. This differs from more traditional leadership research, where the main focus has been on how the leaders can get their followers to contribute to the organisational goals. In this new leadership paradigm, a central element is the employees' identities and self-concepts, where the leadership is the link between the values of the employees and the organisational goals. Therefore, the relationship between the leaders and the followers can be seen as fundamental for the leadership, where the relationship is based on a common value base that is expressed by the leaders and which the followers identify themselves with.

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APPENDIX 1 – Interview guide

Background

- What is your role at Centigo?
- What is your professional/educational background?
- Why Centigo?
- How did you get Centigo presented to you?
- What distinguishes Centigo from other consultancy firms?

The construction of leadership: About the leadership model and the concept collective leadership

- How would you describe the leadership model at Centigo?
 - o What role do the consultants play?
 - o What is the difference between leaders and formal managers?
 - o What is the difference between formal managers and those who are responsible for an area?
- How would you describe the concept collective leadership for someone who is not familiar with the concept/model?
 - o Who set the expectations? How are they set?
 - o Given that collective leadership implies that there are no formal managers, how is decision-making done?
 - o What impact do previous experiences have?
- How is collective leadership played out at the overall/internal level?
 - o Please give examples
- How is collective leadership played out at the project level?
 - o Please give examples
- When you were new at Centigo, how did you learn/get an understanding of collective leadership, the fundamental principles and the core values?
 - o Does it differ depending on what role you have when you start at Centigo? (In other words if you start as a junior or as a senior)
 - o Does it differ between the internal level and the project level?
- How are the fundamental principles and the core values maintained?
- What are the gains from the leadership model?
- Do you see any challenges with the leadership model?

Interdependent relationship between leadership and organisational systems: the organisational systems create conditions/facilitate for the leadership model

- What does the organisational structure look like?
- How does the internal market work?
 - o How important is the internal network?
 - o Do you think the internal market creates conditions for the leadership model? If so, how?
 - o Do you see any challenges accompanied with the internal market?
- How does the compensation model work?
 - o Do you think the compensation model creates conditions for the leadership model? If so, how?
 - o Do you see any challenges accompanied the compensation model?
- What does the recruitment process look like?
 - o What do you look for when recruiting?
 - o How would you describe a typical Centigo-consultant?
 - o Do you think the recruitment creates conditions for the leadership model? If so, how?
 - o Do you see any challenges accompanied with recruitment?
- Do you think the owner structure creates conditions for the leadership model? If so, how?
- Are there any other organisational systems that create conditions for the leadership model?

Other challenges

- Do you see any challenges accompanied with the growth of Centigo?
- Other challenges? For example knowledge sharing, spreading information and feedback.

Applicability

- Do you think that Centigo's leadership model is applicable to other industries and organisations?
 - o In that case, what type of industries and organisations?

APPENDIX 2 – Overview of interviews

Role	Referred to in the empirical results	Date of deep interview
Co-Founder, Managing Partner, responsible for a BU	Co-Founder	29-01-2013
Team Manager	Team Manager	19-02-2013
Junior Consultant	Junior Consultant	20-02-2013
Client Manager	Client Manager 1	21-02-2013
Client Manager	Client Manager 2	22-02-2013
Managing Partner, responsible for a BU	Managing Partner	26-02-2013
Administrative role/receptionist	Receptionist	26-02-2013
Consultant	Consultant 1	01-03-2013
Associate Partner, responsible for a BU	Associate Partner 1	01-03-2013
Client Manager (contact person)	Client Manager 3	08-03-2013
Client Partner	Client Partner	21-03-2013
Client Manager	Client Manager 4	21-03-2013
Associate Partner, Client Manager	Associate Partner 2	22-03-2013
Associate Partner, responsible for a BU	Associate Partner 3	22-03-2013
Consultant	Consultant 2	26-03-2013

APPENDIX 3 - Overview of quotes, codes, links to existing theories and themes

* No relevant theory applicable

CATEGORY: BACKGROUND

	Quotes	Codes	Links to existing theories	Themes
Professional background	Studied business. Previously worked as a consultant. 11 years at Centigo. (Co-Founder)	Background	One-Firm Firm	Professional background and why choosing Centigo
	Studied International Business. Previously worked as a consultant. 6 years at Centigo. (Team Manager)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Studied Civil Engineering and Business. Joined Centigo 7 years ago. (Client Manager 2)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Studied International Business. Joined Centigo 1 year ago. (Junior Consultant)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	University studies. Previously worked as a consultant. 9 years at Centigo. (Managing Partner)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Studied Economics. Joined Centigo 2 years ago. (Consultant 1)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Midwife. Joined Centigo 1 year ago. (Receptionist)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	University studies. Military service. Officer. Worked at another company for 2 year. Joined Centigo 5 years ago. (Client Manager 3)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Previously worked as a consultant. Worked at Centigo since 2005. (Associate Partner 1)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Previously worked as a consultant. Joined Centigo 10 years ago. (Client Partner)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	PhD. Worked at Centigo for 5 years. (Client Manager 4)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Previously worked at another consultancy firm. Joined Centigo 3 years ago. (Associate Partner 3)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Studied Business and Economics. Worked at several different companies before. Worked at Centigo for 5,5 years. (Associate Partner 2)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
	Studied International Business. Joined Centigo 1 year ago. (Consultant 2)	Background	One-Firm Firm	
Why centigo	"If we create a workplace where people enjoy working and where they can develop, then we have created something that we can be proud of" (Co-Founder)	Create a workplace where people can develop	Distributed leadership: enable for self leadership	
	"The feeling of not having a big structure behind was attractive." (Co-Founder)	No big structure	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure	
	"We are good at relationships" (Co-Founder)	Relationships	One-Firm Firm	
	"As a consultant, you like to see people develop" (Co-Founder)	See people develop	Distributed leader, SDWT leader	
	"Wanted to create a firm growing with profitability. The dream was to create an admired firm." (Co-Founder)	Organic growth	One-Firm Firm	
	"I was looking for something new. Rather a small Swedish firm than an American giant" (Team Manager)	Looking for something new	*	
	"The Team Manager role was new and attracting" (Team Manager)	Role attracted	*	
	"Realised that a lot of things were different, very different here." (Team Manager)	Differ from traditional firms	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure	
	"All the owners were present and they listened to my ideas." (Client Manager 1)	Listen to ideas	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure	
	"The main difference was the organisational structure, but there is no big difference while out in the projects." (Client Manager 1)	Differ in structure, but same in projects	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure. SDWT leader	
	"I did not know very much before I got here. But I knew that it was a smaller consultancy firm." (Client Manager 2)	Did not know much	*	
	"I got a good feeling from talking to representatives from Centigo. [...] I got a feeling of that the core values was for real." (Junior Consultant)	Good feeling, core values	One-Firm Firm	
	"The fundamental ideas of Centigo and the reason why they started the firm appealed to me. All the fundamentals were appealing to me and the founders were very compelling when talking about them." (Managing Partner)	Fundamentals appealed	One-Firm Firm	
	"When the founders told me that Centigo never will be listed or never sold, that appealed to me. In fact, it was both trustworthy and appealing." (Managing Partner)	Organic growth	One-Firm Firm	
	"The fact that one could become partner appealed, that there was a chance for me." (Managing Partner)	Career development	One-Firm Firm	
	"No external owners." (Managing Partner)	Owner structure	One-Firm Firm	

Why Centigo?	"The challenge of working as a consultant appealed to me." (Consultant 1)	Challenge of consulting attracted	*
	"My gutfeeling told me that I should join Centigo. In retrospect, I understand that it was the lack of structure that appealed." (Consultant 1)	Gutfeeling	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure
	"The co-workers played a big role when deciding." (Consultant 1)	Relationships	One-Firm Firm
	"It was personal chemistry and my gutfeeling." (Client Manager 3)	Co-workers, gutfeeling	*
	"I noticed during the interviews that there was another type of people here." (Client Manager 3)	Co-workers	One-Firm Firm
	"It was important to me that Centigo was independent, that it was not listed. It is hard to run a business with human capital as the biggest asset if there are a lot of external demands." (Associate Partner 1)	Owner structure	One-Firm Firm
	"I was looking for the entrepreneurial spirit again and I knew it existed at Centigo. I knew that my own aspirations and drive would fit here, that I would get a chance to develop and make a lasting impression." (Client Partner)	Entrepreneurial spirit and chance to develop attracted	One-Firm Firm
	"There were not many rules at Centigo." (Client Partner)	Not many rules	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure
	"I did not want to become square and at Centigo there was no norm that I had to fit into." (Client Manager 4)	Freedom	*
	"Freedom and responsibility." (Associate Partner 3)	Freedom, responsibility	Distributed leadership
	"I got a possitive impression during the interviews." (Associate Partner 2)	Possitive impression	*
	"I fell for the culture at Centigo; good people with good morale." (Consultant 2)	Culture, people and morale attracted	One-Firm Firm
	"Work-life- balance was important." (Consultant 2)	Work-life balance	*
Personal characteristics	"I managed some smaller firms already when studying. Not a fan of formal managers. The more responsibility the better." (Co-Founder)	Individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"I like challenges. I want to develop and learn new things" (Consultant 1)	Challenges, development	*
	"I am opportunity-oriented" (Associate Partner 1)	Opportunity-oriented	*
	"I am not driven by making money, if that would be the case, then I would be better of somewhere else" (Client Manager 4)	Personal drive	*
	"I get motivated by individual freedom, I want to learn new things" (Client Manager 4)	Freedom motivates	Distributed leadership
	"I like being challenged" (Consultant 2)	Appreciate challenges	*
	"I am goal-oriented - I like working towards goals. I like working in projects with a start and an end." (Consultant 2)	Goal-oriented	*
Culture	"We are a company driven by values, where the co-workers take a very big responsibility. That is our culture.[...] If talking in wider terms, one could say that we have a big portion of an entrepreneurial spirit, or maybe rather intrapreneurial spirit. However, it all relates back to the responsibility." (Managing Partner)	Intrapreneurial spirit and individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"We put a lot of ethics on the map." (Co-Founder)	Lot of ethics	*
	"The culture develops people so that they become mature enough to make their own decisions and stand for the consequences." (Client Manager 3)	Individual decisions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"It is a franchise-culture; every consultant is like a franchise-taker. After the junior consultant school, we want every individual to be a self-going person that takes responsibility for their actions." (Client Manager 3)	Individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The culture is probably the same as our core values, so if you get the core values right and act accordingly, then that will constitute the actual culture." (Team Manager)	Core values same as culture	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We are kind of like a big sect/cult, and we like it." (Client Manager 4)	Team spirit	One-Firm Firm
	"We are value driven - that is what holds us together." (Client Manager 4)	Value-driven	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"There is no glass ceiling for women." (Client Manager 4)	No glass ceiling	*
	"Social relationships are extremely important in this environment." (Client Manager 4)	Relationships important	One-Firm Firm
	"It is no one here telling you what you should do." (Associate Partner 3)	No formal managers	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The entrepreneurial spirit is important. The benefit of the model is the freedom to think, to reflect and form your own opinion. This creates a fun working environment, which results in better client projects, and then it all become well." (Associate Partner 3)	Freedom creates better client projects	Distributed leadership: self-leadership

Professional background and why choosing Centigo

A culture driven by values

Culture	"Here, I am myself. I don't act to live up to someone else's expectations." (Associate Partner 3)	Be yourself	*
	"We just got back from a spring conference, and it always hits me how friendly people are here." (Associate Partner 2)	Friendly people	One-Firm Firm
	"Centigo is driven by ambition." (Consultant 2)	Ambition driven	*
	"We are a value based company." (Client Partner)	Value based	*
	"We work a lot with values. We know what we think and value. In an environment like this, it is very important that the worker has an own opinion. That he or she has the engine on the inside. If others also have their engines on the inside, then you are in the right context. If you have the engine on the outside, then you need someone to tell you what to do." (Client Partner)	Need the engine on the inside	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"It is not black or white, there is no right or wrong, as long as it is in the Centigo way." (Consultant 2)	The Centigo way	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"You can sit and talk about each of the core values one at the time, but everything really goes hand in hand." (Consultant 2)	Everything goes hand in hand	*
	"The fundamentals principles are our DNA, the core values are our personal traits." (Consultant 2)	Fundament, core values	*
	"There is no 'dining carrier' waiting for you." (Consultant 2)	Do it yourself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership

A culture driven by values

CATEGORY: THE LEADERSHIP MODEL

	Quotes	Codes	Links to existing theories	Themes
General about Leadership	"Leadership is to inspire people to do a certain thing, even though they have the responsibility to actually do the thing. To make tough decisions, to demand things from people. To be genuinely interested in people's development and to make the people feel that you care for them." (Client Manager 1)	Inspire people	Distributed leadership, SDWT-leader	Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers
	"There are different perceptions of what leadership is." (Team Manager)	Different perceptions	*	
	"The Managers, they are leaders for the entire company. Business Consultants, on the other hand, are more individual. They take responsibility at their own level of capacity for things, besides their personal responsibility." (Client Manager 1)	Different leader dimensions	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership	
	"Leadership is not only included in the role of the Project Leader. Everyone at Centigo are leaders, all the time." (Client Manager 1)	Everyone are leaders	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"All of us are leaders and all of us have to see ourselves as leaders." (Associate Partner 1)	Everyone are leaders	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership.	
	"The thing with our model is that everyone takes responsibility and that everyone acts like leaders. Without that, our model would not work." (Managing Partner)	Everyone acts like leaders	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"It does not have to be the relationship leader- employee, it can also be between employee- employee." (Client Manager 1)	No fixed leader relationship	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership	
	"You can take on a great deal of leadership internally and inspire others without being the responsible one." (Client Manager 1)	Inspire and lead each other	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"If I am a good leader both internally and externally I will get people to work in my projects." (Client Manager 1)	Good leaders attract people	SDWT-leader	
	"The one who has time and inspiration takes the token and runs. When the person gets tired, someone else will pick it up and start running." (Client Manager 1)	Best suitable takes the lead	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership	
	"Leadership is to inspire the people around you to do things. Inspire them to take responsibility." (Client Manager 2)	Inspire people	Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader	
	"The role of the follower is to do the work while the leader supports with a vision. Often, the followers are the best to do the actual job." (Client Manager 2)	Support	Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader	
	"Leadership is not to forcefully instruct, they should rather guide." (Junior Consultant)	Guide	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader	
	"A leader is someone who inspires, supports and pushes." (Junior Consultant)	Inspire, support	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader	
	"For me, leadership and responsibility is related to each other. When you learn how to take responsibility for your own actions and act in accordance to your own responsibilities, then you start working on your leadership. Hence, leadership is simply something that grows." (Managing Partner)	Leadership and responsibility correlated	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"It is not like we have the leaders and the co-workers separated. Everyone has to be leaders, but you may be leader for yourself, for others or for everyone." (Managing Partner)	Different leader dimensions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"...to give people responsibility and a clear goal, but not explain how you reach that goal... I realise that I think very much of a leader now, not leadership." (Consultant 1)	The role of the leader is to set goals	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	

General about leadership

"Leadership is that you take care of your employees; that you lead them in the right direction. That you are responsive to what the individual wants." (Receptionist)	Responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"I link the leadership to the culture. Leadership is a culture in a firm where you go in the same direction." (Consultant 1)	Leadership and culture related	*
"Responsibility is a keyword." (Consultant 1)	Responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Leadership is to lead yourself. More traditional you could say it is an ability to create enthusiasm and inspire others, and oneself." (Client Manager 3)	Lead others and yourself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
The leadership role implies that you inform and explain things so that the individuals can take on own responsibility for things." (Associate Partner 1)	Inform and explain to enable for individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"The ability to inspire" (Associate Partner 1)	Inspire	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"Responsibility to set requirements." (Associate Partner 1)	Set requirements	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
"Help them to prioritise." (Associate Partner 1)	Help prioritising	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"The ability to inspire, to be a role model. [...] A leader is someone you look up to. It is also an approach; an openness to a certain type of questions." (Client Partner)	Inspire, role model, openness	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"When I use the word leader I don't mean a position, but an individual. A new-recruit can exercise leadership just as well as a more senior person, it's about personal traits, how you take responsibility for yourself." (Client Partner)	Leadership is not a position	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"To be and to follow good leaders. Leadership is bidirectional." (Client Manager 4)	Leadership is bidirectional	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"A good leader is a person you can listens to and that listen to you. Who can value impressions and summarise." (Client Manager 4)	Leaders listen	*
"To lead an inspire." (Client Manager 4)	Inspire	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"I don't believe in hierachies. I follow people that are talented." (Client Manager 4)	Follow role models	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure
"We have a modern leadership. It is a success factor to lead with modern components." (Associate Partner 3)	Modern leadership is key	*
"The biggest difference lies in if you lead with values or with structures and frameworks. The big Americans control their employees through management and follow up with rules. Here, on the other hand, we learn how to value ourselves in relation to others." (Associate Partner 3)	Lead through values	*
"Freedom under responsibility." (Associate Partner 3)	Freedom	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"You have to take note of the leader when talking about leadership. To be a role model, to help your peers. Push and pull." (Associate Partner 2)	Be a role model, push and pull	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"Decentralised, pushed down in the organisation. There is not just one leader." (Consultant 2)	More than one leader	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"We put a lot of responsibility on the individual; from the beginning and all the way up. We believe that the individuals have the capability and that he/she is the best person to see what the right decision is. But there is always help and support to get if needed." (Associate Partner 2)	Individual make the best decision for him/herself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"When I think of leadership, I think of a person. This was probably the reason why it took time for me to accept Centigo." (Team Manager)	Realised that there was more than one leader	Distributed leadership
"Our leadership is distributed leadership, it has to do with the business units. Collective leadership has a bit more with Centigo as a whole to do." (Consultant 2)	Distributed leadership	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"We want all our partners to be perceived as the one with decision-power. The partner who has a relationship with a client has the decision-power and do not have to ask the other partners." (Co-Founder)	The best suitable partner has decision power	Shared leadership
"If something happens that is not ok for Centigo, then, as a partner, I have to be able take the command. However, once again, I cannot force anyone to change direction, I have to argue for what I think might happen. It has to be this way, otherwise the model will collapse." (Co-Founder)	A partner can take the command	Shared leadership
"Even though I do not feel particularly inferior, experiences do matter." (Junior Consultant)	Experience matters	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure
"There are no formal managers but it is not entirely unimportant with titles. After all, age and experience matter." (Team Manager)	Experience matters	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure

Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers

General about leadership	"Having a formal manager did not trouble me until the day I got a bad one. You can have a mediocre formal manager and it still works. But it could also be that they simply don't fit together." (Team Manager)	Not always a bad thing to have a formal manager	
	"In other companies, if you want to change the direction, you change the CEO. But here the direction change when initiating new business areas that put up the ambition/direction." (Consultant 1)	New business areas put up the direction	Shared leadership
	"The seniors are leaders the whole time. I see a leader in all senior co-workers." (Associate Partner 1)	Seniors are leaders	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure
Leaders versus formal managers	"I have received a structural leader-role, which makes people view me as a leader. But if no one see me as a leader, I am not a leader. The hierarchy is there from scratch and you cannot ignore that. People listen to the founders, whether they like it or not. In our world, we naturally see hierarchies." (Associate Partner 1)	Naturally see hierarchies	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure
	"A formal manager is someone who you report to, who you ask for permission, someone who decides, a superior/master. Someone who is responsible coordinates, supports, synchronises people and processes." (Client Manager 2)	A formal manager is a superior master	*
	"Leadership is about getting people to do things without being an authority or without forcing them; motivational factors, responsibility, inspiration. A leader does not make decisions, a leader support others to make their own decisions. But, the world is not black and white, and I believe that a formal manager in an other firm also supports their co-workers." (Managing Partner)	A leader supports without forcing	*
	"A formal manager has an assigned responsibility." (Consultant 1)		*
	"Leadership is something you have, formal manager is something you are. Simply, you are assigned a formal manager role while you have to deserve your leadership." (Managing Partner)	You are assigned to be a formal manager	*
	"Many people are leaders, but not formal managers. At Centigo, we have leaders but no formal managers." (Consultant 1)	Everyone are leaders	*
	"In a culture with formal managers every one is waiting for orders. In a culture with leaders, everyone creates their own story of success. It creates an environment that is creative and proactive." (Associate Partner 3)	Everyone creates their own success story	*
	"You follow a formal manager because you have to." (Client Manager 3)	Power formal manager	*
	"You have to be assigned leadership - if no one see you as a leader, you are not a leader." (Associate Partner 1)	Have to be seen as a leader	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership.
	"A formal manager is appointed, a leader is elected by others. A formal manager is formal, a leader is informal. A manager has to work harder, a leader has it naturally." (Client Manager 3)	A formal manager is formal, a leader is informal	*
Challenges without formal managers	"Formal manager is something you are on the paper, and you can be either good or bad." (Associate Partner 2)	Formal manager is formal	*
	"The model has no drawbacks, but consequences. Sometimes the decision-making is slow [...]. The person who is responsible for a big question cannot make the decision. Instead his or her task is to anchor the decision. Therefore decisions take time. We also make decisions later than many others. We do not make decisions that do not have to be made. Concluding one can say that small [individual] decisions are quick and big [collective] decisions are slow." (Managing Partner)	No drawbacks with model but consequences like slow decision making	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
	"If it ain't broke, then don't fix it." (Managing Partner)	Solve problems when they occur	*
	"Frustration over ineffectiveness creates disagreements. It is not a perfect world, it slips a bit." (Associate Partner 1)	Frustration over ineffectiveness	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
	"Can be perceived as ineffective. Some people are better at dealing with it and get rewarded". (Client Manager 4)	Perceived as ineffective	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
	"It might be a bit messy sometimes without a formal manager." (Receptionist)	Messy without a formal manager	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
	"It is a damn cackling before getting to the point, and that is what makes Centigo so stable." (Co-Founder)	Discussions make Centigo stable	*
	"What you lose in effectiveness, you gain in flexibility and dynamic." (Co-Founder)	You gain flexibility and dynamic	*
	"When the client responsible partner can make own decisions, it may exist a brake in that, it is much to synchronise." (Associate Partner 3)	Much to synchronise	*
	"It can be frustrating that I cannot tell you what you should do. But ultimately, it is a good thing." (Co-Founder)	Frustrating not being able to tell you what you should do	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
	"The idea to appoint formal managers is constantly lurking in the reeds." (Co-Founder)	Thought of appointing formal managers	*

Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers

Challenges without formal managers	"In the short term, it is perhaps a good thing with formal managers. But I believe you can express it like this, I think it is like surfing. Once you are standing on the wave, it is amazing, but pretty shaky. It ends just as well with that you are falling. It is not stable. In order to stand up and be stable, you have to be active." (Co-Founder)	Good short-term with formal managers	One-Firm Firm: weakness	Everyone is a leader, but there are no formal managers
	"Health comes from the balance between the professional and the entrepreneurial. Everything else is a consequence of that balance. That's why we need the active leadership." (Client Partner)	Balance between the professional and the entrepreneurial	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"New constellations and new structures occur when Centigo is growing. The structure with new dimensions has to grow with the company. The structure functions as a 'glue', why we do not need micromanagement." (Co-Founder)	The structure function's as a glue	One-Firm Firm	
	"The effectiveness created in other firms with help from their structure, I do not believe is long-term sustainable. They are not custom made for the client." (Consultant 2)	Effectiveness through structure not long-term sustainable	*	
	"We have structure when working with clients, time plans and deadlines for our projects. People do not sit around being flummery. At clients, we can be really effective. The problem is when people are 'on the beach'." (Associate Partner 2)	Structure and effectiveness when working in projects	SDWT-leader	
About collective leadership	"The sum of the ambitions of 200 persons is much stronger then if one manager sets the ambition that 180 employees do not want to work with." (Consultant 1)	Ambition from bottom up	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	Individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of your actions
	"It is your own ambitions that drive you." (Managing Partner)	Ambition driven	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"We work with ambitions. You set an ambition plan with your Team Manager; what do you want do dig deeper into - maybe a client, an area, an industry, work in a certain team etc. Then you look on what is required to achieve that - maybe you have to change you behaviour, develop your competence etc. How you best can manage your strengths. There are no monetary ambitions for the individuals, that are introduced first at a higher level. In addition, we have ambitions on another level. Every Client Team has goals, so does each BU. All this is mixed together and make up Centigo's ambition." (Associate Partner 2)	Individuals and teams set their own goals	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"It is necessary that the employees have a wish to take on responsibility, that they have a wish to be part of Centigo - in order to make this model work." (Client Manager 2)	Individuals want to take responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"'I-want-spirit', stretch up your hand and say that you can and will." (Receptionist)	"I-want-spirit"	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"You cannot isolate collective leadership [from the other core values]. Everything goes hand in hand. It means something to us, but you cannot isolate it from the rest of the context. [...] For example; one reason why collective leadership emerged is that we said we want entrepreneurial spirit. An entrepreneur is a freethinker searching for temporary monopolies to do something new. You cannot have an entrepreneur spirit and a strong formal leader." (Co-Founder)	Cannot isolate collective leadership	*	
	"There is no formal manager and there is no leader who tell you what direction Centigo will develop in. Instead, what we have are our core values and the culture. If we share that, then we will naturally move in the same direction." (Team Manager)	Naturally move in the same direction if sharing values	*	
	"If you crack the code, you will become successful and happy at Centigo." (Team Manager)	Become successful if you crack the code	*	
	"We don't have a 'vision 2020' like Accenture. [...] It's more important where we are coming from than where we are going." (Team Manager)	Important with history	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"Everyone can tell the story." (Team Manager)	Important with history	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"I-want-spirit." (Junior Consultant)	Inner drive	*	
	"It's a constant balancing act between being professional and entrepreneurial." (Client Partner)	Balance between the professional and the entrepreneurial	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"When I tell these stuff about collective leadership to other more traditional companies they often laugh and say 'it is not possible to do it in that way. It does not work, does it?' In addition, the newspapers always ask 'someone has to be the formal manager, right?'" (Co-Founder)	Difficult to believe in	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader	
	"A general description of the leadership at Centigo is that it has a lot to do with the 'I- want- spirit'." (Junior Consultant)	"I-want-spirit"	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"To be able to lead others, you first have to learn to lead yourself." (Managing Partner)	Lead yourself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"It's about leading others but also about being capable of being lead" (Client Partner)	Lead others and be led	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership.	
	"To be able to lead others, you have to be able to lead yourself. We want to encourage self-leadership, so that they can lead others later." (Client Partner)	Encourage self-leadership	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	

About collective leadership

"I am not that fond of the label collective leadership, it is a risk that it becomes unclear." (Client Manager 4)	The label collective leadership is unclear	*
"There is no formal managers who decide/control, but there is a clear division who is in charge." (Consultant 2)	No formal managers but clear who is in charge	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"You may not call it [collective leadership] a leadership model, but perhaps the model. The organisational model." (Team Manager)	Collective leadership as the organisational model	*
"Collective leadership is shared responsibility." (Client Manager 1)	Shared responsibility	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership.
"Everything is rigged for this." (Client Manager 2)	Everything is rigged	*
"Collective leadership is... distributed leadership. Some think that collective leadership means that everyone can take part in every decision, but that is not the way it works. The collective leadership builds on the fact that there are very well defined areas of responsibility. There is someone who is responsible for every single atom at Centigo. For every question, there is someone who is responsible, who you can turn to. But, I can be ultimately responsible for a question, but that does not always mean that I am the one working with the question." (Managing Partner)	Distributed leadership and responsibility	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
"The leadership is fully decentralised, the leadership lies on an individual level. The consequence is that you make your own decisions. It is ambition- driven. The responsibility is distributed in the whole organisation." (Client Manager 3)	Leadership lies on the individual level	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Freedom under responsibility. Self-leadership. Make decision and stand for the consequences." (Client Manager 4)	Freedom under responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Everyone thinks business. That is distributed leadership for me. Even if we do not have a map for how you should think, everyone thinks the same. Business thinking." (Associate Partner 3)	Same way of thinking	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"In the collective leadership there is not one person that personify the company, it is rather dynamic, like an organism. There is still a group that inspires, but they also get help from others. That person cannot be exchanged like a hockey coach. If we have problems, many help out." (Associate Partner 3)	Not one person personify the company	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
"This is tough to explain to someone who doesn't have prior knowledge. We don't have CEO but a common responsibility to lead the organisation. A belief that the individual can make decisions and lead, and that the individual will ask for help if needed. The collective leadership builds on that you are brave enough to let go of control and that you let the individuals make decisions. And, you can only do that if you are a tight group who understand each other, who trust each other and who have the same view on how to work towards the client, and how to work internally." (Associate Partner 2)	Common responsibility to lead built on trust	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. One-Firm Firm.Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"There is no one on a higher level telling you how you should do things, that comes from the bottom up." (Consultant 2)	Incentives bottom up	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Collective leadership can be perceived as a bit socialistic, but what we mean is that we trust each other". (Consultant 2)	Trust each other	One-Firm Firm
"Distributed leadership creates a distributed responsibility." (Associate Partner 1)	Distributed responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"It works in that way that the individual also has to take the consequences of their decisions, implying a great personal responsibility. [...] I am prepared to take the crashes". (Co-Founder)	Responsibility for decisions and consequences	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Individual responsibility, driven by an 'I-want-spirit' no matter what role you have. There is no one who says, 'now, do this', instead it is like: 'now I'm going to do this, do you want to join?'" (Team Manager)	Individual responsibility driven by "I-want-spirit"	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"You are responsible for your own costs. If a cost would be placed on the overhead instead, then the system could be abused. But, if one is personally accountable, then the person is accountable for everything he or she does. There are other aspects as well, as in taking on responsibility when working with a client. As a result from people taking on the responsibility, we can delegate a lot of leadership, as it won't be abused." (Client Manager 1)	Responsibility linked to compensation model	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. One-Firm Firm
"Personal responsibility, stand for your own actions." (Client Manager 2)	Responsibility for actions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"If you blame a mistake on someone else, then we say that you are 'under the line', then you don't take responsibility for your own actions." (Client Manager 2)	Responsibility for actions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Everyone helps each other to be responsible for whole of Centigo, and everyone is allowed to be individually responsible. To enable individual responsibility, you have to give the employees space to make their own decisions." (Client Manager 2)	Give space to enable individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Personal responsibility, you have to lead yourself." (Junior Consultant)	Lead yourself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"90% of the decisions are taken by the individual." (Managing Partner)	Individual decision-making	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Don't bring a problem, bring a solution." (Receptionist)		*
"I have a responsibility to lead myself, but I also have to follow the others. Our primary goal is to help our clients." (Client Partner)	Lead and get led	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"I decide in what direction I want to go." (Consultant 2)	Set own direction	Distributed leadership: self-leadership

Individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of your actions

About collective leadership

"Personal responsibility, 'I-want-spirit'" (Client Manager 1)	Inner drive	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Everyone takes responsibility for his or her own actions." (Co-Founder)	Individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"One example is that we have a shared responsibility for the dish washing machine." (Client Manager 1)	Shared responsibility	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
"Since everyone are on the same level, everybody lead together. We do a lot of work together irrespective of our roles." (Junior Consultant)	Everybody lead together	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
"Everyone is responsible for Centigo's success." (Junior Consultant)	Shared responsibility for success	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"Centigo will work even without the founders. If I would answer no to that question, all things would fall apart. But since they are inspiring, it would be a loss if they quit. It is collective here, but maybe the founders still are the ones who lead? They are so inspiring and they founded Centigo..." (Team Manager)	Will work without the founders	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"There are always tendencies like 'can't we become a little bit more like a normal company?' [...] But I think our uniqueness is positive for us." (Managing Partner)	Uniqueness positive	*
"There is no one deciding for whole Centigo, and no one directly deciding over me." (Consultant 2)	No one decides over me	Self-leadership
"Knowledge sharing is a great challenge. But it is not a challenge steaming from the collective leadership but from the professional and entrepreneurial, the 'artistic freedom'. It is a challenge in itself not to mix up things. The collective leadership is about being able to lead oneself. That is collective leadership for me. You could actually stop there when talking about collective leadership. We actually tell people what to do, and that has nothing to do with the collective leadership. You cannot think that it [collective leadership] means that you can do whatever you want to do because that is not what it is; you cannot do what you want. [...] That is a problem, which is more related to that we do not want to have structure and control as it drains our artistic freedom. In fact, I believe that is the problem, rather than the collective leadership. Knowledge sharing being a challenge is a good point, though. I think many of us tell the story as 'we do not have structure since we are not controlled'. That is one way to do it. It is difficult to isolate the concepts. It is an approach that we have to finalise when growing." (Client Partner)	Collective leadership is about to lead oneself and should not be mixed up with knowledge sharing, which is related to the structure	*
"A cornerstone in the collective leadership is that one, and only one, partner is responsible in every single question. A common misperception is that everybody has the decision power. It may sound hierarchical, but it has to do with that we all have to know who is responsible. Together we, the partners, share the whole responsibility." (Co-Founder)	Always a responsible partner	Shared responsibility
"You have to know who is responsible. It shall not be a concern to bring up things." (Client Manager 4)	There is always someone who is ultimately responsible	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"The power to make decisions differ depending on whether you are a senior or a junior. As an inexperienced junior you need some directions in order to develop. You have to learn the boring stuff as well. Otherwise the risk is that juniors only do fun projects and are not exposed for tough challenges needed in order to be a high performer." (Co-Founder)	Take individual decisions but still get some directions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader. One-Firm Firm
"Everyone takes his or her own responsibility. You do not have a specific formal manager but you have someone who helps you on the way. Someone that is responsible for your development. But you have a lot of freedom in you role." (Receptionist)	Individual responsibility but get support	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Everyone is not responsible for the same thing. Lars-Tommy does not exist. Instead, Lars is responsible for one thing while Tommy is responsible for another, i.e. not for the same thing. There is always someone who is responsible." (Associate Partner 3)	There is always someone who is responsible	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader
"As a junior, you don't have that much freedom. If you come straight from school and wish to become a good consultant, then you have to listen to others in order to understand how and what to do to become good." (Client Partner)	Listen to others as a junior	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation. One-Firm Firm
"It is very clear whom I should turn to. Surely, there is someone who formally is ultimately responsible, but I do not know who that is. It really does not matter." (Consultant 2)	Do not always know who is ultimately responsible	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"The individual makes most of the decisions. But this is very theoretical. Some decisions cannot be made by the individual as the decision affects other areas. If so, the decision has to be lifted up one circle in the organisational structure." (Co-Founder)	Decision-making differs depending on the scope	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"You can make decisions to a wide extent, as long as it only affects you." (Managing Partner)	Decision-making differs depending on the scope	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Depending on the size of the question [who it affects], they get solved in different units and dimensions. Different business units get inspired by each other but are self-propelled. But we talk us together and get synchronised." (Co-Founder)	Decision-making differs depending on the scope	Distributed leadership: self-leadership

Individual responsibility and stand for the consequences of your actions

Collective decisions beyond the individual responsibility

About collective leadership	"Frustration, some decisions take longer time. On the other hand, the decisions get better. If there had been a formal manager then he/she would have made the decisions. If there instead is collective leadership, then there will be more discussion. Arguments will be shared, and ultimately the decisions will be better than an individual's decisions. I am sure that the decisions get better." (Consultant 1)	Decisions get better by discussion	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership. SDWT- leader	Collective decisions beyond the individual responsibility
	"What we want to emphasise is that the leadership can be distributed, but yet someone can be responsible." (Client Manager 4)	Distributed leadership and responsibility	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership	
	"In distributed leadership there are clearer responsibility areas. In collective leadership you do not have particular responsibility areas. It is more about 'I want to feel responsible' [for the collective]." (Client Manager 4)	In collective leadership no clear responsibility areas	*	
Examples of how the leadership model is played out in practice on project level	"The Client Teams organise in a way that make sense for the particular client. It could surely be very hierarchical. There should not be any flexibility, the only thing to do is to adapt. [...] Hierarchy per se is not something bad or problematic." (Co-Founder)	Hierarchical in projects	SDWT-leader	More hierarchial in projects
	"You are allowed to work pro-bono – it is an individual decision." (Co-Founder)	Pro bono work	One-Firm Firm	
	"We work 'with the client', not 'for the client', which differs from other companies." (Client Manager 2)	Work with the client	*	
	"We work in co-created teams; more people from the client than from Centigo." (Client Manager 2)	Co-created teams	*	
	"When you are in a project, then you take on a role. The Project Leader is responsible out in the project, and obviously makes the final decisions. However, as a leader, I delegate responsibility and make the others involved. I support them and make sure they do a good job." (Client Manager 2)	Delegated responsibility	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"It feels like we are on the same level, I don't feel that anyone is particularly higher up in the hierarchy. Once I was corrected when I said 'But he is above me' – 'No, you cannot say that!'" (Junior Consultant)	All on the same level	Distributed leadership: less bureaucratic structure	
	"You do not say no to projects in the beginning; you want to learn. If you have not tried one type of project before, then you do not know whether you think is fun or not". (Junior Consultant)	Want to learn	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"You do a better work if you have chosen it yourself. You can view it like you learn from doing 'boring stuff'." (Junior Consultant)	Learning	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"There is another reality/context out in the projects to relate to. Out there, there are more formal managers and authorities and clearer hierarchies. It is more 'normal'. The client will probably give directives." (Managing Partner)	Hierarchical in projects	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"In the projects there are Project Leaders who are a little bit like formal managers." (Consultant 1)	Project Leaders like formal managers	SDWT-leader	
	"We get agile organisations by working in synergies. Three persons from Centigo and three persons from the client can work together in a team and learn from each other. In this way, we get more buy-in and commitment as it feels like it is we - the consultants and the client - who have worked and delivered together." (Consultant 1)	Synergies, team work and commitment	*	
	"I dare to say no to projects but at junior level it does not matter that much what you do. It is more about learning the consultant profession, which is not that industry specific. But if you are more senior, you may say no to projects abroad if you have kids for instance." (Consultant 1)	Learning to be a consultant	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"The leadership in projects look a bit different than on the internal level. In client projects, the client expects there to be a Project Leader, and we shape the project organisation in the way the client wants it." (Client Manager 3)	Adapt to client	*	
	"The effect of collective leadership it that you can trust people. You trust that people take their responsibility." (Client Manager 3).	Trust	One-Firm Firm	
	"As a manager I feel that I have the authority to tell people what they should do within their areas. However, I ask instead of demand. People dare to say no, but then you should explain why." (Client Manager 3)	Ask instead of demand	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"Who is doing what tasks is normally quite obvious." (Client Manager 3)	Task division	Shared leadership	
	Byn a hierarchical organisation, Centigo's organisation can be perceived as messy." (Client Manager 3)	Perceived as messy	*	
	"In projects the Project Leader is the formal manager. However, the entrepreneurial spirit may effect how they do things: how they divide the responsibilities and tasks." (Associate Partner 1)	Project Leaders like formal managers	SDWT-leader	
	"Even if there is a role called Project Leader, everyone are leaders. The leadership does not end at the Project Leader." (Client Partner)	Leadership scope goes beyond the Project leader	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"In projects, someone is ultimately responsible. As Client Partner, I am ultimately responsible, but I can delegate that responsibility to the Project Leader who then becomes responsible. But, all the consultants are also leaders, on a personal level. It's about being a leader for others, to act as a role model for the client. The capability to inspire and lead others is greater in our teams, and the capability to lead grows." (Client Partner)	Delegated responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"You have the responsibility to lead yourself." (Client Partner)	Lead yourself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	

Examples of how the leadership model is played out in practice on project level	"We try to work as flat as possible, so that each co-worker can create as much value as possible. We try to help each other out." (Client Manager 4)	Task division	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	More hierarchial in projects
	"The basic way of thinking is that we try to have a distributed leadership. But in smaller projects it is not as necessary to have clear responsibility areas. Then it goes more towards collective leadership." (Client Manager 4)	Smaller projects are different	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"Common feedback from customer is: 'finally someone is listening to us'. Someone who do not just bring old hypotheses and lessons, but who dares to work." (Associate Partner 3)	Positive feedback from clients	*	
	"When we have a deadline, we have a structure to reach it." (Associate Partner 3)	Structure in projects	*	
	"The advantage with the collective [leadership] at the client is that it opens up for trying to find solutions together." (Associate Partner 3)	Work with the client	*	
	"You are expected to speak up. We encourage people to articulate their thoughts, it is not just the Project Leader's opinion that matters. It is probably a consequence from the fact that we teach people to take own responsibility." (Associate Partner 3)	Speak up	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"It is more hierarchical in projects. We often work in teams with the client and sometimes we even with other consultants." (Associate Partner 2)	Hierarchical in projects	*	
	"The responsibility lies on the individual; the individual should be responsible to the greatest extent possible." (Associate Partner 2)	Individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"In projects, I make sure that people get roles that suit them well in order to make the projects work as well as possible. I am always out in the projects to support and to listen." (Associate Partner 2)	Everyone gets an appropriate role	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"There is of course more reporting towards our client, we do what is expected from us." (Associate Partner 2)	Adapt to client	*	
	"We can offer dedicated people to our clients, people who perceive Centigo as a good employer. People think it is fun to work, which enables us to both develop our employees and our clients – and to get paid for it." (Associate Partner 2)	Develop and have fun	*	
	"Generally, in client projects, the Client Manager greatly affects my behaviour. If she/he is there at 8 am, then I will also be there at 8 am. If the Client Manager wears a suit, then I also wear a suit. He/she is an informal leader. Perhaps I care so much because I am a junior..." (Consultant 2)	Manager affects juniors	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"I do not think the collective leadership is expressed that clear in the projects, it is about delivering and we following the client's directives." (Consultant 2)	Adapt to client	*	
General examples of how the leadership model is played out in practice	"If you talk to a partner, you can rely on what he or she says. Instead of that everyone talks to the partner, everyone shall have a relation to the partner." (Co-Founder)	Rely on what a partner says	Shared leadership. One-Firm Firm.	Dispite different ideas of what leadership is, yet similar in practice
	"In many workplaces it is full speed until you cannot take it anymore. Here, we want you to be able to accelerate and break; everyone does not have to act the same way all the time. This is fundamental." (Co-Founder)	Everyone does not have to act the same way all the time	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"If you do not have very high ambitions this year then that is ok - as long as you have not already promised that you will manage a certain project for example." (Co-Founder)	Ok to have lower ambitions in some periods	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"You are allowed to take a gap year every fifth year for doing something else: studying or travelling etc. It is not that many who actually do that, but the knowledge of that you have that possibility helps." (Co-Founder)	Allowed to take a gap year	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"If I want to go on a holiday trip, then I have to check with the Client Manager, but I am ultimately the one who decides whether I go or not." (Co-Founder)	Individual decision-making	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"There is no partner that can decide what you should do, but as a partner I can ask: would you like to this?" (Co-Founder)	No partner can decide what you should do	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"Collective pressure is built on the shared values; if you want to be appreciated in the whole organisation there are certain behaviours that you should avoid. For example, being selfish is such a behaviour." (Co-Founder)	Avoid certain behaviour if wanting to be appreciated	*	
	"Centigo is a stable company, even without a top management team deciding which direction to run. It becomes very stable if you make decisions in the bottom, close to where the action is, instead of sitting in the top making decisions that are far away from the action. That would make it much more shaky." (Co-Founder)	Stable if making decisions bottom up	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"There is no internal hierarchy in the partner group." (Co-Founder)	No hierarch among partners	Shared leadership. One-Firm Firm.	
	"It is seldom that we have traditional decision making processes; analysing, considering alternatives and making a decision. Instead we discuss. A lot." (Co-Founder)	Discuss a lot	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"When sending out a survey of what to talk about during the next conference, then everybody answers even though it is voluntary and anonymous." (Co-Founder)	Everyone answered voluntary survey	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	

General examples of how the leadership model is played out in practice

"The key to individual responsibility is that you are free to choose. For example, you can choose if you want a HTC or an iPhone. If you choose the HTC, then you will probably always justify that decision, even if you in fact would like another phone. If you make the decision yourself, then you will put energy on defending your decision." (Co-Founder)	The key to responsibility is that you are free to choose	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Five-past-twelve principle for solving problems - we solve problems when they occur." (Co-Founder)	Solving problems when needed	*
"We should be inspired of things that other firms do well, but if we copy them straight off then we will only be the second best. Instead, we do it 'the Centigo way'." (Co-Founder)	Do it the Centigo way	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"If two people want to do the same project, then they share it and benefit from insight from two perspectives." (Client Manager 1)	Benefit from sharing	One-Firm Firm
"Perhaps you say yes to everything in the beginning as you want experience." (Junior Consultant)	Gain experience	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"We inspire each other. When you see what others are doing, then you may also want to do that. If I have an idea, it is possible to realise it. I get support and people are positive." (Junior Consultant)	Inspire each other	One-Firm Firm
"The culture is open, it feels ok to give feedback to a senior person and to ask for help." (Junior Consultant)	Open culture	One-Firm Firm
"The one who feels that he/she have time and wants to be responsible will take the responsibility." (Consultant 1)	Wanting to take responsibility	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"There are not that many rules and frames here." (Receptionist)	Not many rules	One-Firm Firm
"Only four persons work internally with the administration." (Receptionist)	Few administrative roles	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"If the consultants have lunch meetings with clients, then they order lunch themselves or sometimes they ask me for help very kindly...." (Receptionist)	Consultants order lunch themselves	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"We have a high level of trust." (Henrik)	High level of trust	One-Firm Firm
"No CEO, no managers, no one who is responsible for the finance – it is a spinning schedule." (Associate Partner 1)	Spinning schedule	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership.
"It is ok to change your ambition, but then you have to have a dialogue about it. Even though if we are ambition driven there is a 'pyramid game'." (Associate Partner 1)	Pyramid game	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure
"If we make a decision together and both will benefit from it, then we may share the consequences." (Associate Partner 1)	Share benefits and consequences	Shared leadership
"In the partner group I do what I am good at and what will benefit the organisation as a whole rather than what I think is the most fun. The 'I- want-spirit' does not mean that I always do what I want. If you aim for a goal you sometimes have to do things on the way that you don't think is fun." (Associate Partner 1)	Not always do fun things	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"We have ambition plans for everyone, not development plans. In this way, focus moves from the firm to the individual. It is not what I want that matters, but what you want. We help each other by sitting down and talking about the person's ambition, I help them to get their engine on the inside. In this way, it is not Centigo's will that rules. All in all, this affects how we do things here, the driving force. In this, I believe leaders can work as role models for others." (Client Partner)	Help them with ambition plans	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"Also juniors can say no to projects, partially. They have to bite the bullet. The younger consultants bill a fixed price to the client and therefore they have to bite the bullet sometimes in order to develop. Sometimes I feel that the ones that are entrepreneurial believe that they only should do 'fun' things." (Associate Partner 3)	Bite the bullet	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"We have to be functional; sometimes we need someone similar to a formal manager who can adjust what things mean. [...] Sometimes it is a problem when people do not understand that this is a workplace. You have to be an opportunist, sometimes you are just 'a small cog in a big machinery'." (Associate Partner 3)	Need someone similar to a formal manager	Shared leadership
"Being professional is sometimes about doing things that you do not think is fun." (Associate Partner 3)	Being professional	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"There can of course be situations where you think different from the others, and if you do, then you will hear it." (Associate Partner 2)	Think different	*
"There are different opinions of what the core values mean. Never ending story." (Consultant 2)	Different opinions of core values	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"If I need more structure, I sit down with my Team Manager who is interested in the best for me as an individual, not the best for Centigo." (Consultant 2)	Help from Team Manager	Distributed leadership: self-leadership

Despite different ideas of what leadership is, yet similar in practice

	"There is some kind of career steps. If I want to have clearer steps, then I can sit down with my Team Manager and write down clear steps." (Consultant 2)	Some kind of career steps	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
Challenges feedback	"In organisations where there are frameworks [for feedback] you might find some support in them. Feedback can be scary both to give and receive, and then it might feel safe to use the framework. But here, the feedback once it is given is better because it is more adjusted [for the individual]. We want more feedback." (Associate Partner 1)	Might find support in frameworks for feedback	One-Firm Firm
	"It is easier to compare from year to year if you have a framework. Easier to compare development and persons." (Associate Partner 1)	Easier to compare if having frameworks	One-Firm Firm
	"What drives me to share, to get feedback? To hear that I am good, get to show myself, and get to inspire others. You have to market yourself internally." (Client Manager 4)	Internal marketing drives to give and get feedback	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"[Feedback] Is a challenge when you do not have a hierarchical organisational structure. In a hierarchy, the managers give feedback to subordinates." (Co-Founder)	Challenge when not having a hierarchical organisation	One-Firm Firm
	"It works the first three years for the juniors, but as a senior you have to ask for feedback. But then in this setting, it is ok to ask for feedback." (Co-Founder)	Seniors ask for feedback	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"Companies like Accenture have more structured processes, within very specific frames, which makes people become stereotypes to 'suit the machinery'. But we decided that if we put up a frame for feedback, people will tend to follow that frame and do what it takes to fulfil criteria." (Co-Founder)	Frameworks make people become stereotypes	One-Firm Firm
	"The feedback has to be more open, which frustrates many people. But I will never give anyone a checklist of what to accomplish. You have to find your own way of how to get successful. But I am prepared to coach, 'I think in this way and would probably reason like this, but you do not have to reason like that because you are responsible for your own success'." (Co-Founder)	Open feedback may create frustration	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"Team Managers want more people to get feedback, have to be better at spontaneous feedback. It is easier to discuss who to give a new role if there is feedback." (Team Manager)	Have to be better at spontaneous feedback	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"An employee survey showed that we give too little feedback, while the leaders think that they give enough feedback." (Team Manager)	Leaders think they give enough feedback	*
	"It is up to the individuals to ensure that they receive feedback. We have therefore no set processes, there is a small template that you can follow if you want to with 'three good things, areas to improve, give concrete examples', but in the end it is up to the Client Manager to design the process." (Team Manager)	Up to the individual to get feedback for which the client manager designs a process	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"I take for granted that everyone wants feedback, that everyone wants to grow and develop." (Client Manager 1)	Everyone wants feedback	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The feedback, if there is feedback, could be better. We want more feedback. You should get feedback at least every sixth month. Also direct feedback. A guideline could be good. It would be easier to compare personal development from year to year if there was a formalised guide." (Client Manager 1)	Easier to compare people if having a formalised guide	One-Firm Firm
	"It can be scary to both give and receive feedback, especially in the beginning. It can be tough for a junior to give and ask for feedback from a senior. Therefore, we have decided that it is up to the senior responsible to provide feedback, as well as the Team Manager. A formalised feedback process could work as a support and make it less scary." (Client Manager 1)	Can be tough for a junior to give and ask for feedback. Formalised guide helps	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The more senior, the more responsibility when it comes to feedback, both giving and receiving. As a Client Manager, I want people to develop." (Client Manager 1)	Seniors have more responsibility when it comes to feedback	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"The feedback is up to the individual. Though after a couple of months at Centigo you get a mentor to give some help on the way. After my first project, I got feedback on the initiative of the Project Leader. But I have not got it from Team Manager yet. Some spontaneous feedback, but not that much." (Junior Consultant)	The feedback is up to the individual but juniors get a mentor	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"I would dare to give feedback upwards, but have not done that yet." (Junior Consultant)	Would dare to give feedback upwards	*
	"There are two types, spontaneous after meetings, in projects, direct, and structured feedback. Juniors shall get, while seniors shall give feedback." (Managing Partner)	There are spontaneous and structured feedback	*
	"I don't get any feedback, or at least not very much. I would gladly get more feedback, from below. I will try to ask for more feedback, but I see a challenge in it, the position of dependence. Even if there is not such dependency, some think there is." (Managing Partner)	Feedback and position of dependence	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure
	"If you think that someone, or something can be improved, but don't say anything or give feedback, then it will not be improved." (Managing Partner)	Feedback to improve	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership

Dispute different ideas of what leadership is, yet similar in practice

Challenges feedback	"It should work in a certain way... We have done like this; the manager at the project should give me feedback, but the manager has given me the responsibility to ask for it. If referring to business wellness, starting to regulate feedback may create imbalance in the organisation." (Consultant 1)	Ask for feedback	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"Did not work very well before. I actually rolled out a feedback-process and set some requirements. I put up directions for who are supposed to give feedback and how often. It is included in my role as a manager to develop others." (Client Manager 3)	Rolled out a feedback-process	Share leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"It is always challenging to give feedback, it is always more difficult to give feedback to someone with more responsibility than oneself." (Client Manager 4)	Challenging to give feedback to someone with more responsibility than oneself	Distributed leadership: underlying power structure
Challenges spreading information and knowledge sharing	"Because of the 'I-want-mentality', things might not be done because no one wants to. We do not have any cross-dimensional departments telling what has to be done. For example internal communication." (Client Manager 3)	Things might not get done	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"Spreading information may be insufficient when people do not prioritise 'Share Point' due to high workload." (Receptionist)	Not prioritise spreading information	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"Individual responsibility can quickly fade as we are ambition driven. If you do not take responsibility and hand over to someone else, then it is easily fading out. There are no guidelines for how we should do. A structure had ensured the availability of needed information." (Consultant 1)	Incentives to share information can quickly fade	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The incentives for knowledge sharing are 100 percentages internally. Together we create value. It may even be about building your personal brand." (Associate Partner 3)	Incentives for sharing information is internally	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"Knowledge sharing is very difficult and we could be better at it. I think it is typical for the consultancy industry that you focus on the client and not internally." (Associate Partner 2)	Typical for consultancy firms	One-Firm Firm
	"We share knowledge through 'Academy', internal courses, good people teach others, lunch presentations. It builds on sharing wisdom from cases." (Associate Partner 2)	Share knowledge through an IT system and other informal channels	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
	"Knowledge sharing in terms of completing and actually uploading documents, the short-term win is not that big. Maybe a rule or requirement to upload had been good. But instead of having a rule, you have to answer the question why we do something, motivate people to understand that they do it for their own sake." (Client Manager 1)	Short-term win of having rules for sharing documents	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"We have a 'knowledge bank', but it is not as good as it could be." (Consultant 1)	Knowledge bank	*
	"To secure competence, already when developing offers to a client we secure competence. When developing [a client offer], the competence is individually based, but that offer serves as a reference case. In that way you secure that the competence stays within Centigo." (Consultant 1)	Developing client offers secure competence	*
	"We want to create some sort of knowledge sharing, but we do not want to force anyone. If I want to learn something it is my responsibility to find out about it." (Client Manager 3)	Not force	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"We do not win anything from formalising. Templates to fill in, you start to do carelessly and get tired off." (Client Manager 3)	No wins from formalising	
	"The key is that 'I want to learn something I take own responsibility for'." (Client Manager 3)	The key is wanting to learn	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"I can tell you, it [spreading information] is really difficult. There are 1000 initiatives that I naturally do not know about." (Co-Founder)	Information spreading difficult	*
	"Centigo is owned by partners and not listed. At a listed company, there can be a benefit in not sharing all information as it may affect the valuation of the company." (Managing Partner)	Information is not hindered as might be the case in a listed company	One-Firm Firm
	"Quarterly conferences and pubs for example, are also good venues to present things. Someone can take the initiative to arrange one of these pubs if he or she or they want to inform or launce anything." (Co-Founder)	Incentives to arrange events to inform	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"We can always get better. You cannot say 'you did not tell me this'. It is the individual's responsibility to seek information. There are many informal channels." (Client Manager 1)	Individual responsibility	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"We turn everything around, in a hierarchy information is expected to come from above, but we inform and spread information from the individual. I cannot say 'I do not get any information', instead 'in what way can I ensure that I get informed?'." (Co-Founder)	Information is spread from bottom up	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"In a company with over 50 employees, distributing information never works well. I think it works just as good or bad here as at other places. It is very difficult to tell everything to everyone all the time, there is an infinite amount of information." (Managing Partner)	Distributing information never works well in a big company	One-Firm Firm

Despite different ideas of what leadership is, yet similar in practice

Challenges spreading information and knowledge sharing	"At other firms, someone has to think through and decide who needs what information. At Centigo, the individual decides individually what information is needed. Tough, the management team has to inform some, but that has nothing to do with the collective leadership." (Managing Partner)	The individual decides what information is needed	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	Dispite different ideas of what leadership is, yet similar in practice
	"Everywhere it goes in different pace. Therefore, information is not spread in the same way as in a more hierarchal organisation. The Team Managers can get the same information, but spread that information in different pace. For example, one Team Manager is out on a project and spread the information one week later." (Consultant 1)	Spreading information in different pace	One-Firm Firm	
	"In one way I report what we are doing within the Business Unit, for example sales development. But there could be things that I am not involved in. And then you simply ... It has developed in a way where we have channels for everything. We have a weekly mail within the BU. Then we have some social networks. And then you can have video conferences." (Co-Founder)	Channels for everything	*	
	"Before, no formal communication channels where needed. Now it is required. Some standard information is shared at the BU-meetings every last Friday of the month." (Team Manager)	More formal communication channels required	*	
	"We must find ways to share some, but not too much, important information. There is still a lot of informal information exchange in many types of groups." (Team Manager)	Must find ways to share information	*	
	"Implicitly, you should not send out emails to everyone that much. Especially with the partners in mind that receive a great amount of emails." (Receptionist)	You should not spread too much information	*	
Introduced to fundamentals and core values	"We have not documented what collective leadership is, it has to be told. Some say it is much more effective to write it down, so that everyone can read what it means. But no way, that is not us, it has to be told. And you have to reason about it." (Co-Founder)	Not documented what it is	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning
	"I participated in an introduction day for new recruits. The co-founders participated and talked about the core values." (Receptionist)	Introduction day	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"It is difficult to learn how it works. Quite fast you learn the basics, but with the years and different roles it means more and more things." (Client Manager 3)	With the years you learn more	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"The three-year-long consultant school is important. It helps the person to mature into the role, which is important, as he/she will be required to take responsibility and build experience." (Team Manager)	Consultant school important	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"Theory and practice are interwoven in the junior consultant school." (Client Partner)	Theory and practice	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"We collectively help each other." (Team Manager)	Collective spirit	Share leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"You learn just from being here. You have to adapt and become one of us." (Client Manager 1)	Learning by doing	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
Learning about collective leadership	"Reflection is generally a strength at Centigo." (Co-Founder)	Reflection is a strenght	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"We coach the co-workers so they get allocated to the right project." (Co-Founder)	Coach co-workers	Share leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"If the project is not very fun, then you should reframe it; 'this is something you have to learn'." (Co-Founder)	Reframe	Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"We have conferences three or four times a year, where we discuss culture-related issues." (Co-Founder)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"Success is dangerous. When you are successful you think that you have cracked the code of something and that if you just stay the same you will remain successful. 'Don't change anything, if it works, then don't fix it'." (Co-Founder)	Sucess is dangerous	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"If getting successful there is a risk of becoming static, and we do not want that." (Co-Founder)	Risk of becoming static	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"There have to be dialogues, reasoning and discussions all the time. I think we put a lot of energy into talking with our co-workers." (Co-Founder)	Have to be discussion	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"When there are no rules, humans still want to do the right thing - then they have to find out what is the right thing to do." (Co-Founder)	Find out what is the right thing	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"We have quartely conferences where we meet and discuss what Centigo is, our fundamental values, what we are and where we want to go." (Team Manager)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation	
	"We have managed to create a culture where you never succeed at someone else's expense." (Team Manager)	Never succeed at someone else's expence	One-Firm Firm	
	"No jealousy. If someone do good then the others are happy for that person." (Team Manager)	No jealousy	One-Firm Firm	

Learning about collective leadership

"We don't tell people what to do. If you start doing that, you have to go all the way. Let's say that Centigo only had 5 BU:s, how would you then motivate people if they did not want to work within one of the existing BU:s? It would not work. I was looking at an inspirational movie on when they built the first flying machine. The key was to get the right people, not the right idea. You have to tell people why they should do things, not 'you have to'. Do what you think is fun; follow the people who share your interest." (Client Manager 1)	Tell people why, not have to	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"During the spring conference we were talking about our core value and the culture." (Client Manager 1)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"We spend time together, for instance, Client Teams have dinners together, in order to build Centigo." (Client Manager 1)	Spend time together	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"For me personally, there is an added value from being part of Centigo. I don't feel like it had been better for me if I was on my own or an employee at the client's office." (Client Manager 1)	Added value from being a part of Centigo	One-Firm Firm
"We went on an inspirational trip to Nairobi. That strengthened the 'we-spirit'." (Junior Consultant)	Inspirational trip	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"You learn about collective leadership by just being here. You are learning from the experience. In some way it is about how you treat people." (Junior Consultant)	Learning from experience	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"Learn about the core values by talking about them." (Junior Consultant)	Learning by talking	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"You can imagine what it is when they tell you about it, but it [the learning] is in the experience" (Junior Consultant)	Learning from experience	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"We always have discussions and explain why Centigo works in a certain way [...]. If you only answer the questions what and how, it will not work. Comments like 'that is just the way it is' will not take us anywhere." (Managing Partner)	Explain why	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"We talk a lot about our values, but I guess we could talk even more about it. When we were smaller, we discussed it in bigger groups. Now, we break it down into smaller groups. I start talking about our values during the recruitment. I have some slides that I show them. You have to let them know what it is; it would not be fair otherwise." (Managing Partner)	Talk a lot about core values	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"Reflect, that is how you learn it." (Consultant 1)	Learning by reflecting	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"The understanding of what Centigo is, has come gradually." (Consultant 1)	Understanding has come gradually	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"The core values are the only handrail we got that we can hold onto." (Consultant 1)	Guiding values	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"You learn about it by talking with Fredrik for example, by talking over a coffee." (Consultant 1)	Learning by talking	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"During the conferences there is a true focus on lectures and discussions." (Consultant 1)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"The mix of juniors and seniors creates discussions and constant reawakenings. There will always be a wide spectrum of mindsets when mixing." (Consultant 1)	Mix of people create discussion	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"On conferences, we always have culture-related discussions." (Client Manager 3)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"If you not embrace the culture, you will not feel good at Centigo." (Client Manager 3)	Embrace the culture	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"The founders often talk at the conferences and their message is clear." (Client Manager 3)	Founders tell the story	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"We are a value-based company and we always talk in terms of our core values. There is a document where we have written them down, but that is not key. The important thing is that it means something. That we talk about it, that we discuss it. Everyone interpret them in different ways." (Client Partner)	Talk, discuss and interpret	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation

Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning

Learning about collective leadership	"If a word gets static, then it is not 'future-proof'. If it is not dynamic, then I don't think that we can say that we have an entrepreneurial spirit here. [...] Sometimes you really want to write it down. But, on the other hand, we know that does not work. There has to be balance and that requires an active leadership." (Client Partner)	Words are dynamic	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation. One-Firm Firm
	"We talk, watch and learn. You add your own taste to what your experience." (Client Manager 4)	Talk, watch and learn	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We have conferences every year and they are probably more important to us then to others. We have to discuss it, put words on it." (Client Manager 4)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We are 'under-documented'. It demands extremely much engagement and time to make it work." (Client Manager 4)	Demands much engagement	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation. One-Firm Firm
	"We try to live like we learn: freedom and responsibility." (Associate Partner 3)	Live like they learn	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We talk a lot about it. We have four conferences a year, where we dig deeper into the core values." (Associate Partner 2)	Talk, conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"You cannot learn by reading it, you have to understand it by doing it." (Consultant 2)	Learning by doing	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"You cannot write it down and give it to new recruits." (Consultant 2)	Cannot write down	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"It becomes some kind of religion, out and preach, talk about it." (Consultant 2)	Some kind of religion	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
Adaption	"The conferences are important. When growing, new ideas are added, and then we have the conferences to capture all of us and get us on the right track." (Consultant 2)	Conferences	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"As a new-recruit, you get it into your blood, you don't have any other references." (Managing Partner)	Get it into your blood	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"It is easier to join Centigo as a junior." (Consultant 1)	Easier as junior	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"It can be difficult to join as a junior. During the first six weeks you get education and guidance of what and how to do, but then that disappears. So, even if it might be easier to 'color' juniors, one should not underestimate the situation confronting them." (Client Manager 3)	Not underestimate the situation for juniors	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"It is easier if you are junior as you are not yet colored, for good and for bad." (Associate Partner 1)	Easier as junior	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Sometime I think: 'Oh my, do you really think it works in this way everywhere?'" (Associate Partner 1)	Naivety	*
	"The organisational structure is flat, which might not be that complicated for juniors who comes straight from school without previous work experiences." (Co-Founder)	Not complicated for juniors	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
Challenge misinterpretation of fundamentals and values	"Graduates adapt more easily, they are used to it." (Team Manager)	Graduates adapt more easily	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"When people misinterpret what collective leadership is, it is not that everyone can be part of the decision-making." (Client Partner)	Misinterpretation	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"One challenge is that people associate leadership with consensus decisions. It can also be difficult to separate the role and the person, which is important to do." (Client Partner)	Leadership associated with consensus decisions	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Individual decision making without a sense of responsibility for the whole picture - that is absolutely not what we want. We want to see the whole picture." (Client Manager 4)	See the whole picture	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation

Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning

Challenge misinterpretation of fundamentals and values	"There is a risk that no one knows who is responsible and that the individuals make decisions that are good for them without being attentive to others." (Client Manager 4)	Individuals make decisions without being attentive to others	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The misinterpretation may be our fault, that we have communicated it in the wrong way. Responsibility and free will are not related. Responsibility and consequences are related. You cannot just say 'no, I do not want to'. 'I-want-spirit' means that you have a drive, an engine. The use of the right words is very important." (Client Partner)	May have communicated in the wrong way	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"This is not a playhouse, even if we have an ambition to make it more inspiring, but we are still a company." (Associate Partner 1)	This is not a playhouse	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"The drawback is that if everyone starts to interpret in his or her own way it [the organisation] may be spread out, but it is dangerous to tighten up. Then we lose what is so cool about it [Centigo]." (Associate Partner 3)	If interpreting in their own way the organisation may be spread out	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Easy that it becomes 'hallelulja', that everything is so good and nice." (Associate Partner 3)	Becomes "hallelulja"	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Constantly try to use other choice of words, for example using 'roles' instead of 'level'. But it is there, lurking." (Client Manager 4)	Try to use other words	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"A challenge is where to draw the line of who is affected by the consequences? Did they really understand the consequences? How much consequence can you put on an individual? What is an OK ambition?" (Associate Partner 1)	Draw lines	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We cannot have one CEO with only one brain. Instead we have 180 brains in operation the whole time. Of course it gets a bit spread out." (Co-Founder)	Spread out without one CEO	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Different perceptions of where the organisation is heading, where they want to be, and the current situation. From a survey I recently made, it was really interesting because the answers differed from 'we should tighten up' to 'I believe we are starting to get static'." (Co-Founder)	Different perceptions of where the organisation is heading	*
	"There is a constant dilution [with more and more co-workers]." (Client Manager 3)	Constant dilution	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"I believe this is a result of different personalities and that individuals have different perspectives of reality. But we manage to get all differences together, which creates great dynamics." (Co-Founder)	Different personalities and perspectives created dynamics	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"The topic [growing] is a 'hot potato'." (Client Manager 3)	Growing is a hot topic	*
	"The information sharing is a challenge when we grow." (Team Manager)	Information sharing is a challenge when growing	*
Challenges when growing	"[Information] Might be more difficult when growing." (Junior Consultant)	Information sharing might be difficult when growing	*
	"Today, there are enough personal meetings to distribute information. When growing, a different support function will probably be required. The challenge will be to find the right support." (Client Manager 1)	Support fuctions when growing	*
	"During the spring conferences we have done the same thing since 2005 with 21 persons. We sit down and reflect. We have discussed the challenge of growing. Why it actually works is because we always have an on-going discussion. Then things get solved as you find out stuff." (Fredrik Pakmgren)	Discussions about growing	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"As we are growing; an increased engagement is needed to build up new dimensions." (Co-Founder)	Increased engagement when growing	*
	"There are different levels, 20-100 employees probably posses similar challenges. 200 employees are probably a turning point. When growing the need for information sharing increases. Also, the biggest challenge will be to ensure that the employees still feel that they are seen and valued, that he or she is important and makes a difference." (Team Manager)	Need for sharing information and ensure that employees are seen	*
	"A challenge is how the partners will share the tasks between them as they become more. Will there be responsibility areas for everyone?" (Team Manager)	How will the partners share the tasks?	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
	"The collective leadership itself [is a challenge], if you keep the culture with the right people, it will probably work. However, spreading the information will definitely be more difficult." (Junior Consultant)	Keep the culture with the right people	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation

Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning

Challenges when growing	"The internal network might be a bigger challenge when growing." (Junior Consultant)	The internal network will be a challenge	*
	"Maintaining the core values. It will be a challenge to break down the discussion into smaller groups when growing." (Managing Partner)	Maintenance of core values	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We do not have many structures, and never have had that ambition. When we have grown, perhaps the need has increased." (Consultant 1)	Never wanted structures	*
	"Given the fact that we recruit the right people, we will be able to grow." (Client Manager 3)	Recruiting the right people	One-Firm Firm
	"I am a realist, more support functions will probably be needed if we grow, but I wish not." (Client Manager 3)	More support functions when growing	*
	"If we grow, we might grow by founding other firms instead." (Client Manager 3)	Might grow by founding other firms	*
	"Vertical control might be needed for certain big questions, but we have no vertical commands. No body want to become more hierarchical." (Client Manager 3)	Vertical control might be needed for big questions	Share leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"[We can grow] Through values, that is how you relate to things. As long as we can find people who share our values then we will be able to grow. If we start to compromise with our values in benefit for growing, then it will go fast downhill." (Client Partner)	Grow if sharing values	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Our culture is superior our growth, and in our culture lies our values." (Client Partner)	The culture is superior growth	*
	"As we grow it requires more time to build the collective, or distributed leadership. It demands more engagement". (Client Manager 4)	Growing will demand more engagement	*
	"More support functions is required [when growing]." (Client Manager 4)	More support functions	*
	"It will probably spin off sister firms. We have since Saturday renamed the Centigo-group to the 'Business Wellness Group' and call them sister firms instead of daughter firms. One way to grow is founding 'sister firms' based on the same core values." (Client Manager 4)	Grow through spinn-off sister firms	*
	"I am afraid that if we grow with 500 persons, then we lose the control of recruiting the right people and then we have to establish structures... Usch." (Associate Partner 3)	Fear of losing control over the recruitment	One-Firm Firm
	"With structures it becomes stiff." (Associate Partner 3)	Stiff with structures	*
	"When the founders stand and say 'I do not know what Centigo will stand for in ten years', it tickles me." (Associate Partner 3)	Unclear what Centigo will stand for in ten years	*
	"The brand, we can be something totally different than a consultancy firm in ten years." (Associate Partner 3)	Brand	*
	"Business Wellness Group, it goes a little hand in hand with spin offs from Centigo." (Associate Partner 3)	Business Wellness group	*
	"It is a challenge to grow and at the same time sustain the spirit and culture. But we will grow, but not too fast." (Associate Partner 2)	Grow slow and sustain the culture	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We do not have an ambition to run fast. We do not have those kind of requirements since we do not have any external owners." (Associate Partner 2)	Do not have the ambition to run fast	One-Firm Firm
	"It can be tough to grow in other countries, the culture is typical for Sweden." (Associate Partner 2)	Tough to grow in other countries	*
	"If growing, new ideas are added, and then we have conferences to capture us all, get us on the right track." (Consultant 2)	Conferences to capture them all is needed	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation

Maintenance of the values and constantly learning their meaning

CATEGORY: ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEMS

Quotes		Codes	Links to existing theories	Themes
Compensation model	"The compensation model is important in order to understand that this is not just about gold and green meadows. [...] Put focus on thinking economically, act as a business manager and not just an employee. This is a component to why we can have individual responsibility. With a flexible compensation, no one can tell you what you should do, and I have to take the consequences." (Co-Founder)	Put focus on thinking economically	One-Firm Firm	A compensation model sending out signals of how you should behave
	"If you choose to work pro-bono and want to take the economical consequence, so who am I to say that you are wrong. You are much better to decide, in your situation here and now. [...] However, if that decision has consequences for my profitability, it does not work. Thus, consequences is an important explanation to why we can have delegated responsibility." (Co-Founder)	Take consequences from working pro-bono	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"Junior consultants who have a fixed compensation can in principle not decide for themselves. [...] At a more senior role you can decide on your own, which is a big benefit and a big responsibility." (Team Manager)	Juniors do not decide everything themselves, seniors do	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader.	
	"Most people deal with the compensation model, but for some seniors who have had the wrong expectations the compensation model sometimes is a reason to why they quit." (Team Manager)	Reason to quit if wrong expectations	One-Firm Firm	
	"The compensation model is probably not why you change to Centigo." (Team Manager)	Compensation not the reason for starting	One-Firm Firm	
	"Not very much of internal competition, which probably is linked to the compensation model. The compensation is built on how it goes for everyone." (Team Manager)	Not very much internal competition	One-Firm Firm	
	"It is encouraging to move to a flexible part given that you are out on projects." (Client Manager 2)	Encouraging to move to flexible	One-Firm Firm	
	"No pressure, there is no fear that you do not get paid one month". (Junior Consultant)	No fear you do not get paid	*	
	"Then after 3 years, bigger flexible part which creates incentives to initiate projects." (Junior Consultant)	Flexible part creates incentives	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"If a consultant wants to take a course, then he or she has to stand for the cost. Probably, the course will be beneficial for the worker's profitability in the long run." (Managing Partner)	Responsible for your own costs	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"If you do not bear your own risk then you do not take good business decision, and then you are not doing good business." (Managing Partner)	If bearing your own risk you take good business decisions	One-Firm Firm	
	"The individuals are like profit centres that get a percentage of their own profit." (Managing Partner)	Percentage of own profit	One-Firm Firm	
	"If you say no to a project it affects your compensation" (Consultant 1)	Saying no affects compensation	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"The compensation model makes us focus on the right areas. I could have created the best PR-campaign in Sweden, but it would not benefit me as an individual and not Centigo on the whole. The economical risk leads to healthy risk-taking." (Consultant 1)	Make us focus on the right areas	One-Firm Firm	
	"Creates a responsibility that creates economical incentives." (Consultant 1)	Responsibility and economical incentives	One-Firm Firm	
	"It is rather that I want a new role rather than the flexible compensation. Need to be self-confident and believe that you will have projects." (Consultant 1)	Rather wanting a new role then flexible compensation	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"We are extremely set up for business cycles, we have never asked people to leave because of recession." (Consultant 1)	Set up for business cycles	One-Firm Firm	
	"The compensation model reflects how to work." (Receptionist)	Reflect how to work	One-Firm Firm	
	"The compensation model sends out a signal about which behaviour you should have." (Client Manager 3)	Sends out signals of how to behave	One-Firm Firm	
	"The compensation model is our ecosystem." (Associate Partner 1)	Ecosystem	One-Firm Firm	
	"Enables extremes that would not have worked with high fixed salaries. Normally, with high fixed salaries and economic recession, firms have to ask people to leave, but Centigo do not have to do that." (Associate Partner 1)	Enables extremes	One-Firm Firm	
	"If you don't like it, then you really have to consider whether you think that you will be a successful consultant or not." (Client Partner)	You must like it to be successful	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"Freedom to make your own decisions and to be accountable for it." (Client Manager 4)	Be accountable for decisions	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	

Compensation model	"If you do not want to take the step, you should consider wheather you actually believe you will become a succesfull consultant." (Client Manager 4)	You must believe you will be successful	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The compensation model is flexible so people can say no to projects. Here we have a mechanism that is that everyone shall be satisfied." (Client Manager 4)	Can say no to projects	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"We encourage entrepreneurial spirit, but there is also a limit. There are those who always want to run their own business, who do not want to work in a collective. Do they want to work hard in group or not? It is a fine borderline in that." (Associate Partner 3)	Limit the entrepreneurial spirit	One-Firm Firm
	"People are indoctrinated in it. There is no one who wants to take their compensation and put it in a project that someone else is driving. Insert your own compensation and go for it. See if there is a business opportunity." (Associate Partner 3)	People are indoctrinated	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"You climb between different roles, which is reflected in the compensation model." (Associate Partner 2)	Compensation model reflect roles	One-Firm Firm
	"When you are a junior consultant, the compensation model reflects that you shall deliver and develop, do a little bit of everything. When you are a business consultant, then there is more focus on being on projects and it is more clear what you do and what you make others to do." (Associate Partner 2)	Compensation model reflects what you should do	One-Firm Firm
	"The model rewards that you invite others. You do not sit and protect your own, you invite." (Associate Partner 2)	Rewards that you invite others	One-Firm Firm
	"Recently we changed the compensation model; if you are manager and work hard to get people to different projects, then that should be reflected in your compensation. The compensation model will be even better at reflecting the responsibilty you take; behaviour will be reflected in the compensation." (Associate Partner 2)	Reflecting the responsibility you take	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
Recruitment	"The recruitment process is extremely important." (Co-Founder)	Extremely important	One-Firm Firm
	"We are not capital intensive, we are owned by our employees. Every employee is our success. To find employees that want to work here for more then five years, it is our success factor." (Associate Partner 3)	Every employee is a success factor	One-Firm Firm
	"You should want to stay, how our employees work together, it is our success factor." (Associate Partner 3)	Success factor how employees work together	One-Firm Firm
	"We get employees that are more entrepreneurial, that are free in mind and do not only stand and wait for order." (Co-Founder)	Entrepreneurial and free in mind	One-Firm Firm
	"Innovation occurs in humans that think freely." (Co-Founder).	Creates innovation	*
	"A prerequisite to be successful at Centigo is that you share the core values. If you do not share the core values, then you leave the organisation." (Co-Founder)	Share core values	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Recruitment matters, the individual is very important." (Consultant 1)	Individuals are very important	One-Firm Firm
	"It is important to recruit the right person with the right personality traits." (Receptionist)	Recruit the right people	One-Firm Firm
	"There is no difference whether you come in as a junior or a senior. It is all about sharing our values. You can develop knowledge, but values are static. You get your personal values at a young age; you have them already when you come to Centigo." (Client Partner)	It is all about sharing values	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We are looking for people with the right values, an ambition to achieve something. Depth in competence, width in competence and culture, who are you, really?" (Client Partner)	People with the right values	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We look for people who are attracted by our way of thinking. As a result it is important to think in dimensions and not only linear. You have to build it [your thinking] in a totally different way. This person really wants this, that is the feeling [we want to have]." (Client Partner)	People attracted by the Centigo way of thinking	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"Persons that get recruited have the right attitude." (Associate Partner 2)	People with right attitude	One-Firm Firm
	"We are looking for personality and attitude. Nice and polite people whom are easy to talk to." (Associate Partner 2)	Looking for personality and attitude	One-Firm Firm
	"We want to recruit the right people who share our values." (Client Manager 1)	People who share our values	One-Firm Firm
	"If you have worked in an entrepreneurial company before, then that is positive. If you on the other hand how worked in a linear organisation and not as a consultant, then you may get restless here." (Associate Partner 2)	Positive if previous worked entrepreneurial	One-Firm Firm

A compensation model sending out signals of how you should behave

Solid recruitment process to find the right people

Recruitment

"People are humble, polite, and everyone wants to do something. Everybody is driven by actually doing something and not because you have to do something." (Junior Consultant)	Humble, polite and driven persons	One-Firm Firm
"The people here are very ambition-driven." (Consultant 1)	Ambition-driven persons	One-Firm Firm
"It requires a very strong drive in order to work here. You have to dare to come in and do things. Dare to challenge and make mistakes." (Receptionist)	Requires a strong drive	One-Firm Firm
"I believe you search for a certain type of person that have similar experiences. But it can also be them who look for this type of culture." (Receptionist)	People who look for this culture	One-Firm Firm
"We search for nice, social people, mature enough to understand his or her role and development in his or her own future." (Client Manager 3)	Nice, social, mature people	One-Firm Firm
"Do not blame others. Social skills are extremely important." (Client Manager 3)	Social skills extremely important	One-Firm Firm
"Extrovert, wants challenges, is verbal. They are more visible [in the internal network]. Reflective, analytical [persons], wanting to feel security, have difficulties to be visible." (Client Manager 4)	Extrovert, wants challenges, verbal people	One-Firm Firm
"To want, to have an ambition. To think beyond your own horizon." (Associate Partner 3)	To have an ambition	One-Firm Firm
"We think in a new way, question things, are more personal and dig deeper outside the box." (Associate Partner 2)	Think in a new way and question	One-Firm Firm
"Open, honest, dare to say what you think, dare to take initiatives, driven." (Consultant 2)	Open, honest, initiative taking and driven	One-Firm Firm
"It is all about recruiting the right person from the beginning, with the right DNA [referring to the fundamentals collective leadership, ambition-driven and independent]." (Consultant 2)	People with the right DNA	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"The fundamentals [collective leadership, ambition driven and independence] are our DNA and the values [i.e. professionalism, an entrepreneurial spirit and balance] are our personality". (Consultant 2)	Fundamentals are DNA and values are personality	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"It has to be fun. It never gets fun if you do not recruit the right people. It is about the mix of personalities. Different personalities that work good together." (Associate Partner 3)	Has to be fun	One-Firm Firm
"I think our leadership invites to it, how we have rigged this company invite people to take the responsibility. In this environment, in our recruitment process, we find people who wants to take responsibility, which enables that we get consultants that take more responsibility then what is really expected." (Managing Partner)	Leadership invite to it	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"Nothing like the 'Junior Consultant School' is required [for the seniors], but seniors may need help to build their internal network. We had half a day of introduction and a dinner where the founders discussed how Centigo was founded and the vision they had." (Team Manager)	Building internal network	One-Firm Firm
"Our strength is that all our employees think like a business manager. That is good, so they can make their own decisions." (Co-Founder)	Employees think like a business manager	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Focus is on finding the right person, with the right attitude and the right competence. At least three Centigo people will meet with the applicant. There need to be a good gut feeling saying 'I want to work with this person'. If the person [one of the interviewers from Centigo] says no, then that is enough to say no. In this way, we ensure that the person who gets in at Centigo has the right attitude and likes the model." (Associate Partner 2)	Gut feeling	One-Firm Firm
"The typical person has been studying IE [industrial engineering] in Linköping. One year abroad. Been active in the student association." (Receptionist)	Many IE from Linköping	One-Firm Firm
"The recruitment process of juniors is an important key to why a well functioning organisation." (Co-Founder)	Recruitment of juniors important	One-Firm Firm
"You have to be able to take a step forward without being prestigious and have it in your personality, and also take a step backwards and listen to others." (Co-Founder)	Be able to take a step back	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"We recruit on personal traits. Specific competence you can train, but how you are as a person is difficult to change. That does not imply that we think some persons are good and some persons are bad, but it requires a certain mentality in order to fit in. It is very important that the person understands the core values." (Co-Founder)	Recruit on personal traits, specific competence you can train	One-Firm Firm

Solid recruitment process to find the right people

Recruitment

"Looking for a good CV, good grades and a good letter. First interview, 'tell me about you, what drives you?' Would the person fit here? Do not want egos, 'we-feeling' is important. Humility is key. Being a team player." (Team Manager)	Do not want egos	One-Firm Firm
"We want to recruit the right people who share our values. With a junior we want driven, safe cards, people who can take a step back and not have to prove him or her all the time. A person who you know will take responsibility." (Client Manager 1)	Share values and take responsibility	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"We search for humility, drive, social competence, academical merits." (Junior Consultant)	Humility, drive, social competence and academic merita	One-Firm Firm
"It is personal traits that determines." (Junior Consultant)	Personal traits determines	One-Firm Firm
"Hire people that are similar to oneself." (Junior Consultant)	Similar people to oneself	One-Firm Firm
"A certain type of people is drawn to a certain type of education. If that recruitment have worked before, then it is easy to do it again." (Consultant 1)	Easy to recruit from same educational background	One-Firm Firm
"How to find people that stands for balance and entrepreneurship? Look for if they have been studying abroad. If they have been active in an organisation. We search for our core values. For professionalism, we look on the grades. Not necessary straight A, but there is a lower limit." (Consultant 1)	Search for core values	One-Firm Firm
"Junior recruitment is most difficult. We do not have resources to interview all applicants and have to go on the CV. Gut feeling." (Client Manager 3)	Gut feeling when recruiting juniors	*
"When choosing students, we are clear with how it is here, how the leadership is. They have to like the basic way of thinking." (Associate Partner 3)	Have to like the basic way of thinking	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"Looking at the CV but also at other dimensions, tests and so on. Really tough! We want to find the ones with the right attitude." (Associate Partner 2)	Tough process	One-Firm Firm
"Seniors bring in competence we have not built ourselves. Expert competence, reach new clients and new networks." (Consultant 1)	Seniors bring in competence	One-Firm Firm
"With senior recruitment there is a lot of focus on the core values." (Consultant 1)	Focus on the core values	One-Firm Firm
"Ensure relevant experience." (Team Manager)	Relevant experience	One-Firm Firm
"CV is especially important for seniors." (Client Manager 1)	CV important for seniors	One-Firm Firm
"How it is and how it works here, is something I emphasise and talk a lot about during interviews. [...] You have to let them know what it is, it would not be fair otherwise." (Managing Partner)	Emphasises how it works	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"This is how we work here, do you want to work like this?" (Receptionist)	Ensure people want to work like this	One-Firm Firm
"The recruitment process is a long process. Everyone goes through four interviews. Competence, deep, width, personality, meet and greet." (Client Manager 3)	Long process	One-Firm Firm
"Important not to 'sell in' Centigo, they know themselves best." (Associate Partner 1)	Not sell in Centigo	One-Firm Firm
"First interview: monologue from my side, not dialogue. I tell them how it is, then the person can go home, think, and decide whether it suits or not." (Lena Andesson)	Believe that you suit to be successful	One-Firm Firm
"We have had many people who we want to start working for us, but who does not want to. Perhaps they do not dare. Then we think that probably it is the best. They know themselves best." (Co-Founder)	If not wanting to start, probably the best	One-Firm Firm
"Many recruitment processes take several years before the majority decides that 'now I want to go for it'. Perhaps this was more common when we were a smaller firm." (Co-Founder)	Some processes took years	*
"When recruiting seniors, they get to do a group work and reason about the core values, around every word, and it is from this I get half of everything I use to describe what this is." (Co-Founder)	Get inspired by others' reasoning	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"Early on we talked about core values and it was very relaxed." (Receptionist)	Talk about core values	One-Firm Firm. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation

Solid recruitment process to find the right people

Recruitment	"The model has shown to be suitable for generation Y. Nothing we have actually thought about, but it has turned out that way. Young people do automatically adjust to given structures, do not take 'this old stuff' for granted and constantly moving forwards. Future oriented." (Co-Founder)	Suitable for generation Y	*	Solid recruitment process to find the right people
	"Young modern people are used to take initiatives. More and more people want a modern organisation. Then we get people who wants to be here." (Associate Partner 3)	People want a modern organisation	*	
Challenge when recruiting people with similar characteristics	"We get individuals that are on the borderline between wanting to work hard in group and by their own, who think in new ways and are creative." (Associate Partner 3)	On the borderline to work best by their own	One-Firm Firm	
	"We do not want people to be too entrepreneurial so that they quit, we wish for an entrepreneurial spirit with in the context of Centigo." (Associate Partner 2)	Should not be too entrepreneurial	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"Those persons who work best individually and do not get energy from the collective, I do not believe work at us." (Co-Founder)	Get energy from the collective	One-Firm Firm	
	"Sometimes people run, and nothing comes out of it. But that is the entrepreneurial part." (Associate Partner 2)	Sometimes incentives do not result in anything	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"Too many employees have studied IE [industrial engineering] in Linköping. We do not work actively with diversity, and I think that is a bad thing. At the same time you have to be able to speak Swedish. [...] We work a lot with many middle-sized firms working operatively in Swedish. But we have no problem working organisationally [internally] with minorities." (Managing Partner)	Homogeneous profiles	*	
	"Working with diversity? We do not set quotas. Sex and ethnicity is irrelevant. We search for a person, not a sex. Ok spread in experience, but most economics and engineers. It is for example not always that easy to sell in a social worker to a working capital project." (Client Manager 3)	Do not work actively with diversity	*	
	"We need to have competence that we can sell." (Client Manager 3)	Need selling competence	*	
	"We recruit a little too narrow. We should step down from the pedestal and think broader. For example culture workers." (Client Manager 4)	Recruit too narrow	*	
	"A spread out organisation when many entrepreneurs? No, it does not get spread out. The system is self-sanitising. If someone runs in one direction, then generally it is two persons running in the same direction." (Client Manager 3)	Self-sanitising system	One-Firm Firm: weakness	
	"Centigo will probably not become spread out. Everyone does what he or she wants to do, and if that does not suit you, you can leave, that is the core idea." (Client Manager 1)	Will not become spread out	One-Firm Firm: weakness. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"There is perhaps a risk of working too much as everyone is so ambition driven. In order to not take on too much in the beginning, there are Team Managers. Then you learn. You only take on too much things to do once. On the other hand, if someone else decides what you should do, the risk is that you work too much over and over again." (Consultant 1)	Risk of working too much	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"To say stop? I do not get any help if I am not asking for it. It sounds harsh, but it is adult." (Client Manager 3)	Do not get help if not asking for it	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
Organisational structure	"The firm is rigged for this" (Client Manager 2)	Rigged for this	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	Organisational structure based on an internal market
	"Everything is rigged." (Associate Partner 2)	Rigged	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"Ambition driven, we have built the whole organisation from bottom up." (Co-Founder)	Buildt bottom up	One-Firm Firm	
	"You can describe the organisation as a democracy rather than a dictatorship. In Sweden there is laws for what you cannot do, but you are relatively free within those limitations. If something goes wrong, then it takes a long time to correct [a law]. In a dictatorship you directly confront the individual, put him in jail and take him away." (Co-Founder)	Democracy and not dictatorship	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"If wanting to convert it into a hierarchy, pulling out the circles as a toy, then it becomes a hierarchy, but with the employees in the top. Thus, the most important decision maker is the employee. No matter if it is a partner or not." (Co-Founder)	Employees in the top	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership	
	"There is always a responsible partner for everything, even though it is free." (Consultant 2)	Always one responsible partner	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"Experience from the founders has been refined and improved, the founders have taken the best parts from other consultancy firms and put it together." (Associate Partner 2)	Took the best parts and put them together	*	

Organisational structure	"In Business Units, or competence units, we build up our capacity and competence in different areas." (Co-Founder)	Build up competence in business units	*
	"The internal market creates a balance between the client and us. Supply and demand. There is an interaction. I cannot just grow organically [by more people in the business unit], I have to look on the client side." (Associate Partner 3)	Internal market creates a balance	One-Firm Firm
	"Every Business Unit's purpose is to market their competence and to make the Client Teams to understand what we know." (Managing Partner)	Market competence	*
	"A healthy game." (Associate Partner 1)	Healthy game	*
	"Collaboration becomes more and more important. Affirm overlaps. See opportunities, not protect your borders." (Associate Partner 3)	Collaboration important	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
	"You have as much freedom as possible, but when an individual get lost or if it starts to go wrong, then you have to handle the system."	When things go wrong you have to handle the system	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"Depending on the size of the question [who it affects], they get solved in different units and dimensions. Different Business Units get inspired by each other but are self-propelled. But we talk us together and get synchronised." (Co-Founder)	Self-propelled Business Units	*
	"It works like fractals, we are growing through adding new business units initiated by an entrepreneur." (Co-Founder)	Works like fractals	*
	"Business Units are like a selling firm, you sell competence you have there [...]. While the Client Teams are built on a client relationship. And then you call in that competence." (Co-Founder)	Business units are selling firms and client teams call in competence	*
	"If I sell in a project I do not necessarily take persons from my Business Unit, often I take someone I have got to know during internal projects. I bring persons I find suitable." (Client Manager 3)	People from different business units	*
	"We get the same focus on the client and on the employee. We cannot distinguish whether the clients or the employees are the most important resource. It is impossible." (Co-Founder)	Same focus on client and employees	*
	"If no one wants to do a certain type of project, then we will not sell such a project. It is self-regulating. "I-want-culture" only works if you have the same incentive model that we have. If you have the responsibility for something, then you also have to take the consequences. Everything has to correlate to the other parts." (Managing Partner)	Can say no to projects but have to take the consequences	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"If a person don't want to do a project, then that is the way it is." (Client Manager 1)	Do not have to do a project	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"You have the responsibility to make the decisions and get to take the consequences of it." (Managing Partner)	Take the consequences of decisions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"The consultant can choose to invest in themselves, but have to take the consequences." (Associate Partner 1)	Take the consequences if investing in themselves	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"You can say no to projects. Someone did that today for instance. Haha, I wanted to be a formal manager today. But that is the way it is, people make wrong decisions, in my opinion. But, from their perspective, they have not. Nobody makes wrong decisions. You make a decision given the conditions there and then. There are no wrong decisions. With time, preferences change. That is how life works. You make the decisions you make, and you cannot go back and change them." (Managing Partner)	No wrong decisions	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"If you have said no to a project once, you might not be the first one the Client Manager ask for another project. You have to take the consequences of your actions and decisions." (Associate Partner 1)	Consequences of saying no to a project	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Concetrive control
	"You do a better work if you have chosen it yourself." (Junior Consultant)	Work better if choosen yourself	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"As we are a flat company, it is easier to retain the "we-spirit", you come in contact with everyone." (Junior Consultant)	Flat company	One-Firm Firm
	"It is much more fun to work in a flat organisation, it is much closer to action" (Associate Partner 3)	Closer to action	One-Firm Firm
Internal marke-ting	"It is the Team Manager's responsibility to ensures that a person that has not been on a project for a long time gets pitched. Interest in an area is important. You have to build your internal CV and hence do boring but instructive projects sometimes." (Client Manager 1)	Have to build your own internal CV	*
	"The freedom to choose is probably more limited when you are a junior-consultant." (Receptionist)	Freedom limited as a junior	One-Firm Firm. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
	"Today as a consultant, I am not responsible for my own project allocation. Now my Team Manager is responsible, but in the future I gain from marketing myself today." (Consultant 2)	In the future gain from marketing yourself today	*
	"It requires an internal network to get a chance to show you at your best." (Team Manager)	Requires an internal network	*

Organisational structure based on an internal market

Internal marketing

"The internal market is like a stage where one should get up their name." (Associate Partner 1)	The internal network is like a stage	*
"It is important to create a profile internally and show what you have done." (Associate Partner 2)	Important to create a profile internally	*
"Super important to stay ahead and show yourself in an internal network." (Associate Partner 2)	Stay ahead and show yourself	*
"We don't have a HR- department such as Accenture. To get a project, you have to know what is in the pipeline and you have to let the responsible person know that you are available." (Client Manager 1)	Have to know what is in the pipeline	*
"Expectations in the internal network affect what project you join. You have to market yourself and join internal projects. Taking that extra step. You build your brand in here". (Associate Partner 1)	Expectations affect what projects you do	*
"You have to market yourself. It is not always the best person who becomes most successful here. It is easy to think 'it is only what I have done in the past that matters', but then you forget how important it is to be social and spend time with people. That is truly an important thing. You have to be a genuine and nice person. It is related to leadership, to be able to lead and being led. Then other people want to work with you." (Client Partner)	Not always the one with most competence who becomes successful	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader
"It [personal marketing] is about joining things, going on conferences, daring to say what you think. Take opportunities to make your voice heard. [...]. If I finish at 4pm at the client, then perhaps I can go to the office and work for an hour and to say hi to people that I do not meet that often." (Consultant 2)	Take opportunities to market yourself	*
"I still have to market myself." (Associate Partner 3)	Still have to market yourself as a partner	*
"The first years you get assigned projects, but then it is a lot about getting to know people. During the first years you get the chance to build your internal network, something that can be more difficult for senior recruitments." (Junior Consultant)	Build your network during years as a junior	*
"The internal network has a great impact and plays a bigger role than at other firms. Maybe that is because we are like entrepreneurs. If you run your own business, then you are also very dependent on your network." (Managing Partner)	Internal network plays a bigger role then in other firms	*
"Incentives to share information as you can gain a lot from sharing. For example the project I am in now, I want to get people to know that I am the expert in that area." (Consultant 1)	Show that you are an expert through sharing knowledge	*
"There is an intranet where you can share knowledge. If you share knowledge, you get an opportunity to market yourself and get attention. This is an incentive to share knowledge out of free will, which benefits the whole organisation." (Client Manager 1)	Sharing knowledge creates opportunities to market yourself	*
"We share cases internally and externally to market ourselves. It is also up to the individual to find out where there is more information that he or she wants to take part of." (Associate Partner 2)	Share cases to market themselves	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"Everyone is involved in internal projects. It is related to the culture, if everyone does it, then the culture of being involved in internal projects will live on. Working internally is a bonus, in addition to the work you do with the client." (Client Manager 1)	Many involved in internal projects	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"Anybody participate in internal projects. There is no structure, if you want to engage in something, you are allowed to do that." (Consultant 2)	Anyone who wants participate in internal projects	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"You are perceived as ambitious if you work on internal projects." (Client Manager 1)	Perceived as ambitious if doing internal projects	*
"Incentive to keep an eye on who is working at the office [by doing internal projects]." (Consultant 2)	Internal projects make you keep an eye on people	*
"The culture, the internal market and your own interest are all driving forces. As there are no formal managers here, you do it [internal projects] for your own sake and for Centigo." (Client Manager 1)	Internal projects for your own sake and Centigo	Distributed leadership: self-leadership. Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
"You do internal projects because it is fun and to get to know people. Here, everyone wants to do things." (Junior Consultant)	Internal projects because it is fun	Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"I am involved in internal projects, for example recruitment of juniors. I think it is valuable, because if the leaders do not get involved, then no one else will either." (Managing Partner)	Acting as a role model	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"I choose to do it [internal projects] because it is necessary as a partner to be able to steer the direction." (Managing Partner)	Being able to steer the direction	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership
"I engage much internally, but less now as more senior. You have a stronger internal network once you have worked for a couple of years." (Client Manager 4)	Less internal projects as a senior	*

Organisational structure based on an internal market

Challenges organisational structure	"I do internal projects because it is fun. It is always fun to work with talented people. Though there is a conceited aspect as well, it is our way to market ourselves. And some things just have to be done." (Client Manager 3)	Internal projects is their way of market themselves	*
	"I like the idea of the internal market, with the client market and Business Units. But sometimes there is a lack of discussion. Instead of discussing, it is more like: 'you will get this salary in this project, do you take it or not?'" (Team Manager)	Sometimes lack of discussion	*
	"A challenge is to balance so that none of the sides [Business Units or Client Teams] get too strong. It is difficult to find and keep the balance in practice." (Team Manager)	Balance between Business Units and Client Teams	*
	"With the ability to say yes or no to projects, sometimes situations occur where we have a new project coming and the key to get this project depend on a certain person's competence, but that person would rather do something else. However then it is a certain pressure on that person to say yes to the project." (Co-Founder)	Pressure to say yes to projects	Social constructionism: externalisation-objectivation-internalisation
	"We have said no to projects because of that no one wants to do it." (Co-Founder)	Have turned town projects	*
	"Disagreements of what is right and wrong regarding allocation of projects can create tension between Business Units and Client Teams." (Co-Founder)	Tension between Business Units and Client Teams	*
	"There is potential for disagreements, but that has not occurred yet. If they pick someone else than me, that person must have been a better fit. This relates to accountability, if you play the game you have to follow the rules." (Managing Partner)	Potential for disagreements and internal competition	Shared leadership
	"One of the most difficult situations is when a consultant has worked in a Client Team for so long that the client do not want to let them go. But we have close relationships with clients so you can reason about it. Typically, it results in compromises, for example work for additionally three months and train someone new." (Co-Founder)	Difficult situation when a consultant has been for a long period at one client	*
	"In an economic boom, it is easy to get a project. In recession, it is a question if you get a project at all. [...] I believe several persons would like a more stable income. In an economic boom, this model is great! But thougher in recessions." (Co-Founder)	Easy to get projects in economic boom	One-Firm Firm
	"It is a challenge to break in and understand whom you should talk to." (Team Manager)	Challenge to break in	Shared leadership. Distributed leadership
	"Challenge to recruit seniors as it might be difficult to find projects straight away, they might be prepared to lower their compensation, which is an insecure situation." (Junior Consultant)	Difficult to find projects straight away	*
	"It can be tougher to come in as a senior than a junior, especially the social part. You have to create your own internal network, walk around and present yourself to everyone, go on lunches with people, understand whom the others are." (Associate Partner 2)	Tough for seniors on the social part	*
	"It is easier for seniors to market themselves, as there is an expectation that they already have a certain client base. However, it might be more difficult to get projects in the beginning." (Consultant 1)	Easier for seniors to market themselves	*
	"The internal market is tougher for seniors. The more senior, the more explicit they have to be concerning what their key competences are. They need to have a competence that is clear. I don't know why that is, but it is a fact." (Managing Partner)	Internal market tougher for seniors	*
	"It is clearly easier for a senior person to market his or her competence. But it is not always that easy to translate it into revenue. When I sit with a client, the tasks may not suit the senior person, it may even cost too much." (Client Manager 4)	Easier for senior to market competence	*
	"Might be easier for a more senior person that understand the importance of building up an internal network. But juniors get more 'for free', as they start at the same time as many others. But that becomes more important after a couple of years." (Client Manager 3)	Easier for seniors to understand the importance of an internal network	*
	"There is a risk of 'falling between the chairs'. If you have not had a project for a long time, or you fail to follow someone who initiates many projects, perhaps you fall outside." (Client Manager 3)	Risk of falling between the chairs	*
	"There is no overall fairness in this system, sometimes people get stuck in between." (Associate Partner 1)	No fairness in system	*
	"The compensation model may only suit some people." (Team Manager)	May only suit some	One-Firm Firm
	"Some seek to have a more stable income if they have high fixed personal costs." (Team Manager)	Some seek for more stable income	One-Firm Firm
	"Of course it may be stressful when you do not have any project." (Junior Consultant)	Stressful when no project	*
	"Not yet internal competition. Perhaps when the compensation model becomes flexible." (Consultant 2)	Not yet internal competition	One-Firm Firm

Organisational structure based on an internal market

Partners ownership structure	"If wanting to build a long-term company then the founders could not be the only owners. Therefore, the owners are also employees." (Co-Founder)	Build a long-term company	One-Firm Firm	Partners ownership structure is a prerequisite for independency
	"Partnership structure as a prerequisite for collective leadership. Otherwise, it implies that someone has higher power." (Co-Founder)	Prerequisite for collective leadership	One-Firm Firm	
	"No external stakeholder is the key! We are fully independent, no one demands return on capital." (Client Manager 3)	No external stakeholders is the key	One-Firm Firm	
	"If wanting to be independent you cannot have external owners. Then you have someone you have to report to. I do not want a listed company, over my dead body." (Co-Founder)	No external owners if independent	One-Firm Firm	
	"It is a lot of talk about not wanting a CEO who sits and take all decisions. Therefore, there is no one who can make a really bad decision and a mess in the organisation. It is always at least two persons behind every big decision." (Receptionist)	Always to persons behing every decision	One-Firm Firm	
	"The partnership structure is very important. It makes us have a long-term ambition, the company is supposed to survive longer than us. As a result, we have to foster and educate the ones that will take over after us. The company has to grow. I am planning to be here another 20 years and I have to think about how I can support my colleagues and make them become better than I am." (Client Partner)	Creates a long-term ambition	One-Firm Firm. Shared leadership. Distributed leadership: self-leadership. SDWT-leader	
	"I was there when Accando was founded. People pumped in money, wanted return. Merged with Tieto, and boom, and everything died." (Associate Partner 3)	Everything died when shareholders wanted return	One-Firm Firm	
	"In hierarchal companies, where higher positions are few, not everyone has the opportunity to reach the top. In Centigo new [partner] positions are created, which decrease the internal competition as there is no limitation for the number of partners." (Associate Partner 1)	As nwe positions are created internal competition decreases	One-Firm Firm	
	"Everyone has the opportunity to become a partner, if you have the competence, interest etc. It is a part of the development." (Co-Founder)	Everyone can become a partner	One-Firm Firm	
	"Not promotions, we call it new roles. You do not get a new role before you are ready for it. You have to learn how to act in the new role, before you get the new role." (Team Manager)	You get a new role and not promoted	*	