



Is it worth it? Let me work it (digitally)

An exploratory qualitative study on how organisations can facilitate digital teamwork through organisational culture.

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Abstract

During the Covid-19 pandemic, companies were forced to accelerate the adoption of digital work. Research performed during the pandemic identified organisational culture as an important factor to facilitate digital teamwork, yet there is little research on how to apply these concepts in practice. Hence, this thesis aims to suggest a framework on how to facilitate digital teamwork by analysing the current challenges experienced by managers and employees working digitally. In order to fulfil this purpose, a pilot study and a study consisting of two phases were conducted. During the **first phase** of the study, observations on **Company A** and **Company B** were performed. Afterwards, participants of these two companies were interviewed to further develop the findings on the observations. During the **second phase** of the study, managers and employees from a variety of companies were interviewed in order to investigate whether the findings of phase one could be applied to companies of other industries and sizes. The results indicate that hiring the right people, physical social events/”afterworks”, formal guidelines of communication and self-leadership are factors that enhance a consistent organisational culture throughout the company, and thus, facilitate digital teamwork. Furthermore, it was concluded that a hybrid solution and a more employee-centred approach should be implemented in order to increase individual motivation, further supporting a positive organisational culture and digital teamwork.

Keywords: Afterworks, Check-ins, Digital meeting, Digital teamwork, Digital work, Diverse companies, Face-to-face interaction, Hybrid, solution, Micro-management, Organisational culture, Pandemic, Physical teamwork, Self-leadership, Small talk, SME, Social events, Zoom fatigue

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Foreword:

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Glossary

This glossary is for the reader to gain an understanding of how the following concepts are utilised within this text. It includes a mixture of terms defined by the participants as well as literature.

Expression	Definition
Diverse companies	<i>Defined by authors.</i> Group of single companies that pertain to different industries and are characterised by different sizes between each other.
Check-ins	<i>Defined by participants.</i> When a manager and an employee connect during a one on one meeting in order to acquire and provide information, get help and keep each other updated on current issues of their company.
Hybrid Solution	<i>Defined by participants.</i> When the employee is given the option to work digitally or to go work in an office.
Digital teamwork	<i>Defined by participants.</i> Teamwork conducted online through digital channels.
Physical teamwork	<i>Defined by participants.</i> Teamwork where you sit in the same building as your team members.
Small talk	<i>Defined by participants.</i> The non-work related conversation usually at the beginning or the end of a meeting
Micro-Management	<i>Defined by participants.</i> No trust in management, the manager always checking in on me.
Afterworks (Also referred to as social events)	<i>Defined by participants.</i> (A translated term commonly used in Sweden) Activities that are done with the team after work, non-work related.
Face-to-face interaction	<i>Defined by participants.</i> Team members can physically see others and work together, face-to-face.
Self-leadership/ Open-management	<i>Defined by participants.</i> Managers trust employees to lead themselves for their work.
Digital meeting	<i>Defined by participants.</i> Meeting that happens over Zoom/Microsoft Teams, with employees who are not in the office together.
Digital work	<i>Defined by participants.</i> Working from home or anywhere outside of the office, mainly working on your laptop and phone
Zoom Fatigue	<i>Defined by Nadler et al (2020)</i> A computer mediated communication exhaustion.
Pandemic Covid-19	<i>Defined by the Oxford dictionary.</i> A disease that spreads over a whole country or the whole world. In this context specifically, refers to the Covid-19 crisis.
SME	<i>Defined by the EU recommendation 2003/361.</i> A Small or medium-sized enterprise.

1.0. Introduction:

The following section includes the background, previous research, the research gap, and the purpose of the study. Following on, the expected research contribution, delimitations and disposition of the text will be presented.

1.1. Background

The concept of digital work has been gaining traction for several decades, with multiple industries attempting to implement this (Handy and Mokhtarian, 1996). However, the Covid-19 crisis has accelerated the adoption of remote working worldwide (Davinson, 2020).

Before the pandemic, companies had a high reluctance to adopt digital work, citing data security, productivity, costs, and work quality concerns as the main reasons for not adopting it (Peters *et al.*, 2004). However, even then, there was existing empirical evidence that implied otherwise. For example, research showed that digital working could contribute to improved employee retention and a higher quality workforce, resulting in financial savings (Felstead and Henseke, 2017; Masuda *et al.*, 2017; Raghuram, 2014; Robért and Börjesson, 2006). Moreover, digital working was shown to be an alternative that benefits women, married employees, parents, those with disabilities, and those who live far from their workplace (Gajendran and Harrison., 2006; Iscan and Naktiyok, 2005; Mann and Holdsworth, 2003;).

During the pandemic, it became evident that digital work provides benefits for businesses and employees (Richter, 2020). Thus, resulting in companies like Spotify who are implementing a ‘work from anywhere’ program (Lundström and Westerdahl, 2021). Additionally, given the rapid adoption of digital work and the explosion of research on its benefits (Belzunegui-Eraso and Erro-Garcés, 2020; Raišienė *et al.*, 2020; Jamal *et al.*, 2021; Jean-Victor *et al.*, 2021), this topic is of high interest.

1.2. Previous research and Research gap

As stated previously, the relevance of digital work is confirmed by the fact that the number of publications on the topic has exponentially grown since March 2020 (Belzunegui-Eraso and Erro-Garcés, 2020; Raišienė *et al.*, 2020; Jamal *et al.*, 2021; Jean-Victor *et al.*, 2021). However, many of these papers focused on collaboration, economic activity, and productivity.

Additionally, Raghuram (2014), Dittes *et al.* (2019), and Watad and Will (2003) found that organisational culture was one of the most important factors for digital teams to succeed. However, none of the previous research has clarified how to utilise the concept of organisational culture to facilitate effective digital teamwork. As such, it was identified that there was a gap in the research regarding the use of organisational culture to enhance digital teamwork.

This thesis aspires to fill this research gap for organisations aiming to implement working from home in the long term. This research is also aimed at companies who aspire to understand how best to facilitate teamwork, should they choose a hybrid solution in the future. Research has been made on digital teams and organisational culture. However, there is a need to research to understand the connection between these concepts.

1.3. Purpose and Research Question

With the changing landscape of the working environment due to the pandemic, companies today are faced with pressure from both the government and employees in order to develop their digital working strategy. However, the rapid implementation of digital work has brought challenges for companies. Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate the most common hardships experienced by managers and employees when working in teams. Furthermore, this thesis intends to suggest a framework on how to facilitate digital teamwork by utilising previous research on organisational culture.

The research question for this thesis is ***How can organisations facilitate digital teamwork through organisational culture?***. As this research question remains rather unexplored in current research, this thesis aims to answer this by using an abductive method. Firstly, a pilot study was conducted in order to explore the phenomena at hand. Afterwards, the main study was performed to apply current theory to understand and draw conclusions on the phenomena discovered. The main study consisted of two phases. **Phase one** aimed to observe digital meetings of **Company A** and **Company B** and complement these with semi-structured interviews. **Phase two** aimed to interview a wider sample of companies, including participants from different sized companies and industries, ranging from consultancy to employer branding.

1.4. Expected contribution

This thesis's expected contribution is to understand the connection between organisational culture and digital teamwork. Thus, this thesis expects to identify factors for companies to consider when applying digital teamwork in the future. Furthermore, the thesis expects to propose guidelines to organisations to make the transition to digitally working easier. Moreover, this thesis expects to suggest guidelines that will help companies fulfil the needs of both managers and employees.

1.5. Delimitations

The delimitations of this paper facilitated a concise and in-depth analysis of the explored factors. These factors were chosen after analysing the results of the pilot study. As such, this thesis does not look at other prominent organisational culture and digital teamwork research such as Dauber (2011). Moreover, due to their extensive work on the factors explored in this thesis, the organisational culture and teamwork research by Schein (1985) and literature reviews by Chowdhury and Murzi (2019) and Salas *et al.*, (2005) were used as a theoretical basis to further limit the scope.

1.6. Disposition

The structure of the thesis is as follows. Firstly, the literature review and theoretical framework are presented. Following on, the methodology and the pilot study are introduced. Thereafter, the results of both **Phase One** and **Phase Two** will be discussed. Afterwards, the discussions for **Phase One** and **Phase Two** are presented. Following on, the general discussion and managerial implications are addressed. Lastly, the limitations, future research and conclusion, are considered.

2.0. Theoretical framework

This section will identify the factors that are to be further developed in the literature review section.

As stated previously, this thesis searches to identify how organisations have utilised their organisational culture to solve the most common challenges that digital teamwork implies. Thus, the definition of organisational culture by Schein (1985) will be used as a basis to limit and explore the different characteristics of the organisational culture of the companies studied. As such, the artefacts, espoused values and basic underlying assumptions of their organisational cultures will be identified.

Moreover, during the pilot study, the concepts of teamwork, communication and leaders and managers were identified as relevant for this paper. Additionally, it was found that factors affecting individuals directly were also important to develop effective digital teamwork. The factors to be considered are individual productivity, communication, work-life balance and environment. As such, these concepts will be defined in the literature review, terms have also been defined by the participants, which are presented in the glossary.

3.0. Literature review

This section will present theories relating to organisational culture, digital teamwork and individual themes. These will be used as a framework to effectively answer the presented research question.

3.1. Organisational culture

Previous research shows that organisational culture is one of the most important factors defining the success of digital teamwork (Watad and Will, 2003). Raghuram, (2014) also found that culture power distances within the organisational culture can affect the outcome of digital work.

The research by Schein (1985) is used to define the domains that characterise organisational culture. Firstly, organisational culture is formed by basic underlying assumptions that are invisible and unconscious. Secondly, the basic underlying assumptions turn into espoused values, which are rules, standards and prohibitions clearly defined by organisations. Lastly, the espoused values are manifested as visible behaviours. These interrelated domains will be used to analyse the organisational culture of the companies studied in this thesis.

3.2. Teamwork

As expressed by Salas *et al.*, (2005), “teamwork is a popular topic that has led to an explosion of researcher and practitioner tests”. As a consequence, innumerable factors have been found to affect the success of a team. To understand the factors that increase the success of a team, the literature reviews by Chowdhury and Murzi (2019) and Salas *et al.*, (2005) were analysed. Nine factors of effective teamwork were identified, and are described in **Table 1**. In addition to these nine factors, social events/“afterworks” were also found to increase the emotional attachment and personal identification with the organization, further enhancing teamwork. (Tews, et al., 2013)

Table 1

Factors	Definition	Authors
Commitment to Team success	“Team members are committed to the success of the team and their shared goals for the project. Successful teams are motivated, engaged and aim to achieve at the highest level” (Terricone <i>et al.</i> , 2002)	Scarnati (2001); Terricone <i>et al.</i> , (2002)
Interpersonal skills	“Respect and care for each other with a high level of mutual trust among team members and have productive interactions to enhance task performance” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019)	Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); Kets De Vries (1999); Terricone <i>et al.</i> , (2002)
Ideal team composition	“Clear team roles, relationships, tasks and responsibilities” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019)	Bradley and Fredric (1997) Harris and Harris (1996); Terricone <i>et al.</i> , (2002);
Open and effective communication	“Engaging in open dialogue, timely communication and having active listening skills.” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019)	Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); Kets De Vries (1999); Riebe <i>et al.</i> , (2010); Terricone <i>et al.</i> , (2002)
Shared Goal and Value	“Setting a common team goal and sharing values among team members. The shared goals and values should promote common rules, group cohesion and flexibility.” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019)	Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); McIntyre and Salas (1995); Riebe <i>et al.</i> , (2010); Salas <i>et al.</i> , (1999); Scarnati (2001)
Adherence and Adaptability of Team Process and Performance	“Developing strategies/decisions/solutions through creative/feasible means and act to solve problems towards an effective work process” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019) “Altering a course of action or team repertoire in response to changing conditions (internal or external)” (Salas <i>et al.</i> , 2005)	Brackin and Williams (2001); Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); Salas <i>et al.</i> , (2005); Wageman (1997)

Leadership	“Taking leadership roles through consensus of the team, acting as a facilitator, monitoring tasks, dealing with conflict and accomplishing tasks” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019)	Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); Druskat and Wheeler (2003); Einstein and Humphreys (2001); Morgeson <i>et al.</i> , (2010) Zaccaro <i>et al.</i> , (2001)
Interdependence and backup behaviour	“Helping each other and promoting individual contribution within the group. Learning together and supporting each other socially” (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019) “Ability to anticipate other team members’ needs through accurate knowledge about their responsibilities. This includes the ability to shift workload among members to achieve balance during high periods of workload or pressure” (Salas <i>et al.</i> , 2005)	Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); Johnson <i>et al.</i> , (2000); Salas <i>et al.</i> , (2005); Scarnati (2001); Terricone <i>et al.</i> , (2002)

3.2.1. Communication

Communication is a factor that has been studied before and after the pandemic. Research made before the pandemic on teamwork in an academic setting showed an increase in communication challenges when learning online (Garratt-Reed *et al.*, 2016; Lapsley *et al.*, 2008; Vance *et al.*, 2015). On the other hand, Goñi *et al* (2020) compared teams that worked physically and teams that worked digitally during the pandemic. They found that “most personal goals, team challenges, and regulation strategies are not significantly different among physical and digital teams”. Thus, it can be concluded that there are contradicting results in regards to comparisons between communication on digital teamwork and physical teamwork.

3.2.2. Leaders and Managers

The research by Dittes *et al* (2019) investigated how to facilitate the management of digital teamwork. Their research concluded that self-leadership management is one of the factors that can facilitate the management of digital teams. However, Stewart and Manz (1995) found that a self-management style can lead to decreased team productivity and coordination, which can result in the abandonment of self leading teams altogether. Thus, it can be concluded that there are contradicting results when it comes to the relationship between management style and the success of digital teamwork.

3.2.3. Productivity

Productivity has been used in multiple studies to measure the effectiveness of digital teamwork. Previous studies show an increase in technostress and “Zoom Fatigue” when working from home, which results in lower productivity (Kumar *et al.*, 2013; Nadler, 2020; Suh and Lee, 2017; Yin *et al.*, 2018). Research has also found that working from home could make employees feel isolated and lose their organisational connection, ultimately leading to reduced productivity (Hafermalz and Riemer, 2021; Staples, 2001). Furthermore, recent research, from a working paper, is indicative that there is an increase in the number of meetings, with a decrease in the duration (Defilippis *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, other studies have shown an increase in work-life balance when working from home, increasing productivity (Bloom *et al.*, 2015; Butler *et al.*, 2007; Noonan and Glass, 2012; Wheatley, 2012).

3.3. Individuals Themes

In this section, the individual themes will be presented. Individual themes refer to factors that influence how employees and managers perform individually when working digitally. This concept will be used throughout the thesis.

3.3.1. Productivity

Productivity is defined as the ratio between output and input (Tangen, 2005; Palvalin *et al.*, 2017). Productivity can affect employee engagement, which can further affect firm productivity. Palvalin (2017) also found that organisations need to provide adequate resources and processes in order to ensure that a good environment and organisational culture is fostered, supporting employee productivity and digital teamwork. Work-life balance, communication and environment have been identified by previous researchers as factors that influence productivity. These will be further developed in the following sections.

3.3.2. Work-life balance

Work-life balance is defined as the “satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict” (Clark 2000). Additionally, Greenhaus *et al.* (2003) state that work-life balance is “the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in – and equally satisfied with – his or her work role and family role” (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2003).

Research has shown that digital work increases work-life balance (Stoilova *et al.*, 2020), job effectiveness, employee wellbeing (Hayman., J, 2010), productivity (Grant *et al.*, 2013) and reduces stress (Hartig *et al.*, 2007). This is due to the fact that employees enjoy more autonomy, flexibility in their work environment and control over their work time (Bernstein, 2014; Dittes *et al.*, 2019).

However, research has also found that working from home implies a higher blurring of boundaries between personal and professional life (Barber and Jenkins 2014; Jarrahi *et al.*, 2017). Due to this, employees are at a higher risk of work extensification and intensification (Brammer and Clark, 2020; Duxbury and Halinski, 2014). Work extensification refers to working longer hours, while intensification refers to putting extra efforts into the regular hours (Brammer and Clark, 2020).

Moreover, digital work can be immensely invasive on the personal life of employees, provoking a feeling of always being “on-call” (Bright and Logan, 2018; Salo *et al.*, 2018; Kozynski., 2021), which can lead to technostress and Zoom fatigue (Dery *et al.*, 2014; Jarrahi *et al.*, 2017; Nadler, 2020; Tiwari., 2020; Weil and Rosen, 1997).

3.3.3. Communication

Liu, D *et al.*, (2019) found that communication, specifically phone calls and text messages can increase individual well-being and social connectedness. These factors have been found to be beneficial for digital teamwork, as stress can affect the way an individual perceives communication within the team Pfaff (2021).

However, other research has found various challenges that can occur when communicating digitally. Barzilai-Nahon and Mason, (2010) found that different generations of workers understand information differently depending on the channel of communication, which can cause tension in organisations. Furthermore, digital illiteracy of information communication technologies (ICT) negatively affects communication, resulting in lower productivity (Korzynski., 2021). Diebig *et al.*, (2017) also found that a leader's behaviour can often be related to their followers' stress and that communication moderates this effect.

Furthermore, Baltes *et al.* (2002) found that online communication between teams results in less satisfaction. Online communication is also devoid of social cues with unclear deictic references. This can be further heightened when one does not know others well enough to

understand their style of communication (Baltes *et al.*, 2002). Online communication within teams also reduces the likelihood of informal interactions and off-task communication between team members (Tangirala & Alge, 2004), thus reducing the chances that team members can get to know each other (Martins *et al.*, 2004).

3.3.4. Environment

Work environment refers to the “immediate office workspace, as well as the buildings and surrounding spaces in which employees work” (Carter *et al.*, 2021). Digital working allows employees to have an active role in shaping their own environment (De Lange *et al.*, 2008; Lyons, 2008; Wrześniewski and Dutton, 2001), resulting in higher employee satisfaction, comfort, motivation, well-being, productivity and performance (Ashkanasy *et al.*, 2014; Carter *et al.*, 2020; O’donnell *et al.*, 2019; Shahzad *et al.*, 2016; Vischer, 2008; Vischer 2007). On the other hand, researchers have found that employees in an office setting can have a sense of belonging or territoriality towards their work space that increases employee commitment and retention. However, this was found to be harder to translate in a digital environment (Fischer *et al.*, 2004). Thus, it can be concluded that there are contradicting results when it comes to employee satisfaction linked to their environment when working from home.

4.0. Method

In this section, the way in which the pilot study and the main study were conducted will be described and explained.

4.1. Research approach

The present research is performed with an abductive approach, which is a combination of both deductive and inductive methods. This approach was chosen as the study performed was exploratory, and this is the most adequate method to identify where theory needs to be developed, as well as the factors affecting a certain phenomenon (Andersen 1998).

In order to identify the themes to address during this paper, deductive research was conducted. As such, it was identified that organisational culture and teamwork have been studied, but theories had not been developed to unify these two concepts. After identifying the

themes to study, propositions were formulated in order to be able to design questions for an inductive study, but not for testing them.

4.2. Research method

As the purpose of the study was not to test theories, a quantitative method was not chosen for this research (Graue and Carolin, 2015). Instead, a study in two phases was performed. **Phase One** of the study consisted of observing and interviewing employees of **Company A** and **Company B**. The observations were conducted in order to gain deep insight into the internal processes of a company when working digitally as a team (Yin 2012). **Phase Two** of the study consisted of eight semi-structured interviews in order to obtain detailed answers and perform a complete analysis of the phenomena at hand (Graue and Carolin, 2015). The interview guides for both phases can be found in **Appendix 1**.

4.3. Sampling strategy

The two observations were performed with SME startups, as they are companies that are characterised by dynamic organisational culture with fast adaptability. This may affect how easily the culture evolves depending on whether the employees are working digitally or face to face.

Employees of two SME startups in different industries were contacted. This was because senior management was accessible, and it was easy to negotiate whether observations of meetings would be possible. Both of the SME startups agreed to participate in the study.

In order to not limit the scope of the thesis, **Phase Two** of the study was performed. During this phase, larger companies and a more varied selection of industries were studied. As such, 30 employees from various industries were contacted through a career fair. Employees of eight different companies and industries agreed to participate in our study in the form of interviews. The companies that were interviewed ranged from consultancy to employer branding. The employees also had different backgrounds, and a combination of employees and managers was achieved.

4.4. Data collection process

4.4.1. Pilot study

The pilot study's main aim was to study how the organisational culture of a company is affected by digital working. After a week of research on the elements of organisational culture, it became evident that it was a very wide concept. As such, the first weeks of the thesis were used to identify the most common struggles of employees when working from home.

It was decided that, in order to identify the delimitations of the study, a pilot study would be conducted. This allowed participants to highlight important factors influencing organisational culture when digitally working. Six people were interviewed and asked about the characteristics of their culture, as well as the struggles they had whilst working from home. It was identified that the main struggles the employees had were related to teamwork, and how to adapt to the culture when working from home. Thus, it was decided to study how companies struggled with this, and how they managed to solve this.

4.4.2. Main study

As stated previously, the main study was performed in two phases. The two phases of the study were as follows:

Phase 1: The first phase consisted of two observations. The first observation was a meeting conducted by employees of **Company A**, and the second was a meeting conducted by **Company B**. Both of the meetings were held on *Microsoft Teams*. The purpose of the meetings was the same, which was to sync the entire team with the weekly progress of the company. The meetings were also scheduled to be 30 minutes but instead lasted for 15 minutes. Both meetings allowed all participants to speak about their upcoming work during the week albeit in different methods. In both meetings, members of senior management and employees were present. After the meetings, the employees were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire in order to explore the characteristics of their culture and how it affects their teamwork digitally.

Phase 2: The second phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with five employees and three managers of five different companies of different sizes and industries.

For both phases, the interviews were conducted via zoom due to the pandemic. The joint requirement for all interview subjects was that they had to have been part of the organisation for at least two months. This would ensure that they had a clear understanding of the organisational culture of their respective companies, and would be able to participate effectively in this study.

There were two interviewers. One was asking the questions, and the other was writing the answers. The interviews and observations were also recorded in order to be able to analyse them in detail with the consent of the participants. In accordance with GDPR, all personal data and recordings were deleted when the study was finished. In total, 17 interviews were conducted. From the 15th interview and onwards, no new insights were gathered. Thus, it was concluded that empirical saturation was reached (Graue and Carolin, 2015).

The analysis of the data was performed separately by each of the authors of this thesis using the techniques from Miles and Huberman (1984), which consists of four stages: 1. Data Categorisation; 2. Data Contextualisation; 3. Preliminary within-case analysis; and 4. Cross-Case analysis. Afterwards, the results of the individual analysis were compared, achieving a more reliable analysis (Yin 2012). When analysing the data, patterns of behaviour became apparent. As such, the data was easily classified into large themes, and data that didn't fit was discarded.

4.5. Validity of the studies.

The external reliability is uncertain. This is due to the fact that it is uncertain how long the pandemic will continue. Thus, it is uncertain whether future research will be able to replicate the circumstances of this study.

The internal reliability is enhanced with two researchers performing the analysis separately, allowing more critical and objective findings (Graue and Carolin, 2015). Furthermore, during the research process, advice was received by a thesis supervisor from SSE. Additionally the thesis has been proofread by other SSE students, thus ensuring a high-quality paper.

The external validity of the studies is increased by complementing the first phase of the study with the second phase. However, more studies should be conducted in order to obtain further detailed analysis of specific industries, as it is not possible to generalise the results with the current amount of data (Graue and Carolin, 2015).

The internal validity is assumed to be high, as qualitative studies allow in-depth analysis of relationships between factors studied. However, it is acknowledged that a more extensive time frame for the observations could increase the internal validity of this study even further.

4.6. Coding and analysis of the data

4.6.1. Phase 1

The data was coded in order to give structure to the data gathered (Basit 2003). The companies of the **first phase** were defined as **Company A** and **Company B**. Accordingly, employees were coded according to their position and company. For instance, a manager from **Company B** would be defined as BManager1. This distinction was made because it was important to be able to compare between companies and between different positions, as they may have different experiences when it comes to digital working. Only one employee of **Company A** did not participate in the meeting that was observed. Additionally, two participants of **Company B** were not interviewed despite being observed. All the interviews lasted 30 minutes and were categorised as “long” interviews. **Table 2** summarises the participants of **Company A**’s observation and the nature of their participation in this study. **Table 3** summarises the participants of **Company B**’s observation and the nature of their participation in this study.

Table 2

Name	Observed- Yes/No	Interview Yes/No	Type of interview
AManager1	Yes	Yes	Long
AManager2	Yes	Yes	Long
AManager3	Yes	Yes	Long
AEmployee1	No	Yes	Long
AEmployee2	Yes	Yes	Long

Table 3

Name	Observed-Yes/No	Interview- Yes/No	Type of interview
BManager1	Yes	Yes	Long
BManager2	Yes	Yes	Long

BManager3	Yes	Yes	Long
BEmployee1	Yes	Yes	Long
BEmployee2	Yes	No	-
BEmployee3	Yes	No	-

4.6.2. Phase 2

The purpose of the **second phase** was to further explore the needs of managers and employees. As such, the sample was divided into three groups: members of **Company C (named Group C)**, members of **Company D (named Group D)** and members of diverse companies (named **Group E**). Diverse companies in this context refer to a group of singular interviews held from a diverse range of companies. Afterwards, the coding included the position of the participant similar to that in the first phase. For instance, an employee of **Group C** was coded as **Group C Employee 1**. Six interviews lasted 30 minutes. Three interviews lasted 15 minutes due to the nature of the job of the participants. As such, the interviews were categorized as “**short**”. Additionally, the sample consisted of five employees and three managers. **Table 4** illustrates the nature of the sample.

Table 4

	Participant ID	Type of interview
Employees	Group C Employee 1	Short
	Group C Employee 2	Short
	Group D Employee 1	Long
	Group D Employee 2	Long
	Group E Employee 1	Long
	Group D Manager 1	Short
Managers	Group E Manager 1	Long
	Group E Manager 2	Long

5.0. Results

*In this section, the results from both **Phase One** and **Phase Two** will be presented.*

5.1. First phase:

In the section below, the results for the companies whereby meetings were observed will be discussed. Both meetings were held in the morning. The purpose of both meetings were to synchronise the team with the upcoming goals of the company. As stated previously, the companies will be named **Company A** and **Company B**. The key characteristics of both companies are summarised in **Table 5**. It is important to highlight that the leader of **Company A** is AManager1, and the leader of **Company B** is BManager1. The disposition of the next section will be as follows. Firstly, key findings from observing the meetings will be presented. Following on, the results will be organised into themes that were consistently mentioned by the participants of **Company A** and **Company B**.

Table 5

	Company A	Company B
Size	SME Startup	SME startup
Number of individuals observed	5 (3 managers and 2 employees)	7 (3 managers and 4 employees)
Industry	B2B	B2C
Leaders of the company	AManager1	BManager1
Time of meeting	Early Morning Scheduled: 8.30-9.00 Conducted: 8.30-8.45	Late Morning Scheduled: 11.30-12 Conducted: 11.30-11.45

5.1.1. Description from **Company A** meeting:

The participants of the meeting were AManager1, AManager2, AManager3 and AEmployee2. The meeting started with a minute of small talk led by AManager3 in the form of a story. This small talk was an informal interaction, thus was unrelated to the company. After AManager3 finished their story, the meeting informally changed to work-related matters. AManager3 remained the leader of the meeting despite not being the most senior manager in the company. During the meeting, all participants had their camera on, displaying their face and shoulders. The majority of the participants also used a blurring filter in the background.

AManager3 started the formal stage of the meeting by stating the progress of the

company, setting goals and explaining tasks for the week whilst periodically asking for other participants' opinions. The majority of the meeting consisted of AManager3 and AManager1 conversing. The remaining participants (AManager2 and AEmployee2) did not contribute to the same extent and showed little interest through their facial expressions.

Once AManager3 finished reviewing the weekly plan, there was a shift in leadership in the meeting. The new leader of the meeting was AManager1. As AManager1 is the leader of **Company A**, they started offering support and made sure that all participants understood that they could ask for support from AManager1 at any time of the week.

After AManager1 finished offering support, the participants of the meeting started stating their work plans for the upcoming week. This was done by taking turns to talk, with the intention to not interrupt each other. As this was an informal process of participation, there was an unclear structure. It was not always explicitly clear who was to speak next, causing an overlap with two participants speaking at the same time (AManager1 and AManager2). The unclear structure created an uncomfortable atmosphere in the meeting, as was evident from the participants' facial expressions.

Towards the end of the meeting, the leadership of the meeting switched back to AManager3. This participant took the initiative to end the meeting by asking if the other participants had other issues to discuss, allowing them to further communicate if needed.

The meeting ended earlier than expected, lasting 15 minutes instead of the scheduled 30 minutes. However, the participants of the meeting did not show surprise at the rapidity at which the meeting was conducted. As the leader of the company, AManager1 ended the meeting attempting to motivate the team with a positive message, further reinforcing their supportive role.

5.1.2. Description from **Company B meeting:**

The participants of the meeting were BManager1, BManager2, BManager3, BEmployee1, BEmployee2 and BEmployee3. The meeting started with BManager1, the leader of the company, engaging in small talk with the other participants as they entered the meeting. This small talk was an informal interaction, with participants conversing about personal matters unrelated to the work. During this stage of the meeting, only BEmployee1 had their camera on. The scenery in

BEmployee1's background caused participants to continue the small talk. This lasted 3 minutes, as other participants were late for the meeting.

Once all participants had joined the meeting, there was a minute of small talk between BManager1 and the participants that were late to the meeting. Once this informal interaction had finished, the meeting informally changed to work-related matters. At this time, BEmployee1 turned their camera off, resulting in no participants having their camera on for the remainder of the meeting.

BManager1 started the formal stage of the meeting by stating the progress of the company, updating the participants. BManager1 initiated a process similar to **Company A**, where the participants were expected to talk by taking turns so as to not interrupt each other. However, in **Company B**, BManager1 stated that it was important for the speaker to decide and communicate which participant would take their turn next. The majority of the participants followed this structure. However, a few participants forgot to follow this, resulting in the rest of the team not knowing when to participate. As a result, they were reminded by BManager1 to follow the structure so that the meeting would be conducted smoothly. Despite the clear guidelines on how to communicate, there was still an overlap, with two participants speaking at the same time. This was caused by BManager1, who needed clarifications from BEmployee2. BManager1 did not interrupt BEmployee2 when BManager1 needed clarifications. BManager1 instead asked their question afterwards, thus interrupting BEmployee3.

The meeting ended earlier than expected, lasting 15 minutes instead of the scheduled 30 minutes. This was because all participants had stated their progress for the last week and their current work plans for the upcoming week. BManager1 then asked if participants had other issues to discuss, allowing participants the chance to further communicate should they need. As the leader of the company, BManager1 ended the meeting attempting to motivate the team with a positive message.

5.2. Common themes from the first interviews of the first phase:

*Below, themes that came up during interviews from participants of **Company A** and **Company B** will be presented. The interview guides used can be found in Appendix 1.*

5.2.1. Organisational culture

Since both companies are SME startups with dynamic organisational cultures, there were similarities in regards to how the participants described the organisational culture. The terms that were repeated during the interviews of both companies were: “small team”, “motivated to do whatever it takes”, “startup culture” and “fun”.

When interviewed about the struggles of digital working, both companies mentioned that building the organisational culture online is challenging. Both leaders of **Company A** and **Company B** further explained why they believed it was harder to establish the organisational culture online.

AManager1 believes that: “culture is lived, and to build it online means you can't access all parts of it... consequently making it hard for everyone to align”. AManager1 also implied that no matter the number of digital touchpoints, the quality of face to face interaction will never be equal.

BManager1 expressed that: there will “always be a distance between online [organisational]... culture and [digital]... teamwork”. This is due to the fact that BManager1 stated that being in an office helps “the values shine through, showing the organisational culture more”. As such, the increased distance between employees deteriorates the organisational culture.

Despite the struggles expressed by both companies, all participants stated that they themselves identified with their organisational culture. They also indicated that the majority of their team members identify with the organisational culture.

Managers of both **Company A** (AManager1, AManager2, AManager3) and **Company B** (BManager1) felt they had a special connection with the organisational culture of their respective companies due to the fact that they were involved in creating it.

Despite multiple similarities in the organisational culture, there are also stark differences between **Company A** and **Company B**. For example, **Company A** repeatedly described their organisational culture as “results oriented” with an emphasis on “accountability”. However, **Company B** didn't mention these terms, but mentioned “curiosity” and “the seniority of the team” as a defining organisational culture characteristic.

A difference related to organisational culture between **Company A** and **Company B** is the level of flexibility and willingness both companies expressed at changing and adapting the culture.

In **Company A**, the participants stated the culture is flexible, with a willingness to change it as the needs of employees and managers evolve. Consequently, as stated by AEmployee1, this helped employees to feel that they “identify with the culture more, as [they were]... part of creating it”. This is further reflected in statements from AManager1, AManager2 and AManager3, who expressed that the individual development of each team member was important for the organisation to grow. The flexibility and the importance of the development of individuals were also reflected in the observed meeting, as the participants were open as to whom would assume the leadership of the meeting.

On the other hand, **Company B** is not flexible when it comes to changing its culture. Additionally, the strong organisational culture and shared goals and values of **Company B** were reported to be an important factor attracting external talent to the company. This is reflected by BEmployee1, who expressed that “BManager1 embodied the **Company B** culture really well”, and it was an important factor for them in choosing **Company B**. The lack of flexibility of the organisational culture of **Company B** was reflected in the observed meeting whereby BManager1 constantly reminded other participants on the communication guidelines already established.

The low flexibility of the organisational culture was also evident when issues arose regarding a team member not following the organisational culture. In this instance, BManager1, BManager2 and BEmployee1 noticed that another team member did not comply with the already established culture. In order to solve this, BManager1 and BManager2 “prioritised the [organisational] culture of the company” with the dismissal of this team member. Hence, this team member was not part of the team when this study was conducted. Nevertheless, this remained as a lesson on the important values for **Company B**.

5.2.2. Digital teamwork

The challenges of digital teamwork were different depending on whether the participant was a manager or an employee. Challenges expressed by employees of **Company A** and **Company B** are summarised in **Table 6** below:

Table 6

Company A challenges	Company B Challenges
Lack of deeper meaning between the team	Identifying miscommunications over text
Most communication is non verbal, hard to understand each other	Individual communication styles are harder to understand when unfamiliar with all team members

Challenges expressed by managers of **Company A** and **Company B** are summarised in **Table 7** below:

Table 7

Company A challenges	Company B challenges
Building team spirit online	Less trust in the team
Getting to know the team	Distance in the team
Syncing social aspect of teamwork	‘Real’ team feeling and social interactions

Managers of **Company A** stated that their main challenge was making sure that everyone felt like they were part of the team when working digitally. Their solution to this was to meet in their remote office 1-2 times a week with weekly social events/“afterworks”. This facilitated check-ins and physical connection between the team, despite the majority of the team not often having day to day interactions. This was reflected by statements of AEmployee2, who said that even if they didn’t participate as much in the digital meetings observed, the physical social events/“afterworks” has helped them to interact in social and informal conversation when meeting their colleagues face-to-face.

Managers of **Company B** stated that their main challenge was the increased difficulty in getting to know their team members in a digital setting. **Company B** proposed social events/“afterworks” as a way to mitigate the issue, but were yet to implement this. Despite this, the clear guidelines of communication and strong organisational culture observed helped all the participants contribute to the same extent, regardless of their seniority in the company.

Both **Company A** and **Company B** identified the importance of physical social events/“afterworks”, believing it results in better socialising within the team, which is vital to increase interdependence and teamwork effectiveness. However, only **Company A** took the

initiative to organise both physical and digital social events/“afterworks” that enhanced teamwork.

Additionally, digital teamwork can be hindered by digital onboardings and digital social events/“afterworks”. AManager1, AManager3, BManager1, BManager3 and BEmployee1 all stated that as new employees enter the team, it is harder to connect with them digitally. This was confirmed by the fact that all the participants stated that they preferred physical social events/“afterworks” over their digital ones, as they benefit more from them. Other reasons why physical social events/“afterworks” were preferred are: Easier to make connections; less structured; context switching is hard when using the same tools; digital feels like a continuation of work; little incentive to attend digital social events/“afterworks” and lastly, more restrictions in the digital medium.

An issue that was common for managers of **Company A** and **Company B** was team composition. In **Company A**, AManager2 stated that “hiring the right people ...helps to coordinate the team better [and makes] ...digital teamwork easier”. In **Company B**, hiring employees that did not comply with the organisational culture increased conflicts within the team. As such, team composition was an important factor in effective digital teamwork. As stated by both BManager1 and BManager2, the team worked better and “there was more harmony” when the individual who did not follow the organisational culture left the team, increasing backup behaviours and interdependence.

5.2.3. Communication

Both **Company A** and **Company B** use multiple communication channels when digital working. AManager3 stated that there are two lines of communication between teams: asynchronous and synchronous. Asynchronous refers to “not needing an answer right now, but expecting an answer within a timeframe”. For example, sending a text message on *Microsoft Teams*. Synchronous is “when both parties are connected at the same time in the same channel ...and exchange ideas”. For example, team meetings on *Microsoft Teams* or phone and video calls. **Table 8** shows a summary of the communication channels and their purpose as stated by the participants.

Additionally, participants of both **Company A** and **Company B** stated similar communication processes. All participants begin by sending a message through an online chat

(either *Slack* or *Microsoft Teams*). However, they switch to either a call or book a meeting if the issue at hand is complicated.

Table 8

Communication channel	Used by	The purpose for Company A	The purpose for Company B	Asynchronous/ Synchronous
Microsoft teams video calls	Company A and Company B	Meetings syncing the team	Meetings syncing the team	Synchronous
Slack	Company A and Company B	Messages with parent company	Quick messages amongst colleagues	Asynchronous and Synchronous
Email	Company A and Company B	External matter and clients	External matters and suppliers	Asynchronous
Phone calls	Company A and Company B	Used to train employees and to align everyone quickly on complicated matters.	Matters that require immediate attention or complicated matters. Aligns everyone quickly	Synchronous
Microsoft teams group chat	Company A	To keep everyone aligned, quick messages amongst colleagues. Employees ask managers for help through this channel	-	Asynchronous
Miro	Company B	-	Team idea generation and Workshops	Synchronous

Both **Company A** and **Company B** stated that they have experienced a lot of difficulties when digital working. Firstly, they expressed that it is hard to understand body language and tone through digital communication regardless of the channel, causing misunderstandings and conflict. As was observed in the meetings, interruptions made by the leaders of the company (AManager1 and BManager1) occurred as it was harder for the participants to gauge body language and social cues when only seeing the face and shoulders of the rest of their teammates. The difficulty is further increased for **Company B**, as none of the participants were visible on camera. Thus body language and social cues are important in order to have open and effective communication. Additionally, BEmployee1 stated that this issue is more present when “communicating with employees with whom you're not familiar, as it is harder to understand

their behaviours”. Secondly, participants stated that digital meetings are more formal and less spontaneous as stated by BManager3, “this was not appreciated”. AManager1 stated that their team has attempted to solve this by “forcing ourselves every week to chat about non-work related things”. However, this was not reflected in the observed meeting. Thirdly, all managers and employees stated that technical difficulties and interruptions from outside-influences (partners, children and pets) made online communication much harder. This was however not an issue for the observed meetings in this study.

Despite the difficulties experienced by **Company A** and **Company B**, external communication with clients and suppliers has become easier for both. As stated by AManager1, “As clients have become more accepting to meet online, it's easier to get in contact with them, in comparison to being face-to-face whereby one of the parties would have to travel long distances in order to meet.”.

As **Company A** was observed to have a smaller amount of small talk than **Company B** during the meeting, participants in **Company A** were asked the reason behind this. During the interviews, AManager2, AManager3 and AEmployee2 stated that this is due to the fact that **Company A** meets as a team physically once a week. Thus, small talk is “saved and happens more naturally in real life” as they “prefer to ‘chit chat’ with people in the office”. This was confirmed by AManager1, AManager2 and AEmployee2, who stated that they conduct the same meeting at the same time physically over a team breakfast and informal interactions such as small talk are vastly increased. AManager1 also states that the early morning timing of the meeting could be a factor influencing the amount of small talk. They stated that “often people are low on energy very early in the morning”, and that “team members may be more evening people”.

5.2.4. Leaders and managers:

All managers from **Company A** and **Company B** stated that they operate using open management with all of their employees. This is because they prefer to be there as guidance and not to give orders. In **Company A**, AManager1 stated: “I prefer distributed leadership, I want to give them the tools to lead themselves and do not want to be micromanaging.”, but they stated that this is “especially hard to do online”. This was reflected in the observed meeting, where AManager3 took leadership despite not being the most senior manager.

AManager2 also expressed that the “coordination of the people is difficult online”, but “hiring the right people can make [digital] teamwork and managing easier.”. Similar statements were expressed by BManager1, who stated that they prefer to “Hire the right people,... set boundaries and let people do their own thing”. This was confirmed by multiple employees, each stating that they receive open management. They also expressed that they enjoy this kind of management, as they are included in the decision-making process of the company. Thus, in regards to leadership, both managers and employees prefer a self-leadership style.

When asked whether they had changed their management style when digitally working, managers in both **Company A** and **Company B** stated that there was little change. However, all managers stated that they ensure there are extra check-ins done in order to better connect with their colleagues. This was confirmed by the fact that employees stated that it was easier to book in time for explanations, guidance and help with their managers and other colleagues through the online medium. Thus, an increase in backup behaviours from managers is appreciated by employees when digitally working.

Due to managers being concerned that “certain personalities find it hard to engage in an online medium.”, they have established communication guidelines. Both AManager2 and BManager2 have stated that they have “made it clear that they are always open to communication”, giving their employees “ample channels [to communicate]... should they ever need the guidance”. They also stated that this reassured employees, as they knew the process of communicating with their manager in order to make sure they gain the guidance they are looking for. This shows that managers are committed to team success by taking into account individual employee needs and encouraging backup behaviours and interdependence. However, it was observed in **Company B**’s meeting that, despite the leader (BManager1) establishing communication guidelines, they also struggled with implementing the guidelines themselves. This provoked a disturbance in the flow of communication and confusion amongst the participants.

Managers were also concerned about the well-being of their employees. This was because, as stated by AManager3, “some people feel depressed when working from home alone”. In order to increase employee well-being, managers stated that they make sure to always ask how the employee is doing during their check-ins. AManager2 has particularly combated this by always “being available to help even in my own time”. Thus, managers further confirm their

commitment to team success by encouraging backup behaviours and interdependence within the team.

Employees had also stated their opinions on how a good manager is. These characteristics all are stated in **Table 9** below:

Table 9

Company A	Company B
Open management	Open management
Supportive	Accountability
No micro-management	No micro-management
Guidance	Trust in employees

Managers of both **Company A** and **Company B** expressed some difficulties that managing teams online implies. These difficulties are summarised in **Table 10**:

Table 10

Company A	Company B
Easy to fall into micro-management and to take control	Making sure never to fall into micro-management
Hard to understand body language and employee moods	Hard to understand if someone is frustrated
Hard to understand if the employee is aligned with you	Making sure that everyone is aligned
Hard to keep track and prioritise everyone	-

5.3. Individual themes of the first phase

These themes relate specifically to individual participants' needs and challenges in regards to digital working.

5.3.1. Environment:

Regardless of the culture, company and position, all participants stated similar advantages and disadvantages with regards to their environment when working from home. **Table 11** summarises these collective statements.

Table 11

Factors that made them enjoy the environment	Factors that made them not enjoy the environment
More freedom on environment preferences	The blurring of work and home boundaries
Get time to think more creatively	Small working space
More focus time	External mess in the “work environment”
Fewer distractions and fewer interruptions	Home boundaries with partners/children
Silence	Noise levels at home
Comfort	-

5.3.2. Work-life balance:

Results show that managers tended to perceive worse work-life balance whilst digital working, whereas employees enjoyed better work-life balance. AManager1, AManager2 as well as BManager1 and BManager2 mentioned that there was an increased blurring of boundaries between the professional and personal life. AManager2 also stated that they “were expecting to have more free time, but instead it's more work”. Furthermore, as stated by AManager2, they struggled to “take breaks... In the office, you would have a fika, but at home, it is very difficult to do this”. Additionally, BManager2 also stated that “despite enjoying the benefit of no commute and not having to dress up every day, everything work-related is more present in my life [because]... it's easy to have communication apps on your phone”. AManager1 further illustrated this struggle by stating that the lack of “self-discipline” made it “easy to sit there and continue until 9 pm”.

On the other hand, employees stated a number of reasons for enjoying better work-life balance in both **Company A** and **Company B**. All employees stated that lack of a commute, more flexibility, more comfort and more breaks were reasons for their increased work-life

balance. AEmployee2 also stated that they “feel more productive as they are interrupted less during their workday”.

5.4. Phase 2 - Common themes of the second phase

*In this section, results from the interviews with **Group C**, **Group D** and **Group E** will be reported. The interview guides for these interviews can be found in Appendix 2.*

Below in **Table 12** is a summary of the participants of Phase 2:

Table 12

	Participant ID	Type of interview
Employees	Group C Employee 1	Short
	Group C Employee 2	Short
	Group D Employee 1	Long
	Group D Employee 2	Long
	Group E Employee 1	Long
Managers	Group D Manager 1	Short
	Group E Manager 1	Long
	Group E Manager 2	Long

5.4.1. Organisational culture

Firstly, managers and employees expressed that they identify with the culture of their companies when the entire team shares the same goals and values. Additionally, they stated that this makes it easier for their teams to also embrace the organisational culture. Specifically, **Group D** indicated that their company has trouble implementing these shared goals and values within the organisation. As suggested by Employee 1 of **Group D**, the cause of this is that “some managers do not embrace the [organisational]... culture. In my previous team, my teammates also ignored most of the culture, which provoked conflicts, and this is why I left the team”. Hence, due to a lack of shared goals and values, the organisational culture is inconsistent within the company. As illustrated by Employee 2 of **Group D**: “ I do not feel the culture is established yet. There are too

many changes within the organisation, and thus people do not establish the culture. Because of this, my team trusts each other, but outside, we do not”.

Secondly, Manager 2 of **Group E** conveyed that hiring the right people plays a large role in building a consistent organisational culture within the company. As stated by Manager 2 of **Group E**: “It is not a coincidence that I recruited these people”.

5.4.2. Digital teamwork

Group D could not convey the ways their teams work on commitment. Additionally, it was clear that the members of this group changed teams a lot within their company. On the other hand, **Group E** and **Group C** stated that both managers and employees work hard in order to increase commitment in the team. Moreover, both managers and employees of **Group E** and **Group C** communicated that they are more committed to their team when their team members are knowledgeable and passionate. Furthermore, participants also expressed higher commitment when working in challenging environments where critical thinking and individual development are highly appreciated.

When asked how to increase team members’ commitment, both managers and employees agree that it is important to have a supportive environment. Managers expressed that they foster a supportive environment by encouraging self-leadership and trust instead of micromanagement. On the other hand, employees stated that the characteristics of a supportive environment were: supportive teammates; social events/”afterworks”; managerial support and constant check-ins.

The third factor studied during this phase of the study was interdependence. Thus, employees and managers were asked about their difficulties when encouraging an interdependent team, and how they have managed to solve these.

Manager 2 of **Group E** stated that “people have felt alienated, and I had to work to correct that. Instead of booking more meetings, I took walks with the people in the forest and connected with them.” Employee 1 of **Group E** and 2 of **Group D** agree with this, stating that as new employees enter a new team, it is hard to connect with people digitally. As stated by Employee 2 of **Group D**: “the sense of community is gone.” In order to solve this, managers agree that it is necessary to be creative. They mentioned initiatives like going out for ice cream, buying employees their favourite beverage, and booking a “fika” hour during office hours so that anyone can join and talk in an informal way. However, all managers and employees agree that

social events/”afterworks” should be organised physically and not digitally.

Employees and managers agree that a digital environment is not optimal for socialisation. All of the groups stated that social events/”afterworks” are not effective when they are arranged digitally, and they were unsatisfied with these. Additionally, employees of **Group C** stated that a crucial part of their organisational culture is the network and socialising aspects. Thus, they believe that a purely digital environment has been detrimental to their organisational culture. As expressed by Employee 2 of **Group C**: “The social aspects are crucial for the organisation to increase motivation and make them different. What distinguishes my company from others is that you can build a great network and meet colleagues of different areas, and this is harder to do digitally. It is hard to make digital meetings fun for us. We can do our job, but we do not laugh as much.”.

5.4.3. Communication

With regards to communication processes, managers and employees stated that they prefer to initiate the conversation through an online chat (*Slack* or *Microsoft teams*). If the issue proves to be complicated, they call or book a meeting with the corresponding people. In relation to this, Manager 1 of **Group D**, Manager 2 of **Group E**, and Employee 1 of **Group C** stated that an excess of meetings is also not appreciated by their team members. All the managers and employees expressed that they only use emails for official situations where a record of the answer is necessary.

Managers 1 and 2 of **Group E** expressed that they established clear guidelines on when to use each communication channel. On the other hand, employee 1 of **Group E** stated that it is hard to know which communication channels to use and that they had to directly ask their team members if they felt comfortable with the channels they are using. Employee 1 **Group E** stated “For a few people, I just started writing to them in chats. If I could just walk over to them and ask a question, I feel it would be very similar to a chat message. I felt insecure doing this, because maybe someone wouldn't tell me that they are uncomfortable with me asking questions via chat. I asked them to tell me if they are uncomfortable and what kind of communication channels they want to use”.

Despite the clear guidelines of **Group E**, all managers and employees expressed multiple difficulties in regards to communication. First of all, managers stated that employees are more

reluctant to contact managers for help when working digitally. For instance, Manager 1 from **Group D** stated: “Normally, when I am at work, my team would come up to me and ask for help or advice. But in the first months of the pandemic, no one called me, even though I was waiting for them to call. Now people ...[have become]... comfortable, as they know it is okay to call me”. Additionally, employees have stated that they are more reluctant to contact their team members when working digitally. As conveyed by Employee 1 of **Group E**: “as you do not know what the other person is doing, you do not know if you are interrupting them by asking for help”.

Secondly, both managers and employees stated that digital working is having an effect on the conflict solving processes. Manager 1 of **Group E** expressed that “conflicts are harder to solve online, as it is easier for people to avoid each other”. This is in accordance with statements by Employees 1 and 2 of **Group D**, who also stated that they have noticed an increase in team members ignoring each other.

5.4.4. Leadership and managers

In regards to leadership, both managers and employees prefer a “self-leadership” style where the manager serves as guidance instead of giving orders. As expressed by Manager 2 of **Group E**: “I try to be a coach or a mentor as I do not like bossing people around. I do not think managers should make all the decisions.”.

Additionally, both managers and employees stated that they do not appreciate constant monitoring. Instead, they indicated that the focus should be on booking check-in meetings according to the needs of the team and the individuals. Furthermore, these check-ins should not only be related to work issues, but also the mental health and personal needs of both parties. Employee 1 of **Group D** illustrates this by stating: “My manager always asks if I am okay, and I feel appreciated. We speak even if it is not work-related. I like how the person is always first and the work second. You feel more comfortable when someone wants you to be well”.

Employees of **Group D** and **Group E** stated that their managers’ management style did not change when digitally working. Only employees from **Group C** suggested that their manager changed their management style, as their manager decided to book more check-in meetings. As expressed by Employee 2 of **Group C**: “My manager’s style has changed since we connect more often”.

5.5. Individual themes of the second phase:

5.5.1. Environment

In regards to their environment, individuals that have the right tools stated that they enjoy working from home as they have more freedom, are more productive, and can get their work done without being interrupted by other people. However, both managers and employees agree that a hybrid solution, whereby employees make use of the premises of the office for workshops, meetings or social events is the best solution. A hybrid solution would also allow the social aspects to be present. Additionally, employee 2 of **Group D** and 1 of **Group C** stated that it is harder for them to be noticed by their managers, both as achievers and as responsible employees.

5.5.2. Work-life balance

Phase Two shows that there is no difference between managers and employees when it comes to work-life balance. However, people who are more capable of separating their professional and personal life enjoy a better work-life balance when working digitally. As expressed by Manager 1 of **Group E**: “You have to work on boundaries from your professional and your personal life, but once you have done this, you enjoy a better work-life balance”. The reason indicated by participants for not being capable of establishing boundaries is the lack of commute to work. As expressed by Employee 2 of **Group C**: “Generally, at work, I would work from 9-5. But now, because I do not have to travel home, it is harder to stop working”.

6.0. Discussion

*In this section, the discussion of **Phase One** and **Phase Two** will be presented, as well as the general discussion.*

6.1. Organisational culture of Phase One

Company A was concluded to have a better understanding of their organisational culture characteristics despite the high flexibility within their culture. On the other hand, a lack of flexibility in the organisational culture of **Company B** was reflected in the observed meeting. However, contrary to **Company A**, the interviews of **Company B** indicated that participants

were not able to state the characteristics of their organisational culture in a consistent manner. It was identified that this was due to **Company A**'s focus on weekly workshops, games and social events/"afterworks". Furthermore, as employees are taken into account when creating the organisational culture, the basic underlying assumptions of the organisational culture are better established. Thus, team behaviours, standards, rules and prohibitions being in line with the goals and values of the organisation (Shein, 1985).

Despite participants of **Company B** not being able to consistently describe their organisational culture, they were able to identify when an individual did not follow it. By analysing this finding with the research by Shein (1985), it was concluded that people who do not fit with the culture establish the wrong espoused values, resulting in the wrong behaviours. Thus, showcasing the importance of hiring the right people in order to build a consistent organisational culture. It was also concluded that this becomes more noticeable in the startup environment, where there are few employees and behaviours are more noticeable. Thus, it is important to further research this assumption in larger companies.

6.2 Teamwork of Phase One

It was observed that participants who engage in physical social events feel more comfortable contributing during team meetings. Participants of **Company A** expressed that physical social events/"afterworks" allowed them to get to know their team members better, increasing interdependence and trust (Chowdhury and Murzi 2019; Pfaff, 2021; Johnson *et al.*, 2000; Salas *et al.*, 2005; Scarnati 2001; Terricone *et al.*, 2002,). On the other hand, managers and employees of **Company B** stated that they are more stressed during digital meetings in comparison to face-to-face meetings due to a lack of familiarity and closeness with other team members. Thus, physical social events/"afterworks" help companies build interdependence within their organisational culture, facilitating digital teamwork.

6.2.1. Communication

Both **Company A** and **Company B**'s meetings were the first team meetings of the week. The purpose of the meetings was to sync the teams. They were scheduled to be 30 minutes long. However, both lasted for 15 minutes instead. This is supported by the working paper Defilipis *et al.* (2020), who found that on average, the duration of meetings had reduced and that the number

of meetings has increased. Despite this, AManager2 and BManager2 stated that they felt digital meetings were longer and that there were more meetings held. Participants may have perceived that the meetings are longer due to the fact that online meetings are more strenuous and compact in comparison to physical meetings. Nonetheless, these meetings were found to be of great help for the teams to establish shared goals and values, increasing team effectiveness which is in line with Chowdhury and Murzi (2019); McIntyre and Salas (1995); Riebe *et al.*, (2010); Salas *et al.*, (1999) and Scarnati (2001).

The observed digital meetings reflected that often digital meetings require a higher level of formality and structure in order to allow everyone to participate and reduce interruptions between speakers. This was concluded to be due to a lack of body language and communication cues visible (Baltes et al, 2002) as was evident in the observed meetings.

Additionally, it was observed that there are few informal and off-task interactions between teams in digital meetings. This is in line with Tangirala & Alge (2004), who found that there is little social communication in digital meetings. It was concluded that the lack of social interactions in digital meetings may increase the participants' perception of the digital meeting being monotonous and therefore more strenuous. As stated by AManager2 “digital meetings are sometimes boring and unnecessary”.

6.2.2. Leaders and managers

During **Company B**'s observation, BManager1 did not have their camera on. This signalled to BEmployee1 and other participants to also not have their camera on. Furthermore, it was observed that despite BManager1 establishing the communication guidelines, they struggled with implementing the guidelines themselves, provoking communication struggles within the team. This finding indicates that leaders are crucial to the team environment, as their behaviours often signal to other team members the rules and standards of the company (Chowdhury and Murzi 2019; Druskat & Wheeler 2003; Einstein & Humphreys 2001; Morgeson et al.2010; Zaccaro *et al.*, 2001). Hence, it is important that senior management, especially those in a startup environment, who are often seen as a representation of the official organisational culture are aware of the impact of their behaviours (Schein, 1985).

Moreover, as was evident in **Company A**'s observed meeting, the leader of the meeting was not the most senior manager, and participants were open as to whom would assume

leadership of the meeting. Participants of **Company A** indicated during the interviews that they were more satisfied with the organisational culture as they were empowered by their managers, and were able to contribute on an equal level during company meetings. Thus, flexibility and open management are important factors to include in the organisational culture of a company in order to facilitate digital teamwork (Dittes *et al.*, 2019).

Furthermore, managers from **Company A** and **Company B** stated that it is important to hire the right people. BManager1 expressed “if you use the right tools and [the right people]... it would be a great workshop, online”. Additionally, AManager2 stated that “hiring the right people makes managing a digital team easier”. Thus, managers hiring the right people remains an important factor when facilitating digital teamwork (Bradley and Fredric, 1997; Harris and Harris, 1996; Terricone *et al.*, 2002).

6.3. Individuals themes Phase One

6.3.1 Environment

Despite the pros and cons of a work-home environment, all participants stated that they would like to have this option moving forward. Participants stated reduced commute, increased flexibility and increased control of their environment as the reasons behind them preferring digital work. This goes in hand with findings from Shahzad *et al.*, 2016 and Vischer, 2007 who found that employees are more satisfied and productive if they have personal control over their environment. All participants also suggested that a hybrid option between the office and home would be preferred for the future. This is because some participants experienced some difficulties in their work environment, such as disturbances from outside influences (partners, children etc.), lack of social interaction and too small working space.

6.3.2 Work-life balance

Work-life balance was perceived by managers to decrease as there was a higher blurring of boundaries between their personal and professional life. This resulted in managers extending their work and working more whilst digitally working. This could be due to the differing managing practices whilst managing a team entirely online. This goes in line with Brammer and Clark (2020), Barber and Jenkins (2014) and Jarrahi *et al.*, (2017), who found that digital

working resulted in high blurring of boundaries between personal and professional life. The decreased work-life balance has provoked an increase in the managers' stress levels. This is exemplified by BManager2 "I am always exhausted in digital meetings, sitting in front of the screen". As such, it can be concluded that the stress of digital working due to a decreased work-life balance can decrease the effectiveness of managers' communication (Pfaff, 2021).

On the other hand, employees enjoyed a better work-life balance, due to less social pressures, more time at home and less weight of their responsibilities. This is in line with findings from Stoilova *et al.* (2020), Hayman, (2010) and Grant *et al.*, (2013), who found that work-life balance increases when digitally working. Thus, it can be concluded that the increased work-life balance of these may increase the effectiveness of employee communication (Pfaff, 2021).

Thereby, it can be concluded that due to the misalignment of stress and communication levels between managers and employees, digital teamwork effectiveness may decrease. The theory suggests that digital teamwork should not be as effective for the companies observed. However, despite opposite findings on work-life balance between managers and employees, findings indicate that digital teamwork is effective. This is illustrated by the fact that all participants stated that they were surprised at the higher levels of productivity whilst digital working, both individually and within their teams. Based on the research by Dittes *et al.*, (2019), it was concluded that the increased productivity despite the individual communication issues was due to the fact that self-leadership management does not require as much alignment between managers and employees in regards to communication.

6.4. Organisational culture and digital teamwork of Phase Two

As in the previous phase of the study, **Phase Two** showed that organisational culture is highly influenced by team composition. As observed in **Group C and Group E**, commitment to team success becomes part of the culture when colleagues are knowledgeable and passionate. This was found to result in increased back up behaviours that encourage interdependence, as employees and managers are willing to help and get to know each other in order to be successful.

On the other hand, the manager and the employees of **Group D** reported that their company has an issue hiring the right people. This is illustrated by Employee 2 of **Group D**: "I do not feel the culture is established yet. There are too many changes within the organisation,

and thus people do not establish the culture. Because of this, my team trusts each other, but outside, we do not”. Hence, failing to hire the right people results in an absence of a sense of community, which provokes a misalignment of shared goals, rules and values within the organisation (Schein, 1985). Additionally, it was found that this resulted in a decrease in commitment to team success, and a lack of interdependence and backup behaviours, increasing conflicts. Thus, hiring the wrong people can be detrimental for the organisational culture and digital teamwork (Schein, 1985).

6.5. Teamwork of Phase Two

During **Phase Two**, it became evident that a digital environment is not optimal for digital teamwork as interdependence, communication and management between team members is reported to be harder due to a lack of socialisation. As expressed by Employee 2 of **Group C**: “The social aspects are crucial for the organisation to increase motivation and make them different... we can do our job, but we do not laugh as much.”. Moreover, findings show that employees who are new to the team become alienated, which results in increased difficulty in getting to know their team members and the company itself. As stated by Manager 2 of **Group E**, “people have felt alienated, and I had to work to correct that.”. This makes it harder for companies to establish a consistent organisational culture. Effective self-managing teams require socialisation in order to build relationships with teammates and colleagues and reinforce backup behaviours (Chowdhury and Murzi 2019; Druskat & Wheeler, 2003; Salas *et al.*, 2005). Hence, a lack of physical social events can be detrimental for the organisational culture and digital teamwork (Schein, 1985).

6.5.1. Communication

In a face-to-face environment, managers and employees stated that they had an unwritten rule of “always ask for help” as it is easier to see whether someone is available to support them. However, in the digital environment, employees and managers struggled to establish communication channels and rules, as the basic assumptions of a physical environment could not be applied. This was reflected in negative behaviours such as managers booking excessive meetings, and employees not asking for help when needed (Schein, 1985).

Furthermore, due to the digital environment, a new underlying assumption of “I can

decide if I want to reply or not” to messages sent by team members became prominent. As expressed by manager 1 of **Group E**: “in the office, people can’t stay mad at each other, because they have to see each other every day, but it is not the case online”. This resulted in negative behaviours such as team members ignoring each other, negatively affecting teamwork and increasing conflicts (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2019; Kets De Vries, 1999; Riebe *et al.*, 2010; Terricone *et al.*, 2002).

As the basic assumptions of the organisational culture were negatively affecting both managers and employees, formal guidelines had to be set. Managers 1 and 2 of **Group E** established clear rules and communicated directly with their employees when to use each communication channel. As the team went through the “espoused values” phase, team communication ran more smoothly, and employees felt comfortable communicating with their colleagues (Schein, 1985). Hence, it is important that managers consider establishing clear communication guidelines together with employees in order to increase backup behaviours, engagement, awareness, development, creativity, effectiveness of teammates, as well as minimise internal problems (Kets de Vries 1999; Santarelli, & Marchioro 2010).

6.5.2. Leaders and managers

Managers and employees interviewed stated that they prefer a “self leadership” management style. Additionally, employees stated that they expect their manager to be a mentor and a guide, with check-ins being a tool utilised by employees to further develop professionally and personally. Thus, employees should be allowed to book them as often as they need. As Employee 1 of **Group D** states: “The person should be first and work second. You feel more comfortable when someone wants you to be well”. This is in line with findings from Dittes *et al.*, (2019), as they state that digital work can increase technostress and they recommend implementing mentoring activities to guide employees to build better digital working habits.

6.6. Individual themes Phase Two

6.6.1 Environment

Despite the pros and cons of digitally working, all participants of **Phase Two** stated that they would still like to have the option of working from home in the future. During this phase,

participants also suggested that a hybrid solution would be ideal. This would allow employees to control their environment which consequently increases employee satisfaction, productivity and reduces stress (De Lange *et al.*, 2008; Johnson *et al.*, 2000; Lyons, 2008; Wrześniewski and Dutton, 2001). Additionally, Pfaff (2021), found that stress is detrimental for communication. Hence, an employee-centred organisational culture should include a hybrid solution for individuals to better perform when working in teams digitally (Schein, 1985).

6.6.2. Work-life balance

Unlike **Phase One**, there was no difference between the work-life balance between managers and employees. However, as stated by Manager 1 of **Group E**: “You have to work on boundaries from your professional and your personal life, but once you have done this, you enjoy a better work-life balance”. This goes in line with Brammer and Clark (2020), Barber and Jenkins (2014) and Jarrahi *et al.*, (2017), who found that digital working resulted in high blurring of boundaries between personal and professional life. Additionally, the decreased work-life balance has provoked an increase in the participants’ stress levels. Pfaff (2021) found that higher stress levels result in worst communication within teams. Thus, it can be concluded that the stress of digital working due to a decreased work-life balance can decrease the effectiveness of participants’ communication (Pfaff, 2021), being detrimental for organisational culture and digital teamwork.

7.0. Summary of findings

*This section will include a summary of findings from **Phase One** and **Phase two**.*

Firstly, it can be concluded that hiring the right people results in the organisational culture being consistently applied throughout the companies, further encouraging shared goals and values between team members. This was found to be beneficial for teamwork, as companies who hire the right people reported better backup behaviours, interdependence and commitment to team success.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that social events/“afterworks” are crucial for the organisational culture to facilitate digital teamwork. However, it was concluded that a digital environment is not appropriate for socialisation, as it is harder to get to know other members of the team. This results in more misunderstandings, thus increasing conflicts.

Moreover, it was found that communication between team members working digitally required a higher level of formality. Thus, an organisational culture that includes clear communication guidelines and rules is necessary in order for managers and employees to communicate smoothly and facilitate digital teamwork.

It can also be concluded that an organisational culture that empowers employees facilitated digital teamwork. This should be reflected by a “self-leadership” management style, where managers take on the role of a mentor and employees decide when check-ins are necessary.

In regards to the individual themes, the factor environment revealed that managers and employees would like to have the option of digitally working moving forward. However, they missed the social aspects of the office, and they believed that the organisational culture and teamwork were negatively affected by a purely digital environment. Due to this, it was concluded that a hybrid solution would be ideal to allow the flexibility of an online environment, whilst establishing connections with their team members.

In regards to the individual theme factor of work-life balance, results conclude that participants who had more difficulties establishing boundaries between their professional and personal life had a worse work-life balance. Additionally, participants who reported to have a worse work-life balance when working digitally also stated that they feel more stressed in this environment. This results in worsened communication due to increased stress. Thus, it can be concluded that an employee-centred organisational culture helps facilitate organisational culture when digitally working.

8.0 Managerial implications

Based on the findings, managerial implications for organisational culture to facilitate digital teamwork will be presented in the following section.

Firstly, it is recommended that organisations implement adequate HR processes that allow them to hire employees that align with the organisational culture. This would allow the espoused values to be consistently implemented throughout the organisation, thus facilitating digital teamwork. Additionally, it was concluded that, in order for these espoused values to be translated into consistent behaviours with the organisational culture, social events/ “afterworks” and social events are necessary. It is of utmost importance that these activities are physical, as the digital

environment is not optimal for socialisation. Examples of physical social events/”afterworks” that were recommended by the participants are escape rooms, restaurants, and spa days.

Secondly, as part of the employee-centred organisational culture, managers should take the role of a mentor. Furthermore, monitoring should be used as a way to help the employee develop professionally and personally and, as such, employees should have the power to utilise the check-in sessions at their convenience. Additionally, it is recommended that managers implement self-leadership management style in order to facilitate digital teamwork. Moreover, it is recommended that organisations implement well-being activities to further enhance effectiveness of digital teamwork. Examples recommended by the participants include workplace meditation and employee competitions for physical activity.

Thirdly, it is recommended that the organisations establish a formal structure of communication for digital meetings. Additionally, the purpose of the meetings should be clearly stated and in line with the needs of managers and employees. This will allow employees and managers to see the value of scheduling the meeting instead of seeing it as a waste of time. Furthermore, in order for organisations to increase employee satisfaction, it is recommended that digital meetings are limited, and other communications channels are considered. An example recommended by the participants include to solve simple issues by prioritising phone calls or text messages.

Lastly, it is recommended that, in order for managers to facilitate digital teamwork and increase employee satisfaction, organisations should introduce a hybrid option. This will allow employees to have more control over their environment whilst engaging in activities that enhance team building. Thus, the office should not only be seen as a workplace, but also as a social space where employees are able to connect and support each other.

9.0. Limitations and future research

Firstly, there were two participants in the data collection that were observed, but could not be interviewed. It is possible that this variation could cause a negligible impact on our findings. In order to replicate the work, it is recommended that future authors interview all participants observed.

Due to time and resource constraints, the study was limited in the factors that could be taken into account. Additional factors could possibly have led to more nuanced analysis,

resulting in more impactful future recommendations. Hence, it would be valuable for future authors to take more factors into account when replicating this study.

This study was conducted in Stockholm, Sweden, which did not have strong restrictions but rather recommendations regarding working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, the characteristics of the Swedish work culture could have influenced the results of this study (Raghuram, 2014). Hence, future research should focus on studying how the organisational culture of other countries can facilitate digital teamwork.

The study is further limited by the fact that a small number of companies were observed, as well as the fact that the thesis did not study all sizes of organisations. Thus, only a small portion of the entire market was captured. For future research, it is recommended that authors look at gaining access to a wider array of companies. Furthermore, the results may be biased due to the characteristics of the participants of this study. Firstly all participants are advocates for a hybrid solution, and have mostly positive perceptions of digital work. The results may differ if a study includes a larger variety of opinions regarding digital work. Secondly, this thesis did not include companies that are against open-management. As such, it was not possible to convey whether other management styles would help build the organisational culture of the companies and increase the effectiveness of teamwork. Third, even though Phase Two of the study included companies of different sectors, it is assumed that a larger variation of sectors would have been beneficial in order to be able to generalize the results found. As such, future studies should focus on studying whether the conclusions of this study are applicable to different industries.

This thesis was focused on a qualitative approach in order to explore the research question. However, qualitative methods are often criticised as being subjective due to the fact that it is influenced by the researcher's perception of important factors. Nevertheless, all efforts were made to reduce the subjectivity of the analysis, as explained in section 4.0. *Methods*. Bell *et al.*, (2019) also criticised the ambiguity of qualitative research questions. Additionally, despite the increased convenience of an online interview, there may be a loss of spontaneity in online interviews in comparison to face-to-face interviews (Bell et al., 2019). Bell *et al.*, (2019) also state that despite interviewers being able to pick up visual cues, the responses could be affected by characteristics of the interviewer such as gender, age and ethnicity and the social desirability bias may occur. Hence, future researchers should take all of these limitations into account when replicating this study.

Finally, future studies could investigate this research question using quantitative methods. As quantitative methods are useful in order to capture a wider range of perspectives, this could be valuable for future research (Bell *et al.*, 2019).

10.0 Conclusion

The aim has been to answer the research question: *How can organisations facilitate digital teamwork through organisational culture?* In order to do so a pilot study and a main study with two phases were performed. **Phase One** consisted of two meeting observations and 11 semi-structured interviews. **Phase Two** consisted of eight interviews, with a more varied sample of companies. The focus was on investigating how the dimensions from the Schein's (1985) research on organisational culture could be used to enhance teamwork and individual performance digitally. The research question has been sufficiently answered. The results show that an ideal organisational culture can improve team composition, social activities, communication and leadership.

10.1 Contribution

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the common hardships faced by managers and employees in digital teams. The aim was also to fill in the research gap by connecting organisational culture and digital teamwork with an employee perspective. Previous research lacks in regards to understanding how these three factors are connected. Additionally, previous research done on digital teamwork has been contradictory. As such, this paper contributes to the updating and development of digital teamwork and organisational culture. Additionally, due to the thesis being performed during a pandemic, the research provides knowledge on how teams adapt when their environment drastically changes during a crisis.

11.0 Appendix

The following interview questions were adapted from the research by Fey & Denison, (2003) and Bell et al., (2019).

11.1. Interview guide for the Pilot study

Theme	Questions
Organisational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the cultural values that are important to the organisation • What are the rules within the organisation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Do they enforce it strongly? • Do you feel your company values equality? • Do you feel innovation is an important part of your organizational culture? Why? How is it reflected in your everyday work? • Is competence and professionalism valuable for your company?
Digital Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you been working from home? • What are the main challenges with working from home? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What do you think your company can do to facilitate better working from home conditions? • How long have you been working from home? • What has your experience been like working from home? Good/Bad Why? • Readiness of the company to change: Do you feel your company is fast at decision making? Why?
Digital Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel that teamwork is an important part of the organizational culture? • Are there conflicts within your organization? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Why? ◦ How are they generally managed? • Is communication valuable for your company? • What is the competitive dynamic of the company? • Do you feel your company cares about the customer?
Individual themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel your company cares about you? • Do you feel that you can grow in your organization? • Do you feel proud of being part of this company? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Do you feel appreciated by the company? • Is work life balance important for your organization?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do you feel you can make decisions in the organization freely? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you feel you are free to take risks in your decisions? ○ Do you get rewarded for your achievements?
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11.2. Interview guide for short interviews - Phase One and Phase Two

Theme	Questions
Organisational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If an outsider were to walk into your company and spend a day there can they easily observe your company's culture? E.g. key characteristics ● What makes this company special for you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How does it differ from other companies you have been exposed to? ● Do you feel that you identify with the organizational culture of your company? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you feel that your manager and your team embrace the organizational culture? Why?
Digital working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What surprised you the most about digital working? ● What are the obstacles that you have dealt with regarding working from home both as a team and working individually?
Digital teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are you satisfied with the social events/"afterworks" activities organized digitally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why
Leaders and Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What kind of management style does your manager conduct with your team? → for team members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has it changed recently due to digital working? ● What kind of management style do you prefer to have with your team → for the managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has it changed recently due to digital working? ● What expectations did you/do you have regarding managerial support regarding working from home?

11.3. Interview guide for long interviews - Phase One and Phase Two

Theme	Questions
Organisational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If an outsider were to walk into your company and spend a day there can they easily observe your company's culture? E.g. key characteristics ● What makes this company special for you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How does it differ from other companies you have been exposed to?
Digital working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What surprised you the most about digital working? ● What are the obstacles that you have dealt with regarding working from home both as a team and working individually?
Digital teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are you satisfied with the social events/"afterworks" activities organized digitally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We saw that you use mainly XYZ communication channels, can you under which situations you use each channel? And why
Leaders and Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What kind of management style does your manager conduct with your team? → for team members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has it changed recently due to digital working? ● What kind of management style do you prefer to have with your team → for the managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has it changed recently due to digital working? ● What expectations did you/do you have regarding managerial support regarding working from home? ● Do you feel that your manager and your team embrace the organizational culture? Why?

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