

HOW TO BECOME A
TEAM MEMBER?
An Explorative Journey

Marcel M.P. Probst
All2Change.com

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In memory of Anna ...

Acknowledgements

The explorative journey started with a polite request for an in-depth interview regarding psychodynamic and psychological experiences related to the process of becoming a team member. As preparation, there were some theoretical texts to read and some pre-reflection on guiding questions. Unexpectedly, it became an ‘intervention’ based on features of action research, resulting in a thick description of experiences regarding childhood, upbringing, CCRTs and current behavior related to the – lack of – capacities and skills required for connecting more deeply with individuals and teams.

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Content

Abstract	6
Keywords	6
Chapter One: Introduction, Research Aims & Objectives	7
1.1 Introduction	7
1.2 Research Aims & Objectives	10
Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Introduction Conceptual Framework – Part One	12
2.3 The Stranger (Simmel, 1950)	13
2.4 The Singleton (Turquet, 1979)	15
2.5 The Universal Stranger (Bauman, 1991)	19
2.6 Conclusions Conceptual Framework – Part One	23
2.7 Introduction Conceptual Framework – Part Two	26
2.8 Unconscious Team Dynamics (Bion, 1961)	26
2.9 Conceptualization of Sensemaking (Weick, 1995)	30
2.10 Conclusions Conceptual Framework – Part Two	40
Chapter Three: Methodology	42
3.1 Introduction	42
3.2 The Case Study Approach	42
3.3 The Multi-Case Study Approach	44
3.4 Collection of Case Study Evidence	45
3.5 Insights instead of Causal Connections	46
3.6 Validity	47
3.7 Triangulation	47
3.8 Biases & Bracketing	48
3.9 Interviews & Interviewees	49
3.10 Analyzing Case Study Evidence & Reporting	51

Chapter Four: Research Context & Data Gathering	53
4.1 Introduction	53
4.2 Research Context	53
4.3 Data Gathering	53
Chapter Five: Data Analyses	56
5.1 Introduction	56
5.2 Biases	56
5.3 Data Analyses	57
5.3.1 Introduction	57
5.3.2 Cross-Case Analyses	57
5.3.3 Within-Case Analyses	60
5.3.4 Personal Interpretation	70
5.4 A Thought: From Childhood & Upbringing via CCRTs to Occupation	75
Chapter Six: Findings & Conclusions, Limitations & Future Research	78
6.1 Introduction	78
6.2 Findings & Conclusions	78
6.3 Limitations	81
6.4 Future research	81
Appendix 1 Angle in Application of Interviewees	83
Appendix 2 Guiding Questions for Preparation of Interviewees	84
Appendix 3 Format Page 1 & 2 of 5 Interviewees	87
Bibliography	97

Abstract

The process of becoming a team or group member has been investigated from different scientific angles, such as anthropology, psychology, and sociology. This thesis presents a multi-case study exploring this process from a psychodynamic and psychological angle, based on Bion (1961) and Weick (1995) respectively. The approach is specifically applied to the change agent connecting with his new team when starting a new interim assignment, following the perspectives of the ‘stranger’ (Simmel, 1950), the ‘singleton’ (Turquet, 1979), and the ‘universal stranger’ (Bauman, 1991). They each employ a different angle – an evanescent timeframe, an identity connection, and a quest for order respectively – all of which are applicable and relevant for the change agent in this research. An extensive preparation of the interviewees upfront in terms of purpose, goals, underlying theory, and research methodology as well as using social-analytic interviewing and aspects of motivational interviewing as methodology is applied to retrieve conscious and unconscious data regarding this interactive process by five experienced change agents. The result is a thick description of anxieties, associations, attitudes, biases, conclusions, content, dreams, emotions, facts, fears, ideas, issues, jokes, motivations, nightmares, observations, opinions, parapraxis, symptoms, ‘slip of the tongue or pen’, and thoughts, concerning this process. The results are in line with the existing theory, meaning individuals experience iterative, logically defined stages during this process. In addition, the research reveals new ‘inner’ psychodynamic findings related to a lack of experience and knowledge regarding (un)conscious team dynamics, providing a ‘reaching out initiative’, and ‘extensive experience’ regarding the local historical background. In turn, a key psychological ‘outer’ finding is that external forces significantly frustrate the connection process. The findings also inform how this process can be improved for both the change agent and team; this can be done by introducing the change agent in a clear and timely manner and by providing relevant education and coaching for both the change agent and the team specifically regarding underlying (un)conscious aspects. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords

Change agent, individual member, individual member transitioning, membership individual, insider, outsider, psychodynamics, singleton, sensemaking, stranger, team member, universal stranger

Chapter One: Introduction, Research Aims & Objectives

1.1 Introduction

In this study, I pursue a research theme that interests me from both a theoretical and practical perspective and is relevant to my working environment. As an interim change agent¹ (Giddens, 1984), I provide senior leadership to organizations undergoing significant organizational change² and transformation under pressure.³ This means, as an interim manager, connecting and disconnecting to members of a new team or group⁴ in a functional, psychodynamic and psychological way on a regular basis, usually every six to eighteen months, depending on the term of an assignment, within highly ambiguous⁵ and uncertain⁶ situations.

In such circumstances, there is a dilemma: on the one hand, the change agent needs to get close to the new individuals and team as quickly as possible, in order to organize and deliver the time-pressure-driven performance required in both an acceptable rational-economic and

¹ In his structuration theory, Giddens (1984) describes the relation between actor, acting, and knowledge. A (human) agent, the actor, is able, based on his ability, intentions, (reflective) knowledge, power and purpose, to influence his activities and those of others. In other words, in a specific context, the actor acts like a change agent, applying recursive social practices in a sense that those are continuously (re)produced; an ongoing process of always being and being in the making, resulting in change. In his view, actor and system, as well as process and structures are co-constitutive; the one cannot exist without the other. Giddens stresses the importance of both reflective and practical consciousness when acting in daily life.

² Substitute names for organizational change are: cutback management, management of hard times, organizational decline, organizational death, recovery, retrenchment, revitalization, termination, transformation, and turnaround (De Heer, 2009).

³ De Heer (2009) distinguishes seven types of pressure situations: “1. loss of legitimacy is related to a meaningful existence of the organization; 2. loss of function to a completed program or project; 3. scarcity or lack of resources to a decrease in demand, turnover, tasks, and/or budgets; 4. integration of organizations to anticipated economies of scale; 5. problematic reputation or identity to a decrease in perception and trust by relevant stakeholders; 6. difficult or unattainable mission related to barriers and frustrations provided by internal and external parties; and 7. entropy in organization network or a broader context connects to increasing – not manageable – disorder due to a series of speedy and unexpected developments.” (Probst, 2012: 97).

⁴ In this research, I use the word team for ‘team’ as well as for ‘group’. Although the change agent interacts with a variety of different people at different moments and different (cultural and physical) locations in substantial quantities sharing moments of deep as well as superficial contact, his aim is to create and/or establish a team to deliver time-pressure-driven performance; a collection of people, who are linked together to achieve a common objective. Obviously, by applying quotes of other authors, the original wording will be used regardless of the word team or group.

⁵ “In ambiguous situations, people become confused because these situations are difficult to understand, due to the unpredictability of interactions and feedback processes, and the multiple meanings and multiple voices of actors. This implies that meanings should be constructed socially in direct interaction with others, in dialogue that makes room for multiple voices” (Boonstra, 2004: 13).

⁶ According to Weick (1995), uncertainty is mainly related to a lack of information.

social-psychological manner; on the other hand, these new individuals and team know that the change agent's committed leadership will end within a foreseen timeframe, giving them the space to either work professionally with the change agent during this predicted period, or to 'deal' with the change agent for the time being. Or, as Turquet (1979) states:

“In the harsh terms of large-group life, it is a case of who will dominate whom: will consultant [read: change agent, MP] and member dominate the large group or be dominated by it?” (Turquet, 1979: 92).

According to Kets de Vries (2011), those ambiguous and uncertain situations can have a negative impact on people's well-being, because there is both increased pressure on people to perform and a decreasing attachment to the organization.

Obviously, due to the unusual, 'threatening' circumstances, people act and react in these kinds of situations in a different, more unpredictable and/or instable way, with the risk of jeopardizing individual and organizational economic and psychological performance. The (in)stability depends significantly on the quality of interpersonal relationships preferably decreasing ambiguity and uncertainty (Weick, 1995), which emphasizes the importance for the change agent and team to build, establish, and understand the process of becoming an accepted team member.

I am emotionally connected and inquisitively engaged to this interactive and recursive process⁷ and it is meaningful to me – meaningful in a sense that it enhances my theoretical understanding about the theme itself, resulting in a better understanding of the consequences of my and other(s) behavior. Further, it improves the operational execution of process details with a more effective outcome regarding the quality and speed of integrating myself in a new team and allowing the team to access and to connect with me more easily. In my opinion, explanatory and exploratory connecting, comparing and analyzing the more conscious part of this process (read: sensemaking) to the more unconscious part of this process (read:

⁷ “Human action is, in a specific context, continuously in process, in social interaction, influencing, developing, changing and creating an ongoing new context; it has no beginning and it has no end. Human action is also not a successive or consecutive process adding one action after another action. Actually, it is the other way around; if we talk about a specific action, we have chosen one specific action out of an unlimited number of previous actions; such as one 'picture' taken out of a 'movie'” (Probst, 2012: 62-63).

psychodynamics) is essential to deeply understand the aspects of both – different, complementary, and partly overlapping – insights. Having explored the subject, it is remarkable to discover that hardly any connected or integrated research has been done in this field.⁸ At the same time, in addition to having an organizational application, I believe this study is interesting to a wider audience, because most people experience ambiguity, anxieties, doubt, emotions, fear, and uncertainty when entering and becoming an appreciated part of a team of people on a regular basis outside organizations as well.

The research question is about the psychodynamic and psychological aspects of the process of becoming a team member from the perspective of the change agent. This topic has been separately investigated from different scientific angles, such as anthropology, psychology, and sociology, and therefore is not new. Linked to the interactive process of becoming a team member, as described by means of the ‘stranger’ (Simmel, 1950), the ‘singleton’ (Turquet, 1979), and the ‘universal stranger’ (Bauman, 1991), this thesis presents a unique, multi-case study focused on the process of a change agent becoming a team member from a psychodynamic and – simultaneously – psychological view, based on, respectively, Bion (1961) and Weick (1995). Both views are connected and interwoven and cover the conscious and unconscious level of the mind: whereas the psychodynamic view is primarily focused on the unconsciousness, the sensemaking view concentrates on the consciousness. Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and Bauman (1991) each employ a different angle – an evanescent timeframe, an identity connection, and a quest for order, respectively – all of which are applicable and relevant for the change agent in this research.

⁸ Research shows that only three articles are available featuring both the words ‘psychodynamics’ and ‘sensemaking’ or ‘psychoanalytics’ and ‘sensemaking’ in their (sub)title. The first article relates to making sense of repetition phenomena by integrating psychotraumatology and psychodynamic psychotherapy (Ørner & Stolz, 2002) and is not relevant to this study. The second relates to the psychodynamic perspective in organizational research: making sense of the dynamics of direction-setting in emergent collaborative processes (Prins, 2006), and the third is related to affect, the unconscious, and sensemaking: a psychodynamic, semiotic, and dialogic model (Salvatore & Freda, 2011). The latter two articles overlap, to some extent, with this study, i.e. regarding an organizational research setting and the connection between psychodynamics and sensemaking, but they are different in terms of scope: multiparty collaboration, and connecting unconscious and sensemaking via affect, respectively. Moreover, a highly academic focus versus a more practical focus is required for this study. This, together with the scope of research and the space limitations of this paper are reasons not to further elaborate on those articles.

The research regarding the process of becoming a team member is specifically applied to the change agent connecting to his or her new team of employees when starting a new assignment. An extensive preparation of the interviewees, all experienced change agents, upfront, in terms of purpose, goals, language, underlying theory, and methodology, as well as using socio-analytic interviewing (Long & Harding, in Long (2013)), and aspects of motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2004; Passmore, 2007) as research methodology, is applied to retrieve conscious and unconscious rich data regarding this interactive process.

The result is a rich and thick description⁹ of anxieties, (free) associations, attitudes, biases, conclusions, content, dreams, emotions, facts, fears, ideas, issues, jokes, motivations, nightmares, observations, opinions, parapraxis¹⁰, symptoms, ‘slip of the tongue or pen’, and thoughts, concerning this process. The results are in line with the existing theory, meaning individuals experience iterative, logically defined stages during this process of integration. In addition, the research reveals new ‘inner’ psychodynamic findings related to a lack of experience and knowledge regarding (un)conscious team dynamics, providing a ‘reaching out initiative’, and ‘extensive experience’ regarding the local historical background. In turn, a key psychological ‘outer’ finding is that external forces significantly frustrate the connection process. The findings also inform how this process can be improved for both the change agent and team; this can be done by introducing the change agent in a clear and timely manner and by providing relevant education and coaching for both the change agent and the team specifically regarding underlying (un)conscious aspects. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

1.2 Research Aims & Objectives

The aim of this research study is to explore the process of becoming a team member from a psychodynamic and psychological point of view, based on Bion (1961) and Weick (1995) respectively, and specifically applied to the change agent connecting to his new team of employees when starting a new assignment, following the perspectives of the ‘stranger’

⁹ “This type of description aims to give the readers a sense of the emotions, thoughts and perceptions that research participants experience. It deals not only with the meaning and interpretations of people in a culture but also with their intentions. Thick description builds up a clear picture of the individuals and groups in the context of their culture and the setting in which they live ...” (Ponterotto, 2006; 541).

¹⁰ Parapraxes refers to unconscious thoughts and feelings emerging as tips of icebergs, such as slips of the tongue, bungled actions, forgettings or mis-rememberings (Milton et al., 2011).

(Simmel, 1950), the ‘singleton’ (Turquet, 1979), and the ‘universal stranger’ (Bauman, 1991). This will be achieved by a multi-case study involving the in-depth interviewing of five experienced change agents.

The related research question that will be addressed is:

How does a change agent experience the process of becoming a team member?

In this context, the sub-research questions related to the conceptual framework are:

1. What are the main similarities and differences regarding the concepts of the ‘stranger’ (Simmel, 1950), the ‘singleton’ (Turquet, 1979), and the ‘universal stranger’ (Bauman, 1991)?
2. What kind of psychodynamic aspects are relevant during this process, based on Bion (1961)?
3. What kind of sensemaking aspects are relevant during this process, based on Weick (1995)?
4. What are the main similarities and differences regarding the concepts of Bion (1961) and Weick (1995)?

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

The intention of the literature review is to provide a relevant theoretical background to better understand the content of the research question and its context, as partly described in the sub-research questions. In addition, it also allows me to prepare and execute the research in a methodologically responsible manner, as well as to prepare the interviewees to be able to provide well-thought-out data. The idea is to “give a review of previous works, and show how they relate to your current inquiry” (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, in Florent Treacy, 2015: 65) and to ensure a “delicate balance between ‘argument by citation’ versus ‘argument without citation’” (Sparrowe & Mayer, 2011, in Florent Treacy, 2015: 65).

2.2 Introduction Conceptual Framework – Part One

The first part will cover three different perspectives describing the process of becoming a team member, including relevant related aspects. These different perspectives are partly complementary, partly overlapping, and partly unique, each providing a distinguishable and comprehensible part of the puzzle. Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and Bauman (1991) each employ a different angle – an evanescent timeframe, an identity connection, and a quest for order, respectively – all of which are applicable and relevant for the change agent in this research. An additional perspective is provided by Turner (1969).¹¹ His view is also partly complementary, partly overlapping, and partly unique, but provides an interwoven cross section of the previous three views and is therefore not further discussed in this research.

The second part will cover the connected and interwoven details regarding the unconscious (read: psychodynamic) and conscious (read: sensemaking) aspects the change agent undergoes during this interactive process of becoming a team member, which is based on Bion (1961) and Weick (1995) respectively. Both parts will be concluded using arguments, without citations, and a ‘summarizing’ figure, which form the basis of the research

¹¹ Following Van Gennep, Turner (1969) introduced in the field of anthropology the concept of ‘liminality’. It concerns three different – transitional – stages in society when undergoing a ‘ritual’, for example, becoming a change agent connecting to a team: 1. separation, meaning before entering the next stage, the current social status is completely stripped; 2. liminality (read: in-between), meaning you belong neither here, nor there; you are betwixt and between positions without insignia, kinship, rank, status, etc., which is connected to marginality (read: on the periphery) and inferiority (read: beneath); and 3. re-assimilation, meaning receiving a new status before reuniting and integrating in society.

methodology used during the preparation and execution phase of the multi-case study, as described in Chapter Three.

2.3 The Stranger (Simmel, 1950)

Georg Simmel (1950) provides an impressive contribution regarding the position of a stranger (not) becoming a team member, its complications, and its negative and positive effects, based on an evanescent timeframe, applicable and relevant to the change agent in this research. Simmel's concepts are characterized by the combining of apparent opposites, here, the contradictory qualities of nearness and remoteness, into a synthetic view. In this case, the stranger, the third element in a sociological sense, being part of the social system with a repetitive interaction, with an instrumental purpose, unexpectedly arrives to support a team of people around him. Simmel distinguishes the stranger from the outsider, who has no specific relation to the group, and the wanderer, who arrives today and leaves tomorrow. The stranger is perceived as not of the team, but as being in the team. The best way to express Simmel's sharp thoughts is by quoting him:

“The stranger is thus being discussed here, not in the sense often being touched upon in the past, as the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow. He is, so to speak, the *potential* wanderer: although he has not moved on, he has not quite overcome the freedom of coming and going. He is fixed within a particular spatial group, or within a group whose boundaries are similar to special boundaries. But his position in his group is determined, essentially, by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning, that he imports qualities into it, which do not and cannot stem from the group itself. The unity of nearness and remoteness involved in every human relation is organized, in the phenomenon of the stranger, in a way which may be most briefly formulated by saying that in the relationship to him. Distance means that he, who is close by, is far, and strangeness means that he, who also is far, is actually near. For, to be a stranger is naturally a very positive relation; it is a specific form of interaction” (Simmel, 1950: 402).

As we see, Simmel (1950) argues that the position of the stranger in relation to the team makes him unique; the stranger offers specific qualities that do not exist within the team and the stranger does not share the same local background as team members. As a result, the team

assigns the stranger with three related attributes: mobility, perceived openness and objectivity, and a more abstract nature. Firstly, his mobility keeps him ‘positively’ disconnected:

“The stranger is by nature no ‘owner of soil’ – soil not only in the physical, but also in the figurative sense of a life-substance which is fixed, if not a point in space, at least in an ideal point of the social environment. [...] If mobility takes place within a closed group, it embodies that synthesis of nearness and distance which constitutes the formal position of the stranger. For, fundamentally mobile person comes in contact, at one time or another, with every individual, but is not organically connected, through established ties of kinship, locality, and occupation, with any single one” (Ibid.: 403-404).

Secondly, the stranger receives more openness and objectivity, which, paradoxically, is about feeling close to confident with the stranger, because his perceived social distance from the team prevents the stranger from judging too critically:

“[...] he often receives the most surprising openness – confidences which sometimes have a character of a confessional and which would be carefully withheld from a more closely related person” (Ibid.: 404).

It is important to stress that objectivity:

“[...] does not simply involve passivity and detachment: it is a particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement. [...] Objectivity may also be defined as freedom: the objective individual is bound by no commitments which could prejudice his perception, understanding, and evaluation of the given. [...] The stranger is close to us, insofar as we feel between him and ourselves common features of national, social, occupational, or generally human, nature. He is far from us, insofar as these common features extend beyond him or us, and connect us only because they connect a great many people” (Simmel, 1950: 404-406).

Thirdly, the abstract nature:

“Finally, the proportion of nearness and remoteness which gives the stranger the character of objectivity, also finds practical expression in the more *abstract nature* of the

relation to him. That is, with the stranger one has only certain *more general* qualities in common, whereas the relation to more organically connected persons is based on the commonness of specific differences from merely general features. [...] It is rather caused by the fact similarity, harmony, and nearness are accompanied by the feeling that they are not really the unique property of this particular relationship: they are something more general, something which potentially prevails between the partners and an indeterminate number of others, and therefore gives the relation, which alone was realized, no inner and exclusive necessity” (Simmel, 1950: 405-407).

The position of the change agent remains strong as long as he is considered a stranger in the eyes of the team, and it becomes even stronger once he settles down in the place of his activity, not least as a result of the growing emphasis on his uniqueness. It should be noted, however, that this uniqueness will decrease over time, when local processes losing its historical quality and as intelligence finds expansions. Due to the above, the stranger creates and takes a dominant position in the team, at least for the time being. Finally, the unique qualities of the relationship disappear; they fade away and become something more general.

2.4 The Singleton (Turquet, 1979)

Pierre Turquet (1979) investigated the process of (not) becoming a team member from an identity connection perspective, which is applicable and relevant to the change agent in this research. This perspective primarily describes the threats to identity in a large team and:

“[...] attempts to explicate some of the phenomena which lie behind the structures usually deployed in such groups, such as chairman, rules, and procedures, and fixed topics for debate” (Turquet, 1979: 87).

In this case, the personal experience of a consultant working with teams of 40 to 80 people is described, detailing the reciprocal process of individuals and the consultant connecting and disconnecting. An essential point is not so much the number of individuals in a team, but “with such numbers the group can no longer be face to face” (Ibid., 1979: 88). Thus, no single member of the team can easily significantly influence the dynamics of the team. Turquet (1979) states that the dynamics in smaller teams, especially ‘face to face’ teams, are partly identical, but also partly significantly different. A change agent fulfills a dual capacity:

“[...] a consultant [like a change agent, MP] is present in a dual capacity: as an individual and fulfilling a role. To have a role in itself increases the chances of survival, to survive being an important emergent aim in such a group” (Ibid.: 91).

The existing dilemma, as mentioned in the introduction, is appropriately described by Turquet:

“In the harsh terms of large-group life, it is a case of who will dominate whom: will consultant [read: the change agent, MP] and member dominate the large group or be dominated by it?” (Ibid.: 92).

Turquet (1979) distinguishes four main states regarding an individual entering and fusing with a team: 1. singleton; 2. individual member (I.M.); 3. membership individual (M.I.); and 4. individual member transitioning.

He described the state of the singleton as follows:

“I have introduced the term ‘singleton’ for this person entering into a new experience totally on his or her own, not yet part of a group but attempting both to find himself and to make relations with the other singletons who are in a similar state. As yet within the large group situation no relationships with the other singletons have been established; nor do previous acquaintanceships seem to operate. One of the characteristics of a large group is that many of its members remain in the singleton state, unable, possibly unwilling, to join in and so to go through a necessary change of state” (Ibid.: 94).

The second state, individual members, is described as following:

“I find it necessary also to have a term for the singleton who has established a relationship, not only with the large group as a whole, but also with other singletons, each and all having thereby evolved out of their singleton states. Such ‘converted’ singletons I shall refer to as ‘individual members’ (I.Ms) each singleton having obtained his or her own personal I.M. definition from the kind of

relationships established with other singletons as they too struggle in the large group to evolve into I.Ms” (Ibid.: 94).

The third state, and its inducement, is described as following:

“Nor is the experience of the threat of annihilation – in itself part of the more general experience of flux – lessened by the further experience of the large group attempts to make him a ‘membership individual’ (M.I.), where group membership predominates over individual self-definition and needs, and also destroys his I.M. state” (Ibid.: 95).

The last state is the individual member transitioning:

“There remains one more important state to be identified: a transitional one, as the individual member in his group life moves between the various states of singleton to I.M., I.M. to M.I., or I.M. back to singleton” (Ibid.: 95).

According to Turquet (1979), the individual team member experiences flux and being part of a process. Related to this flux is the desire and necessity to find an acceptable balance between personal needs and roles and those of the team, without losing too much identity and preferably over a longer, more or less stable period. The singleton state reflects a non-role, but a developing of and search for an identity. The individual member reflects a team role and a recognized identity, including the development of skills for the new role. The member individual reflects no role and no recognized identity equating to a lumpenproletariat state; “[...] group membership predominates over individual self-definition and needs, and so destroys his I.M. state” (Ibid.). In addition, the team must assume a meaning for the singleton, some specific role or skill to be fulfilled. Without this, no individual membership existence is possible.

The kaleidoscopic forces constantly disturbing, influencing, and threatening the individual in his (non-) position are interesting; an ongoing (inter) action in a theater, on stage and backstage, ranging from acceptance and cooperation to annihilation and

violence.¹² In fact, trying to conquer a position as an individual member and avoid staying a singleton or becoming a member individual, the individual fights and competes on an ongoing basis with himself and his surroundings. With himself, because he should create and establish a for him acceptable and meaningful identity within a fast-changing and competing environment. With his surroundings, the other individuals around him, because they are aiming for the same, regardless of the costs; the pressure within the team of people triggers feelings of annihilation, disarray, and bewilderment. Nevertheless, some individuals ‘choose’ to withdraw from the individual member battlefield to become or stay singleton or member individual; a less risky and much safer environment.

The four states describe the process of ultimately becoming an accepted – by the team and yourself – and genuine member of the team, carrying an acceptable identity, and sharing team interests, goals, and values. This process evolves in a consecutive way, with ongoing iterative and recursive characteristics. To be clear, becoming a genuine member of a team is not guaranteed; for whatever reasons, some singletons are not accepted, but refused, and/or accept not being accepted. As mentioned before, a change agent is equipped with a special known role, which makes the process of becoming a team member less difficult. However, other individuals are equipped with specific experience, knowledge, or skills, also giving them an advantage in terms of acceptance. Nevertheless, the highly competitive arena of individuals fighting for an acceptable and appreciated individual member identity or position will continue undiminished using all thinkable methods: alienation; annihilation; bewilderment; bizarre behavior; collusive

¹² A critical difficulty for the singleton is how to start an interactional relationship with other individuals. What (concept, idea, skill, tool, etc.) does he have to offer and how does he sell it; in other words, how does he move from being a singleton to a ‘joiner’, acting at the interface of becoming an individual member? “Essential to this joining process is that the singleton should find a boundary or skin which both limits and defines him. Of such skins there are two: external (the skin-of-my-neighbor) and internal (my own skin)” (Turquet, 1979: 96). The skin-of-my-neighbor, other competing individuals, is used to distinguish himself from the others in terms of ‘what can or do I have to offer and what can or do you have to offer?’. A way of accepting and positioning himself between the other individual members and other individual members accepting and positioning themselves around him, albeit sometimes with a stretched skin. Nevertheless, your buddy today can be your enemy tomorrow. “The second skin, the internal skin, is needed so that the singleton can separate himself from his background, the undifferentiated non-singleton matrix out of which he has developed and to which he might return again, if the I.M. status is not securely established, the various problematical processes foiled him and the defensive manoeuvres have broken down” (Ibid.: 97). The internal skin includes the creation of a time boundary; the past and the present, moreover, ‘there and then’ and ‘here and now’, representing the certainty of yesterday (I know who I was) and the unknowingness of tomorrow (I do not know who I will be tomorrow).

behavior; defensiveness; delays; deprivation; dislocation; distancing; emotionality, endowing; envy; fraud; gratuitousness; idiosyncrasy, immediacy; impingements; inhibition; intimidation; introjection; isolation; judgment; loquaciousness; loudness of voice; lumbering; obsessiveness; outbursts; projection; puppetry, remorselessness; unresponsiveness; ricochet motion; talion; threats; tone; withdrawal, etc. (Turquet, 1979).

This type of at least doubtful behavior is part of daily team life. As suitably stated by Turquet:

“Paradoxically, the envy derives its strengths from the fact that through his endowment the endower is now weakened. He has not only diminished his own skills and abilities through his recognition of a difference, but has even put himself in an inferior or subordinate position vis-à-vis the richer other whom he has endowed” (Ibid.: 142).

2.5 The Universal Stranger (Bauman, 1991)

Zygmunt Bauman’s (1991) contribution is based on a quest for order, mainly the reduction of ambiguity and ambivalence, based on transparency, unambiguity, and unequivocalness, which is applicable and relevant for the change agent in this research. The centuries-old struggle for order is not so much a battle between different types of order, but a battle between clarity against confusion, explicitness against vagueness, and consistency against contradiction:

“The other of order is not another order: chaos is its only alternative. The other of order is the miasma of the indeterminate and unpredictable. The other is the uncertainty, that source and archetype of all fear” (Bauman, 1991: 7).

Bauman’s (1991) classification approach is relatively black and white, supported by the following quote:

“Classifying consists in the acts of inclusion and exclusion. Each act of naming splits the world into two: entities that answer to the name; all the rest that do not. Certain entities may be included into a class – *made a class* – only in as far as other entities are *excluded*, left outside” (Ibid.: 2).

As a result, Bauman (1991) considers a straightforward approach; somebody is ‘in’ or somebody is ‘out’; in other words, an individual is an ‘insider’ or an ‘outsider’, or a ‘friend’ or an ‘enemy’. By acknowledging and confirming the contradiction ‘friends versus enemies’, friends confirm their identity. They include themselves by excluding others. In this case, the friends dominate the process of classification. If you are an insider, you respect the culture, the order, the rules, and the law. Thus, life is controlled, organized and predictable, and focused on decreasing any amount or form of ambiguity and ambivalence:

“Like most other oppositions that order simultaneously the world in which we live and our life in the world, this one is a variation of the master-opposition between the *inside* and the *outside*. The outside is the negativity to the inside’s positivity. [...] Only by crystallizing and solidifying what they are not (and what they do not wish to be, or what they would not say they are), into the counter image of the enemies, may the friends assert they are, what they want to be and what they want to be thought of as being. [...] Being a friend, and being an enemy, are the two modalities in which the *Other* may be recognized as another subject, construed as a ‘subject like the self’, admitted into the self’s world, be counted, become and stay relevant. If not for the opposition between friend and enemy, none of this world would be possible” (Ibid.: 53-54).

If not an insider *and* not an outsider, you are a stranger, per definition disrespecting and frustrating culture, order, rules, and law. The ‘undecidable’ militates against and paralyzes the opposition, meaning insiders *and* outsiders, which is without fail intolerant, and is focused on increasing any amount or form of ambiguity or ambivalence:

“Against this cosy antagonism, this conflict-torn collusion of friends and enemies, the *stranger* rebels. [...] He calls the bluff of the opposition between friends and enemies as the *compleat mappa mundi*, as the difference which consumes all differences which patch it up and hold together, the stranger is neither friend or enemy; and because he may be both. And because we do not know, and have no way of knowing, which is the case. The stranger is one (perhaps the main one, the archetypal one) member of the family of *undecidables* – those bluffing yet ubiquitous unities that, in Derrida’s words again, ‘can no longer be included within philosophical (binary) opposition, resisting

and disorganizing it, *without ever* constituting a third term, without ever leaving room for a solution in the form of speculative dialectics.’ [...] Undecidables are all *neither/nor*; which is to say that they militate against the *either/or*. Their underdetermination is their potency: because they are nothing, they may be all. They put paid to the ordering power of the opposition, and so to the ordering power of the narrators of the opposition. Oppositions enable knowledge and action; undecidables paralyse them. Undecidables brutally expose the outside into the inside, and poison to the comfort or order with suspicion of chaos. This is exactly what strangers do” (Ibid.: 55-56).

The well-organized, socially constructed society experiences the stranger as an unwelcome alien, as an undesirable insect, who restrains himself from any effort to order or to reorder:

“These [undecidables, MP] are the true hybrids, the monsters – not just *unclassified*, but *unclassifiable*. [...] They destroy the world. They stretch the temporary inconvenience of ‘not knowing how to go on’ into terminal paralyses. They must be tabooed, disarmed, suppressed, exiled physically or mentally – or the world may perish” (Ibid.: 58-59).

“There is hardly an anomaly more anomalous than the stranger. He stands *between* friend and enemy, order and chaos, the inside and the outside. He stands *for* the treacherousness of friends, for the cunning disguise of enemies, for fallibility of order, vulnerability of the inside” (Ibid.: 61).

Bauman (1991) distinguishes the newcomer and the stranger, the first not yet being classified and harmonized, the second per definition not classifiable and harmonizable. The first group providing temporary discomfort, the second group hopefully abidingly ephemeral. The stranger arrives as an uninvited guest, manifests himself as an undesirable friend, and turns out to be an unreliable ally:

“As always, the practical incongruity follows the conceptual one. The stranger who refuses to go away gradually transforms his temporary abode into a home territory – all the more so as his other, ‘original’ home recedes in the past and perhaps vanishes altogether. On the other hand, however, he retains (if only in theory), his freedom to

go, and so is able to view local conditions with an equanimity the native residents can hardly afford. Hence another incongruous synthesis – this time between involvement and difference, partisanship and neutrality, detachment and participation. The commitment the stranger declares, the loyalty he promises, the dedication he demonstrates cannot be trusted: they come complete with a safety valve of easy escape which most natives often envy but seldom possesses” (Ibid.: 60).

The unbridgeable, existential gap between the native and the stranger is the totally opposite interrelation concerning the apparently same world, where they are involuntarily confronted with each other: for the native, an ecumenical, self-evident, and value(able) environment and, as such, inseparable; for the stranger, one of many environments containing specific local circumstances and oddities, relatively easy to (dis)connect, living as an eternally homeless or rootless individual:

“The ‘objectivity’ [...] of his view consists precisely in his inability to make a distinction between the stations of his unstoppable pilgrimage: as far as he is concerned, all of them are just sites, confined in space, bound to become the past in the future” (Ibid.: 79).

However, in this ‘in-between’ position, the stranger is confronted with a simultaneous identity of ‘illusional’ power and distrust:

“The table has been turned. It is now the stranger who can find the truth the natives are looking for in vain. Far from being a mark of shame, the incurable foreignness of the stranger is now the sign of distinction. The power of the homeowners is but a sham. The powerlessness of the homeless is but an illusion. [...] The distrust with which the group treats the ‘unfit’ testifies to the group’s own disabilities, rather than to the sins of the stranger” (Ibid.: 82-83).

In daily life, the stranger is stronger than the natives, and the natives are part of many social subsystems. Thus, every individual is, in some way, a partial stranger; indeed, some are uprooted and called universal strangers:

“In relation to each of the subsystems, the individual is a unit of many meanings, an ambivalent compound – always a *partial stranger*. In relation to none of the subsystems is he completely a native. In terms of his biography, the contemporary individual passes a long string of widely divergent (uncoordinated at the best, contradictory at worst), social worlds. At any single moment of his life, the individual inhabits simultaneously several such divergent worlds. The result is that he is ‘uprooted’ from each and not ‘at home’ in any. One may say that he is the *universal stranger*” (Ibid.: 95).

2.6 Conclusions Conceptual Framework – Part One

The first part of the conceptual framework covers three perspectives describing the process of becoming a team member and are partly complementary, opposite, overlapping, and unique:

- Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and Bauman (1991) each employ a different angle regarding an ‘unknown person’ entering, connecting, and establishing a form of (non-) relationship with a team (or group) of people, an evanescent timeframe, an identity connection, and a quest for order, respectively. Simmel (1950) tries from a philosophical-sociological perspective to harmonize two opposites; the contradictory qualities of nearness and remoteness. From the same perspective, Bauman (1991) tries to de-harmonize two opposites (the inside and the outside, i.e. friends and enemies). Both approaches strongly stimulate philosophical thinking and reflecting, and are more consciously (read: sensemaking) related. Turquet (1979) applies a more practical approach by describing ‘logical’ states and is more related to unconscious (read: psychodynamic) behavior and interactions between people;
- The three perspectives consider the unknown person to possess negative and positive attributes related to his environment. Simmel (1950) focuses mainly on the support the stranger can give to the team due to his specific qualities (intelligence). Turquet (1979) focuses on the stranger’s ‘usefulness’ for the team as long as it endures. In other words, only if there is a meaningful identity and role available, is the singleton appreciated. Bauman (1991) focuses on negative aspects related to the universal stranger, mainly creating and offering ambiguity, ambivalence, chaos, disorder, and frustration;
- Based on the two points above, the stranger (Simmel, 1950) is ‘not of the team, but in the team’, and accepted for a longer period, the singleton (Turquet, 1979) is only

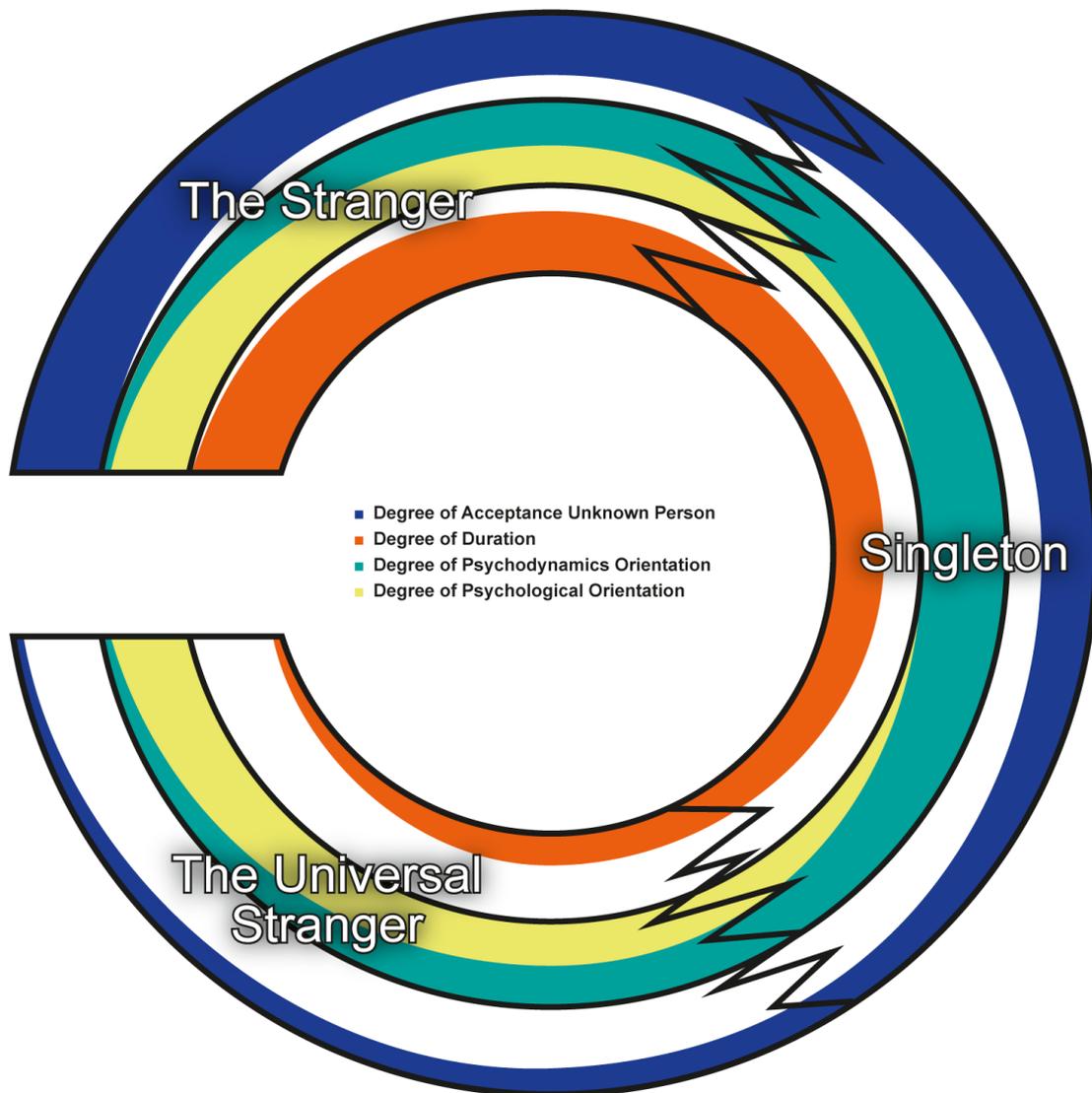
accepted for the period he can be useful for the team, and the universal stranger (Bauman, 1991) is surely not accepted and should disappear as soon as possible;

- The three perspectives are strongly connected to their environment. In this respect, Hosking (2004) provides an appropriate description of the social-historical context,¹³ containing unconscious (read: psychodynamic) and psychological (read: sensemaking) aspects, and containing elements of the three described perspectives;
- The similarities and contradictions between the three perspectives are a valuable basis for stimulating diverse reflections from different angles for the object of this research, the change agent; wanted versus not wanted, accepted versus not accepted, change agent versus team perspective and vice versa, unconscious versus conscious, etc., resulting in a thick description of valuable anxieties, (free) associations, attitudes, conclusions, content, dreams, emotions, facts, fears, ideas, issues, jokes, motivations, nightmares, observations, opinions, parapraxis, symptoms, ‘slip of the tongue or pen’, and thoughts.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the similarities and differences regarding the approaches of Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and Bauman (1991). I have chosen for the aspects ‘Acceptance’ and ‘Duration’ because those are strongly related to an interim change agent, the subject of investigation, and are different in all three perspectives. I have chosen for the

¹³ “Hosking (2004) strongly connects social, local, and historical qualities by focusing “on action rather on meanings and constructions ‘inside the head’. My interest is in the processes of making, maintaining, and changing local realities” (Hosking, 2004: 262). “My reference to ‘local’ can be further developed by returning to mainstream discourses of knowledge and ‘the real world’. First, it contrasts with the mainstream discourse in which generalizable knowledge is centered. This is knowledge that remains knowledge across historical epochs and across social contexts. The present reference to ‘local’ is intended to situate reality constructions, in particular, social-historical processes. Second, my discourse of ‘local’ can be contrasted with the mainstream discourse of the one reality that underlies and validates or falsifies all knowledge claims. In contrast, my present talk of ‘local’ is related, for example, to Rorty’s talk about ‘community’ (Rorty, 1991), and related notions, such as ‘community of practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991). [...] In other words, locals perform their particular local identity (as co-constructors of some community) when they co-act in ways that are locally warranted as ‘real and good’ (e.g. Weigert, 1983). These ways of ‘going on’ in relation may seem fixed and may be (locally) taken for granted as ‘how the world really is’. However, we should not forget either the essential artfulness – artificial rather than natural – of these ‘stabilized effects’ or the relational processes in which they are constantly ‘made and remade’. Local processes can be said to have a *historical* quality. So, acts supplement an already available act, a con-text supplements already available text: coordination’s make and remake (local) history, so to speak – in ongoing relations. [...] Finally, processes can be said to both resource and constrain the future, i.e. how the process ‘goes on’. [...] accepting or rejecting someone’s claim to be ‘doing research’ will allow the process to continue in different ways. We may say that a particular act invites a range of possible supplements but there is no local culture that I know of where ‘anything goes’” (Ibid.: 264-265)” (Probst, 2012; 87-88).

Figure 1 - Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979) & Bauman (1991)



Simmel - *Synthesizing opposites
Nearness & Remoteness*

The Stranger

- Accepted, supports the team as third element
- Specific qualities (intelligence)
- Unique position (mobility, objectivity & openness)
- Evanescent timeframe
- Different local background

Turquet - *Connection via
Meaningful Identity*

The Singleton

- Accepted in terms of identity, role & skills
- Meaningful identity creation in threatening environment
- Balancing group & personal needs and roles
- Singleton, individual member & member individual
- Individual member transitioning

Bauman - *Contradiction & Quest
for Order*

The Universal Stranger

- Not accepted, unclassified & unclassifiable
- Neither in, nor out; neither insider, nor outsider; neither enemy, nor friend
- Frustrates, militates & paralyzes opposition (insiders & outsiders)
- Unbridgeable gap, 'quest for order' minimizing ambiguity & ambivalence
- Disrespects clarity, consistency, control, law, order, predictability & rules

orientations psychodynamics and psychology since these, too, are key in the research and able to ‘connect’ the two orientations with the former three perspectives.

2.7 Introduction Conceptual Framework – Part Two

The second part of the conceptual framework covers the connected and interwoven details regarding the unconscious (read: psychodynamic) and conscious (read: sensemaking) aspects the change agent undergoes during this interactive process of becoming a team member, which is based on Bion (1961) and Weick (1995) respectively.

2.8 Unconscious Team Dynamics (Bion, 1961)

Before discussing the psychodynamic part of this conceptual framework, mainly based on the – team – psychodynamics as described by Wilfred Bion (1961), a brief introduction to the clinical paradigm is provided. This paradigm offers a framework for applying a psychodynamic lens to study behavior in organizations, and is based on four related basic premises (Kets de Vries & Cheak, 2014):

1. There is *a rationale behind every human act*, regardless of whether there is a logical or an illogical explanation;
2. A significant part of *mental life lies outside of conscious awareness*, but shapes conscious reality and physical well-being;
3. *Central and essential to a person is their way of expressing and regulating emotions:*

“Emotions color experiences with positive and negative connotations, creating preference in the choices we make and the way we deal with the world. Emotions also form the basis for the internalization of mental representations of the self and others that guide relationships throughout one’s life” (Kets de Vries & Cheak, 2014: 297).

4. All humans are *products of past experiences*, meaning human developmental experiences are an inter- and intrapersonal process provided by early caregivers that remain influential throughout life.

The psychodynamic paradigm originated in Freud’s psychoanalytic theories of human behavior. Following the psychoanalytic approach of Freud and Klein, Bion (1961) started

investigating the unconscious functioning of a group or team as a whole, instead of an aggregate of individuals, which was later applied in organizational settings, such as task-oriented teams.

Bion's (1961) rationale behind this application was to use the unconscious ideas that the team had about itself in order to support the individual members learning about themselves and their anxieties, as well as improving the outcome of the task.

As the outsider – a consultant or change agent, possessing a dual capacity (Turquet, 1979) – consulting the team, Bion experienced a significant level of transference¹⁴ from the individual team members to earlier figures in their lives, primarily parents, families, and teachers (Mawson, 2017). Bion called this 'group mentality'.¹⁵ Especially in organizational settings, negative or positive transference from team members onto the leader or change agent is part of daily life.¹⁶ The main goal of the individual members in the working group is:

“The basic assumption is that people come together as a group for purposes of preserving the group” (Bion, 1961: 63).

“In any group there may be discerned trends of mental activity. Every group, however casual, meets to 'do' something; in this activity, according to the capacities of the individuals, they co-operate. This co-operation is voluntary and depends on some degree of sophisticated skill in the individual” (Ibid.: 143).

¹⁴ “[...] people were transferring experiences and emotions from past relationships onto the present” (Maccoby, 2004: 2). “Transference is defined as a displacement of patterns of feelings, thoughts, and behavior, originally experienced in relation to significant figures during childhood, onto a person involved in a current interpersonal relationship” (Van de Loo, 2007, in Kets de Vries et al.: 131). In other words, transference means the unconscious 'transportation' of past, currently unconscious, emotions, experiences, or relationships into present experiences or relationships.

¹⁵ “Bion pioneered this approach to group mentality, as he called it, group life, the life of groups, in which the transference ideas and fantasies of the members of the group, and the group as a whole in the way it functioned could be used as a therapeutic procedure and a study in its own right of group relations” (Mawson, 2017: 5). “Group mentality is the unanimous expression of the will of the group, contributed to by the individual in ways of which he is unaware, influencing him disagreeably whenever he thinks or behaves in a manner at variance with the basic assumptions” (Bion, 1961:65).

¹⁶ According to Maccoby (2004), in organizations undergoing significant organizational change, the change agent: “[...] is preoccupied with handling the crises at hand and, as a consequence, is probably less alert to the likelihood that his followers are just acting out childhood fears” (Ibid.: 3).

Bion (1961) describes one of the typical characteristics of a team as follows:

“Feelings of frustration are common, boredom is acute, and often relief is provided only by outbursts of exasperation between members of the group” (Ibid.: 59).

By studying groups and teams with and without tasks, Bion (1961) retrieved three ongoing and interwoven modes of unconscious operation, called basic assumptions: 1. dependency;¹⁷ 2. fight/flight;¹⁸ and 3. pairing.¹⁹

As transference is related to “old issues from past relationships emerging in new relationships” (De Haan, 2011: 181), counter-transference²⁰ is related to “the influence from the patient on the ‘unconscious sensing’ of the therapist” (Ibid.: 182). When both transference

¹⁷ The basic assumption of dependency refers to the team and its individual members to become dependent on its leader representing the person that could save the group from an unspecified disaster or could provide something to the team to nurture it and to enable it to survive and grow, like the original feeding mother or breast. United feelings like fear, helplessness, inadequacy, and neediness are shown. Individual members showed a kind of *resistance* involving hostility and turning away from the group consultant in offering these interpretations. This was part of development processes happening in the individual to such an extent that it resulted in the team mentality being internalized and forming part of every individual. (Mawson, 2017). Moreover, battles to be the leader are part of team behavior: “The dependent group, with its characteristic elevation of one person, makes difficulties for the ambitious, or indeed for anyone who wishes to get a hearing, because it means that in the eyes of the group, and of themselves, such people are in a position of rivalry with the leader” (Bion, 1961: 79).

¹⁸ “My second point is that the group seems to know only two techniques of self-preservation, fight or flight” (Ibid.: 63). There is a group tendency to split the world into two camps of enemies and friends, manifested in the form of aggression against authority, peers, and the self, and including absenteeism, avoidance, and resignation. The basic assumption of fight/flight relates to the notion of a coherent team coming together to identify an external threat that they must either fight, or escape – take flight – from. Using particular *defenses* to attack or destroy the threat, before being destroyed by it, relieved the team from its anxieties about being destroyed and reinforces a sense of unity, but increases the dependency on the leader.

¹⁹ The basic assumption of pairing is related to the group creating a pair of ideas, fantasies, or members to provide hope or protection against evil: “[...] the group can show evidence of a fantasy, or as set of fantasies, that the purpose of the group, no matter what its avowed aim, is to throw up a couple, a pair, often a pair of members of the group, but it could be a pair of ideas, and that the mating taking place in that pairing is felt to give hope, and to provide hope, and a protection against despair and pointlessness, and possible also hope against the destruction coming from the other basic assumptions; the anxiety about being destroyed or the anxiety about scarce resources and being starved” (Mawson, 2017: 5). Unfortunately, pairing also implies splitting, possibly resulting in conflicts.

²⁰ “The analyst does not and cannot remain a neutral observer. [...] Self-observation is crucial for the analyst: monitoring the real emotional effects of the patient, a willingness to be on the receiving end, the better to understand the patient’s way of relating” (Milton et al., 2011). Moreover, “Counter-transference refers to a situation in which an analyst’s feelings and attitudes toward a patient are derived from earlier situations in the analyst’s life that have been displaced onto the patient” (Van de Loo, 2007, in Kets de Vries et al.: 132–133). Two types are distinguished: 1. A dangerous type (attitudes and feelings of the analyst towards the patient may reflect the analyst’s own unconscious and unresolved conflicts), and 2. A supportive type (it can provide useful data about the patient).

and counter-transference play a part, the term ‘parallel process’ is used (De Haan, 2011). Both phenomena emerge in all relationships.

In addition, many other complex, connected, and interwoven themes regarding the clinical and psychodynamic approach are active, such as: core conflictual relationship dreaming;²¹ themes (CCRTs);²² empathy;²³ enactment;²⁴ intuition;²⁵ mentalizing;²⁶ mirroring;²⁷ social defense mechanisms;²⁸ and valency.²⁹

Besides understanding the themes above, the key challenge and task of the change agent is to distinguish and correctly interpret fantasies, feelings, projections, and reality, including the interwoven links between them for both the change agent and team:

²¹ “Dream researchers believe that dreaming is essential for our mental, emotional, and physical well-being” (Kets de Vries, 2014: 79). It is important to analyze and understand dreams in terms of understanding emotions and major drivers. Kets de Vries (2014) distinguishes dreaming as 1. A nonsensical activity, 2. An evolutionary process, 3. A garbage-sorting process, 4. A form of trauma resolution, and 5. A therapy.

²² Some individuals have significantly influenced our life over time, such as early caregivers, developing certain relationship themes rooted in our deepest goals, needs and wishes, contributing to our unique personality style. “These ‘core conflictual relationship themes’ (CCRTs) [...] become recurring relationship patterns that we take into adulthood. In the context of the workplace, replete with superior and subordinate relationships, we act out these themes onto others, and, based on those wishes, rightly or wrongly anticipate how others will react to us; then we react to their *perceived* reactions” (Kets de Vries & Cheak, 2014: 302).

²³ “Empathy is the ability to subjectively experience the world from another person’s perspective. [...] Empathy is an ‘emotional knowing’ rather than intellectual understanding” (Van de Loo, 2007, in Kets de Vries et al.: 126).

²⁴ For enactment see the paragraph covering Weick (1995).

²⁵ “Intuition is applying one’s professional judgement to a situation. It may be approached from a cognitive or information-processing paradigm” (Van de Loo, 2007, in Kets de Vries et al.: 128).

²⁶ Mentalizing, explicit (consciously) and implicit (unconsciously), is a recently identified cognitive skill: “Anybody who is listening carefully to another person is not only receiving information, but also continuously trying to make sense of what is being said. This is influenced by our capacity to understand that behavior is caused by so-called unobservable states of mind: wishes, needs, desires, feelings, ideas, hopes, fear, illusions, and so on, and to acknowledge that the state of mind of another person may be different from our own” (Ibid.: 123).

²⁷ Mirroring is a transference process where one person subconsciously imitates the attitude, gesture, or speech pattern of somebody else; ‘copying’ cues about being and behaving from people around us. It occurs in social situations, like organizations (Kets de Vries & Cheak, 2014).

²⁸ “When organizational anxieties are not properly managed, people may act out and engage in regressive social defenses to transform and neutralize strong tensions. These defenses include splitting (seeing everything as black or white); projection (seeing one’s own shortcomings in others); displacement (expressing negative emotions by focusing on a less threatening target); denial (refusal to accept facts)” (Kets de Vries & Cheak, 2014:303).

²⁹ A valency is a concept originated in chemistry; the combining power of an element and inherent characteristics of a substance activated by being exposed to specific external conditions. In psychodynamics, it relates to ‘how we tend to respond or react (aggressive, attack, go silent, nervous, start speaking, etc.) based upon specific individuals or situations’, often by surprise and unconscious.

“Bion is saying that the main function of the group analyst [change agent, MP] [...], the main importance is that the analyst should wake up from his numbing feeling of reality and to be able to give an interpretation based on what has been projected into them and what role they have been asked to play in the fantasy life of the group” (Mawson, 2017: 6).

2.9 Conceptualization of Sensemaking (Weick, 1995)

The next paragraph provides an elucidation of the conceptualization of sensemaking (Weick, 1995) containing a mainly linguistically edited (in 2015) copy of paragraph 2.3.2 of Probst (2012).

The focus of this study is sensemaking; more specifically, ‘organizational sensemaking’, based on Weick’s (1995) conceptualization.³⁰ In the context of organizational change, theories concerning sensemaking are mainly based on Weick. “Weick’s conceptualization is perhaps the most well-known voice on sensemaking in organizations” (Guijt, 2008: 249) and applicable in several scientific fields, such as cultural analysis, social psychology, communication, and management disciplines (Czarniawska, 1997).³¹ As a result, the seven properties or process characteristics of sensemaking³² described by Weick (1995) are aligned with the purpose of this study and were arbitrarily chosen as the basis of the related conceptual framework. Weick (1995) has chosen these properties to support the discussion on sensemaking in a pragmatic manner:

“These seven [properties or process characteristics, MP] were chosen to organize the discussion because they are mentioned often in the literature on sensemaking; they have practical implications (e.g. when identities are destabilized during downsizing, sensemaking processes are threatened and these threats can enlarge); each is a self-

³⁰ Weick (1995) does not consider his concept to be an empirical theory to explain how organizations work or do not work, but rather a meta-theory: “a general set of prescriptions for anyone developing his own theory of organizations” (Weick, 1979: 235). Weick’s concept focuses on the ‘missing parts’, instead of what we already know.

³¹ Czarniawska (1997: 113-114) distinguishes sensemaking from sensegiving and sensemaking; the last two are defined as: “the distribution of ready-made meaning”. A meaning more or less exists and is changed by adding new elements. Sensemaking is based on a more extensive process of ‘inventing’ a new meaning.

³² The seven properties or process characteristics are: 1. grounded in identity construction; 2. retrospective; 3. enactive of sensible environments; 4. social; 5. ongoing; 6. focused on and by extracted cues; and 7. driven by plausibility rather than accuracy (Weick, 1995: 17).

contained set of research questions that relates to the other six; each incorporates action and context, which are key aspects of sensemaking; and all can be presented crudely as a sequence (people concerned with identity in the context of others engage ongoing events from which they extract cues and make plausible sense retrospectively, all the while enacting more or less order into those ongoing events). This sequence is crude because it omits feedback loops, simultaneous processing, and the fact that over time, some steps may drop out” (Weick, 1995: 17-18).

Weick (1995: 12), following Wallas (1926: 106), describes sensemaking as: “How can I know what I think till I see what I say?” Simplified: “In that recipe, saying is followed by seeing, that terminates in thoughts” (Weick, 1995: 135), based on a common set of six emphases used in dissonance theories: justification; choice; retrospective; discrepancy; social construction; and action (Ibid.: 12). This process is eternal, but more explicit in specific circumstances, such as situational or organizational change, where uncertainty is present. His concept is based on the process of reducing ambiguity, uncertainty, or equivocality. According to Weick (Ibid.: 16), sensemaking is not identical to interpretation;³³ it is not a metaphor³⁴ and it is not decision-making.³⁵

Sensemaking is based on language, i.e. vocabularies of sensemaking. According to Weick (1995), it is impossible to capture experiences in words, due to the fact that ‘experiencing’, and, as a result, sensemaking, is an ongoing process:

“Sense is generated by words that are combined into sentences of conversation to convey something about our ongoing experience. If people know what they think when they see what they say, then words figure in every step” (Ibid.: 106).

³³ According to Weick (1995), the connection between sensemaking and interpretation is that “[...] sensemaking is about the ways people generate what they interpret” (Ibid.: 13). He explains that sensemaking is related to the action and the process, while interpretation may be connected to the process or the product and is more detached and passive.

³⁴ Weick states that sensemaking is not a metaphor in order to distance himself from Morgan et al.’s interpretation of sensemaking, which considers it one of the three metaphors besides language game and text (Ibid.: 15).

³⁵ Weick’s discussion of sensemaking and decision-making suggests that sensemaking takes place before decision-making (Ibid.).

Two vocabularies are distinguished: frames and cues. Frames contain abstract words referring to less abstract words than cues. Frames are related to past moments of socialization, i.e. cultural background and experiences; cues are present moments of experience, which are connected during sensemaking. Sensemaking occurs when both vocabularies – frame and cue – are connected in a specific context (Ibid.: 109-111). Weick (1995) refers to six vocabularies related to organizational sensemaking, all containing frames, cues, and connections: 1. ideologies (vocabularies of society); 2. third-order controls (vocabularies of organization); 3. paradigms (vocabularies of work); 4. theories of action (vocabularies of coping); 5. tradition (vocabularies of predecessors); and 6. stories (vocabularies of sequence and experience) (Ibid.: 111-131).

Weick's concept is mainly based on the reduction of equivocality. People within a certain context, especially in a context of organizational change, use social interaction to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty; people are confused and prefer to 'understand' a specific – changed or changing – organizational situation. Especially within a 'revitalization under pressure' situation, as in this study, meanings change as current projects and goals change.³⁶ As Weick (1995) says:

“Because people typically have more than one project³⁷ under way, and have differing awareness of these projects, reflection is overdetermined and clarity is not assured. Instead, the elapsed experience appears to be equivocal, not because it makes no sense at all, but because it makes many different kinds of sense. And some of those kinds of sense may contradict other kinds. That is not surprising given the independence of diverse projects and the fact that their pursuit in tandem can work at cross-purposes” (Ibid.: 27).

Before describing the seven properties or characteristics in more detail, we will elaborate on this 'process of reduction of equivocality'. The main question is: How do people deal with situations characterized by an 'unacceptable' level of ambiguity,³⁸ where it is difficult to

³⁶ For details see Gioia & Chittipeddi (1991: 435).

³⁷ Weick's conceptualization of what a project is seems broader than how we usually think of a project in a certain timeframe. His definition of projects includes all the parallel things that one may be busy with at a certain point of time (Weick, 1995: 27).

³⁸ Also see Phelan's (2005) conceptualization of a maze and his description of how the maze can become dysfunctional under severe stress (Phelan 2005: 50).

attribute one clear meaning to a situation? A situation, or information about a situation, is ambiguous when different meanings about the situation exist simultaneously and, as a result, potentially different consequences – known or unknown – can occur.

For example, in the T-case, a major ‘change project’ is announced. What will this mean for the organization and, at the same time, for me? Will management further reduce the labor force and, if so, what will it mean for me? Am I still in the picture and can I continue or finish my part-time education and finish the renovation project at home, or will this change?

To reduce ambiguity, a ‘social interaction process’ needs to take place. People exchange ‘information’ to ‘align’ experiences, ideas, feelings, and opinions. This ‘organizing’ of an act is:

“A consensually validated grammar for reducing equivocality by means of sensible interlocked behaviors” (Weick, 1979: 3).

This implies an exchange of information in order to find out whether the information is ‘real’ or an ‘illusion’. This basic ‘check’ is called a consensual validation:

“The grammar consists of recipes for getting things done when one person can’t do them and recipes for interpreting what has been done” (Ibid.: 4).

With this process of acting (recipes), people aim to reduce the ambiguity of the aforementioned confusing input, with the social interaction of two or more individuals (re)acting or interacting, coupled via stimulus and response; an ‘interlocked behavior’. Based on their own initiative, actors ‘organize’ their behavior through a certain dependency towards other actors via ‘interlocked behaviors’, ‘interactive behavior’, or ‘interaction’. Weick calls this a ‘process of organizing’, or, in his later work, ‘sensemaking’ (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005).

Another interesting feature of Weick’s (1979) conceptualization to reduce the level of equivocality is related to the relation between the number of interlocked behavior cycles and the number of assembly rules applied. As previously mentioned, people are looking for social interaction to reduce equivocality. By acting in ‘double acts’, i.e. an actor acts and another

actor responds (interacts), the first actor will adjust his or her behavior, i.e. ‘double interact’. Every process of interaction consists of a minimum of two acts of interlocked behavior. Which behavior cycle will be activated depends on the assembly rule(s) that are activated, meaning the recipes used to compose the process of sensemaking and extracted from the total collection of available interlocked behavior cycles, such as (in)formal instructions, routines, protocols, and standard operating procedures. According to Weick (1979), actors will use the following ‘meta rule’:

“The greater the perceived amount of equivocality present in the input, the *fewer* the number of rules used to compose the process. Conversely, the smaller the perceived amount of equivocality in the input, the greater the number of rules used to assemble the process. If an input is judged to be equivocal, there is uncertainty as to exactly what it is and how it is to be handled: this makes it more difficult to judge what the appropriate cycles would be or how many should be applied. As a result, only a small number of rather general rules are used to assemble the process. However, if the input is judged to be less equivocal, there is more certainty as to what the item is and how it should be handled; hence a greater number of rules can be applied in assembling a process to deal with this input” (Weick, 1979: 114).

Consequently, Weick (1979) distinguishes three levels in the process of sensemaking: 1. behavior (interlocked behavior acts); 2. assembly rules with regard to desired behavior; and 3. a meta rule to choose an assembly rule. All three levels of action are interrelated.

Thus far, we have described the process of sensemaking in terms of interlocked behavior acts and assembly rules. According to Weick (1995), the process of sensemaking has seven basic properties or characteristics: 1. grounded in identity construction; 2. retrospective; 3. enactive of sensible environments; 4. social; 5. ongoing; 6. focus on and extracted cues; and 7. driven by plausibility rather than accuracy (Weick, 1995: 17). In more detail:

1. Grounded in identity construction

The first property suggests that sensemaking is grounded in identity construction. The basis and center of sensemaking is the sensemaker, an individual with more identities; that is to say, with more ‘selves’. Every situation and interaction with other people will be different and

prominent. In my case, being coach, consultant, and researcher simultaneously means at least three different identities in this specific context. Weick (1995) states:

“The more selves I have access to, the more meanings I should be able to extract and impose in any situation. Furthermore, the more selves I have access to, the less the likelihood that I will ever find myself surprised (Louis 1980) or astonished (Reason 1990), although I may find myself confused by the overabundance of possibilities and therefore forced to deal with equivocality” (Weick, 1995: 24).

2. Retrospective

Sensemaking is retrospective; that is to say, it takes place after the event and is partly based on short- or long-term memories and can be influenced by and in between experiences (Ibid.: 24-26). Consequently, sensemaking can change due to a different experience. This is in line with the ‘sensemaking for self and sensegiving to others’ theory of Gioia & Chittipeddi (1991: 442-444). For example, a change in strategic direction or goals will lead to a change in sensemaking and will be perceived differently by senior management and, say, other employees. Consequently, both groups do not share an aligned behavior, defined by management as resistance (Piderit, 2000: 784; Ten Have, 2005). The process of sensegiving and sensemaking, as proposed by Gioia & Chittipeddi (1991) and Homan (2005), will finally converge and both meanings will more or less align. In general, employees are dealing with an overload of information; too many projects and not enough priorities, with too many different meanings as a result (Weick, 1995: 27-28).

3. Enactive of sensible environments

People create their own reality through action. Action is crucial in sensemaking; sensemaking creates meaningful environments. This is called ‘enactment’ (Ibid.: 30). To a degree, this is a free choice: “There is not some impersonal ‘they’, who puts these environments in front of passive people. Instead, the ‘they’ is people who are more active” (Ibid.: 31). Action means to create something or to delay or not to create something; in both cases sensemaking occurs (Ibid.: 37). Furthermore, Weick warns us about Cartesian anxiety:³⁹

³⁹ Cartesian anxiety refers to the notion that, ever since René Descartes promulgated his highly influential form of body-mind dualism, Western civilization has suffered from a longing for ontological certainty, or feeling that scientific methods, and especially the study of the world as a thing separate from ourselves, should be able to

“People seem to need the idea that there is a world with pre-given features and ready-for-use information, because to give up this idea as the world as a fixed and stable reference point is to fall into idealism, nihilism, or subjectivism, all of which are unseemly. Cartesian anxiety is ‘best put as a dilemma: either we have a fixed and stable foundation for knowledge, a point where knowledge starts, is grounded, and rests, or we cannot escape some sort of darkness, chaos, and confusion. Either there is an absolute ground or foundation or everything falls apart’ [...] We continuously can (re)shape our world by action in which we engage” (Ibid.: 37-38).

4. Social

Social interaction is important for sensemaking. Sensemaking is a social interaction process that shapes interpretations and interpreting. Weick (1995) refers to a statement made by Walsh & Ungson (1991):

“An organization is ‘a network of intersubjectively shared meanings that are sustained through the development and use of a common language and everyday social interaction.’ [...] This definition is social several times over in its references to ‘network’, ‘intersubjectivity’, ‘common language’, and ‘social interaction’” (Walsh & Ungson, 1991, in Weick, 1995: 38-39).

And:

“The contingent quality of sensemaking is found in Allport’s (1985) description of social psychology as ‘an attempt to understand and explain how the thought, feeling, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, *imagined*, or *implied* presence of others’” (Allport, 1985, in Weick, 1995: 39).

This implies that, in some cases, sensemaking occurs when no other people are present. And: “Even monologues and one-way communications presume an audience, and the monologue changes as the audience changes” (Weick, 1995: 40).

lead us to a firm and unchanging knowledge of ourselves and the world around us. The term is named after Descartes because of his well-known emphasis on ‘mind’ as different from ‘body’, ‘self’ as different from ‘other’ (Source: Wikipedia).

Moreover, sensemaking takes place if social interaction takes place, such as in a social environment of an organization. This does not imply that meanings are (fully) shared; on the contrary, different meanings can lead to no action (Ibid.: 42). According to Wiley (1988), a social – interaction – process can take place on three levels of sensemaking: 1. an inter-subjective level related to communication; 2. a general (subjective) level related to the social structure and the organization; and 3. an extra-subjective level, related to culture and social reality. All levels are influencing each other based on feedback (Wiley, 1988: 260) and are applicable in this study.

5. Ongoing

Sensemaking is an ongoing interactive process never starts or ends:

“Sensemaking never starts. The reason it never starts is that pure duration never stops. People are always in the middle of things, which become things, only when those same people focus on the past from some point beyond it” (Weick, 1995: 43).

People find themselves thrown into ongoing situations – ‘everyday life’ and ‘projects’ – and make sense of them:

“You cannot avoid acting. [...] You cannot step back and reflect on your actions. [...] The effects of actions cannot be predicted. [...] You do not have a stable representation of the situation. [...] Every representation is an interpretation and language is action” (Winograd & Flores, 1995, in Weick, 1995: 44).

Interrupted situations result in either a positive or a negative emotional response, both of which influence sensemaking. Positive emotions occur when an interruption is deleted or ends sooner than expected. Conversely, negative emotions occur when an interruption delays action (Weick, 1995: 44-48). In general, emotions in organizations⁴⁰ are negative, due to the fact that personally experienced interruptions are often caused by ‘the organization’. An increasing number of interruptions are experienced due to mergers, reorganizations, revitalizations, turnarounds, etc. In general, organizational change plans are decreasing due to budget restrictions, insufficient financial resources, and personnel leaving the company (Ibid.:

⁴⁰ See also Fineman (2008) in sub-paragraph 2.3.3.

48). Needless to say, positive emotion also occurs in organizations and both negative and positive emotions are influenced by the specific culture of an organization.

6. Focus on and Extracted Cues

As previously mentioned, two vocabularies are distinguished: frames and cues. Frames comprise abstract words referring to less abstract words than cues. Frames are related to past moments of socialization, i.e. cultural background and experiences, and cues are present moments of experience, which are connected during sensemaking. Sensemaking occurs when both vocabularies – frame and cue – are connected in a specific context (Ibid.: 109-111).

As a result, the context is of significant importance; every context has its own specific connection, based on actions and experiences, connecting a frame to a cue; a recognizable stimuli representing the situation, making sense. Weick (Ibid.: 54) states that “[...] cues tie elements together cognitively.”

7. Driven by Plausibility rather than Accuracy

The process of sensemaking is driven by plausibility rather than accuracy. To simplify human life, people filter the huge amount of information provided and select the cues required for sensemaking. As a result, this interpretation process decreases the level of accuracy, but makes the situation comprehensible and sufficient for action (Ibid.: 57). Greater accuracy takes time. During this time-consuming process, the situation will change (other occurrences happen) and paralyze action (Ibid.: 60). In summary, as Weick clearly states:

I need to know enough about what I think to get on with my projects, but no more, which means sufficiency and plausibility take precedence over accuracy (Ibid.: 62).

Organizational Sensemaking

It is clear that organizations and people interact; people create organizations and organizations ‘create’ people, each in their own way. Sensemaking in an organizational context is a specific form of sensemaking: “Everyday sensemaking and organizational sensemaking are not identical” (Ibid.: 63). Weick’s (1995) conceptualization of sensemaking is focused on an

organizational setting and can therefore be called ‘organizational sensemaking’. Weick (1995) follows Scott’s ‘superb’ analysis and definition of organizations:

“He [Scott, MP] defines the concept of organization three ways. First, there is the organization as a rational system [...] and defined by Scott as ‘collectivities oriented to the pursuit of relatively specific goals and exhibiting relatively highly formalized social structures’ [...]. Second, there is the organization as a natural system [...] and defined by Scott as ‘collectivities whose participants share a common interest in the survival of the system and who engage in collective activities, informally structured, to secure this end’ [...]. And third, there is the organization as an open system [...] and defined by Scott as ‘coalitions of shifting interest groups that develop goals by negotiation; the structure of its coalition, its activities, and its outcomes are strongly influenced by environmental factors’” (Ibid.: 69-70).

Organizational sensemaking means sensemaking in a context, as previously described.

Organizing and sensemaking constitute each other:

“Organization is an attempt to order the intrinsic flux of human action, to channel it toward certain ends, to give it a particular shape, through generalizing and institutionalizing particular meanings and rules” (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 570).

And,

“A central theme in both organizing and sensemaking is that people organize to make sense of equivocal inputs and enact this sense back into the world more orderly” (Weick, 2005: 410).

Weick’s (1995) concept regarding sensemaking has been described in this sub-paragraph. The process of equivocality reduction and the seven related properties have been discussed. Finally, the link to organizational sensemaking has been made. In order to investigate the research question, additional conceptual information is required. This will be provided in the following sub-paragraph.

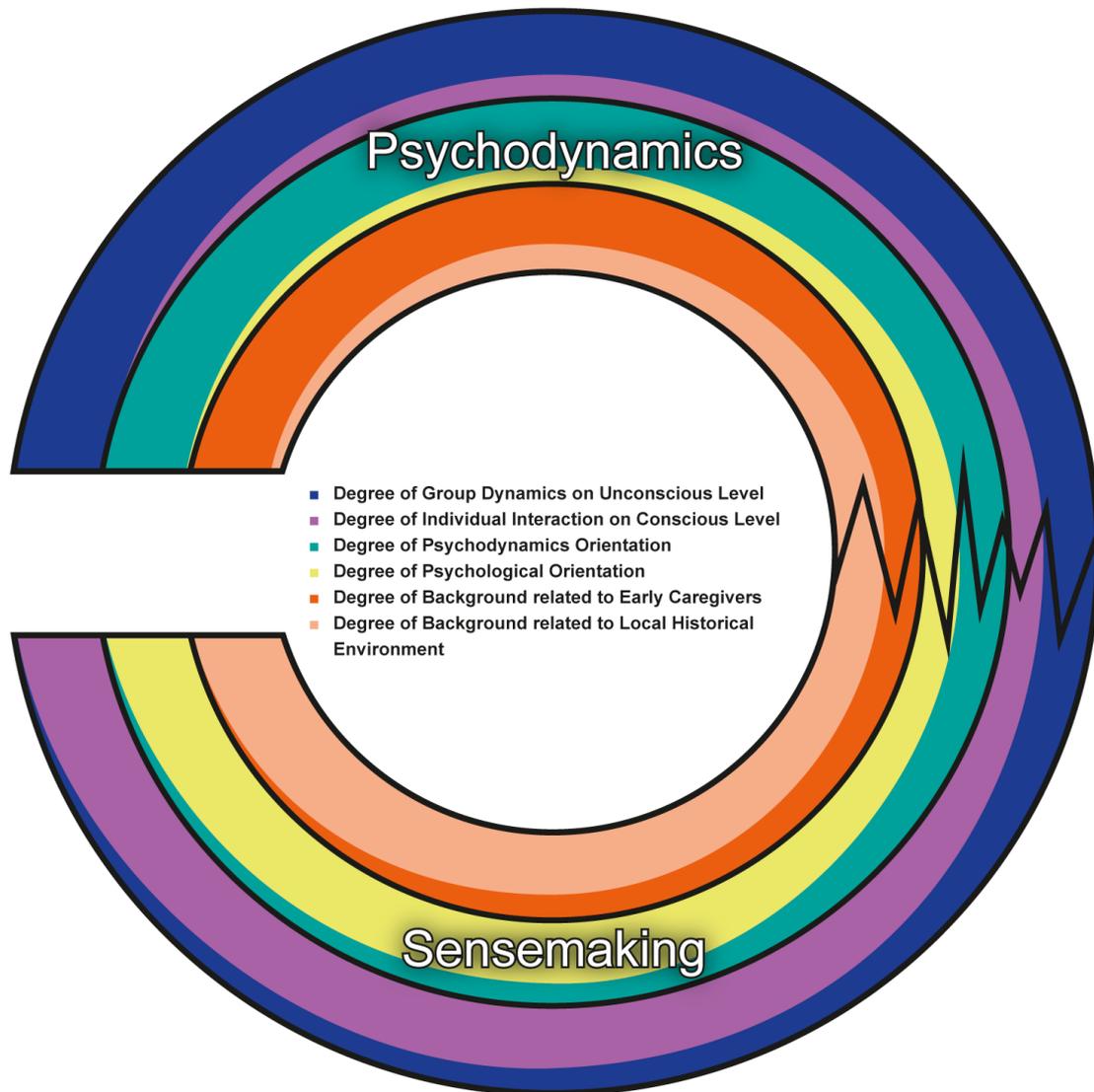
2.10 Conclusions Conceptual Framework – Part Two

The second part of the conceptual framework covers two different views describing the conscious and unconscious process of becoming a team member, including relevant related aspects, based on Bion (1961) and Weick (1995). These different perspectives are partly complementary, opposite, overlapping, and unique:

- Bion (1950) and Weick (1995) both employ a different angle regarding an ‘unknown person’ entering, connecting, and establishing a form of (non-) relationship with a team (or group) of people. Both views are connected and interwoven and cover the conscious and unconscious level of the mind: whereas the psychodynamic view (Bion, 1961) is primarily focused on the unconsciousness, the sensemaking view (Weick, 1995) concentrates on the consciousness;
- Within the clinical paradigm, Bion (1961) explores unconscious group dynamics based on three basic assumptions: 1. dependency; 2. fight/flight; and 3. pairing, whereas Weick (1995), within the social constructivism paradigm, focuses on individual conscious sensemaking via interactive communication;
- The two perspectives are strongly connected to and interactively influenced by their background. Bion (1961) relates strongly to the background regarding the early caregivers in life (family, parents, teachers, etc.), whereas Weick (1995) strongly relates to the local historical ‘actual’ (private or working) environment;
- The similarities and contradictions between the two perspectives are a valuable basis for stimulating diverse reflections from different angles for the object of this research, the change agent; unconscious versus conscious, background versus environment, individual (change agent) versus team perspective and vice versa, etc., resulting in a thick description of attributes and experiences.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the similarities and differences regarding the approaches of Bion (1961) and Weick (1995). Besides the psychodynamic and unconscious group orientation and the psychological and conscious individual orientation, I have chosen for the aspects ‘Background related to early caregivers’ and ‘Background related to local historical environment’, because those are strongly related to an interim change agent, the subject of investigation, and are different in the two orientations.

Figure 2 - Bion (1961) & Weick (1995)



Bion

Psychodynamic Group Approach

- Clinical paradigm (rationale behind every human act, mental life lies outside of conscious awareness, the way of expressing and regulating emotions & products of past experiences)
- Based on Freud's psychoanalytical approach
- Focus on unconscious group dynamics
- Transference & counter-transference
- Three group modes: dependency, fight/flight, & pairing

Weick

Organizational Sensemaking

- Social constructivism paradigm
- Focus on consciousness
- Seven characteristics (grounded in identity construction, retrospective, enactive sensible environments, social interaction, ongoing, focus on an by cues & driven by plausibility, rather than accuracy)
- Sensemaking via interactive communication (interlocked behavior cycles)
- Local historical background is key

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of Chapter Three is to provide a well-thought-out and detailed approach to design, prepare, collect, analyze, and share data regarding this research. It covers the methodology, the description of the research setting, data gathering, and reporting. The justification for the application of a multi-case study is based on Stake (2000) and Yin (2009) and covered in paragraphs 3.2. and 3.3. The collection of case study evidence is based on Yin (2009) and Long & Harding (in Long, 2013), and outlined in paragraph 3.4. The case study mainly explores a deep understanding of a social phenomenon instead of explaining a social phenomenon. This is based on Verweij (2011) and, as described in paragraph 3.5, is called insights instead of causal connections. Paragraph 3.6 covers validity and is based on Yin (2009). Paragraph 3.7 outlines triangulation and is based on Teunissen (1985) and Ritchie & Lewis (2003). Paragraph 3.8, based on Weick (1995), Yin (2009), and Long & Harding (in Long, 2013), describes the interviews and interviewees. Paragraph 3.9, called analyzing case study evidence and reporting, is based on Latour & Woolgar (1986), Van Dongen, De Laat & Maas (1996), and Yanow & Tsoukas (2009).

3.2 The Case Study Approach

According to Yin (2009), there is no basic rule for applying a case study approach as a research methodology. This study about the process of becoming a team member is explanatory as well as explorative.⁴¹ It is explanatory due to the type of research question(s). As Yin states:

“[...] ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are more *explanatory* and likely to lead to the use of case studies, histories, and experiments as the preferred research methods” (Yin, 2009: 9).

⁴¹ Yin (2009) distinguishes three types of case studies: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive case studies. In the case of a ‘what’ research question, an exploratory study is frequently appropriate, which allows the researcher to develop hypotheses and propositions for further studies. These studies intend to get a basic idea of the issue at hand. ‘How’ and ‘why’ questions reflect explanatory intentions because: “[...] such questions deal with operational links needing to be traced over time, rather than mere frequencies or incidence” (Yin, 2009: 9). Descriptive case studies focus less on explanations and instead simply aim to provide a clear illustration.

However, due to the distinguishable and, at the same time, interwoven psychodynamic and psychological processes that the change agent undergoes consciously and/or unconsciously – and also partly isolated – I argue that an explorative component is applicable as well. In fact, during the study we partly try to ‘explore’ the ‘unknown unconsciousness’ mind of the change agent. In both cases, explanatory and exploratory, the application of a case study approach as research methodology⁴² is permitted and useful (Yin, 2009). In summary, the research question concerns a ‘how a social phenomenon works’ question in a non-controlled behavioral and contemporary event.⁴³ This justifies the application of a case study approach. Two additional reasons for an exploratory component are the requirement of an extensive and in-depth description of a complex social phenomenon and the limited accessibility in terms of the willingness of change agents to cooperate due to the exploration of the unconsciousness, based on extensive reflection.⁴⁴ This case study about the process of becoming a team member is also intrinsic, instrumental as well as collective.⁴⁵ In practical terms, the intrinsic and instrumental significance are mixed and interwoven:

Because the researcher simultaneously has several interests, particular and general, there is no line between distinguishing intrinsic case study from instrumental; rather, a zone of combined purpose separates them (Stake, 2000: 437).

⁴² Yin (2009) distinguishes six research methodologies: 1. experiment; 2. survey; 3. archival; 4. analysis; 5. history; and 6, case study, all with advantages and disadvantages.

⁴³ The three guiding and deciding conditions for choosing a research methodology are related to: 1. the form of the research question; 2. if the research requires control of behavioral events; and 3. if the research focuses on contemporary events. Based on those three guiding and decision conditions, a decision can be taken in terms of which of the six methods is most appropriate for a specific research situation. Most appropriate does not mean that other methods could not fit as well, but at least it becomes clear which method does not fit well (Yin, 2009).

⁴⁴ Three types of reflection are distinguished: 1. reflection-in-action (in the moment; understanding what you do, while doing it); 2. reflection-on-action (retrospective; understanding what you did, after you did it); and 3. reflection-to-action (dealing with surprise, based on malfunction, temporary and total breakdown situations in operations) (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009).

⁴⁵ Stake (2000) distinguishes three types of case studies: 1. intrinsic case studies; 2. instrumental case studies; and 3. collective case studies. An intrinsic case study is: “[...] if it is undertaken because, first and last, the researcher wants better understanding of this particular case. Here, not undertaken primarily because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because, in all its particularity *and* ordinariness, the case itself is of interest. The researcher at least temporarily subordinates other curiosities, so that the stories of those ‘living the case’ will be teased out. The purpose is not to come to understand some abstract construct or generic phenomenon” [...]. “A case study is instrumental if a particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization. The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else. The case is still looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, but all because this helps the Researcher to pursue external interest” (Stake, 2000: 437). The collective case study is an instrumental study extended to several cases simultaneously.

3.3 The Multi-Case Study Approach

Yin (2009) “[...] considers single- and multiple-case designs to be variants within the same methodological framework [...]” (Yin, 2009: 53). A single-case study approach is not applicable due to a missing rationale.⁴⁶ However, a decent rationale for a multi-case study is applicable.⁴⁷ As a result, a multiple-case study approach will be conducted. As Yin (2009) states:

“Each case must be carefully selected so that it either (a) predicts similar results (*a literal replication*) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons (*a theoretical replication*)” (Ibid.: 54).

The purpose of this study is, in the first instance, not to seek literal replicable outcomes (similar results), although the same line of thoughts are more or less expected by the application of the theories of Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and Bauman (1991), as well as those of Bion (1961) and Weick (1995). Seeking theoretically replicable outcomes (contrasting results) will be a significant part of the study. As Yin states:

“Each individual case study consists of a ‘whole’ study, in which convergent evidence is sought regarding the facts and conclusions for the case; each case’s conclusions are then considered to be the information needing replication by other individual cases. Both the individual cases and the multi-case results can and should be the focus of a summary report. [...] Across cases, the report should indicate the extent of the replication logic and why certain cases were predicted to have certain results, whereas other cases, if any, were predicted to have contrasting results” (Ibid.: 56).

⁴⁶ Yin (2009) described five rationales for single-case case studies: 1. when it represents a critical case in testing a well-formulated theory; 2. where the case represents an extreme case or a unique case, or conversely; 3. the representative of a typical case, in the sense of capturing the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation; 4. the revelatory case, meaning when an investigator has the opportunity to observe and analyze a phenomenon previously inaccessible to social science; and 5. the longitudinal case, studying the same single case at two or more different moments in time.

⁴⁷ According to Yin (2009), the main rationale is related to understanding the literal and theoretical replications. Seeking literal replications could be based on two or more cases, whereas theoretical replications need additional cases to be robust. This research covers both replications.

Based on the above, Yin (2009) advises researching three to six cases, applied in a holistic⁴⁸ approach. As a result, five ‘single-case’ studies are conducted to be robust in this multi-case study. A multiple-case study approach is less vulnerable and may offer substantial analytical benefits compared to a single-case study. Even though the design is relatively closed,⁴⁹ it will be as flexible as required to retrieve the best result if any unexpected information emerges during the process of investigation. Due to a limitation in terms of available time and the number of pages permitted for this thesis a mixed method design⁵⁰ is not considered.

3.4 Collection of Case Study Evidence

According to Yin (2009), the investigator should be sufficiently skilled⁵¹ and apply an inquisitive mind in order to be able to execute the research, not only before and after, but especially during data collection. The data collection will be solely qualitative.

As mentioned before, the multiple-case study will consist of five holistic case studies equating to five different individuals. These individuals will “be recruited voluntarily” (Long & Harding, in Long, 2013: 95) and will be chosen based on a significant fit in terms of the type of change agent under investigation, being able to understand the purpose and deeper rich content of the research, and the ability and willingness to be object of investigation in terms of ‘collecting’ psychodynamic and psychological experiences related to the research question. They will be thoroughly prepared in terms of the purpose of the case study, the research questions, the selection of the cases, reading, and understanding the conceptual framework, the in-depth discussion methodology used for the interview, i.e. motivational interviewing,⁵²

⁴⁸ Yin (2009) distinguishes two types of multiple-case study designs: holistic or embedded. The holistic approach is applicable for a single unit of analysis, which is the case in this research, and the embedded approach is applicable for multiple units of analyses, such as several departments within one organization.

⁴⁹ Yin (2009) distinguishes two types of multiple-case study designs: closed or flexible. A closed design refers to a ‘fixed’ approach that cannot be changed during the research process. However, during the process of investigation, new – unexpected – information can arise leading to the need to alter or modify the original design. This possible adjustment refers to a flexible design dealing as well as possible with the new situation.

⁵⁰ As mentioned before, Yin (2009) distinguishes six types of research methodologies. If two or more are used simultaneously it is called a mixed method design.

⁵¹ Yin (2009) lists five commonly required case study skills: 1. to be able to ask good questions; 2. to be a good listener; 3. to be adaptive and flexible; 4. to be knowledgeable regarding the issues being studied; and 5. to be unbiased by preconceived notions; in other words, to be sensitive and responsive to contradictory evidence.

⁵² “Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a client-centered, directive therapeutic style to enhance readiness for change by helping clients explore and resolve ambivalence. An evolution of Roger’s person-centered counselling approach, MI elicits the client’s own motivations for change” (Hettema, Steel & Miller, 2005: 91).

the questions being used as a guideline during the interview, and anticipated topics to be covered in (the outline of) the case study report. In addition, every single individual will read their specific case study report, evaluate the content in-depth with the researcher, and approve the final outcome, ensuring that the report covers the discussed content accurately, minimizing possible biases from the researcher or the communication between interviewee and researcher, resulting in a rich description of their experiences, as well as providing a narrative. Moreover, the five interviewees will be deployed as a transitional or ‘third’ object supporting the revealing and deepening experiences, which Long & Harding (in Long 2013) described as a critical aspect of research design.

3.5 Insights instead of Causal Connections

Due to the distinguishable and simultaneously interwoven psychodynamic and psychological processes the change agent undergoes consciously and/or unconsciously – and partly isolated – during the process of becoming a team member, the case study mainly explores a deep understanding of a social phenomenon, rather than explaining a social phenomenon. In fact, ‘exploring’ the ‘unknown unconsciousness’ of the change agent. Thus, the main intention is not to explain causal relations or conduct a ‘failure mode and effects analysis’ explaining factual processes and/or outcomes of processes. Moreover, the aim is not to ‘explain’, but to ‘understand’ the process and/or outcome. According to Verweij (2011):

“Practically every explanation, be it causal or teleological or of some other kind, can be said to further our understanding of things. But ‘understanding’ also has a psychological ring which ‘explanation’ has not. [...] Understanding as a method characteristic of the humanities is a form of empathy or re-creation in the mind of the scholar of the mental atmosphere, the thoughts and feelings and motivations, of the objects of his study. [...] Understanding is also connected with intentionality in a way that explanation is not. One understands the aims and purposes of an agent, the meaning of a sign or symbol, and the significance of a social institution or religious rite” (Georg Hendrik von Wright, 1971: 6, in Verweij, 2011: 102-103).

3.6 Validity

The quality of research design is dependent on four criteria⁵³ (Yin, 2009). In this case, where I consider the study to be explanatory as well as explorative, all four validity criteria are applicable. The first criterion is to construct validity and is fulfilled by employing two tactics, i.e. the use of multiple sources of evidence (the five individuals to be interviewed) and providing every single individual with their specific case study report and giving them the chance to evaluate the content in-depth with the researcher before approving the final outcome. The second criteria, internal validity, will be covered by the explanatory part of the research, which seeks possible causal relationships. However, as mentioned before, this is not the main aim of this research. The third criterion, external validity, is about the generalization of study findings:

“In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)” (Yin, 2009: 15).

The last criterion, reliability, shows whether the conducted processes and procedures of the research, for example data collection procedures, are repeatable and generate the same results:

“The objective is to be sure that, if a later investigator followed the same procedures as described by an earlier investigator and conducted the same case study all over again, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings and conclusions” (Ibid.: 45).

This criterion is also applicable due to the chosen methodology and process order.

3.7 Triangulation

According to Ritchie & Lewis (2003), “[t]riangulation involves the use of different methods and sources to check the integrity of, or extend, inferences drawn from the data” (Ritchie &

⁵³ Those four criteria are: 1. “Construct validity: identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied, 2. Internal validity: (for explanatory or causal studies only and not for descriptive or exploratory studies): seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships, 3. External validity: defining the domain to which a study’s findings can be generalized, and 4. Reliability: demonstrating that the operations of a study – such as the data collection procedures – can be repeated, with the same results.” (Yin, 2009: 40).

Lewis, 2003: 46), but “[...] will mainly lead to more insight and not so much to more validity” (Ibid.: 44).

This is in line with the main purpose of this research. However, different techniques can lead to different outcomes. Teunissen (1985) states:

“More different angles or perspectives will provide more different views, which will enrich – broaden – the different interpretations of methodologies” (Teunissen, 1985: 83).

Yin (2009) distinguishes four types of triangulation.⁵⁴ In this research, data triangulation is covered by the in-depth investigation of five separate cases and will provide insight into each individual case as well as into the comparison between the cases. The research will be done by only one investigator, so investigator triangulation is rather poor, although the written outcome of the interviews will be critically reviewed by the interviewees before they are applied. Theoretical triangulation is applied by using different theoretical perspectives explaining and exploring the five cases; different theoretical views regarding the process of becoming a team member are provided in Chapter Two. Methodological triangulation is rather poor given the application of only one research methodology; however, a motivational interviewing methodology means that the interviews are in-depth.

3.8 Biases⁵⁵ & Bracketing

In this study, the researcher has an occupational background as a change agent. Moreover, the researcher is both interviewer and interviewee. Among others, this allows the researcher to facilitate a form of intervention that supports exploration of the interviewees experiences during the preparation and execution of the interviews that is based on an ‘action learning process’. Consequently, there is a “[...] close relationship between the researcher and the research topic that may both precede and develop during the process of qualitative research, bracketing is also a method to protect the researcher from the cumulative effects of examining

⁵⁴ Following Patton (2002), Yin (2009) distinguishes four types of triangulation: 1. of data sources, data triangulation; 2. among different evaluators, investigator triangulation; 3. of perspectives to the same data set, theory triangulation; and 4. of methods, methodological triangulation.

⁵⁵ According the *Cambridge Dictionary*, the definition of bias is: “The action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions to influence your judgement.”

what may be emotionally changing material” (Tufford & Newman, 2010: 81). Bracketing in qualitative research is primarily a method for mitigating the potential effects of unacknowledged preconceptions, thus increasing the rigor of the project. This can be applied to all steps of the research: 1. project conceptualization; 2. research questions; 3. data collection; 4. data analyses; and 5. writing. In this research, it has been applied in terms of:

- Selecting a diverse range of interviewees in terms of age, nationality, background, context, and experience;
- The researcher’s awareness of possible biases arising from three interwoven angles: interviewer, interviewee, and researcher. Applying socio-analytic interviewing and aspects of motivational interviewing by letting the interviewee ‘wander’ as much as possible with minimal ‘interruptions’;
- Extensive preparation of interviewees upfront by asking them to read the research introduction, conceptual framework, and methodology;
- Extensive involvement of interviewees the process of writing and checking written texts of self, others, and researcher;
- Utilizing an ‘external source’ by applying a third object session, evaluating and discussing the process, findings, and conclusions.

3.9 Interviews & Interviewees

Yin (2009) distinguishes six sources of evidence⁵⁶ for this type of research “about human affairs or behavioral events” (Yin, 2009: 108), explaining, but mostly exploring the process of becoming a team member, interviews are most suited, due to the strengths⁵⁷ related to this source of evidence. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware of the weaknesses⁵⁸ related to this source of evidence and to ensure these are minimized by good preparation and execution of interview process. To obtain the best result:

“The interviews will be guided conversations rather than structured queries. In other words, although you will be pursuing a consistent line of inquiry, your actual stream of

⁵⁶ The six sources of evidence Yin (2009) distinguishes are: 1. documentation; 2. archival records; 3. interviews; 4. direct observations; 5, participant observation; and 6. physical artifacts.

⁵⁷ Strong points regarding interviews are: “Targeted – focuses directly on case study topics” and “Insightful – provides perceived causal inferences and explanations” (Yin, 2009: 102).

⁵⁸ Weak points regarding interviews are: “Bias due to poorly articulated questions”, “Response bias”, “Inaccuracies due to poor recall”, and “Reflexivity – interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear” (Ibid.).

questions in a case study interview is likely to be fluid rather than ridged” (H.J. Rubin & Rubin, 1995) (Ibid.: 106).

It is important to find the right balance between satisfying the needs of the line of inquiry and asking the questions in a friendly, non-threatening, and open-ended manner. It concerns in-depth interviews,⁵⁹ covering all possible psychodynamic and psychological attributes and experiences: anxieties, (free) associations, attitudes, biases, conclusions, content, dreams, emotions, facts, fears, ideas, issues, jokes, motivations, nightmares, observations, opinions, parapraxis, symptoms, ‘slip of the tongue or pen’, and thoughts. As mentioned before, motivational interviewing is an appropriate methodology for this purpose, resulting in a rich and thick description of experiences.

To prepare the five individuals for the in-depth interview, guiding questions will be submitted upfront, giving the interviewee enough time to pre-reflect on them. The guiding questions are related to the main research and sub-research questions and are listed in Appendix 2. The interviewee will also be asked to read (concept) Chapters One, Two, and Three of the thesis upfront. As a result, it should be clear what the purpose of the interview is regarding intentions, research question(s), conceptual framework, methodology, interview, approving the final outcome of the interview report, and the structure of the thesis.

The five interviewees are chosen based on the following criteria: 1. they fit the description of a change agent as provided in Chapter one; 2. they contribute to a different ‘angle of application’ in terms of age & nationality, background (level & subject), context (company size, industries, level in organization & job title), and experience (national, international & number of assignments), as set out in Appendix 1; 3. they are able and willing to read and understand all required theoretical material, mainly Chapters One, Two, and Three of the thesis; 4. they are able and willing to extensively and openly discuss all possible related psychodynamic and psychological attributes and experiences, as previously listed; and 5. they are willing to be part of the transitional or ‘third’ object (Long & Harding, in Long (2013)). One of the participants – interviewees – will be the researcher himself. In other words, the

⁵⁹ Yin (2009) distinguishes three types of interviews: 1. in-depth interview (asking about facts as well as opinions within a flexible and open timeslot); 2. focused interview (asking pre-defined structured questions within a short timeslot); and 3. structured interviews (asking pre-defined structured questions along the lines of a formal survey).

researcher will interview and reflect on himself. According to Weick (1995), sensemaking is an ongoing interactive process that also can take place when no other people are present:

“Even monologues and one-way communications presume an audience, and the monologue changes as the audience changes” (Weick, 1995: 40).

As an experienced change agent and having experienced the process of becoming a team member several times in many different (company and country) cultures, it is a great challenge and opportunity to deeply reflect on a psychodynamic and psychological level regarding this process. With respect to all interviews, including the ‘third object session’, the researcher will use himself as a tool.

3.10 Analyzing Case Study Evidence & Reporting

As mentioned before, guiding questions, related to the main research and sub-research questions, are provided to the interviewees upfront. In addition, the interviewees are well-prepared in advance in terms of the purpose of the interview regarding intentions, research question(s), conceptual framework, methodology, interview, approving the final outcome of the interview report, and the structure of the thesis. The expectation is that the explanatory and exploratory approach of the research will provide:

- A confirmation of the existing theories covered in the conceptual framework;
- New insights regarding the existing theories covered in the conceptual framework;
- Similarities regarding the individual cases;
- Differences between the individual cases;
- Expected and unexpected findings.

Based on the guiding questions, all in-detail discussed topics will be noted in detail. I will use extracts from the interviews to show how I reached my conclusions, but also to allow readers to come up with their own interpretations. It is a conscious attempt to describe, organize, and structure ambiguous, questionable, (un)clear, or even (in)comprehensible information. In other words, to create order out of disorder:

“[...] writing is not so much a method of transferring information as a material operation of creating order” (Latour & Woolgar, 1986: 245).

As mentioned before, a detailed and critical evaluation of the conversation data will be carried out and approved by the interviewees before drawing conclusions and finalizing the report. The aim of this research is to explain, explore, evaluate, deeply understand, and inscribe the process of becoming a team member. This approach is in line with the ethnographic approach that stresses that ‘being there’ (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009) is an adequate manner to best ‘see’ and ‘feel’ the actual situation, i.e. the context, the actual working environment, actions, and reactions.⁶⁰ Moreover, the approach will yield a rich and thick description. This is also in line with the view held by Van Dongen, De Laat & Maas (1996) that there is an unlimited multiple perspective containing absolute relativism; in other words, ‘anything goes’. However, I prefer relative relativism because ‘reality’ is strongly related to a social, local historical environment, meaning not ‘everything’ goes. Moreover, my reality is only one possible reality and not a knowledge claim forced on other people as being the truth.

⁶⁰ “According to Yanow & Tsoukas (2009), a decent ethnographical research design should contain the following eight elements: 1. place and space (research settings); 2. time (timing and duration); 3. time and space together (exposure); 4. Silences; 5. the researchers’ role (positionality and prior knowledge); 6. access (getting in and maintaining relationships); 7. data details; and 8. representation. In addition, there should also be space for dealing with doubt, belief, and abduction (Locke, Golden-Biddle and Feldman, 2008). From a reader’s perspective, the sense of ‘being there’ should be accomplished efficiently. In more detail; reflexivity and the improvisational character of interpretive research” (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009, in Probst, 2012: 167).

Chapter Four: Research Context & Data Gathering

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four outlines aspects of the research context and data gathering provided in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3, respectively.

4.2 Research Context

Based on the methodological setting and the five selection criteria described in Chapter Three, five interviewees were selected with the aim of gathering rich, explorative ‘within-case’ and ‘cross-case’ data (Eisenhardt, 1989). As a member of two change-agent organizations (DDIM⁶¹ & IM-Register⁶²) and as having been active as a change agent for over 25 years, there were no issues with finding qualified change agents for this research. My triple-role in this research is interviewee, interviewer, and researcher. Even though some interviewees have different nationalities, currently, for practical reasons, all interviewees selected are living in the Netherlands. The methodology, as described in the previous Chapter, has been executed in detail, with a focus on socio-analytic interviewing to retrieve as much ‘unconscious material’ as possible alongside systemic process and conscious information (Long & Harding, in Long (2013)).

The research context is related to the mental and physical context in which the five interviewees have garnered their extensive experiences over the years and from diverse assignments, companies, countries, industries, responsibilities, and roles, as outlined in Appendix 1.

4.3 Data Gathering

All interviews took place in August and September 2018. The third object session was organized in early October 2018; all five interviewees attended this session. As previously mentioned, all interviewees were extensively prepared in advance in terms of reading concept versions of the introduction, the aim of the research, the conceptual framework, the methodology and guiding questions. The guiding questions provided are based on my own

⁶¹ The DDIM (*Dachgesellschaft Deutsches Interim Management e.V.*) is a German organization committed to the public recognition and development of the interim profession and interim management industry.

⁶² The foundation IM-Register is a quality control institute for professional interim managers in the Netherlands.

experiences and insights regarding the topic and content and can be found in Appendix 2. Open and unstructured interviews were conducted to let the interviewees ‘wander’ as much as possible, with a view to obtaining better results. The interviews went well. All interviewees were extremely open and eager to learn about the theory and themselves, and all were – finally – able to deeply reflect. All interviews started and ended in a different order, depending on the ‘priority and weight’ of topics for the interviewee and roughly guided by the questions and provided formats. I used myself as a tool to explore the ‘unconscious’ mind of the interviewee by engaging in deep listening and deeper asking, and by ensuring that all subjects to reflect upon were covered. Sometimes, interviewees had an emotional response to this process. Nevertheless, the following deviation was experienced: it was anticipated that only one extensive interview per interviewee would be necessary; however, all interviewees needed significantly more time to prepare and conduct the interviews due to:

- Not being used to reading and understanding ‘psychodynamic and psychological’ texts, which were experienced as ‘difficult’;
- Not being used to deeply and repeatedly reflecting on behavioral aspects, covering all possible psychodynamic and psychological attributes and experiences;
- Given the unfamiliarity with deeply and repeatedly reflecting on behavioral aspects, sufficient time was needed in between interviews to process reflections;
- Not being used to ‘transforming’ the outcome of this deep reflection process into representative content, i.e. a narrative.

As a result, several additional individual meetings and interviews were held to explain the theory in detail and, in the end, two to three interviews per person were conducted. The total time spent on interviews varied from roughly 10 to 20 hours per person. Ultimately, the research method was adapted and a more longitudinal approach (Yin, 2009) was taken, deploying features of action research⁶³ and moving slightly towards an ‘intervention’, with the researcher assisting the interviewees to reach new insights. Before the first interview, as a pre-reflection on behavior, theory, and the research question, the interviewees were asked to fill in a two-page form, provided in Appendix 3. The first page relates to the interviewees’ opinion on the five perspectives described in the conceptual framework, and the second page to the interviewees’ personal ‘experiences’ regarding the research question. Together with the

⁶³ According to Gustavsen (2008), action research is a mixture of consulting and research; the combination of interaction and research to develop the group.

guiding questions, this was the basis for conducting the interviews. As the interviews commenced, the ‘completeness’ of these two pages varied from being almost empty to 60 per cent filled in. During the interview, additional notes were made and afterwards added to the form. Subsequently, all interviewees approved the content of the form, reducing any researcher bias and justifying the ‘exact’ content of the discussions. All interviewees were then asked to write a narrative, detailing their working context, including any anxieties, the way they connect with team members during an assignment, and describing any possible links to childhood and their upbringing as well as suggestions on how to improve the process of becoming a team member. Interviewee Rico had issues about writing his own narrative, so I wrote Rico’s narrative based on his detailed input and quotes. Finally, after he had checked and approved the text, it became ‘his’ narrative.

The third object session was useful for getting acquainted with each other and reflecting on previous reflections, to ‘adjust and align’ chosen individual associations with previous reflections and narratives, and to elaborate on CCRTs. It was designed to allow interviewees to share experiences regarding the research question and of being a participant in this research. Finally, the session also facilitated the application of sensemaking about change agents on a ‘meta level’: who are they and how can they improve the process of becoming a team member? Prior to this session, interviewees were asked to read each other’s forms and narrative and to prepare a fifteen-minute presentation about themselves.

During the five-hour third object session, it became clear that all interviewees were extremely satisfied with the – sometimes confronting and painful – ‘learning process’ and the outcomes. The interviewees considered it:

- A great advantage and necessity to have read the five perspectives upfront; otherwise such a detailed reflection would not have been possible;
- A great opportunity to ‘practice’ deeper reflection to better understand their behavior and related/underlying ‘reasons and symptoms’; all experienced several personal ‘eye openers’ regarding their CCRTs, previous and current behavior, and childhood;
- A great, but not always easy opportunity to share – emotional – underlying reasons and symptoms of behavior with peer interviewees;
- A great opportunity to further enhance the theory and continue deeper self- and group reflections to enhance awareness of potential behavior and its effects.

Chapter Five: Data Analyses

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter Five, the collected data will be analyzed and connected to the conceptual framework to answer the research question: How does a change agent experience the process of becoming a team member? This Chapter is, in part, a *practical summary* of Appendix 3, which include detailed and thick descriptions for each interviewee, i.e. two pages on the psychodynamic and psychological aspects and experiences related to the five perspectives and research question, and a two-page ‘summarizing’ narrative per interviewee, as provided in paragraph 5.3.3. Chapter Five covers biases, data analyses (cross-case, within-case and a personal interpretation), and a thought on ‘from childhood, upbringing via CCRTs to occupation’, presented in the paragraphs 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 respectively.

5.2. Biases

The considered biases regarding this research are related to the distinct and interwoven roles of the researcher: interviewee, interviewer, and researcher:

- The selection, analysis, description, and explanation of the theory is conducted by the researcher, who also produced the guiding questions, which could contain the following researcher biases: attentional bias; blind spot bias; confirmation bias; the knowledge curse; and the researcher expectancy effect;
- Age-, cultural-, and personal-situation-related biases of the interviewees produce diverse views on private and working life, not least because different life phases affect the method and depth of reflection;
- Emotional biases of interviewees because of attachments to sensitive topics that limit the ability to reflect with a higher degree of objectivity; attaching associations, emotions, and feelings to the theories and the way the theories are expressed and/or presented, which, in turn, affect and influence the method of reflection;
- Socially desirable biases (level or power) of the interviewee, interviewer, and researcher related to how we (and others) want to see ourselves; this potentially clouds reality;
- Time- and experience-related biases of all participants; existing background and experiences limit reflection and perceptions of the theories.

5.3 Data Analyses

5.3.1 Introduction

Firstly, cross-case feedback from the interviewees will be provided. Secondly, within-case feedback retrieved from the interviewees Belle, Jade, Mike, Rico and Sisi⁶⁴ will be provided.

5.3.2 Cross-Case Analyses

As set out on the first page of each of the five formats of Appendix 3, the cross-case feedback regarding the five perspectives is relatively clear:

- From a psychological view, all interviewees strongly recognize and relate to Simmel's (1950) perspective, i.e. the stranger being accepted, offering specific qualities to the team, holding a unique position and his availability in an evanescent timeframe. Critical remarks are:
 - No elaboration on consequences regarding available or emerging 'positive or negative' (dis)functional or psychological qualities of the stranger related to background, personality, role fulfilment, and skills;
 - No elaboration on psychodynamic, unconscious team dynamics and the related local historical background, and – announced in advance? – evanescent timeframe.
- From a psychological view, none of the interviewees recognize and relate to Bauman's (1991) contradictory perspective of the universal stranger not being accepted. What is recognizable in a high-pressure change agent context, however, is the 'quest for order', to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty, and the fact that a change agent also creates a degree of 'chaos' in the short term. Interviewee Sisi relates to 'creating disorder' deliberately to create a new order. Critical remarks are:
 - The approach is too 'black-and-white', extreme and rigid. It is based on a 'perfect', organized society, and does not emulate the context and reality of change agents;
 - Professional teams are open to the outside world, welcoming people who offer something valuable to the team.
- From a psychological (read: sensemaking) view, all interviewees strongly recognize and relate to Weick's (1995) perspective covering seven characteristics of

⁶⁴ For reasons of confidentiality, this thesis is depersonalized; names of interviewees are fictive.

interactive communication, reducing ambiguity and uncertainty within the paradigm of social constructivism. Critical remarks are:

- A clear link to the clinical approach and psychodynamic aspects is missing;
 - Weick (1995) focuses on unexpected and unknown situations, which are just a small part of daily and organizational life;
 - No elaboration on the social historical context and ‘future related’, prospective sensemaking, both of which are essential for change agents, especially in high-pressure situations.
- From a psychodynamic view, all interviewees strongly recognize and relate to Turquet’s (1979) perspective describing four states: the singleton being accepted as an individual member, based on a recognized identity, role, and skill, balancing team and personal needs and roles. Key here is the *dual* capacity of the change agent. Critical remarks are:
 - As a change agent, you always enter an organization with a dual capacity; as an individual and with a specific *functional* role. Thus, singleton and member individuals are ‘non-existing’ states and, as a result, the highly ‘competitive’ environment is relatively weak and hardly applicable;
 - Acceptance is mainly based on identity, role and skills; there is no elaboration on the available or emerging positive or negative qualities of the change agent.
- From a psychodynamic view, all interviewees strongly recognize and relate to Bion’s (1961) perspective relating to the clinical paradigm based on Freud’s psychoanalytical – unconscious – approach, which describes aspects of dependency, fight/flight, and pairing, including transference and counter-transference and unconscious group dynamics. Critical remarks are:
 - Doubts expressed about whether, as a ‘prisoner of the past’, a change agent, can fully ‘overcome’ (counter-)transference; the change agent is far from a professional psychoanalyst;
 - A clear link to sensemaking is missing, even though Bion (1961) in general refers to interactive communication;
 - The interviewees concur with and understand ‘fight/flight’, but: what if an enemy imposes himself on the team?

Regarding the five perspectives, no other significant deviation feedback is provided by any single interviewee, apart from Sisi (as detailed above). This is possibly linked to ‘positive’

and ‘negative’ associations. All five interviewees recognize the need to contribute to society by applying appreciated qualities; thus, they unconsciously see themselves as strangers, in contrast to Bauman’s universal stranger. Four interviewees find it difficult to accept that a change agent might ‘frustrate, militate, or paralyze a situation’, despite it being common practice in a transformation process to unfreeze existing patterns to turn the situation around. This is possibly a sign of a social defense mechanism triggered by a threat to professional identity.

As set out on page two of each of the five formats of Appendix 3, the cross-case psychodynamic and psychological attributes and experiences are:

- All interviewees experience anxieties related to uncertainty about personal qualities and how they are perceived by others. Specifically, interviewees do not want to be perceived as: ‘smart-ass’ (Belle), ‘big brother watching’ (Jade), ‘scrutator’ (Mike), ‘pretender’ (Rico), and ‘second-hand car salesman’ (Sisi). As will be shown, these anxieties are strongly related to CCRTs and upbringing;
- Associations: Interviewees perceive themselves as ‘energetic, quality-providing individuals with positive social skills’, expressed in associations that will be detailed later;
- Dreams and/or nightmares are related to positive or negative thoughts or experiences about: the ‘ideal’ cooperation, teams and the process of becoming a team member; anxieties about: ‘claustrophobia’, disrespect, helplessness, not being able to do the job, selfishness, heavy workloads, long ‘to do’ list;
- Emotions are expressed in terms of feeling: angry, anxious, cautious, disappointment, distant, excitement, happy, fear, frustration, irritation, joy, pain, sad, sensitive, and temper;
- The experiences shared disparate, but mainly relate to the five perspectives, positive and negative personal attributes, roles and working context and/or environment. Within-case experiences will be discussed later;
- Fears are strongly related to anxieties: Am I communicative, good, quick, nice, and smart enough to perform in this context? As will be shown, they also relate to the control, quality and stability of personal attributes and, especially, CCRTs and upbringing;

- Feelings are strongly related to anxieties, fears, and 'being able to cope with a specific situation' and are expressed by the aforementioned emotions;
- Ideas and observations are mainly related to how to improve understanding and social skills of self and others; this is related to the process of becoming a team member;
- Remarks and thoughts shared are disparate, but mainly relate to the five perspectives, personal behavior in specific cases, connecting past and present, and ways to improve social skills and relationships with individuals and teams;
- All interviewees employed jokes and humor disguising a 'serious message' or 'perspective' to address a situation or provide relief. It can also be interpreted as a self-defense mechanism. Jokes were used 'on stage and/or back stage'. Everybody had experienced a 'slip of the tongue', but not dramatically.

5.3.3 Within-Case Analyses

In the next section, within-case feedback is provided regarding specific behavioral aspects, including the psychodynamic and psychological attributes and experiences discussed during the interviews and the third object session, and related to the process of becoming a team member, as well as any connections to childhood and upbringing. To start, a deeper introduction is provided by five narratives, summarizing the contribution per interviewee.

1. Narrative interviewee 1 – Belle

"After graduating as an Industrial Engineer in 1990, I started as an internal consultant for a well-known Dutch department store. I was part of a significant logistics transformation project. There was time to analyze problems and to work on presentations and reports. Software was not 'shelf-bought', but developed; details mattered. In this 'safe & slow' environment, I developed my analytical, communication, and (project) management skills. My second job was in a challenging environment. As part of an American Logistics Service Provider, I learned hard lessons about client management, IT-implementation, and internal politics. In my thirties, as a middle manager, I had to deal with difficult challenges; laying-off staff and handling difficult customer contracts. I felt supported by colleagues and staff. Initially, the team spirit was great. I learned to be customer focused, fair, and transparent with customers and staff. After four years with this company, at 35, my first child was born. A year later, I decided to leave due to internal changes and the pressure of combining being a parent and a full-time Logistics Operations Manager. It was a difficult year; I did not feel supported, I felt isolated (senior management had left), and there were serious client and

organizational issues. After leaving, I felt comfortable acting as an independent change agent. I was hired for my qualities and did not get involved in internal politics. I could leave after achieving results, preserve a good work/life balance, and work on interesting and challenging assignments. Although people perceived me as 'good' at my work, I never deeply reflected on these qualities. I still find it difficult to speak about my qualities, my added value, which seems odd given that I earn a living by selling my unique qualities as a change agent. Luckily, hard selling was never necessary; I got assignments via former clients. I always felt this was not ideal. Why was I not prouder of and specific about my qualities? What was holding me back? I believe my family background and upbringing is relevant. I grew up in a normal family with a father, mother, and a younger sister and brother. I was very smart and good at school. This was difficult for my parents who had received little or no education. My sister and brother were also not the best students. I was different. During my childhood, I learned not to make a fuss about my projects and achievements at school. I was not ignored, but my family felt intimidated and were afraid I would become arrogant. Thus, I learned to keep my head down. By contrast, I was asked for my qualities when the family needed them. Having a caring but distant father and mother, who gave me the freedom to play outside, I see my childhood as an 'open space'. At the age of 17, my father died and my mother needed me to keep the family going. I passed my Gym-Beta examination, but did not go to university. To please my mother, temporarily, I started a course to become a secretary. I had no choice. Only recently did I realize that this situation has deeply affected and wounded me. I feel emotionally misused by someone 'close' who had a responsibility for my well-being; I felt neglected, unappreciated, and my 'sacrifice' not valued. For the last 18 years, I have worked as an independent change agent. Twice, I have tried to accept a fixed position in a company where I started as an interim; the last one recently. I decided to take a course at Baak Institute to reflect on this topic. Why can I perform well as an interim change agent but fail in permanent positions? Can I not relate well to my superiors? By deeply reflecting, I realized that working in an independent role influences me psychologically. This 'independency', the psychological freedom to leave at any time has kept me in balance and gives me the energy and strength to perform and relate to people. In these situations, I am a good leader, interested in people, calm during stress, able to analyze problems, and create overview and focus. A former client noted that my way of working made chaos disappear; people start to work with focus and energy. I create structure; people can flourish again. I can relate to Csikszentmihalyi's idea of 'flow'. 'Flowing' people make me happy. I consider myself as an 'unlocker'; identifying roadblocks and any missing connections in order to create and

establish new connections, releasing energy and bringing relief. I do not want to be seen as a 'smart-ass'. By contrast, being part of an organization, looking at the situation at a distance, especially when I felt at home in such a company, made it difficult for me to leave. Reflecting on the two attempts to accept a permanent position, I have concluded that, at some point, I started to feel trapped and misused, just like in my childhood. This feeling of anxiety made me emotionally unstable and impacted the way I behaved with my colleagues and superiors. Reflecting on my behavior and the way I relate to others, I have learned that in the loop of observing, thinking, feeling and acting, I avoided feeling; it evoked too many painful memories. I never deeply reflected on these feelings and automatically moved on to other assignments. By taking the time to reflect on specific situations, I now feel that I am able to connect with teams and individuals more effectively, regardless of whether I am an independent change agent or in a fixed position. This no longer matters; I trust and understand myself better. Recently, I started a permanent position at a large company and I feel my experience and qualities as a person and a professional are valued. During the interviews, I was clear about my qualities and they were clear about their requirements. After 28 years, it feels like starting a new and mutually appreciated career. I have no further recommendations for improving the process of becoming a team member."

2. Narrative interviewee 2 – Jade

"I gained 15 years of experience within the same multinational and organizational culture, taking several functional positions culminating in my role as an Internal Auditor today. During the last six years, I have been auditing dozens of business units located around the globe, entering and exiting a variety of teams operating in diverse backgrounds, businesses, and cultural contexts. A 'transmitter' from the outset, gathering and passing on information about best practices within the company, I need to quickly establish good contact with the local team to access the existing control environment, identify weaknesses, and communicate results within two to three weeks. My assignments are almost never identical in terms of my anxieties, associations, appearance, awareness, communication, emotions, fears, feelings, and interactions, although some experiences are repetitive. I have developed and improved these attributes over the years and now understand the mutual effect of the team and myself on the process of (not) becoming a team member. Unfortunately, one of my fears relates to the age-old perception of auditors as 'big brother is watching you'. Regarding my identity, I never dreamt about an occupation as an Auditor; it happened rather unexpectedly and was certainly not the result of any long-term thinking about my life. I just took what was available,

which is in sharp contrast to my parents teaching me to 'play safe and avoid any risk'. Regarding my upbringing, I consider myself very 'lucky', being raised with love, but very 'unlucky' being controlled and overly protected 'for the best'. I have never faced any tense situations with my surroundings due to the status of my parents in our local community and rather introverted character, and I always got what I wanted easily. I have never been rejected, and my weaknesses have neither been exposed to anybody else other than my parents, nor discussed with me. My parents always backed me up and solved my issues, rather than going deeper into my struggles. At school, I was one of the best in my class, especially in math and physics. I studied hard, but sometimes 'played around' too much, messing up the study, unconsciously knowing that my parents would 'protect' me anyway. I did not face any serious competition at school, or at university or work. Any rare failures were followed by emotions and tears; I was not used to dealing with it myself. My parents were controlling in terms of needing to know where I was, with whom and requiring me to be at home early and at an agreed time, much earlier than my friends. If the rules were not followed, I ended up in heated discussion, often with a lot of shouting, and a single physical punishment. I have never been a part of a sport team. Moreover, I was withdrawn from physical activities due health issues. Although, I have an older brother, he left home before I turned seven, so I was raised in a 'one child family', always the center of attention, and I felt very jealous when my mum was diverting all her love to my sibling when he stayed with us for summer holidays once a year. Throughout my childhood, I was raised with the 'gypsy' idea; there will be a day when the family moves from an 'unknown', poor, military garrison in The Far East in Russia to settle down in big and beautiful Saint Petersburg. Compared to my outgoing dad, my mum never had girlfriends, like me now. This was partly due to a life 'living out of suitcases', and partly due to her character. Over-control and protection 'forced' me into doing things that I thought they would never have approved of, secretly. I still do this today; I take the risk, but I feel the freedom, which is important to me. At times, I go too far, neglecting things. At 23, this over-control became a strong motivator to flee my parents' home and have my own experiences around the world. I moved to Moscow and later to the Netherlands; not easy for a little and curious bird who has fallen out of the nest. Over-protected and isolated in the past, I feel myself a 'triple-protected prisoner', lacking social skills. I still find it difficult to connect to people, to build and maintain long-lasting friendships. Knowing I am capable, I feel uncomfortable and worried about this process, resulting in avoidance. I feel insecure and uncertain in unknown environments. I cannot stand rudeness and shouting, and struggle to find words and arguments to sort out disrespectful behavior, resulting in emotional outbursts,

which prevent straight thinking. Thus, I seek ways to check out or ‘agree’ instead of facing and dealing with the problem. I lack the skills to formulate, express, and transfer my thoughts. Raised as a ‘golden girl’, it is difficult to prove myself. I am a perfectionist and find it hard to get past mistakes or failures. I suffer if I don’t get tangible confirmation or if I don’t get enough attention, and see others ‘center stage’; I feel unfairness, attacked and perceived as less. Over the course of the last three years, I have been taking coaching and this has certainly improved my anxiety and social skills. Sooner or later, I will sense a ‘wind of change’. Then, I will know it is time to move on and change job or place. In a quest for escape or liberation and I am working on reducing my anxieties to build confidence. The process of becoming a team member could be improved by providing genuine interest in others through deep listening and questioning, continuous self-reflection, and sharing feelings and information. By showing your true nature when connecting to a team; by sensing the opposite, people will check out. My experience is that people with the same ‘interests and qualities’ connect more easily and for longer.”

3. Narrative interviewee 3 – Mike

“As an adept change agent, I am used to (dis)connecting with new teams, frequently in organizational, high-pressure change situations characterized by extreme levels of ambiguity and uncertainty, shaking up basic personal and organizational needs and stabilized attainments. Often, people in these situations have been mentally ‘abused’ by previous management over a longer period and are relatively open to and even ‘begging’ for attention, mental freedom, and psychological and business-related support. At the same time, they are extremely sensitive and vulnerable, something you can ‘see and smell’ when you start interacting. I find this quite disappointing, painful, and sad. But, it also means a fruitful and useful basis for ‘reaching out’ and connecting on a psychodynamic and psychological level, especially when you have a clear and directive, but supportive and humble management style and you are genuinely interested in them. People sense this immediately and, in my opinion, it significantly determines the quality and success of the initial contact phase and further development of the relationship with individuals and/or the team; communication (deep listening, being clear and consistent), consistent behavior, fairness, radiating proactive, positive energy and focus with flexibility are indispensable attributes. I seriously try to avoid people perceiving me as a ‘scrutator’, which taps into my fears. In my career, I rarely experience ‘impossible’ people; if I do, it’s usually for a good and (re)solvable reason. I experience those complex situations as extremely challenging and exciting, not doubtful about

the outcome and envisioning various options and possibilities to 'get the job done', but – and this is important for me – better and quicker than anybody else. Most people would walk away from these circumstances, but I feel extremely inspired to meet the team, get acquainted and start building something meaningful. I feel happy and satisfied to be in charge, not because I like being the boss, but because I like supporting others and the company to continuously improve in my own way; especially in the early stage of connecting, building and establishing a team. At the same time, it's about being able to 'protect' employees against others with disrespectful, disturbing and/or frustrating intentions. I am a demanding change agent and I like supporting people to make it happen. It motivates me, gives me a good feeling. I was raised in a loving, respectful and hard-working family. My mother became sick when I was a kid and my father had a heart attack when I was 16. As a result, my three brothers and I did everything in the home, including cooking and gardening, with a lot of drive and enthusiasm. So, I am used to 'not complaining', to 'dealing with everybody', and to 'getting the job done', whatever the circumstances. Besides that, respect for other people and ourselves was a central and significant theme in our family. As a kid, I was bullied a lot because my teeth weren't straight. I was extremely bored at school, so skipped class and was disruptive. I was expelled from school twice. Reflecting deeply on this, those difficult and painful experiences formed my personality: being able to connect with others, being creative (always being able to find solutions), I am extremely driven (to accomplish results better and quicker than others, probably to 'prove' myself), inquisitive (I like to learn and understand it 'all'), and respectful (to others and myself). Even though not always easy, I consider my childhood and upbringing as a period with an 'aureole' around it. To feel good, I need to be a – far above average – productive, respectful, and social person, never hesitating to discover and contribute to the world. Those and other attributes are greatly appreciated and necessary for an interim change agent. The opposite is also true: not getting what I need makes me disappointed (in myself and others), and sad, resulting in feeling like a 'loser'. I am quite sensitive to the physical environment I work in; an old, badly maintained building or office makes me feel 'depressed' and a modern, well maintained building or office gives me energy and positive associations. Returning to the process of becoming a team member, a constraint I regularly experience is the 'limitation' determined by shareholders and/or clients; the people that hire you for the complex task. Initially, and sometimes during the recovery phase, they try to tell you (the 'expert' they hired ...) what to do and what not to do. This deeply frustrates me and leads to mistrust; it's a violation of my professional 'change agent identity', limiting the speed of connecting deeply with the team, due to different approaches and/or

directions, which influences the drive, focus, motivation and trust for me and the team. Moreover, it is time consuming and delays deadlines. I rarely have issues when connecting with people and I hardly feel, see or 'smell' issues regarding other people connecting to me. If I do, I try to find out what the limitation is about and how I can resolve it. The connection process is smoother if my presence is announced on time and when I introduce myself well at the start of an assignment. This gives individuals time to get used to the idea and to talk and gossip about it, which reduces ambiguity and uncertainty and increases trust.”

4. Narrative interviewee 4 – Rico

“During the last few weeks, I have been intensively involved in preparing for the interview(s) by reading academic texts and reflecting deeply on aspects of the research question. I agree with, recognize(d), and learned a lot about and from the five different perspectives, especially from comparing and discussing them in detail, but also by disagreeing with some aspects. This participation process turned out to be quite difficult, especially deeply reflecting and putting my thoughts on paper – something I am not used to doing – but it has significantly increased my awareness of who I am and how I behave. Regularly (dis)connecting with and managing middle-management teams is a ‘routine’ activity for me. My working environments are relatively stable, but specific time-pressured improvements in an IT or logistic functional area are required and managed by the team and me. This process, in which I imagine myself to be a ‘connector’ between people, excites me a lot. Usually, my arrival is announced upfront and my role and responsibilities are sufficiently clear. Due to my honesty and openness, I connect easily with others. I can always justify my actions and decisions in a dialogical manner, which creates trust. I do not judge anybody, I try to get the best out of the team; a genuine approach not just to managing the ‘business’, but to treating the team as a family, which makes people feel cared for. Using this approach, connecting to others, not acting like a ‘pretender’, I seldom experience any disruptions, which makes me happy. Nevertheless, when starting an assignment, I have some anxieties and fears related to acceptance, radiating appropriate behavior, underperformance, and of being dismissed for making mistakes. This is partly related to insecurities about not finishing my bachelor’s degree. I also feel some frustration towards people coming from a financially ‘richer’ background than me; I consider it unfair and it feels like they did not need to utilize their personal potential to reach the same point. This feeling is not related to my ‘poor’ Yugoslavian background. Sometimes, all these things worry me and keep me awake. During assignments, I need to feel fortunate in a specific philosophical way: ‘Ubuntu’, meaning ‘you

are only fortunate in a team when all team members are fortunate as well'. I try to achieve and share this positive feeling by creating an open and safe environment and providing a balanced, fair, honest, open, stable, and supportive management style to create something meaningful for the team, business, or society. I feel disappointed, guilty, and sad when this does not happen. This approach and feeling is strongly related to the way I was raised. My parents were and are socially correct and polite, they are good to others and family. They strongly believe in acceptance of others, not being selfish or greedy; they promote harmony and total respect for others. They have a balanced, social communication and I was disciplined if these expectations were not met. The strict discipline was designed to extort standards and values, and is something I consider valuable and – looking back – appreciate. When I was two years old, my parents, my three older sisters and I fled the war in Yugoslavia and sought asylum in the Netherlands. As a family of refugees, not speaking the language, missing family in Yugoslavia, not knowing if we would ever go back to our homeland, and with no job, it was difficult to adapt and integrate into this new society. My parents sacrificed much of their own lives to provide for the four children and to create a harmonious family, but that does not mean a family without discussions and verbal fights. We had issues inside the family, but they were never communicated to the outside world. Being grateful about being 'accepted' in the Netherlands further emphasized the importance of 'ubuntu'. As a kid, I spent many holidays and Saturdays working with my dad, and learned to connect and be part of different and new social groups, always behaving in a very correct and polite manner. I experienced hard labor as my father worked as a plasterer. Despite acting like a 'rebel', I still had to be respectful, whatever happened and in whatever circumstances. For my parents, providing for the kids was key; for the kids, helping our parents wherever possible was essential. This experience strongly impacts my current approach and behavior as a change agent. I was taught to be humble and not spend money unnecessarily. I like to be recognized as helpful and kind, sometimes struggling to set my boundaries. I try to avoid conflicts and seek to bring people together to (re)solve issues. Providing functional and social 'value' to individuals, teams, or society makes me feel fortunate and satisfied. A successful team in terms of co-operation and achieved results, makes me excited, happy, and proud. Considering my level of assignments in a relatively stable environment and situation, being announced and introduced professionally in advance, I do not have any further recommendations for improving the process of becoming a team member."

5. Narrative interviewee 5 – Sisi

“With twenty years of experience as a project manager, I am used to (dis)connecting with teams on a regular basis. I start connecting functionally; what do we have to achieve, where are we in the process, and how can I help? I introduce myself, indicating my specific contributions, my first steps as part of the team, and my willingness to support them. I am a ‘deliverer & savior’; achieving goals on time. During the start, I closely monitor how team members operate. I get to know them more personally in informal ‘one-to-one’ settings. Sometimes, I find it hard to make a deeper connection, because of the culture, for example using nicknames within the team (e.g. Pat, for Patrick). This makes me uncomfortable, because I only do this with close friends. I also believe I do not have anything unique or interesting to say, add, or share in a conversation. Shortly after the start of my assignment, I find myself rebelling against the stakeholders (client, management, team, suppliers, partners) in order to achieve order. I provoke the stakeholders slightly to disrupt old ways of working and to introduce new ways of working and cooperation. Not wanting to be perceived as a ‘second-hand car salesman’, I aim for transparency by being clear about goals and actions, talking directly to people involved, instead of talking about them, and by indicating to individuals involved when I escalate things, also by accepting ‘no’ for an answer, and by looking for solutions and next steps. I try to value each team member’s personality and input. I expect them to be able and willing to fulfil their role. I have a positive approach to team members and show this by listening to their input and stories. I greet them in the morning and when they are leaving and make small talk at the coffee machine. I encourage people to contact and support each other. If someone does something unexpected, I try to find out why. Usually, the reason is a lack of information. I am focused on cues to discover unwillingness, resignation from the task, conflict, (un)clarity, and ‘friendly ignorance’. When team members are open to improvement, I support their development. In each assignment, I am looking for new environmental, functional, locational, and social challenges. I am excited when things fall into place, when the team works together, when work gets done, and when an assignment is successful. Sometimes, I can almost smell the drive and cooperation. It makes me proud to provide guidance and be part of these moments. It feels like being a ‘father’ who has raised his children well. I was raised in a strictly religious, caring, but not loving, family on a remote farm, 15 kilometres away from school and friends, with only one older brother to play with and with few social challenges, contacts or variation. I never received hugs, kisses, or love from my parents and I was taught that a ‘social life’ should be ‘Calvinist’, i.e. functional; feelings, ideas, different views were not discussed. In that respect, I am a prisoner

of the past, trying to escape. Until the age of 18, I took sport very seriously and did not like studying. But based on the kind of jobs I wanted, I took studying more seriously and found it much more interesting. I completed a Master's in Business Science. In working life, feedback suggests that team members value my 'result orientation', 'ethics', and 'self-control'. They indicate room for improvement with respect to 'teamwork', 'conflicts & crisis', and 'consultation'. Although I am not happy about the lower scores, I know I cannot involve the team in every decision; but if I communicate my approach and the reasons behind it more clearly, the scores might improve. They also indicate I can improve the way I support my team to become a better team member. To do so, I can give more direct guidance and/or challenge team members by asking questions to support their thinking process. This point is almost certainly related to my upbringing. It is also difficult for me to 'determine & judge' the level of – deeper – connection to people. I am proud that no team member has ever resigned during my assignments. Sometimes they fight, but they never take flight. I guess they do not leave, because one of my contributions is achieving structured progress and cooperation, without blame, and with enough attention to personal situations. To improve my skillset, I read articles, books, practice, reflect, and follow specific programs, like Leadership Transition at INSEAD. I 'functionally' reflect more based on what I think than based on what I say. It is hard to deal with people who do not seem to listen to advice and it is a challenge to find out how dominant I can or should be when entering a new team. Almost daily, I am insecure about being fast enough, reflecting enough, and smart enough to achieve maximum results. In order to connecting to the team more easily, it would be beneficial not to start by discussing content and operational issues. It is better to spend time getting to know all stakeholders and their input. Given my upbringing, it will remain a challenge to make a deeper connection with teams. It is difficult for me to learn and change and this makes me feel frustrated. But, I keep pushing myself to reflect and improve, including by working with a coach and paying attention to suggestions."

This deeper introduction provided by narratives, combined with quotes from the form as presented in Appendix 3 and/or third object session, leads to a personal interpretation, as described in paragraph 5.3.4.

The last part of this paragraph is based on the outcome of an extensive 'meta level' discussion during the third object session in response to the question: Viewed from a psychodynamic and psychological perspective, what is a change agent?

In random order, the result of this discussion is summarized in four points. Change agents:

- must contribute to society by applying appreciated qualities: This contribution to society, more specifically, to individuals and organizations, can be expressed by looking at the associations the interviewees make about their role as a change agent: Belle, who works at a middle- to high-management level, stated: *“I consider myself an ‘unlocker’; identifying roadblocks and any missing connections to create and establish new connections, releasing energy and bringing relief.”* Jade, who acts as an international auditor, considered herself: *“a ‘transmitter’, gathering and passing on information about best practices within the company.”* Mike, who works as a CEO, said: *“Mostly, I feel like a ‘liberator’, liberating people from their previously suppressive, unprofessional management.”* Rico, who operates as a middle manager between departments: *“This process, in which I imagine myself to be a ‘connector’ between people, excites me a lot.”* Finally, Sisi, an IT project manager, stated: *“I am a ‘deliverer & savior’; achieving goals in time.”* Even though all these cross-cases associations are relatively ‘close’ in terms of providing an intended contribution to society, they all have a different underlying meaning related to the context, level, and possibilities within an organization and their related responsibility, i.e. they are within-case different;
- need to repeatedly prove ourselves, based on past experiences: Interestingly, all interviewees report having to clearly and repeatedly prove their identity. This conclusion is not explicit when reading the forms and narratives, but emerged during the third object session. In this case, too, there are significant differences;
- need to repeatedly (dis)connect based on past experiences: Interviewees strongly align ‘connecting and disconnecting’ to repeatedly proving themselves. The more we can (dis)connect, the more we can prove ourselves;
- need to repeatedly overcome anxieties and fears. This seems to be part of the process of (dis)connecting and proving ourselves and feels like a masochistic exercise.

5.3.4 Personal Interpretation

In summary, having synthesized and reflected on the findings and observations, based on my intuition and deeper reflection, I can make the following personal cross-case and within-case interpretation regarding the (cap)abilities of the five interviewees related to the process of becoming a team member. Observing some similarities between cases, including social

isolation or activity and extraordinary – adverse – circumstances during childhood, I consider Jade and Sisi to be rather weak from a psychodynamic and psychological perspective, and Mike and Rico to be rather strong in terms of applying (un)conscious skills to the process of becoming a team member. I consider Belle to be somewhere ‘in between’.

An essential part of the within-case analyses can be found below, where the three groups, Jade and Sisi, Mike and Rico, and Belle respectively, are interpreted in detail.

1. Jade & Sisi

Jade and Sisi were both raised in a ‘triple-isolated’ environment, in, respectively, a military garrison in the Far East in Russia, a mother with limited social interest in connecting to others, and an overprotective father, and a remote farm, one brother with learning difficulties and religious, caring, but not loving parents. In terms of their upbringing, Jade and Sisi expressed associations including being a ‘triple-protected prisoner’ in childhood and being raised in a ‘Calvinist’ way. Jade and Sisi connect to people, but on a functional level rather than a psychodynamic one. This was ‘unconsciously’ articulated in their own change agent associations: ‘transmitter of best practices’ and ‘deliverer of project results’, respectively. Both lack deeper connection skills, simply because neither were taught (how) to do so and have been unable to practice and develop these skills over the years. Jade expressed this perfectly: “*My parents always backed me up and solved my issues, rather than going deeper into my struggles.*”, and Sisi: “[...] *I was taught that ‘social life’ should be ‘Calvinist’, i.e. functional; feelings, ideas, different views were not discussed.*” Today, both are aware of and frustrated about this lack of social skills and are ‘prisoners of the past, trying to escape’. As Jade says: “*I still find it difficult to connect to people, to build and maintain long-lasting friendships.*” The solution is partly in preparation and partly in execution: reading articles and books, being coached, practicing, and reflecting. CCRTs hinder this process: For Jade, this relates to ‘overprotection’ and ‘disrespectful behavior’, especially shouting (at her); for Sisi, it relates to ‘stepping out of his comfort zone’. For both interviewees, this results in anxieties and fears, such as not being good enough and being rejected (Jade), and “*can I do the ‘trick’ in a new environment*” and speaking up (Sisi). The lack of sufficient social skills is ‘unconsciously’ ‘continued’ in their current jobs. As an international auditor, Jade connects with teams for two to three weeks several times per year. A deeper psychodynamic connection is not absolutely required in this ‘functional’ role and if it fails Jade can escape shortly after: “*Thus, I seek ways to check out or ‘agree’ instead of facing and dealing with the*

problem”. This situation is also reflected in Sisi’s experiences as an interim IT project manager: *“I start connecting functionally; what do we have to achieve, where are we in the process, and how can I help?”* Even though this is (un)consciously a painful process, both are continuously seeking repetitiveness. In Jade’s case, it amounts to: *“Knowing I am capable, I feel uncomfortable and worried about this process, resulting in avoidance. I feel insecure and uncertain in unknown environments”*; and for Sisi, who never stepped out of a project before delivering results, it is a matter of unconsciously knowing he *can* step out due to an *interim* agreement. Repetitiveness provides both a possibility to learn how to deal with the situation and a ‘safe’ place to hide (Turquet, 1979). The lack of teaching and practice in ‘becoming a team member’ during the interviewees’ upbringing has, however, been improved upon over the years. Jade: *“I have developed and improved these attributes over the years and now understand the mutual effect of the team and myself on the process of (not) becoming a team member.”* For Sisi different: *“It is [...] difficult for me to ‘determine & judge’ the level of – deeper – connection to people.”* To connect on a deeper psychodynamic and psychological level, both are aiming and ‘hunting’ for an experience that gives them a deeper feeling that neither have felt before, which is an interesting and learning journey. In Jade’s case, a remark made during the third object session is particularly revealing: *“My mum always told me not to smile, because if I smile a lot, I will become wrinkled and look old. Coincidentally, during my adulthood, I am always getting remarks that I do not smile and look too serious. This feature fits my auditor occupation very well, supporting the ‘serious’ function and not connecting to people. However, this is not the way I want to be.”*

2. Mike & Rico

Mike and Rico both originated in a caring and loving family. In Mike’s words: *“I was raised in a loving, respectful, and hard-working family.”* And Rico said: *“My parents were and are socially correct and polite, they are good to others and family.”* As a result, both are used to receiving love and sharing feelings. At the same time, both families faced extraordinary circumstances. As a child, Mike had to deal with a sick mother and provide significant support in the household, including cooking and gardening. He was also sent away to family during school holidays. At the age of two, Rico and his family fled the war in Yugoslavia and sought asylum in the Netherlands. Both these situations resulted the interviewees constantly adapting and adjusting to other people, whatever the circumstances, expressed by Mike as: *“So, I am used to ‘not complaining’, to ‘dealing with everybody’, and to ‘getting the job done’, whatever the circumstances.”*, Rico, in turn, said that: *“As a kid, I spent many holidays*

and Saturdays working with my dad, and learned to connect and be part of different and new social groups, always behaving in a very correct and polite manner.” Both Mike and Rico constantly experienced and learned from (dis)connecting to other people and related circumstances based on acceptance, fairness, harmony, openness, respect, and not being selfish; at home, this was taught using ‘discipline’. This strongly developed the skill to adapt to others, often to the extent that their own boundaries are crossed. It also results in CCRTs related to ‘not being taken seriously’ and ‘being treated disrespectfully’. As mentioned, both learned ‘not to complain and do the job, in whatever circumstances’. Moreover, Mike was bullied and stuttered, and Rico was a ‘rebel’ who fought with his father a lot. This developed discipline, perseverance, and a drive to achieve success. As Mike states: *“Reflecting deeply on this, those difficult and painful experiences formed my personality: being able to connect with others, being creative (always being able to find solutions), I am extremely driven (to accomplish results better and quicker than others, probably to ‘prove’ myself), inquisitive (I like to learn and understand it ‘all’), and respectful (to others and myself).*” Rico said: *“They [My parents, MP] have a balanced, social communication and I was disciplined if these expectations were not met. The strict discipline was designed to extort standards and values, and is something I consider valuable and – looking back – appreciate.”* Those ‘negative drivers’ turned out to be positive in terms of strongly developed skills to ‘sense’ deeply and connect to individuals and teams, supporting people in a functional and psychological way. Mike reflects on being a change agent thus: *“Mostly, I feel like a ‘liberator’, liberating people from their previously suppressive, unprofessional management.”* And Rico: *“This process, in which I imagine myself to be a ‘connector’ between people, excites me a lot.”* In both associations, the emphasis is on the psychodynamic and psychological – instead of functional – meaning. Mike and Rico hardly ever experience issues when connecting to others: Mike told how: *“I rarely have issues when connecting with people and I hardly feel, see or ‘smell’ issues regarding other people connecting to me.”* Similarly, Rico said: *“Due to my honesty and openness, I connect easily with others. I can always justify my actions and decisions in a dialogical manner, which creates trust.”* The downside is that dealing with CCRTs and the related anxieties and fear regarding acceptance, being good, experienced, humble, knowledgeable, nice, quick, smart, and supportive enough, results in an unstoppable pressure to prove themselves, always and everywhere, regardless of the circumstances.

3. Belle

As mentioned, I consider Belle somewhere ‘in between’ in terms of the process and her ability to (not) become a team member. Belle grew up in an ordinary, working-class family; it was a caring and loving, but at the same time rather ‘distant’ environment. Belle considers herself to be different to her brother, sister and parents: *“I was very smart and good at school. This was difficult for my parents who had received little or no education. [...] During my childhood, I learned not to make a fuss about my projects and achievements at school. I was not ignored, but my family felt intimidated and were afraid I would become arrogant.”* Belle grew up ‘in and between’ the family, meaning as long as she kept her head down, caused no problems for others, all went well. She also felt her qualities were (mis)used to support the family. Belle developed herself and transcended the family: *“Having a caring but distant father and mother, who gave me the freedom to play outside, I see my childhood as an ‘open space’.”* The aforementioned sense of feeling ‘misused’ became stronger when the family faced extraordinary circumstances; her father died when she was 17. Thus, her mother needed her to keep the family going, which impacted Belle heavily: *“Only recently did I realize that this situation has deeply affected and wounded me. I feel emotionally misused by someone ‘close’ who had a responsibility for my well-being; I felt neglected, unappreciated, and my ‘sacrifice’ not valued.”* Belle’s CCRTs are related to feeling less and being (mis)used. Even today this plays a part in her life, resulting in a relatively easy deeper psychodynamic and psychological connection to individuals and teams, when she feels genuinely appreciated and accepted for her qualities. However, if Belle does not feel appreciated for her qualities or feels slightly misused by higher management, she heavily blocks, gets frustrated, and her behavior and communication can become out of control: *“[...] I have concluded that, at some point, I started to feel trapped and misused, just like in my childhood. This feeling of anxiety made me emotionally unstable and impacted the way I behaved with my colleagues and superiors.”* Being an interim change agent gives her the possibility to ‘unconsciously’ disconnect if necessary: *“This ‘independence’, the psychological freedom to leave at any time has kept me in balance and gives me the energy and strength to perform and relate to people.”* Moreover, to become part of a team, and to function well, Belle must feel an appreciated part of the business family, something she missed in her upbringing, to be able to contribute and strengthen her appreciated qualities.

Figure 3 provides a summary of the similarities and differences regarding the previously described groups. I have chosen the aspects ‘Functional, Psychodynamic, and Psychological Orientation’, because they are strongly related to the subject of investigation – being an

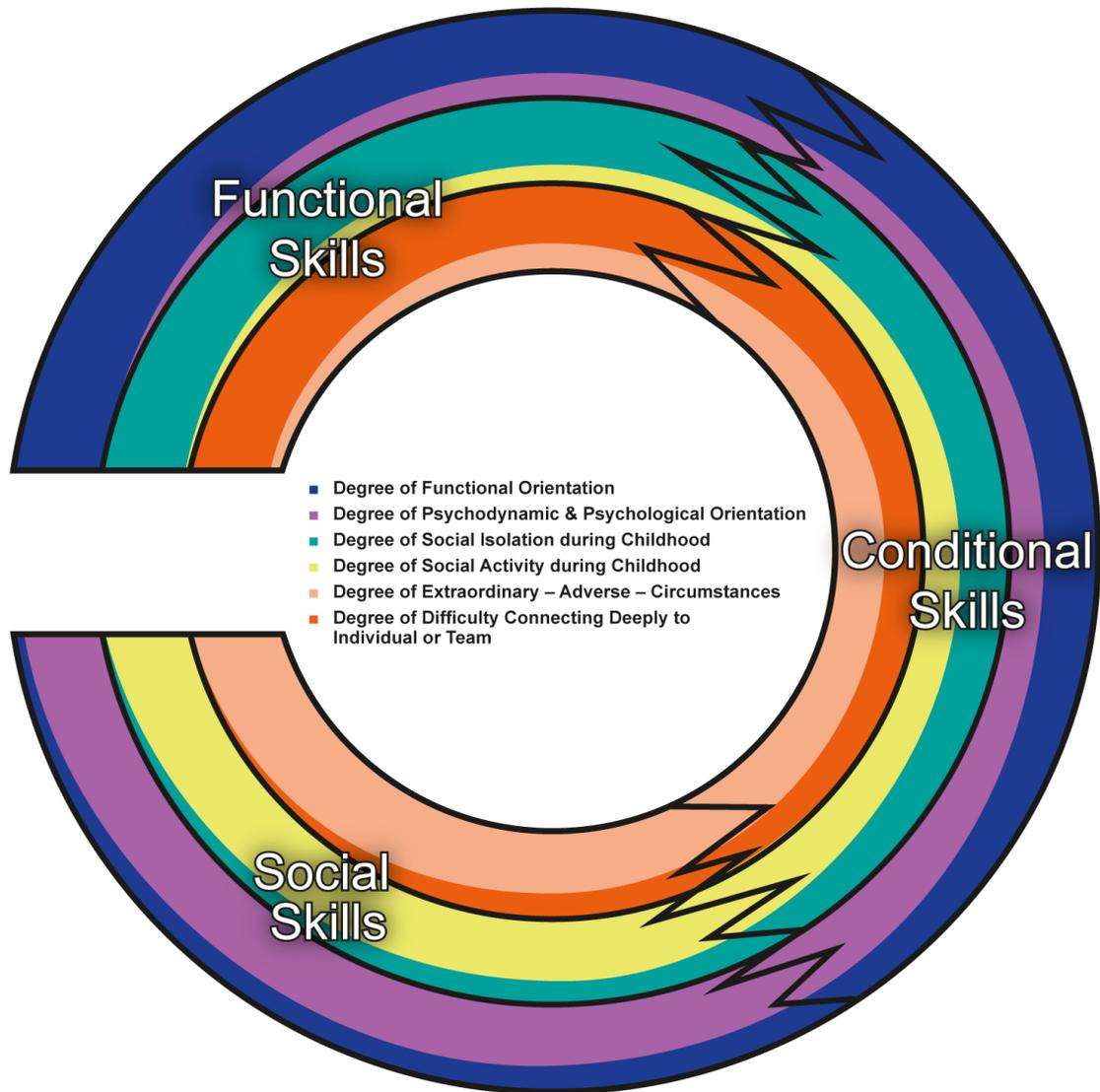
interim change agent – and are different in all three groups. I have chosen for the orientations ‘Social Isolation and Active during Childhood’, and ‘Unordinary – Adverse – Circumstances’ since these, too, are key in the research and result in the ability to ‘Deeper Connect to Individual or Team’.

To reiterate, with respect to the research question, a variation in functional and/or psychodynamic or psychological orientation makes a difference regarding the process to become a team member, alongside recognized aspects of Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and to a lesser extent Bauman (1991). This does not mean, however, that a difference is not appreciated; some organizational contexts need, for example, a functional orientation.

5.4 A Thought: From Childhood & Upbringing via CCRTs to Occupation

Although not directly related to the research question, further analysis of the data triggered thoughts about the relationship between developed CCRTs and the occupation of change agent, specifically the social context during childhood and upbringing. Figure 4 demonstrates a pattern: (non-)developed attributes gained under certain conditions during childhood and upbringing turn into deeply rooted CCRTs. These CCRTs lead to behavior, with strong and weak points, that directly influences the ability to connect deeply to individuals and teams on a psychodynamic and psychological level, expressed as functional and social skills. Instead of resolving or improving CCRTs-related weaknesses, change agents ‘unconsciously’ continue to choose working environments that maintain these weaknesses, resulting in ‘no dramatic change’ in terms of the ability to improve the process of (not) becoming a team member, i.e. ‘continuation instead of revisiting’. This strongly relates to the associations the change agents have about themselves regarding their occupation; change agents like to contribute to society by applying appreciated qualities, repeatedly need to prove themselves, and therefore seek to repeatedly (dis)connect and overcome anxieties and fears.

Figure 3 - Cross-Case & Within-Case Analysis



Jade & Sisi - *Functional Skills to become Team Member*

Functional Skills

- Socially isolated childhood within family
- Limited external social contacts
- No extraordinary – adverse – circumstances
- Protectionism throughout childhood
- Discipline around respectful behavior, standards & values
- Limited expression of feelings
- Weak skills to connect deeply regardless conditions
- Transcended family in social dimensions*

Belle - *Conditional Skills to become Team Member*

Conditional Skills

- Socially 'constrained' childhood within family
- Variety of external social contacts
- Extraordinary – adverse – circumstances
- Exposed to duties & roles
- Discipline around respectful behavior, standards & values
- Distant feelings
- Strong skills to connect deeply under certain conditions
- Transcended family in social dimensions*

Mike & Rico - *Functional & Social Skills to become Team Member*

Social Skills

- Socially active childhood within family
- Variety of external social contacts
- Extraordinary – adverse – circumstances
- Exposed to duties & roles
- Strong discipline around respectful behavior, standards & values
- Expression of feelings
- Strong skills to connect deeply regardless conditions
- Transcended family in social dimensions*

* with different forces contributing to the phenomenon in each specific case.

Figure 4 – From Childhood & Upbringing via CCRTs to Occupation

Related aspects	Sisi	Jade	Belle	Mike	Rico
Childhood & upbringing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially isolated childhood within & values family • Limited external social contacts • No extraordinary – adverse – circumstances • Protectionism throughout childhood • Discipline around respectful behavior, standards & values • Limited expression of feelings • Weak skills to connect deeply regardless conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially constrained childhood within family • Variety of external social contacts • Extraordinary – adverse – circumstances • Exposed to duties & roles • Discipline around respectful behavior, standards & values • Distant feelings • Strong skills to connect deeply under certain conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially active childhood within family • Variety of external social contacts • Extraordinary – adverse – circumstances • Exposed to duties & roles • Strong discipline around respectful behavior, standards & values • Expression of feelings • Strong skills to connect deeply regardless conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being taken seriously • Being treated disrespectfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrespectful behavior
CCRTs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepping out of comfort zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overprotection • Disrespectful behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling less • Being (mis)used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to handle conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to handle conflict
Potential for conflict avoidance	Able to handle conflict	Unable to handle conflict	Unable to handle conflict	Able to handle conflict	Able to handle conflict
Potential for emotional control	Extremely high	Low	Low	High	High
Skills	Functional	Functional	Conditional	Social & Functional	Social & Functional
CCRTs pattern	Intentional escalation	Avoidance	Unintentional escalation	Immediate resolution	Delayed resolution
CCRTs' effect on process of becoming a team member	Tends to work against	Works against	Works against	Supports	Tends to support
Influence of CCRTs on choice of occupation	Occupational identity and environment where functional skills for connecting are sufficient	Occupational identity and environment where change agent feels appreciated, so functional & social skills get unlocked	Occupational identity where change agent shapes the environment	No specific links identified	No specific links identified

Chapter Six: Findings & Conclusions, Limitations & Future Research

6.1 Introduction

In paragraph 3.10, expectations are provided regarding the outcome of this research. To conclude the thesis, this Chapter details expected and unexpected findings and conclusions in paragraph 6.2, the experienced limitations regarding this research in paragraph 6.3, and suggestions for future research in paragraph 6.4.

6.2 Findings & Conclusions

Deeply reflecting on the five theoretical perspectives, childhood, upbringing, and CCRTs of the interviewees, and the research question, resulted in expected and unexpected findings.

In summary, the expected findings are:

- A significant part of the five perspectives related to the process of becoming a team member are clearly recognized and inherent in daily (working) life;
- The dual capacity role as described by Turquet (1979) is always applicable for a change agent;
- The chosen research methodology significantly stimulated deeper reflection by the interviewees and resulted in a rich and thick description of attributes and experiences, and a deep and extensive learning process;
- Childhood, upbringing, and CCRTs strongly influence – interactive communication – the capabilities, skills, and limitations involved in the process of becoming a team member.

In summary, all the unexpected findings mentioned below can significantly contribute to improving the process of becoming a team member. The findings are divided into three groups:

1. ‘Inside’ the change agent; aspects related to the ‘internal’ world of the change agent, such as contextual-, functional-, and team dynamics-related knowledge, as well as learning, reflection, and social skills;
2. ‘Outside’ the change agent; external aspects strongly influencing the process of becoming a team member;
3. Process improvement; aspects related to the preparation and execution of the process.

The ‘inside’ related findings are:

- The process of becoming a team member is accelerated and improved by ‘exploiting’ the characteristics of high-pressure change situations by the change agent providing balanced and strong – ‘unconscious’ (Bion, 1961) and conscious (Weick, 1995) – social skills – Simmel (1950) called this ‘intelligence’ – in combination with the relatively weak mental position of a team that has endured poor circumstances over a long period. This relates to the dual capacity role as described by Turquet (1979): the change agent having the – additional – capacity to provide a ‘reaching-out initiative’ and increasing the dependency of the team on the change agent (Bion, 1961);
- The process of becoming a team member is accelerated and improved by deeply ‘understanding’ the local historical background, context of the business and, for example industry, based on extensive experience. Team members sense that the change agent knows what he is talking about, which improves trust. This – additional – capacity to provide ‘extensive experience’ also increases the team’s dependency on the change agent (Bion, 1961);
- Change agents like to contribute to society by applying appreciated qualities, repeatedly need to prove themselves, and therefore seek to repeatedly (dis)connect and overcome anxieties and fears;
- Instead of resolving or improving CCRTs-related weaknesses, change agents ‘unconsciously’ continue to choose working environments where these weaknesses are maintained, resulting in ‘no dramatic change’ in terms of the ability to improve the process of (not) becoming a team member, i.e. ‘continuation instead of revisiting’;
- Knowledge of experiences of childhood and upbringing are highly valuable in a positive or negative sense when selecting and applying effective change agents; the – combination of the – level of social isolation, variety of social contacts, extraordinary or adverse circumstances, being exposed to duties and tasks, and focus on respect are essential;
- As described in paragraph 4.3, the interviewees (read: change agents) were not used to reading and understanding psychodynamic and psychological texts or reflecting deeply on the effects their behavior has on their ability to become a team member. Consequently, they were unfamiliar with purposefully influencing the team, and vice versa, on a psychodynamic and psychological level;

- The interviewees surpassed themselves in the level of deeper reflection and learning regarding childhood, upbringing and current behavior related to the process of becoming a team member.

The ‘outside’ related findings are:

- ‘Outsiders’, such as clients and/or shareholders can significantly frustrate the process of becoming a team member. This relates indirectly to the second group mode fight/flight as mentioned by Bion (1961). In this case, the team does not imagine an enemy, rather the enemy imposes himself on the team and influences group dynamics in a negative manner;
- To create a ‘stabilized’ strategic direction in cooperation with clients and shareholders, so that everyone knows ‘where to go’, and to be consistent in communication to create trust between the change agent and the team.

During the ‘meta level’ sensemaking discussion as part of the third object session, the following process improvement findings regarding how to become a team member were discussed:

- To introduce the change agent’s role clearly and in a timely manner prior to his arrival and to organize an extensive introduction on arrival to get acquainted and ‘confirm’ his identity and take the time to explore and equalize the connection on both sides;
- To educate and coach change agents and teams in practice regarding the mutual effects of psychodynamic and psychologic aspects.

Conclusions

The research question: *How does a change agent experience the process of becoming a team member?* has been answered by providing several aspects, details, experiences, (expected and unexpected) findings, insights, perspectives, and thoughts, analyzing and concluding on cross-case and within-case data, as presented in Chapter Five and Appendix 3.

The answers to the four sub-research questions are from a theoretical point of view summarized in the conceptual framework and from a practical point of view covered in the previous Chapter.

We *are* prisoners of the past, albeit some of us are desperately trying to escape. As we have seen in the previous cross-case and within-case descriptions, in team dynamics there is a strong connection between unconscious experiences collected during childhood, upbringing and CCRTs, and conscious (read: sensemaking) past and present experiences, which are interrelated to the skills required for becoming a team member on a deeper psychodynamic and psychological level.

Due to limitations, as listed in the next paragraph, future research will be required to deeper understand this interesting subject.

6.3 Limitations

During this research the following limitations were encountered:

- Limited space and time were available to elaborate more extensively on additional theoretical perspectives and in-depth descriptions of the cases;
- Strong focus on the practical business university-related application of research instead of theoretical non-business university-related research;
- The biases and skills of the researcher to reflect ‘more deeply and get more out of it’;
- CCRTs are covered in this research, but more extensive investigation could have added insights;
- The interviewees are from the Netherlands, Russia, and Yugoslavia; it would have been interesting to involve interviewees from other parts of the world.

6.4 Future research

To investigate the research question and related aspects more deeply, future research could be applied in the following areas:

- To further investigate the interviewees using a 360 approach to validate or test their statements and to connect them to CCRTs and ‘self-perception’ of revealed behavior, including biases;
- To investigate the relationship between CCRTs, behavior, and choice of occupation, including biases;
- To look at the process of becoming a team member from the perspective of the team members to capture their perceptions of change agents;

- To investigate why change agents like to contribute to society by applying appreciated qualities, repeatedly need to prove themselves, and therefore seek to repeatedly (dis)connect and overcome anxieties and fears, including biases;
- To investigate the process of becoming a team member within two distinct groups: one group consisting of participants with 'zero' psychodynamic and psychological background and one group of 'specialists' in this area;
- To conduct the same research in other parts of the world to better understand possible cultural influences and differences.

Appendix 1 Angle in Application of Interviewees

Name	Age & Nationality	Background		Context			Experience		Associations*
		Level	Subject	Company size & Industry	Level in organisation	Job title	(Inter) National	Number of assignments	
Belle	54, Dutch	MSc in Technical Engineering	Logistics	Small- to Middle-sized; Multiple industries	Middle & Higher Management	Internal & External Consultant; Logistics Operations Manager	National & International	12	Unlocker; Smart-ass; Open space
Jade	34, Russian	MSc in Financial Management	Finance; Logistics; Marketing; Production; Sales; Logistics	Multinational, FMCG	Cross Functional Middle Management	Internal Audit Manager	International	60	Transmitter; Big Brother watching; Triple-protected prisoner
Mike	58, Dutch	MSc in Business Science; MSc in Social Science; MSc in Change Management	Logistics; Production; Service Industry; Strategy; Transformation & Change	Small- to Middle-sized to Multinational; Multiple industries	Senior Management	CEO; Managing Director; Senior External Consultant	National & International	20	Liberator; Scrutator; Aureole
Rico	27, Croatian	Middle Management Electrical Engineering & Automation; Student Bachelor Law	Information Technology; Logistics	Small- to Middle-sized; Multiple industries	Middle Management	Logistics Manager; Operations Manage	National	8	Connector; Pretender; Rebel
Sisi	49, Dutch	MSc in Business Science	Information Communication Technology	Middle-sized to Multinationals; Multiple industries	Middle & Higher Management	Project Manager, External Consultant	National & International	9	Deliverer/ Savior; Second-hand car salesman; Calvinist

* The first association is about the way the change agent perceives himself in the job; the second about not wanting to be perceived by the team; and the third about his childhood and upbringing.

Appendix 2 Guiding Questions for Preparation of Interviewees

The questions below are meant to guide and support you to *deeply* reflect on *your experience as a change agent when starting a new assignment and connecting to a new team*, resulting in the extensive and open discussion of anxieties, associations, attitudes, conclusions, content, dreams, emotions, facts, fears, ideas, issues, jokes, motivations, nightmares, observations, opinions, parapraxis, symptoms, ‘slip of the tongue or pen’, and thoughts regarding the process of (not) becoming a team member.

Questions:

- On a scale from 0 to 10, how much do you (dis)like (read: what rating would you give) being occupied as a change agent, especially when you look at the process of becoming a team member? What would your ‘ideal’ rating be and what needs to be done to achieve this ideal rating?
- Reading the introduction, the conceptual framework, and the methodology, is everything clear or do you have any questions upfront? In particular, and with respect to the purpose of the research, your role in it, and the different concepts, are the following clear:
 - Simmel (1950), Turquet (1979), and Bauman (1991)?
 - Bion (1961), and Weick (1995)?
- What was your first impression after reading the text?
- What did you like most about reading the text?
- What did you not like about reading the text?
- Regarding Simmel (1950): which – positive or negative – aspects of this perspective relate to and resonate with you the most and why? What kinds of associations or feelings come to mind? Can you elaborate on one specific memory?
- Regarding Turquet (1979): which – positive or negative – aspects of this perspective relate to and resonate with you the most and why? What kinds of associations or feelings come to mind? Can you elaborate on one specific memory?
- Regarding Bauman (1991): which – positive or negative – aspects of this perspective relate to and resonate with you the most and why? What kind of

associations or feelings come to mind? Can you elaborate on one specific memory?

- Which of the three perspectives do you consider as fitting your practical experience the most during the process of becoming a team member and why?
- Which of the three perspectives do you consider as fitting your emotions and feelings the most during the process of becoming a team member and why? Can you express that on a scale from 0 to 10?
- Do you believe there is a difference in experiencing the process when you look at it from the team perspective? What do you consider to be the differences and why?
- Looking at the above, is there any 'repetitive' association, behavior, fear and/or feeling(s) at the start of this process from your perspective or from the perspective of the group based on their feedback? If so, what is that exactly and where do you believe it comes from?
- What do you believe are your strong points when entering a new team of people and why?
- What do you consider to be your points for improvement when entering a new team of people and why?
- What do you consider to be your weak points when entering a new team of people?
- If you reflect on your experiences during those processes (improvement, strong and weak points) do you consider any link to your character?
- If you look at your experiences during those processes (improvement, strong and weak points) do you consider any link to your mother, father, significant traumatic experience, or the way you were raised?
- Looking at Bion (1961) and Weick (1995):
 - What do you recognize in both approaches and why? What kind of associations emerge when reflecting on both?
 - Which approach do you relate the most to and why?
- What type of manager are you? Are you more rational-economic or social-psychological driven? Where does that come from?

- During the process of entering a new team, to what extent do you consider your (psychodynamic and psychological) impact towards the team? Why do you believe this?
- Do you often reflect on your behavior? If so, what are the topics that come to mind? Are they 'repetitive' topics or elements?
- Based on your experience, how does an ideal process of becoming a team member evolve? From first contact with the client, introduction into the organization, starting work, until the last day of work.
- Based on your experience, what do you believe is generally lacking?
- What feelings does the organization evoke in you and team members?
- In general, when and how often do you ask your team members for detailed feedback about your behavior? If so, what kind of feedback are you looking for and why?
- What is your experience as a change agent when starting a new assignment and connecting to a new team in terms of anxieties, associations, attitudes, conclusions, content, dreams, emotions, facts, fears, ideas, issues, jokes, motivations, nightmares, observations, opinions, parapraxis, symptoms, 'slip of the tongue or pen', and thoughts?
- Which associations do you have regarding:
 - Being a change agent?
 - Your fears about being a change agent?
 - About your 'childhood & upbringing'?
- Is there anything else you would like to elaborate on or to add?
- Do you feel we need another interview to further elaborate on specific topics or to discuss possible additions?

Appendix 3 Format Page 1 & 2 of 5 Interviewees

Interviewee 1 – Belle	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belle Female, 54 Number of interviews: 2 in September and October. Total hours 9 and 5 hours Third Object Session on October 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 interim change agent logistic related assignments The assignments are at the level of middle- to higher- management: interim management and project management Background in Technical Engineering – Master’s level
Simmel (1950) – Agree	Simmel (1950) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most assignments, I strongly recognize and relate to Simmel’s perspective and the details described, especially when my specific qualities and objectivity are valued and appreciated; I see that as a positive aspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing: The change agent provides new positive qualities to the team. Simmel does not elaborate on possible ‘negative’ – functional or psychological – qualities that the change agent brings to the team Missing: Even though I agree with the ‘openness’ of the change agent, in practice, using the information received is not always possible due to your specific position Missing: At the start, the unique qualities of the change agent are clear and appreciated. However, during the process of connection, other – latent – qualities can be required and possibly (not) provided by the change agent
Turquet (1979) – Agree	Turquet (1979) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The four states – singleton, individual member, member individual, and individual member transitioning – are clearly recognized, experienced, and felt What I feel as positive is that this theory indicates that the process starts from the moment the change agent enters a new team and shifts through the four states Becoming a team member but keeping your identity requires constantly balancing thoughts and acts I recognize the constant battle and balancing act between your identity and the specific qualities you bring related to the specific needs of the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing: Turquet does not elaborate extensively on the different psychodynamic and psychological aspects between bigger and smaller teams or groups I do not consider the state individual member transitioning as a separate state, but as a ‘connecting’ state that combines the other three states. Most likely you are simultaneously singleton, I.M and M.I in different contexts
Bauman (1991) – Agree	Bauman (1991) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bauman’s quest for order, addressing the reduction of ambiguity and ambivalence based on transparency, unambiguity, and unequivocalness is usually one of the main tasks for an interim change agent, especially in a high-pressure environment Sometimes you should classify people and/or situations as good or bad, in or out, useful or not useful. This reflects Bauman’s thinking: you are in or out The universal stranger Bauman describes exists, but I have rarely met such a character in my interim jobs or acted that way myself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagree: Approach is too black and white; I do not relate to it and have not experienced it this way during my career Disagree: As an external change agent, you are always asked to join a team and, in most cases, you are needed and welcomed at first, so this approach is not applicable Missing: Bauman’s approach – being an insider or outsider – diminishes the existence of an ‘individual identity’ as described by Turquet and limits the movement between groups Missing: Good teams are open to the outside world; Bauman’s theory seeing everybody outside the team as negative is not a good basis for exploring different views
Bion (1961) – Agree	Bion (1961) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I strongly believe in the starting points of the clinical approach; we are products and prisoners of the past I clearly recognize group behavior related to the three group modes as described by Bion: dependency, fight/flight, and pairing, especially after becoming more experienced in my work and accepting more challenging assignments at middle-management level – ‘squeezed’ position A variety of psychodynamic aspects, like transference, counter-transference, core conflictual relationship themes (CCRTs), dreaming, empathy, enactment, intuition, mentalizing, mirroring, social defense mechanisms, valency, and many others, are absolutely part of daily life and significantly influence individual and team relationships, especially social defense mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing: a clear link to aspects of sensemaking, although, in general, Bion refers to communication as an important aspect, especially ‘language’ and ‘behavior’
Weick (1995) – Agree	Weick (1995) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive communication between individuals is essential, especially for reducing ambiguity and uncertainty in high-pressure organizational change situations The seven characteristics describing the process of sensemaking are recognized and part of daily (working) life. Awareness and understanding of those characteristics are essential to proactively contribute to and improve effective – and ‘efficient’ – sensemaking Sensemaking is significantly related to the background of the sensemaker and environment in which sensemaking occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing: a clear link to the clinical approach and psychodynamic aspects, as mentioned by Bion and others; Weick refers indirectly to ‘cues and frames’ partly connecting psychodynamics and sensemaking Missing: Weick mainly focuses on conscious sensemaking in unexpected and unknown situations. In organizations, most processes are more or less expected and known, even in high-pressure change situations Missing: Sensemaking is also future related, especially in high-pressure organizational change situations where people need a ‘future view’ to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty Missing: The social context and the type of contextual complexity are key elements in making sense. Weick fails to address those aspects adequately

Anxieties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not want to be seen as a 'smart-ass' with a low level of empathy and feeling. This is related to my childhood Can I handle my insecurity about people who are dominant and very self-assured? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can I stay healthy and strong enough to keep going? Can I keep calm and remain open to other opinions and views in stressful situations? Am I clever and knowledgeable enough?
Associations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I see myself as an 'unlocker'; identifying roadblocks and any missing or wrong connections in a system, including relationships, creating new connections, and releasing energy and bringing relief Simmel: open space with loose connections – you come and you go Turquet: coming and going is possible, but you might get hurt; a tricky trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bauman: a bunker in war time Bion: emotional rollercoaster Weick: robot-like atmosphere, an orderly setting I am at my best when structures in organizations are not fit for purpose and people are forced in wrong directions, not working together and losing energy due to lack of focus or clarity
Dreams / Nightmares	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ultimate dream: For people to experience a Csikszentmihalyi 'flow' when working in a system and/or structure Everything should flow – 'panta rei' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes, I have a nightmare that I cannot contact someone because my phone has gone or is not working. I am helpless and struggling. This nightmare pops up when I am very busy and overstretched
Emotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to master your emotions and be in touch with yourself. I am not naturally confident. This insecurity and lack of confidence is sometimes unhelpful in an unsafe and difficult context I am not over confident in groups, although most people do not notice that, not because I am not confident about my qualities, but because I am not always sure how to behave. I feel anxious, cautious, and reserved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not easily share what I feel, despite appearing assertive I always felt like an outsider, sometimes that makes me sad When I feel that things are unfair or unjustified, then I become irritated and less open for other opinions from team members I like to observe and to analyze. It stops me from diving into the group dynamics. I feel anxious and reserved about connecting
Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simmel – In my perception, this approach feels the most 'safe' (associated distance due to stranger role in combination with specific knowledge) and easy for me, especially when I started my career as an interim change agent Simmel – In situations where group dynamics are relatively unstable and result in less cohesion, or are in a state of regression, I am not sure whether the position of stranger is helpful or sufficient to provide input for useful interventions Turquet – When I look back at my last job at Agrifirm, I entered a large IT project team as an outsider. The process of (not) becoming a team member was quite painful. The possibility of staying a singleton was not an option, although safe for me. It is important that my actions have impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turquet – I have never experienced the member individual state, probably due to the dual capacity. Missing the role capacity makes you useless as a change agent. I have certainly experienced this in permanent positions, which took my (for me, required) identity away I have experienced my openness, interest in a specific situation, and ability to ask questions and listen as strong points when connecting with a team. On more than one occasion, people have told me I am good at providing sincere and useful feedback
Fears	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have difficulties controlling my emotions in stressful working situations Being not good or knowledgeable enough Being unnoticed and ignored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be forced to do injustice to people That people I really like or love do not like me or do not find me worth connecting with
Feelings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have difficulties controlling my feelings; feeling trapped, damaging relationships, and not being able to cope with the situation My background is Technical Engineering, so I search for order and I want to find and understand an organizational problem from a systems perspective. This helps me to start acting and overcome my insecurity when connecting with individuals and/or teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not take charge immediately; I need to understand more about the situation. At the 'right' moment, I take full responsibility In chaotic situations, where senior leadership is poor, resulting in ad hoc actions and no connection to a longer-term goal, and with no power to change that, I am sometimes irritated and start emotionally driven fights When I feel more comfortable about my position and my added value, I relax and try to build deeper relationships with people in the team
Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure and processes should not hurt, capture, and demotivate people You should practice what you preach. Words are nice, the proof is in the way you act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team has certain dynamics and you must fit in, understand the team state, and intervene in the right way to be accepted. So, first understand before acting
Observations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team has certain dynamics and you must fit in, understand the team state, and intervene in the right way to become accepted When entering a team, I mostly act and react intuitively I start connecting to people to understand the situation or problem from a systems perspective. Deeply knowing a person is not my first priority. This does not mean I do not (want to) care. I build relationships gradually When urgent action is required, I become very economical and rational. I am not afraid to confront staff, but I need to have a fair and clear story to tell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes, I start digging into the content to soon and do not spend time establishing relationships; under pressure to achieve results, I start acting. My organizational sensitivity is poor My bonding with senior management and/or key stakeholders in stressful situations could improve. Why? My bonding with senior management and/or key stakeholders in stressful situations must improve to avoid misunderstandings about direction and focus
Remarks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last year, I started reflecting more extensively on my behavior. I took a course and read some subject-related books. Interestingly, I usually start reflecting when I feel I have failed I see a strong connection between Bion's and Turquet's perspective in a sense of fighting for an acceptable identity in a 'violent' environment I see a strong connection between Bauman's and Bion's and perspective in a sense of Bion's fight/flight mode 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I increasingly ask for feedback and I have become less afraid of hearing it. It is part of making a connection with someone and opening up Both Bauman and Weick are referring to a reduction of ambiguity and uncertainty People say I am good at providing feedback. So far, I have found it difficult to ask for feedback. I am surprised that most feedback is very positive and helpful. I was always afraid that feedback would be hard to receive
Thoughts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe that expressing a positive, open mindset as a change agent and exploring situations from all sides and using people's knowledge is key to creating new perspectives in organizations I am an engineer and I love systems that function logically and fluently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In situations where there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel, it is important to start with small steps and show perseverance in order to be successful When people regain hope, they start believing and acting again
Jokes & Slip of the tongue or pen	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like to use jokes or irony to put things in perspective I have also become better at telling stories with a certain 'message' based on my experience in other companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I always lose my stuff, like my mobile phone and pens. I like to make fun of myself and warn people about this

Interviewee 2 – Jade	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jade Female, 34 Number of interviews: 2 in September and October. Total hours approximately 10 and 5 hours Third Object Session on October 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 60 interim change agent auditing related assignments The assignments are at the level of middle management: internal auditing worldwide regarding the following functional areas: finance, logistics, marketing, production, sales, and warehousing
Simmel (1950) – Agree	Simmel (1950) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, I agree with the concept presented by Simmel. This includes particular aspects like the team's interest in the stranger, nearness to and distance from the stranger, individuals being more open to the stranger rather than those with whom they are currently connected in the team The above is probably because they are naturally seeking new perspectives and/or opinions, since the known, well-established positions within the group are of low value to them and do not bring anything new It feels like the model is very simplified, omitting the qualities of the group and the change agent, which influence the process of becoming a team member and strongly retaining the position of the change agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagree: due to his or her own background and role, a change agent cannot be entirely objective. They can perhaps be more objective than a team member, however I wonder whether everybody in the group accepts the stranger bringing additional qualities, but also providing ambiguity and uncertainty, which are reduced over time due to internal and external influences and evolve at changing speeds, resulting in leaving or staying longer How does the change agent interact within the non-homogeneous team? Simmel does not describe or refer to any psychodynamic – unconscious – team process during the process of connecting; how do people connect? Simmel does not elaborate on the impact of the change agent on the team dynamics
Turquet (1979) – Agree	Turquet (1979) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree with and recognize all underlying aspects of Turquet's perspective, to a greater or lesser extent, so I have no specific remarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In certain contexts, it feels that a change agent has multiple identities. This is where I can see an overlap with the theory of Bauman stating that in fact everyone, at any moment, is part of more than one social group. Therefore, this perspective is a simplified version of real situations that are much more complex
Bauman (1991) – Agree	Bauman (1991) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bauman presented the theory of utopia where everybody is equal in a sense that all follow developed and agreed principles and rules for 'threat-free' existence in society and any attempt to depart from the rules results in rejection. To me, the extreme form of this is totalitarianism I agree that the perspective describes several extreme practical situations, i.e. when the universal stranger unexpectedly shows up without adding any perceived value Individuals who do not want to follow the existing order will never fit in, so they are excluded and/or rejected by the power of the majority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The motivation of the universal stranger is a mystery to me. There should be a motivation, otherwise why would the universal stranger show up? It feels like Bauman is describing the universal stranger as evil. I see the universal stranger as an individual who thinks differently, challenging the existing order, which I do not perceive as bad. I also believe that when a society is stuck, it needs a revolutionary shake-up to move to the next, 'better' stage Bauman considers society as well-organized and socially constructed. I believe such an ideal state is impossible to achieve due to the way mankind is
Bion (1961) – Agree	Bion (1961) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree with several points of the theory that are in line with my own experiences. For example, the three basic assumptions dependency, fight/flight, and pairing, and the processes of transference and counter-transference are very familiar Bion describes the basic assumptions as being the law of nature, the way people are, regardless of any other factors or contexts I recognize the dependency assumption in Simmel's perspective (the reliance on the stranger who is in a certain way superior to the team), Bauman's fight/flight assumption (a black-and-white division of the world), and Turquet's pairing assumption (the singleton trying to connect to other singletons in attempt to become an individual members) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe it is impossible for a change agent to completely overcome his own (counter-)transference and past experiences when reconciling team dynamics I disagree that humans can completely reject the 'prisoner of the past' idea to start acting and thinking differently What is next? Even if the change agent sees things clearly and 'objectively', what action would he take to get the team where it is required to be? 'Dependency' is rather 'suicidal' or at least a mechanism that slows development. Once a leader is chosen, ambiguity is reduced and team dynamics feel easier; attempts to shake-up the existing order become difficult Team dynamics ultimately depend on external factors (context & environment) and internal factors (qualities of agent & team members)
Weick (1995) – Agree	Weick (1995) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the context of my work as an international auditor and, at the same time, part of an audit team, interactive communication is vital at each stage. In other words, the lack of or insufficient interaction determines the success or failure of an audit project The outcome of interactive communication and a process of sensemaking significantly depends on external factors (environment & context) and internal factors (qualities of involved sensemakers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The perspective does not specifically address the 'ego' as a possible aspect of sensemaking The local historical and social context of interactive communication significantly influences the process and outcome of sensemaking

Anxieties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My biggest anxiety is to be perceived as 'big brother is watching you', scrutinizing people Whether the assignment will be smooth or painful in terms of communication, gathering observations, assigned functional areas, and deadlines How I come across to new people as a person and as a professional, as it determines my work mode and a 'good or bad' feeling about myself, which will, in turn, determine the way I communicate and act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we deal with major observations? About the team (auditees) I will work. Will the team be cooperative, pleasant, open? What do you feel? Will the audit team include auditors with compatible attitudes and approaches? Are they selfish and careless or cooperative? About the location where the audit takes place – depressing, new, dangerous, etc.
Associations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am a 'transmitter': gathering and passing on information about best practices within the company worldwide Jacques-Yves Cousteau and his mission and team, because we might discover absolutely 'beautiful' things about company performance and at the same time ugly and dark things that the company will not be proud of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A journey where the process is just as exciting as the outcome Two-auditors scheme for Russian fossil fuel companies in Siberia: the first auditor comes to test and check. After he is back home, the second auditor comes to deliver results (issues found). The first auditor might never return home if he had to execute the audit and deliver the results
Dreams / Nightmares	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dream: psychologically safe environment in the audit team, the team on the same page, each member counts and matters, nobody is less, no political games, helpfulness, open discussion on splitting of new work, space to express an opinion, respectfully challenging the team Dream: time- & task-wise, well-planned assignments with all information available upfront, discussed and concluded, so the visit is quick Dream: auditees team that are not opposites, but work together, providing constructive, clever, and challenging arguments against audit opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nightmare: culture of selfishness in the audit team where each pulls in his own direction, refusing to take on unexpected tasks, openly showing disrespect and rudeness Nightmare: auditees who do not respect auditors' function, the extreme of this is when it becomes open and personal Nightmare: 5 meter-square room without any windows given to six auditors to work for two weeks coupled with extremely extrovert – noisiest – characters in the audit team
Emotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Happiness and fulfilment by accomplishing the project and delivering observations that make sense to work on and fix for auditees Happiness realizing that I can go home after weeks in another country Sadness and hopelessness about realizing that I cannot help people because of the standard policy or politics, rather than rationale and good sense behind it Annoyance having explained what to do and why it needs to be done in a certain way ten times and the person still does not get it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sadness that I made a great connection with somebody however it is going to be over because the pace of life is so fast and because I will not sacrifice my goals in favor of spending time on developing friendships at a distance Fear of standing in front of auditees and audit team presenting the opening and closing audit slides because everybody is watching and evaluating me Joy from experiencing and thinking that I did a good job
Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a big difference between doing an audit and a management support (consulting) assignment. In the first scenario, the pressure of under-performance and/or unknown issues being discovered and officially escalated makes a much tenser atmosphere. Although, if the team leader (in this case CFO) comes across to everybody as reasonable, relaxed, committed and fair, backing his team from the outset, it is a huge indicator that the assignment will go well. The second scenario is much less pressured and everybody is much more relaxed and open to discussions from the beginning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the team is tense, I feel that I am sad and start under-performing. On the flip side, when everything is great around me, I might get too excited and start making mistakes If I am open with the team from the beginning, I am who I am, openly explaining important aspects of the work, my expectations, my personal experiences, connecting to the team becomes easier. In some cases, I do open up easily and in some cases I stay completely closed. I feel like I am absolutely politically correct but not more than that, no emotional bond between me and another arise. I am not sure why and when; person related?
Fears	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifelong fear of being rejected Fear of being not good enough, in my eyes and in the eyes of others. Looking silly and unprofessional. Am I worthy of the position that I currently hold? Why is this and who am I? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being less, somebody who is not important and inferior to others, so that ultimately the team does not take me into account, shuts up and ignores me Fear of negative consequences to my career and well-being by failing the given task, missing something in my audit work
Feelings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becoming a team member according to Bauman's perspective makes me feel sad. His black-and-white classification of humans gives me the feeling of a prison or totalitarianism, where the few decide for the many what is allowed and what is not Guilt that I am wasting the valuable time of a hard-working team on useless compliance checks, instead of considering things that should be changed and improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surprised and excited when I meet someone who stands out from the crowd and thinks differently Exhausted and relieved when time-pressured assignments are over (no more (social) anxiety) Feeling of hope when I realize that I have connected to people in the team Strong sense of commitment to the team once I am accepted; I want to be accepted
Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you know what the other thinks until they see what the other says? Mostly, people are not aware of how they come across, what happens with them emotionally and what it does to their environment and the team. Increased individual awareness in this regard would help the process of becoming a team member Asking for feedback is not natural for people. Those that ask for feedback are motivated to improve themselves for their own benefit and are not thinking about others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human behavior and reasoning changes if one starts acting from the team perspective, applying (probably subjective) principles of a fair process The process of becoming a team member is continuous. If broken, it must start all over again to reduce ambiguity and interpretation is (re)created In an organizational prison, you can spend fortunes on agents building teams, freeing the prisoners, but later fall back into the same situation No-one can become a team member in the blink of an eye; it takes time. Many factors influence this time-related process
Observations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I 'screen' individuals I am going to work with to choose a communication approach depending on the knowledge of the person, how he comes across (smiling, concerned), his attitude and behavior. Auditors need not be business process experts, but must be experts in the auditing process. I experience greater confidence, easier interaction, and better cooperation when I possess specific knowledge about the company and its processes. I consider this an additional capacity. I like to share my experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When starting an assignment, I fight the stereotypical idea about auditors being serious, unpleasant, scrutinizing, and not trusting I try to get a feeling about the team. Who is who in the zoo and how do they (not) cooperate? This determines the way I navigate in the team to get things done. The 'better' the team, the easier my task From the beginning, I invest time explaining what we are going to do, why, how and when. This decreases uncertainties, opens discussions, and increases suggestions and speed
Remarks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When I am too nervous, it feels like my brain function is reduced or paralyzed; somebody asks a question and I cannot make sense of it I cannot stand it when people shout at me or others, I feel devastated I feel emptiness and boredom with consecutive assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like a bit of pressure at work, especially if I am acting within the boundaries of my knowledge and expertise. I struggle to perform new tasks under pressure I do not like a setting where the team dynamics are competitive I am curious & interested entering a new place (country, company office)
Thoughts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I reflect a lot. It feels that I am concentrating on myself and what I feel, trying to understand myself, and not on others' feelings, experiences, or suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes, I over-think, creating my 'own reality' – based on a few things someone said. I do not know how to overcome this When I am seriously concerned about something, I focus on my concerns and 'neglect' others. I do not ask for feedback
Jokes & Slip of the tongue or pen	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I often joke that 'when the auditors are out of the door, the celebration starts'. I always feel that it carries dual meaning, both negative and positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Interviewee 3 – Mike	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike • Male, 58 • Number of interviews: Ongoing in September and October. Total hours approximately 20 and 5 hours Third Object Session on October 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 20 international interim change agent assignments • All assignments are at the level of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Managing Director (MD) and relate to closures, culture change, organizational change, revitalization, start-ups, turnarounds, and time-specific-driven improvement projects
Simmel (1950) – Agree	Simmel (1950) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The change agent should offer specific experience, knowledge and/or skills that is lacking to be able to offer something meaningful and durable to the team • The dual capacity (Turquet, 1979) makes it easier from the outset to connect with the team; participating as an individual with a clear role and the development of skills • Full acceptance by the team is important to accomplishing individual and team goals and purpose • An – upfront known or not known – evanescent time frame makes a difference regarding the unique position (mobility, objectivity, & openness) • Differences in terms of local background impacts the quality and speed of becoming a team member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea is that the stranger per definition will be accepted by the team. Missing: What happens when the change agent does not fit in due to his or her background, personality, role fulfillment or skills? • Acceptance is mainly based on the stranger’s specific qualities – intelligence. Missing: the definition of the qualities of characteristics of the change agent • Simmel does not describe or refer to any psychodynamic – unconscious – team process during the process of connecting • Simmel does not describe the impact of differences in local background other than addressing the positive unique position qualities (mobility, objectivity, & openness)
Turquet (1979) – Agree	Turquet (1979) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Usefulness’ of the change agent is key; without a clear contribution in terms of experience, ideas, knowledge, skills, or vision there is no sustainable basis for creating a meaningful identity • Personal and team goals, purpose, and (basic) needs are essential to making a long(er) stay possible • The reality in teams is about ‘fighting for your position’, meaning constantly adjusting to ongoing changing circumstances, environment(s), and threats • The four states – singleton, individual member, member individual, and individual member transitioning – are clearly recognized, experienced, and felt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘competitive’ environment is significantly reduced due to the change agent’s dual capacity – as an individual and as a change agent. From the outset, being the change agent provides a relatively stable identity, based on specific qualities and role • Acceptance is mainly based on specific qualities – identity, role, & skills – provided by the stranger. Missing: content about the quality of the change agent’s characteristics • To survive in this highly competitive ‘arena’, the skill package of the change agent should contain at least a decent level of perseverance and resilience. Missing: content about the quality of characteristics of the change agent
Bauman (1991) – Agree	Bauman (1991) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bauman’s quest for order, addressing the reduction of ambiguity and ambivalence based on transparency, unambiguity, and unequivocalness is usually one of the main tasks for an interim change agent, especially in a high-pressure environment • People that do not <i>want</i> to fit in, <i>will</i> not fit in and will frustrate others by accomplishing their goals; the universal stranger disrespects clarity, constancy, control, law, order, predictability, and roles, and thus is unclassified and unclassifiable • An organized society with ‘acceptable’ discipline is meaningful, but it should be a long way from a ‘military’ approach, as Bauman’s perspective more or less suggests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This perspective is too ‘black & white’, too rigid, and too inflexible to allow a change agent to act and breathe • During my career, I have never met ‘impossible’ people, so I consider it possible to integrate universal strangers in one or another, providing the stranger has an identity, purpose, and role that is accepted by the team • Usually, people are part of several and different social sub-teams; I cannot envisage an individual who does not fit into – at least – one or more of these specific sub-teams
Bion (1961) – Agree	Bion (1961) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I strongly believe in the starting points of the clinical approach; we are products and prisoners of the past • I clearly recognize group behavior related to the three group modes as described by Bion; dependency, fight/flight, & pairing • A variety of psychodynamic aspects, like transference, counter-transference, core conflictual relationship themes (CCRTs), dreaming, empathy, enactment, intuition, mentalizing, mirroring, social defense mechanisms, valency, and many others, are absolutely part of daily life and significantly influence individual and team relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing: a clear link to aspects of sensemaking, although, in general, Bion refers to communication as an important aspect • The fight/flight mode refers to the group appointing an ‘enemy’ to fight. Missing: an explicit view on external influences on the team; in case the enemy imposes itself on the team • Missing: an explicit view on external influences imposed on the change agent that impact the relationship between the change agent and the team
Weick (1995) – Agree	Weick (1995) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive communication between individuals is essential, especially for reducing ambiguity and uncertainty in high-pressure organizational change situations • The seven characteristics or properties describing the process of sensemaking are recognized and part of daily (working) life. Awareness and understanding of those characteristics are essential to proactively contribute to and improve effective – and ‘efficient’ – sensemaking • Sensemaking is significantly related to the background of the sensemaker and environment in which sensemaking occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing: a clear link to the clinical approach and psychodynamic aspects, as mentioned by Bion and others; indirectly Weick refers to ‘cues and frames’ partly connecting psychodynamics and sensemaking • Weick mainly focuses on conscious sensemaking in unexpected and unknown situations. In organizations, most processes are more or less expected and known, even in high-pressure change situations • Sensemaking is also future related, especially in high-pressure organizational change situations where people need a ‘future view’ to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty • The social context and the type of contextual complexity are key elements in making sense. Weick fails to address those aspects adequately

Anxieties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I try to avoid people perceiving me as a 'scrutator' auditing and controlling the world Am I accomplishing enough and quickly enough? Am I humble enough? Am I nice and supportive enough? Am I too pushy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally, I experience an unwanted stuttering feeling, but this disappears quickly after the initial connection(s) Are there 'external' influences – clients and/or shareholders – frustrating the process of becoming a team member? I am a strong personality and a 'character' trying to be humble and nice with a low ego level, but do I behave and come across that way?
Associations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel like a 'liberator', liberating people from their previously suppressive, unprofessional management Simmel – An organization as 'free spirit' Turquet – An organization as a 'dangerous, threatening, and violent arena' Bauman – An organization as a 'mental prison' Bion – An organization as 'mental chaos'; limited thinking, selfish fighting individuals trying to survive within a group of identical individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weick – An organization as 'reasonable communicators' I strongly associate being a change agent in high-pressure situations with an act of charity and contributing positively to society, to 'free' people from the 'abuse & suppression' of previous management I associate connecting to a new team with 'eat or be eaten', but interact positively with the team goal as main priority I have a positive attitude towards people, but consider them as 'scarily limited' in their basic mental existence and social skills
Dreams / Nightmares	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I dream regularly, but, as far as I can recall, not specifically about connecting to a team, work, or other work-related challenges Sometimes long 'to-do' lists pop up in my dreams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I cannot recall any nightmares regarding connecting to a team or work-related challenges or issues
Emotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, I feel emotions, but not at an extremely high or low level. I do express emotions, but also not in an extremely 'up or down' manner. I am raised in a way to – positively – deal with issues If I feel emotions, it is usually as a result of being 'disappointed' by myself or others not being respectful to me or others. This can make me feel disappointed, sad, or confused. It is frustrating and, if repeated, painful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I also feel positive emotions; I can get really excited about individual or team achievements. This can make me feel energetic, happy, and satisfied and puts me in a 'party mood', ready to celebrate, which I often do to enjoy life and honor the team's achievements I can get annoyed and irritated when people are slow or do not accomplish tasks on time
Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simmel – the team is seeking professional support Simmel – the team is seeking individual and team security Simmel – the team wants to know: What kind of change agent is this? Turquet – describes the process of connecting from an identity view, mainly driven by unconscious factors and communication Turquet – the speed and quality of success depends significantly on the skills of the change agent; able to show vulnerability; acceptance of (critical) feedback; communication; decision-maker with consulting; genuine behaviors & interest; humbleness; low ego; being proactive and positive Bauman – I have never been treated like a universal stranger and not been accepted by a team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bion – I and others experience all group modes and psychodynamic 'forces' during the process of becoming a team member. The – developing – awareness of this makes me feel great, more stable, and able to prevent and/or resolve 'operational daily issues' between people. It contributes significantly to the quality and speed of connecting with others Weick – Reduction of ambiguity and uncertainty through interactive communication is key during high-pressure organizational change. A structure – meetings, projects, reflection moments, etc. – provided by the change agent supports this process significantly I share my feelings, ideas, and thoughts easily and genuinely, which is an effective way to connect and build good relationships with other
Fears	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the team like me? I experience this fear this not on a 'problematic' self-esteem level, but on a 'healthy' level. The main reason for me being in an organization is to 'get the job done' and not to be liked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do I get the freedom from the client 'to act' the way I want to in order to build genuine and respectful relationships, including a high level of open communication and honesty
Feelings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial hours after showing up, I feel a bit 'uncertain'; not because of the 'job at hand', but due to the aforementioned childhood stuttering I feel great when I oversee personal and organizational development better and quicker than anybody else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly, I feel like a 'liberator', liberating people from their previously suppressive, unprofessional management. Immediately sensing and smelling the needs of the individuals and team gives me a good feeling
Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on the 'level' of the team, providing basic knowledge and developing skills to apply a form of psychodynamics and 'deep' reflection improves social relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Observations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am a supportive manager, but 'drive' team members to the limit, balancing energy, experience, performance, and skills; I try to avoid driving them over the limit Generally, the atmosphere in the team is great; a lot of fun, laughter, and open discussions and at the same time accomplishing a lot of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A proactive, positive, and stable attitude is important for supporting the team's feeling of 'dependency'. In other words, the change agent could be completely 'in control' in this 'change chaos', which is related to his or her experience, knowledge, and skills It is great to see that most individuals are open to connecting as long as you show genuine interest and behave in a humble, but clear, consistent, and fair manner
Remarks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite previous experience, I am still surprised by the 'emotional' level of teams when starting a new assignment. Often, it is 'scary' to see how people have been 'abused and suppressed' by former management over a long time and what the effects are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a change agent, I always develop individuals and teams by initiating 'action learning teams', connecting daily practice with – understandable – theory. Semi-scientific articles related to work practice are provided and discussed in a team to develop and share experiences, knowledge, and skills, which influences team dynamics significantly in a positive way
Thoughts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simmel – Too nice a concept; the company is managed by an angel Simmel – Ideal world; everybody fits in without trouble Turquet – Harmonious team of people; able to handle feedback; simultaneously fun & serious; positive; result driven & quick Connecting people would probably be much more effective and efficient if it had been taught during childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The (working) world could be so much more effective and nicer if team focus prevailed over individual selfishness My way of dealing with and experiencing all the above-listed topics and my related behavior is specifically connected to the way I was raised (see my narrative)
Jokes & Slip of the tongue or pen	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I use jokes to balance the often demanding and stressful situation; seriousness and performance versus releasing stress and creating a 'friendly' environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On reflection, I realize that making jokes, which I often do, almost always contains a 'serious hidden message'

Interviewee 4 – Rico	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rico Male, 27 Number of interviews: 3 in September and October. Total hours 13.5 and 5 hours Third Object Session on October 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 interim change agent IT and logistics related assignments The assignments were at a middle-management level: mainly interim change agent and project management Unique positions in terms of responsibility and role
Simmel (1950) – Agree	Simmel (1950) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The change agent is the third element in a sociological case with an instrumental purpose The unique position in his group is determined by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning and that he imports qualities The unique position and offering specific qualities – intelligence. The team assigns three related attributes to the stranger: mobility, perceived openness and objectivity The change agent receives more openness and objectivity. I agree, but it is openness and objectivity in a specific context; he receives ‘confessionals’ that would be carefully withheld from a more closely related person The change agent has more general qualities in common with and is close to the team The uniqueness will decrease over time, as local processes lose its historical quality and intelligence finds expansions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The change agent does not arrive unexpectedly; his arrival is mostly announced in advance The change agent could be the potential wanderer, although he never embraced the freedom of coming and going. Usually my intention is to stay ‘til the end’, depending on my assignment Initially, there is no emotionally connected ‘openness’; a person does not show his true self Missing: What happens if the change agent does not stay because of personal and organizational goals no longer being aligned? The change agent is not inherently a ‘soil’ owner. Correct, but, depending on the context and specifications of the team you can be a partial soil owner
Turquet (1979) – Agree	Turquet (1979) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A change agent is – temporarily – present in a dual capacity; as an individual and fulfilling a role. This makes his ‘entrance’ less complex and difficult Who will dominate whom: will the change agent and member dominate the large group or will he be dominated by it? The four states – singleton, individual member, member individual, and individual member transitioning – are clearly recognized, experienced, and felt. “Mostly, I feel I am in the individual member stage. A balance between personal and organizational goals and purposes is key” In a bid to conquer a position as an individual member and avoid remaining a singleton or becoming a member individual, the individual continuously fights and competes with himself and his surrounding(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I disagree with Turquet that one person cannot significantly change or influence the dynamics of a team; sometimes it is remarkable what one can achieve or provoke The third state, the member individual, is not applicable for a change agent. As a result, I do not recognize this state for myself A fight with your surroundings is part of the game, but not at any cost; I still behave respectfully and value the approaches and feelings of others Constantly finding a balance between the three states is important. You are constantly shifting between those states as an individual member transitioning In every state, you are (re)positioning and strengthening your role, identity or position, also at a more lower level: responsibilities, tasks, subjects, etc.
Bauman (1991) – Agree	Bauman (1991) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a change agent arrives on the stage, he will create a certain level of chaos – intended or not – as a basis for a new order “The commitment of the change agent declares the loyalty he promises, the dedication he demonstrates cannot be trusted: they come complete with a safety valve of an easy escape” The stranger stands between enemy and friend, and between order and chaos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I disagree with Bauman’s zero-sum ‘in or out’. In my opinion, there are more ‘in-between stages’ on a continuum from zero till infinity, which strongly depend on the ability to ask questions (‘to get to know’), context and history Not all insiders respect the culture, the order, the rules and the law resulting in a controlled and organized reality You belong either to the ‘enemies’ or the ‘friends’; no in-between states are possible A change agent does not frustrate, militate, or paralyze a situation; he tries to achieve the opposite
Bion (1961) – Agree	Bion (1961) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I strongly believe in the starting points of the clinical approach; we are products and prisoners of the past I clearly recognize group behavior related to the three group modes as described by Bion; dependency, fight/flight, & pairing A variety of psychodynamic aspects are inherent to daily life and significantly influence individual and team relationships A team meets to do something; there is or should be a common goal. The level of cooperation is skills-based; feelings of frustration are common Early caregivers significantly influence our lives based on certain themes The main function of a change agent is to provide an interpretation based on what has been projected onto them and what role they have been asked to play in the life of the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant difference can exist in the awareness of (un)conscious behavior and experiences I disagree with the notion that teams come together to serve a common goal to preserve the team. This is also dependent on the self-interest of individuals A team meets to do something; there is or should be a common goal. I disagree with the idea that co-operation is voluntary However, feelings of frustration are common, I disagree with the idea that exasperated outbursts between team members bring relief team. I also experience relief by achieving team goals Humans are the product of past experiences, but you have a choice to – partly? – change this and undergo new experiences, which then become your experience
Weick (1995) – Agree	Weick (1995) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The seven characteristics or properties describing the process of sensemaking are recognized and part of daily (working) life. Awareness and understanding of those characteristics are essential to making a proactive contribution and to applying and improving effective – and ‘efficient’ – sensemaking The core of sensemaking is related to the reduction of ambiguity and uncertainty Sensemaking and organizational sensemaking are linked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing: sensemaking is also prospective, especially in fast-changing environments, which reduces ambiguity and uncertainty

Anxieties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be perceived as a 'pretender', knowing it all Afraid of under achievement due to a lack of experience, knowledge & skills Afraid of not being accepted in an aligned, balanced, existing, harmonized, and stabilized team in a functional and social manner and my ability to accept and/or resolve this situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am I too selfish or too materialistic? Entering a team, I feel a level of uncertainty in terms of 'is my behavior (coming across as) appropriate/correct?'
Associations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I consider myself as an 'connector', connecting people and systems If 'ubuntu' is applied within the team, I feel like I am part of a harmonized family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Bad' teams are burning rubber – spinning your wheels
Dreams / Nightmares	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My dream – wish – is to create or be part of an 'ubuntu' team that is meaningful to the business or society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can – repeatedly – (re)consider possible options for how to improve delicate business-related issues on a personal – team – level. Consequently, I start doubting myself, but at the same time it triggers my perseverance
Emotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel happy and satisfied when people are open with; on the other hand, I feel sad and not trusted if it does not happen. Is something wrong with me? I am quite sensitive about 'being accepted' and look for a kind of – direct or indirect – confirmation from the people around me. Do I add the functional value required? Am I useful? If not, I feel disappointed and try to change If something significant to me and the team is achieved, I feel extremely proud and happy; especially when it is a team result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the start and during the process of becoming a team member/ part of a team, I feel a high level of excitement about the – unknown – new assignment and the new team Some people drive me completely nuts by ignoring behavioral or functional feedback, even though I try to encourage insight into their behavior
Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes, I feel guilty about taking private time, knowing that this time could be used to improve the team; I feel guilty when I go home on time or earlier Bauman: creating chaos in a team because you are changing their routines – good or bad – with the intention to improve the situation Turquet: at the beginning of an assignment you are very useful; later – when the team starts to perform well – you are too expensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bauman – I have never experienced being the enemy during the process of joining a team The performance of a team is highly dependent on the preconditions set by higher management and the quality of the product and related tools
Fears	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simmel: due to a 'non-rooted' connection at the start, I have a fear of being dismissed as a result of a mistake; in the context of bad internal communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turquet: not being accepted within a group, not feeling 'at home' To feel good and not to waste time, I need to know 'where to find' everything I need: post-its, printer, data storage, process descriptions, etc.
Feelings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being emotional in my personal life influences my feelings at work and how I react in a team in both a positive and a negative sense Turquet: I feel simultaneously alone and able to relate to everybody. This position is time-dependent Possible disappointment: Am I part of a team and is everybody being upfront with me or is this just because of my role in this team? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am sensitive to feeling good; I appreciate and need fair feedback by positive-critical people to deliver maximum performance. Moreover, dishonest people have little influence on my 'feel good' feeling Developing myself – learning and implementing – makes me feel excited, happy and satisfied; practical application is key
Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on Simmel: viewing the relations in a team objectively (read: with a certain distance) and being able to divide the team in a way that it doesn't cause any damage works well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need management to know upfront what my responsibility and role is regarding the assignment and team
Observations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simmel: looking at the people in the team from a distance and being able to observe what everybody's role is The division of power, roles, and social interaction in a team is an important basis for understanding the team dynamics in terms of getting the job done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turquet – the acceptance of the stage I am in is very much dependent on my motivation, which is related to the overlap of my personal and organizational goals
Remarks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bauman: friend or enemy. If you are a friend/insider you have more insight into valuable information, which can help you a lot. If you are an 'enemy' life gets much harder, but I think there are degrees to these states of enemy and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bauman: you can be 'in' or 'out' of a team, but I believe there are also – partly overlapping – sub-teams, i.e. that there are more social groups within in a team If my role is explained well and clear to other team members from the outset, I mostly act as an individual member. If not, I mostly act as a singleton until my role/identity is clear
Thoughts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simmel: I am not a wanderer, but as long as my business and private goals are aligned, I stay. With some teams, I stay longer, with others shorter, due to the specific goals, interests, and values I want to achieve Turquet: The singleton state reflects a non-role, but a developing of and search for an identity. If not introduced well, I can 'hunt for' an identity that is useful to the team and myself I reflect on important experiences; did I do the 'right' thing? Reflecting on an interim assignment, thinking about whether I handled it correctly/ fairly; could I have worked harder or did I fit into the team well enough? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weick: you make sense through making conversation with every team member, so your visions of how the team works are as clear as possible; you try to make sense of how people think and do To what extent do people make conscious choices? Bion: the unconscious is strong and a person's life is built on his history; you can't expect him to change significantly, so you should deal with it Reflecting on things I have said and will say in the future, considering whether it was too early or too late to say this
Jokes & Slip of the tongue or pen	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes, I make jokes with a core of truth, but mainly I see this happening with other team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People's emotional expressions show their real underlying goals or intentions

Interviewee 5 – Sisi	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sisi Male, 49 Number of interviews: 2 in September and October. Total hours 12 and 5 hours Third Object Session on October 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 interim change agent Information Communication Technology related assignments The assignments are at the level of senior management: interim management, program management, project management, and portfolio management
Simmel (1950) – Agree	Simmel (1950) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree with ‘mobility’, although in a limited way, since the team knows you’re here to stay until the assignment is finished I agree with ‘perceived openness & objectivity’. Most team members and clients are open to me and share their views about other team members, the assignment, and the wider organization. They also value my objectivity and integrity I strongly share the view with respect to freedom, in the way that I do not feel bound or limited by commitments I agree with the ‘abstract nature’. In my observation, I indeed add ‘general qualities’, for example specific detailed knowledge. I also recognize that ‘uniqueness will decrease over time’. For me, this is a factor in whether or not I become bored after I have settled down in my place of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific remarks
Turquet (1979) – Agree	Turquet (1979) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For me, the description of ‘who will dominate whom’, was an eye-opener. I consider becoming more dominant a personal point During my assignments, I always try to integrate the singleton characters in the team It is always a challenge to find the right balance between cooperation and ‘to conquer for a position’ and ‘establishing an acceptable and meaningful identity’ – see also the first bullet point I recognize several methods used in the ‘arena’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being an interim change agent, I join the team with a specific assignment and clear task, also with an identity, so I do not experience being a ‘singleton’ The descriptions of individual member, member individual and individual member transitioning do not resonate with me
Bauman (1991) – Agree	Bauman (1991) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I strongly agree with and recognize Bauman’s findings with respect to not being an insider and not being an outsider and rebelling against both the outside and inside, with a view to opening eyes and achieving alignment and recognizable progress I agree with being able ‘to view local conditions with an equanimity the native residents can hardly afford’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I strongly disagree with: “They stretch the temporary inconvenience of “not knowing how to go on” into terminal paralyses”, because in my assignments, I am always pushing to make progress, decisions, and next steps I strongly disagree with: ‘There is hardly an anomaly more anomalous than the stranger. He stands <i>between</i> friend and enemy order and chaos, the inside and the outside. He stands <i>for</i> the treacherousness of friends, for the cunning disguise of enemies, for fallibility of order, vulnerability of the inside’, since I use my ‘rebelliousness’ to achieve progress with integrity I disagree with: ‘The stranger arrives as an uninvited guest, manifests himself as an undesirable friend, and turns out to be an unreliable ally’. Based on independent feedback, I experience the team welcoming me and seeing me as a partner in accomplishing things. They value my integrity ‘[...] cannot be trusted: they come complete with a safety valve of easy escape [...]’. In my opinion, this is not true. My reputation is at stake during an assignment. If I use the safety valve, it will backfire I disagree with: ‘unstoppable pilgrimage’
Bion (1961) – Agree	Bion (1961) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I notice the ongoing mode of unconscious operation with respect to ‘dependency’, because the team members indicate they need help, guidance, and elevate me to the status of someone able to solve all the issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I seldom experience real ‘fight’ or ‘flight’, although team members frequently resist guidance and/or flight in other activities. In my experience, as long as you ask your team members to work on their specific tasks, they are willing to cooperate
Weick (1995) – Agree	Weick (1995) – Disagree or missing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I recognize the ideas of being ‘grounded in identity construction’ and ‘sensemaking is retrospective’, although I rarely reflect based on what I say. I am more used to reflecting based on what I think. But, I also understand that people will only respond upon to what I say in addition to my non-verbal communication I recognize that ‘sensemaking is a social interaction process’, because I regularly examine the reasons behind unexpected behavior of other team members in order to make sense of the behavior I also experience ‘it is ongoing’, because I am constantly balancing what I understand and what I not yet understand with respect to what people do and how they behave ‘Focused on and by extracted cues’. Simply put, I constantly simplify, categorize, and generalize inputs from team members and I am aware this process is not accurate, coherent, and reasonable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific remarks

Anxieties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not want to come across as a 'second-hand car salesman'; I want to provide and radiate professionalism Can I do the 'trick' in a new environment? On what basis, will I be judged? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which behavior is acceptable, and which is not? What is expected? When do I meet the – minimum – expectations?
Associations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel like I am a 'deliverer & savior' achieving goals on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executing all activities related to being a change agent reminds me of a father 'organizing & running' a family
Dreams / Nightmares	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I dream of developing into a role that adds more value to the organization. From moving to a specific project to a more integrated approach, with having the full responsibility to not only deliver a project, but also to manage the project environment, e.g. being responsible for the savings, benefits, extra revenue, reorganization, wider change, strategy implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When my action list is overloaded, I sometimes have problems sleeping Sometimes a tiny work-related issue recurs in my dreams. It is usually something I must remember to do the next day
Emotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When team members are, from my perspective, not willing to listen to good advice, I can be quick-tempered. I become irritated about having to spend time on the topic and the incompetency of the team member. I am angry because they appear not to be listening to reason. This happens maybe twice a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An example is a teammate constantly asking for a long-term plan while he knows that the necessary information to make such a plan is not available and the team members do not want to spend time on it. I snapped at him: 'How does a long-term plan help you with the things you need to do today?'
Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The perspectives presented support the feedback loop from practice to theory, and vice versa It is difficult to have the theory available as a skillset at the moment you need it in daily interactions Becoming a member of a team is generally quite easy, because I add a specific value to the team, which means they do not have to worry about that aspect, because they know it will be taken care of. Recognition of my added value is satisfying I have difficulties with remembering names. Even if I know the name, the name does not always pop into my head when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'The fact that an action is obvious does not mean that it will automatically be carried out' – Dennis Heijn The majority of my assignments are projects. In my experience, there are three layers and often an issue in the second or third layer is the result of something missing in the first or second layer. These layers are: 1. content – what needs to be done?; 2. connections – how is the content related?; and 3. cooperation – how can we work together to get the job done? 'Be kind to those who collaborate, though on those who work against you bear no resentment for past betrayals' – Dennis Heijn. Although some team members fool me, I continue to cooperate with them but note the 'shortcoming'
Fears	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How dominant can I be at the start and still be accepted? Am I smart enough and fast thinking enough? Do I reflect enough to do a good job and/or to get the maximum out of every situation? Maximum in terms of overseeing and understanding the situation, providing guidance, and the goals I would like to achieve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not every situation is natural to me and people will observe this when I am insecure about a certain topic and/or the strength I give to the situation, but: 'There is a significant difference between fake and unnatural' – Dennis Heijn My fear of speaking up and indicating my needs sometimes block me from taking action. Good preparation (thinking the situation over) helps me to overcome these blocks
Feelings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel connected to the team, but not too close. I am supportive, but not too involved It is difficult for me to 'determine & judge' the level of the – deeper – connection to people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have only been in tears once, when a team member indicated that he and his wife had had a miscarriage that morning, because I almost lost my oldest son due to a preterm birth
Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a stranger, I am able to get a much clearer picture of the overall situation in a company compared to the employees in their own departments After working on an assignment for 3 to 6 months, I have the idea I can do much better than the existing CEO, because I see 'all' the issues that are not resolved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I should inform clients, as I sometimes do, about areas outside my assignment where I can be beneficial, e.g. portfolio management Would it not be wise to put my assignment on paper, to share it with all stakeholders and review it on a regular basis? I try to change and adapt my communication approach to connect more deeply with people; from conscious & incompetent to conscious & competent
Observations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am frequently aware of the effect I produce as a change agent, for example with respect to stimulating cooperation and staying factual to overcome emotions As a change agent, my ability to add 'general qualities' stops as I discover the unchangeable constraints of an organization. This causes reduced concentration, dedication, and performance, often resulting in my looking for a new assignment, although I always complete the current assignment correctly I am often concerned about adding enough value, so when I ask for a 1-to-1 with the client, I feel nervous and am submissive, because they pay my invoices, or am distant because I often miss a deeper connection My process and approach have improved over the years – I am more aware of group dynamics, personal situations, and reflecting during and on actions – and I use variants of the same basic approaches in every situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My assignments are always formulated at a high level and half of the time are not put on paper I have never had formal feedback sessions on my performance. I should ask for this feedback 'Something keeps coming at you until you learn from it' – Dennis Heijn. At the moments when I change my approach, recurring issues disappear. For example, I recently accepted a broadening of an assignment, but only after I negotiated terms. Previously, I would have accepted the extension without consideration Usually I do not have significant issues with the team, but rather with 'conquering a position' regarding a client or senior management team
Remarks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In my observation, teams do not treat me as someone who's committed leadership will end. I am seen as fully committed to the assignment and to structural change I believe a big part of my work is resolving ambiguous situations by creating clarity, e.g. by determining priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For me, 'remoteness' also means not participating in company events 'Nearness' also means contributing to a gift, for example when a team member is going on maternity leave
Thoughts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a client – 'the boss' – aware of the impact of a stranger? I will also confront him with my findings about the way the project team is functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what level do you have to adapt to the client's organization, given the following: 'It would be an enormous coincidence if that culture happened to match with the goals of the company' – Dennis Heijn
Jokes & Slip of the tongue or pen	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roughly once every 3 months, I make a huge mistake, by not following the guidelines of 'good communication' or jumping to conclusions too quickly. In all situations, I was able to solve the issue and the team member(s) involved accepted my apologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I sometimes make jokes that can potentially backfire, e.g. making fun of my client – indicating a CFO (my client) doesn't usually become a CEO, and/or a little gossip to keep spirits up, or making little jokes about people, such as the IT manager always wearing a scarf

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