The Challenge of Organizational Change:

A comparative study of private organizations' reflections on change processes

Ellen Flakke

Master of Philosophy in Psychology

Department of Psychology

University of Oslo

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to evaluate the relationship between organizational change and organizational behavior, and identify dynamics underlying organizational change. Semi-structured interviews based on the SWOT-format encourage informants in two samples representing top management ($n = 7$) and mid-level management ($n = 8$) in two private Norwegian organizations to reflect on change from an organizational- and interpersonal perspective. Reflections are evaluated and distributed according to the SWOT components (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, or Threat), and classified by what part of the organization they address (Individual, Team, Leader, or Organization). SWOT reflections are additionally compared using the Job Characteristic Model (JCM) and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) respectively, both models claimed by literature to explain profitable organizational behavior. The findings indicate no significant relation between the informants' or the two organizations' reflections on organizational change. Repeated measures ANOVA show a high frequency of Strength and Weakness indicating a dominant present-time focus when encouraged to reflect on change. The level of reflection concerning future change is contrastingly low. Change is nevertheless a topic addressed to concern the organization as a whole, not just individual employees, teams, or leader- and management. OCB is furthermore proven as more capable of capturing reflections and relate to organizational change than JCM. Nevertheless, both models fail to capture SWOT reflections on change of negative character.

Organizations are changing like never before, and faced with unprecedented demands for change at strategic and operational levels there is general acceptance for change to be a constant feature of the current organizational life (Burnes, 2004). Influenced by increased globalization of the economy, worldwide market competition, development of technology, customer expectations (Schabraqu, Cooper, & Winnubst, 2003), and product obsolescence (Furnham, 2005), today's organizations are probably more complex compared to organization of the last two decades' (Saksvik & Nytrø, 2006). The constantly evolving and dynamic environment indicates that the ability to succeed with change is, or should be, a considered core component of the organization (Arnold, Silvester, Patterson, Robertson, Cooper, & Burnes, 2005; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 1996, 2005; Kotter, 1996; Rieley & Clarkson, 2001; Todnem, 2005). Although spending time and financial resources on change as a response to the constant strive for flexibility, change is never a guarantee for success (Arnold et al., 2005). Despite the plethora of change strategies and initiatives (Pellettiere, 2006), and the numerous recipes and prescriptions telling managers how to achieve competiveness and organizational success, the jargon of reality tends to be different (Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992). Although some corporate change efforts have been profitable (Kotter, 1996), studies indicate that even the most well-established initiatives do not always provide successful outcomes (Arnold et al., 2005), and approximately 70-80% of all change initiatives are unsuccessful (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 2005; Pellettiere, 2006).

Beyond questioning what methodological approaches underlie the poor success rates, or evaluating organizations' subjective interpretation of success and failure, there is consensus that the majority of change efforts do not end up as imagined (Todnem, 2007). Although suggested to fall between success and failure, most efforts do tilt towards the 'failure part' of the scale (Kotter, 1996), and change is more complex in reality than priory assumed (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Barnett and Carroll (1995) suggest that the tendency to refer to organizational change as a distinct aspect of the organization that needs to be studied on its own, underestimates the potential that lies within the use of basic theories on organizational behavior to investigate and make predictions about change. Organizations displaying certain behaviors are nevertheless better equipped for change, and studies indicate that successful changes increase employee well-being and integrity, reduce economic tension, and enhance motivation and job satisfaction (Beer & Nohria, 2000). As failing with or not changing at all could have suicidal consequences for any organization (Schabracq, 2003), more attention should be paid to the dynamics underlying change and organizational behavior in order to succeed with change and obtain organizational payoffs.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Definitions of Organizational Change

      To plan, implement and bring about change are all complex processes confronting modern organizations. Even the study of change is a challenge, as the concept tends to operate under different guises. Being referred to as transformation, development, reorganization, restructuring, realignment and innovation, there is no wonder why managers or CEO's in charge of change report feeling bewildered in the jungle of approaches on 'how to deal and succeed with change'. Although categorized differently and despite disagreement concerning the speed, effort and direction of change, there is consensus on two issues: Firstly, the pace of change that faces the current organizational life has never been greater (Arnold et al., 2005; Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 1996, 2004; Kotter, 1996; Schabracq et al., 2003; Todnem, 2005), and secondly, all types of organizations will at some time be affected by change, as change is triggered by a combination of external and internal forces (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 1996, 2004; Dawson, 2003; Kotter, 1996). External forces tend to comprise globalization and market competition, new technology, large political happenings, governmental regulations, and the overall expectations of society and customers. Contrastingly, internal forces tend to involve increased workplace diversity, administration structures, strategic directions, implementation of new technology, and market opportunities (French & Bell, 1999). Change is, according to Furnham (2005), the interaction of various organizational factors (e.g. centralization of decision-making, degree of formalization and professionalization, organizational hierarchy, complexity, organizational age, and size), combined with personal factors (e.g. employees' age, levels of education, training, values, beliefs and positional rank).

      Van de Ven and Poole (1995) believe organizational change involves an empirical observation of difference in state or form over a certain time in an organizational entity, such as the overall organizational strategy, work groups or teams, an individual's job and work-related tasks, a service or product. In a similar vein, Pooras and Silvers (1991) argue that organizational change is activated by an environmental shift that triggers intentionally generated responses when recognized by the organization. Change consequently intends to alter specific key variables that furthermore influence employees and their work-related behaviors. Based on this, organizational change is understood as *a process that occurs in an organizational setting where the aim of reshaping, altering or transforming is to move*

something from one state to another, with the intention of improving the organizational
performance, production, or interaction with the individual or the external environment
(Anand & Nicholson, 2004; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Dawson; 2003; Marcus, 2000).

Theories on Organizational Change

Theories on organizational change try to explain why organizations change and what
the consequences of change might be (Barnett & Carroll, 1995). Based on the argumentation
that understanding the theory and practice of change management is fundamental in order to
achieve organizational effectiveness and success (Arnold et al., 2005), the following section
presents two approaches that in the last 50 years have dominated the theory, practice, and
literature on change, and sheds light on the current debate on how to best manage change.

The Planned approach to change. In 1946 Lewin, a pioneer in systematic studies of
planned change (Kanter et al., 1992), initiated the Planned approach to change, which
influenced and dominated the theory and practice of change management until the 1980s
(Burnes, 2004). The Planned approach comprises Field theory, Group dynamics, Action
research, and the Three-Step model, and the last one is cited as a key contribution to the study
of organizational change. The Three-Step model for change recognizes that old behavior has
to be discarded before any new behavior can be successfully adopted and fully accepted
(Burnes, 1996). As indicated by the name, the process of planned change involves three steps:
Unfreezing the present level, *moving* to the next level, and *refreezing* the new level. The
Planned approach was primarily developed as a theoretical framework with a broad
orientation towards understanding the concept of change in general, and not solely for
organizational issues (Marcus, 2000). Nevertheless, Lewin's Three-Step model is argued to be
the best-developed, best-supported, and best-documented approach to change (Burnes, 2004),
and its conceptualization is suggested fundamental for understanding how humans and social
systems change (Mirvis, 2006). Schein (2004) claims that any change in human systems is
based on the assumptions originally derived from Lewin, and even those who have not read
Lewin use the Planned approach (Kanter et al., 1992).

The Planned approach influenced the field of organizational psychology, especially
related to studies and theories on change, such as Beckhard and Harris' Three-part process
from 1987 explaining organizational change as a transition from a current to a future state
(Marcus, 2000). The Organizational Development (OD) builds on the fundamental ideas of
Lewin, but argues that the Three-Step model should be seen as an independent rather than an
integrated element in the Planned approach (Burnes, 2004). OD's elaboration of the theory

has resulted in alternative theories on planned change such as Lippitt and colleagues' Seven-phase model from 1958, Bullock and Battens' Four-phase model from 1985, and Cummings and Huses' Eight-phase model from 1989. With a system-wide and humanistic-democratic orientation OD received much attention as it responds to the changing needs of organizations and their customers (Arnold et al., 2005).

The Emergent approach to change. The Planned approach to change received extensive criticism in the early 1980s regarding its inability to adapt to the rapid pace of change (Schein, 2004), and its focus on small-scale and incremental change made it less applicable in large-scale and transformational change situations (Burnes, 1996). The description of organizations as frozen units that had to be refrozen was argued to be inappropriate, and the metaphor was argued to be replaced by the picture of organizations as fluid entities (Kanter et al., 1992). The Emergent approach appeared as several united stances against Lewinian, planned change, and became dominating due to its focus on organizations as complex, dynamic, and non-linear systems (Burnes, 2005), and its understanding for the broad range of unpredictable problems facing modern organizations (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Although focusing on organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational learning, managerial behavior, and power to politics (Burnes, 2004), and besides comprising Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process for Successful Organizational Transformation, and Kanter's (Kanter et al., 1992) Ten Commandments for Executing Change, the Emergent approach is criticized for lacking coherence, being new in the game, and offering no more choice than the Planned approach (Burnes, 1996).

New paradigms and 'no such thing as one way to change'. Based on the acceleration of change situations in the last two decades, and despite the large body of research devoted to the topic, there is still considerable disagreement concerning the most appropriate way to change. Research shows that the previously dominating approaches do not fully cover the spectrum of change confronting modern organizations (Burnes, 2004), no universal rule on how to successfully manage change exists (Dawson, 2003), and even currently available theories receive restricted support, and moderate empirical evidence (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2004; Guimaraes & Armstrong, 1998; Todnem, 2005). Burnes (2004) moves beyond the question of good or bad approaches to change and calls for a more profound debate on appropriate models, as there is increasing support for rejecting the idea that one or two theoretical approaches are suitable for all change situations (O'Brien, 2002). *The Contingency theory*, emerging in the 1960s as one of the first theories to reject the 'one best way' approach of how to manage change, emphasizes that organizational activities are

dependent on situational variables. As structure, strategies, culture, shape and size differ from organization to organization, the 'one best way' to change for *all* organizations should be replaced by the 'one best way' to change for *each* organization, seeking the optimum fit in each situation (Dunphy & Stace, 1993). A more recent contribution is *Burnes Framework for Change* (2004) that encompasses possible change situations and allows managers a degree of choice related to change under the given circumstances. The framework attempts to combine various approaches to change, as combining approaches on how to best assign change is suggested beneficial for organizational survival in the long run. In a similar vein, Cao, Clarke and Lehaney's (2003) present a four-dimensional view on how to manage organizational change. Similar ideas are found when combining Beer and Nohria's (2000) economic-oriented *Theory E* with the human-oriented *Theory O,* or Kanter et al.'s (1992) suggestion that large-scale transformations of Bold Strokes should be followed by slow small-scale transformations of Long Marches, in order to embed and succeed with rapid change. Strategic organizational change comprises, according to Kotter (1996), small- and large-scale changes, and despite their different nature, starting time and management, the overall aim is the same.

Reasons for Unsuccessful Change

The debate on how to deal with change has been long-lasting, and the need for more knowledge has since the radical changes of the organizational life in the 1980s and 1990s influenced the empirical studies on the topic. McLennan's (1989) assumption that change would be an essential part of future organizations was appropriate. Change is a salient feature and a primary task of organizational management (Argyris & Schön, 1996). Dawson's (2003) question regarding how such a large number of seemingly successful companies spend large amounts of resources, and *still* fail with change, is just one in line of the extensive empirical coverage of the last decades (Bamford & Forrester, 2003).

Studies have depicted 'criteria of success' related to successful change, as well as uncovered 'key factors' that might contribute to the experiences of unsuccessful change. Management and leadership are primary factors related to organizational success, and organizations with strong leadership are better equipped when encountering change (Miller, 2002). The chance of succeeding with change is furthermore assumed to be better for organizations with a directive management (Dunphy & Stace, 1993). Although failure in management involvement reflects poor project management and change implementation (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 1991), good leaders are not enough. Successful change depends just as much on discipline and implementing the right framework for change (Miller, 2002).

Burnes (2004) and Dawson (2003) agree that poor, contradictory theories and the lack of valid frameworks are fundamental factors in explaining unsuccessful changes. Fronting organizational culture, Schein (2004) argues the importance of communication in order to succeed with change, as organizations that lack fundamental communication patterns tend to fail with change as a result of not fully understanding the organizational culture and its capabilities. The essence of understanding organizational culture and keeping a realistic picture of the qualities the organization possesses is, consequently criteria of success. Organizations lacking congruence between the real world and the perception of their position in it are argued to experience more unsuccessful change efforts compared to organizations with a more congruent view (Rieley & Clarkson, 2001). Limited investigation to identify the organization's readiness for change is another factor related to unsuccessful change (Pellettiere, 2006), so is also employees' resistance to change (Madsen, Miller, & John, 2005).

Studies indicate that managers in charge of change generally ignore literature on the topic as theories tend to make the process of change sound *simpler* than it comes about in reality. When deciding what approach to choose, by evaluating its relevance and validity, managers report confusion (Bamford & Forresters, 2003). A study evaluating the practice and state of organizational theories indicates a discrepancy between managers' assumptions about *how to change* and *the aim of changing*, and the actual managerial practices in change management (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Limited managerial skills and lack of knowledge on how to effectively bring about change are factors related to unsuccessful change efforts (Burnes, 1991), so is managers' neglect of employees and their involvement (Adand & Nicholson, 2004; Kotter, 1996). Kanter et al. (1992) emphasize that organizations involving the entire organization in the change process are better equipped to succeed, as managers think of employees as the organization's most important assets and instill confidence in them when planning the future (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Behavior claimed by literature as profitable, especially related organizational change is furthermore presented.

Profitable Organizational Behavior
Two trends are, according to Furnham (2005), applicable to the modern organization: *Flatter structure* and strive for *efficiency.* As the previously dominating hierarchical structure that separated employees has started to fade, organizations consequently tend to obtain flatter structure. Arnold et al. (2005) suggest that customer-oriented organizations benefit more by obtaining horizontal structures as this reflects responsiveness. Modern organizations' focus on empowering, team-orientation and agile structures (Piderit, 2000), is indicated by research as

important for the organization's development and ability to succeed with change over time (Furnham, 2005). Burnes (2004) claims that the ability to succeed with change is related to organizational strategy, and that strategy and structure should be seen as one. Efficiency is furthermore one of the greatest challenges of modern organizations (Nadler & Tushman, 1999), and studies indicate that efficient organizations tend to succeed with change efforts when attempting to increase competiveness, reduce waste, and make the most of the available resources. Effective organizations consequently know where to go, how to get there, and how to involve employees in order to succeed with change (Rieley & Clarkson, 2001). Besides prioritizing smart strategies and efficiency, organizations should also emphasize human contribution and commitment when the intention is development and future survival in constantly competitive surroundings (Gallos, 2006).

Organizational culture. Succeeding with change is clearly something more than choosing the right approach to change, and the concept should be linked to the well-known term of organizational culture (Burnes, 1996). Based on the fundamental idea of Schein (2004), a leading writer on organizational culture, it is suggested that for an organization to manage and deal with change it is necessary to first understand its culture. Knowledge on organizational culture and how it is sustained will consequently benefit the process of planning and implementing change. Organizational culture involves the unique and shared norms, beliefs, values, and ways of behaving that explain how the organization and its members function. The concept is furthermore agued to be an adaptive learning process (Schein, 2004), which is essential in understanding how the organization develops, communicates and behaves. Analyses of fundamental values that govern employees' behavior might provide an overview of the nature of the culture, as well as an understanding of how members of the organization think, feel, and act. French and Bell (1999) emphasize what a great value it is for an organization to be able to understand and diagnose, as well as change its culture, when necessary; all essential elements for the modern organization that consequently should not be underestimated. If the aim is to get an overview of the culture one should investigate how it is communicated to new recruits (Schein, 2004), or review the presence of consistent goals. The more clear goals an organization possesses, the more the culture will influence organizational behavior, especially in relation change (Burnes, 2004). Although studies often omit organizational culture as a result of organizations not sufficiently understanding the impact of the concept (Schein, 1996), it is indicated a strong correlation between attributes of organizational culture and readiness for change (Pellettiere, 2006).

Arrangement, participation, and development. Knowledge of organizational culture is a fundamental element in the process of change, and all parts of the organization should be involved in reflecting on current and future organizational problems, as well as participate actively in developing possible solutions. The clever organization consequently orients itself towards making the right adjustments for its employees, which is furthermore stated as central in the revised edition of the *Working Environment Act,* section 4-2, *'Requirements regarding arrangement, participation and development'.* Besides creating a good psychosocial environment and focusing on employees' integrity, organizations should emphasize arrangement, participation, and development as they are all suggested indicators for organizational success. A case study of the public sector indicates participation as a key factor to successful change (O'Brien, 2002), as direct participation of employees is essential when aiming for individual development, ensuring employees' acceptance for the change effort, and making employees active contributors to the organization when undergoing change. Despite the link between employees' participation and 'bottom up' processes to change, such as fronted by Theory O (Beer & Nohria, 2000), the difficulties of encouraging participation should not be underestimated. As a result of the rapidly changing world with constant demands for flexibility, higher performance, and lower costs, Cummings and Worley (2005) encourage organizations to turn to employees to enhance participation and involvement, commitment and overall productivity. Although involvement is indicated as a key factor of the modern organization, current literature on practical management tends to underestimate the importance of employees (Pfeffer, 1998).

Job Characteristic Model. A model of great influence on the development of the Norwegian work life and the Working Environment Act is the Job Characteristic Model (JCM), initiated by Hackman and Oldham (1976). The model has been of great inspiration and has helped create better work environments, enhance employees self-determination (Saksvik & Nytrø, 2006), influence motivation, increase job productivity and job satisfaction, and develop more structured patterns for implementing ideas and values, and encourage democracy and active job participation (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2002). Based on five core job dimensions JCM describes characteristics of work and how the individual employee responds to them: Skill variety, Task identity, Task significance, Autonomy, and Feedback. The five job dimensions are argued to promote three psychological states that are collectively linked to beneficial work-related and personal outcomes, such as work motivation, performance, satisfaction, and efficiency (Kompier, 2003). The first three dimensions determine how meaningful the individual feel the work is, whereas the fourth dimension decides the

experience of responsibility. Nevertheless, different work situations involve different levels of autonomy, and a high degree of autonomy is suggested to increase the feeling of individual freedom, interdependence, and determination concerning how the work should be carried out. The fifth dimension is based on receiving information about work performance and fosters knowledge of results. When calculated as Motivating Potential Score (MPS), autonomy and feedback are considered the most important dimensions related to job motivation. JCM is argued to be an individual model as the relation between the five dimensions, critical psychological states, and personal and work-related outcomes are moderated by individual growth need strengths (GNS) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; 1980). Despite disagreement on the exact number of dimensions and critics concerning the rather limited range of variables (Arnold el al., 2005), studies indicate JCM as reasonably valid, support its multidimensionality, and correlate the dimensions with behavioral and psychological outcomes. JCM is suggested the best-developed model for providing and increasing employees' work motivation (Fried & Ferris, 1987).

   Change and theories of motivation. Being a central model within the socio-technical approach, JCM comprises motivational job characteristics and focus on what motivates work under different circumstances. Motivation is an essential element in any change process, as change is less likely to succeed without the right motivation being present. It is suggested that motivation based on the components of direction, effort, and persistence decides what pushes or pulls us to behave the way we do (Arnold et al., 2005). Motivation is according to Furnham (2005) a combination of individual- and work-related factors that influence work attitudes, enhance job satisfaction, and increases commitment and work performances. Lewin furthermore uses motivation as a key concept, and argues that motivation has to be generated for any change to occur (Mirvis, 2006). Knowing that change is not always wanted and that employees tend to resist change makes motivation a crucial aspect of any change process.

   Among the motivational theories are *the Need theories*, based on the idea that human behavior is directed by psychological needs, and that work-related behavior is behavior aiming to satisfy certain needs of employees. Maslow's (1954) *Hierarchy of Needs* is the most well-known of the Need theories and has been of great influence on work-related motivation and development of recent theories (Furnham, 2005). Maslow (1954) explains human motivation as needs that are experienced to a varying degree at all times. Motivation is the process where an unsatisfied need gives direction towards a goal. Human behavior is motivated by five needs structured in a hierarchical system. Three lower-order needs of fundamental character (psychological, safety and social needs), have to be activated one by

one before higher-order needs (esteem and self-actualization needs) can be satisfied. Personal growth consequently involves fulfilling the higher-order needs. Maslow's hierarchy remains popular although little empirical evidence indicates the exact number of needs and the hierarchical order in which the needs have to be activated. It is further suggested that the needs offer limited guidance concerning how managers should motivate employees (Arnold et al. 2005). Its popularity is nevertheless explained by the incorporation of its concepts in the daily language (e.g. self-actualization), and the assumption that employees are motivated by different incentives in different work situations (Berry, 1998).

Justice in motivation has become a prominent topic related to employees' perception of fairness at work, and a motivational approach that has focused on justice in organizational settings since the late 1980s is *the Equity theory*. Originally derived from Adams in 1965, the theory suggests that individuals are motivated to work, as long as they receive something in return (Arnold et al., 2005). Motivation to work and maintain a balance between personal investments and contributions, and benefits and rewards, is based on social comparison and the experience of fairness. Organizational behavior, especially related to change processes, influence employees' experience of fairness and equity. Experience of fairness tends to increase profitable behavior and might result in organizational payoffs. Contrastingly, the more unfairness and inequity perceived the more distress, which consequently is reflected in decreased work effort, lower commitment, and reduced performance. Recent years' focus on justice-related work issues in modern organizations have increased the interest in employees' willingness to behave as 'good citizens'.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior. The Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) has received great attention from scholars of motivation based on the remarkable interest for organizational justice (Moorman, 1991), as OCB is assumed to provide employees with a certain work motivation that is beneficial for organizations in order to succeed (Arnold et al., 2005). OCB is, compared to traditional models argued to represents, an alternative, new way of thinking about job behaviors. Bateman and Organ (1983) emphasize the individual's contribution to the workplace and the model's function and ability to cover the current needs of modern organizations. The essence of OCB is by Organ and Ryan (1995) suggested to involve the employees' contributions to the organization that goes beyond what is stated as their contractually rewarded jobs and role requirements. Such an understanding is in accordance with Arnold and colleagues' (2005) argumentation that OCB furthermore refers to the individual employee's choice to perform such a behavior, or not. Despite the rapid growth in research and literature on OCB, there seems to be some conceptual confusion concerning

the nature of the concept, as well as lacking consensus on the exact number of dimensions. Although having been presented as five-dimensional involving altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue (Arnold et al., 2005), a review article by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach (2000) redefined seven dimensions and is suggested more theoretically adequate. The seven dimensions are: Helping behavior, Sportsmanship, Organizational loyalty, Organizational compliance, Individual initiative, Civil virtue, and Self development.

The interest in OCB in recent years indicates a change of mentality and focus, as more organizations experience the presence of rapid changes as well as realize their dependency on the human side of the organization in order to succeed (Adand & Nicholson, 2004; Kotter, 1996). Studies indicate a relation between OCB and enhanced organizational performance, increased efficiency, enhanced employee and managerial productivity (Podsakoff, Adhearne & MacKenzie, 1997). OCB is assumed to reduce friction and attract the right people to the right jobs. As human capital is considered the most important aspect of modern organizations (Pfeffer, 1998), the presence of OCB reflecting employees who besides doing their contractual jobs well, have the motivation and courage to act beyond core tasks and help each other out, is profitable (Moorman, 1991). OCB has a positive impact on managers' performance, judgment and decision-making, and is suggested a key factor in order to increase production and effectiveness in work groups and teams (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Social Leaning theory. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning theory is argued as a relevant aspect of change processes. Most human behavior is, according to Bandura (1997), learned by observing models. Observation of models, such as colleagues at the workplace, might provide ideas on how to behave as we see how other people act and what the consequences of their actions are. The observed behavior might consequently function as a guide on how to behave in later situations, depending however on whether the observed behavior is being punished or rewarded. Models tend to be people ranged high in status, competence or power. Jimmieson (2005) furthermore relates Bandura's concept of self-efficacy to organizational change, arguing that *change-related self-efficacy* in organizational settings involves "the individual's belief in her or his own capabilities in order to execute a course of action needed to meet the demands of a situation" (p. 5). Having members of the organizations serve as positive models and at the same time empathizing with the individual employee's belief in one's capabilities to manage and tackle change situation, should be considered to be of importance.

Employees' Reflections and SWOT-based Interviews

  Employees and human capital. The priority of employees' integrity, involvement and participation tend to increase as more organizations realize what great potential employees are for the organization. Positioned centrally in the Working Environmental Act, studies indicate that employees' involvement and participation benefits organizational activities, especially change efforts. Pfeffer (1998) argues that organizational success is simple and available for everyone. The key is to put people first, whether the goal is increased productivity, more profits, organizational learning or innovation. The crucial element on the road to success is how managers view their employees and the organization as a whole. The ability to reflect and have insight and perspective concerning the organization, its visions and strategies, activities and members is a key factor in order to experience success. Successful organizations actively include employees and value their competence, knowledge and reflections, which is advantageous as employees comprise the local expertise of the organization (Dawson, 2003). Participatory change is considered superior compared to expert-centered change (Mirvis, 2006), and to fully realize the organization's potential employees should interact with the change initiative (Piderit, 2000). Clever organizations generate employees' enthusiasm and support for change, as it is easier to succeed when employees are willing to and feel ready to change (Miller, 2002).

  Proactive behavior and reflections. Lewin emphasized the importance of being able to reflect in relation to the planning of change. Decades later it is still argued that organizations that do not take time to reflect on current situations and the external environment runs the risk of being less equipped to tackle and survive the challenges of the modern organizational life, as little or no reflection is a factor of failure (Argyris & Schön, 1996). Organizations should consequently promote participation and organizational reflective openness (Senge, 1990). Although reflective organizations are indicated as more efficient than non-reflective organizations, case studies show that reactive behavior still remains common practice in the organizational life (Burnes, 2004). Proactive behavior should be included in more organizational strategies, and more organizations should prioritize analyzing reflections and information concerning their overall performance.

  Anand and Nicholson (2004) argue for the benefit of linking proactive behavior to change efforts, as proactive change involves an active seek for internal or external reasons to change, instead of waiting for them to arise (e.g. planning future opportunities based on the understanding of the organization's current state). Time is a great advantage by choosing a proactive approach to change, as planning in advance provides flexibility concerning options,

priorities and resources, as well as dealing with foreseen problems. Burnes (2004) links proactive behavior to the standard prescription for successful organizations, emphasizing the importance of keeping a realistic sense of one's capabilities, understanding the costumers' needs and the nature in which one operates.

SWOT-based interviews. Reflectivity is a factor related to success, and organizations confronting change should be encouraged to actively reflect on their situation and the role they play in the larger context. Described as an exploring phase providing empirical fundament on the topic of study (Holter & Kalleberg, 1996), qualitative interviews are a common measure for obtaining reflections. When aiming for detailed information semi-structured interviews oust structured interviews due to their orientation towards letting the informants reflect more freely on the topic under study. It is nevertheless the responsibility of the researcher to follow responses and ask additional questions when necessary (Kvale, 1997). Reflections could be obtained by using the SWOT-format, a well-known strategic tool related to corporate strategies, strategic planning (Bernoider, 2002; Chermack & Kasshanna, 2007; Hill & Westbrook, 1997) and organizational development (Furnham, 2005). Developed at Harvard Business School in the 1950s, and later at Standford Research Institute in the 1960s and 1970s, the SWOT-format is still a high-ranked analytical tool for strategic planning processes (Glaister & Falshaw, 1999). The SWOT-format enables identification of 'key factors' related to a specific objective under study, and have been used to study organizational change (Langer, Alfirevic, & Pavicic, 2005). Based on the four components of Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat, the main principle is to obtain and evaluate reflections on the current and future situation, and the internal and external environment in which organizations operate (Sørensen, Vidal, & Engstöm, 2004). Studies indicate that the SWOT-format is easy to perform, and suitable for combining with qualitative interviews (Edvardsen, 2007; Straumsheim, 2007).

Present Study

Based on the theoretical underpinnings and the need for knowledge on change accounted for, the present study evaluates the connection between organizational change and organizational behavior. Aiming to identify dynamics or 'key factors' underlying change the present study investigates: *How is employees' reflection on organizational change related to 'key factors' claimed by literature to explain profitable organizational behavior?*

Whereas studies on change tend to involve prior and present evaluations of specific change initiatives, the present study evaluates the ability to *reflect on change,* based on

Dawson's (2003) argumentation that studies on organizational change should always start by obtaining an overview and gaining insight of the organizations' characteristics on change. The SWOT-format, representing Lewinian principles of proactive thinking and reflection, is consequently chosen for obtaining reflections on change, and will combined with semi-structured interviews, encourage informants in two samples representing top management (n = 7) and mid-level management (n = 8) in two private Norwegian organizations to reflect on change from an organizational- and interpersonal perspective. Despite operating in different business areas Organization A and Organization B, are invited to participate based on their organizational- and operational similarities. As operators in global business environments both organizations are familiar with demands of adapting to the obligations of the external environment and the constant strive to meet costumers' expectations. The ability to manage and succeed with change is by both organizations considered important in order to stay competitive and innovative, and appear as reliable market operators.

Being common measures for collecting attitudes and reactions to change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999), and evaluating readiness for change, turnover, social relationship, companioning behavior and commitment (Cunningham, 2006; Madsen et al., 2005), surveys and self-reports were considered alternative measures. Although less time-consuming and providing large bodies of information in relatively short time, surveys and self-reports were both considered unsuitable for obtaining rich and detailed information on change based on a comparative study of quantitative and qualitative measures (Straumsheim, 2007). The findings show that semi-structured SWOT-based interviews are more sensitive and provide more information than survey instruments, QPSNordic and HSE indicator tool, respectively.

To evaluate the connection between employees' reflections on change and 'key factors' claimed by literature as profitable organizational behavior, two additional models are chosen for comparison, the Job Characteristic Model (JCM) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). JCM has been highly influential in the organizational life and its development, whereas OCB is suggested to be in accordance with the needs and expectations of the current and future organizational life. Both models independently draw notice within the empirical research literature due to theoretical difference, and a comparison of their ability to capture reflections and relate to the topic of organizational change will provide new perspectives to the debate on 'key factors' and predictions about successful change.

Methods

Organizations and Participants

      Two private Norwegian organizations were invited to participate in the present study evaluating the ability to manage and succeed with organizational change. Organization A encompasses 1200 employees in 22 countries, whereas Organization B is a larger operator with 7000 employees and comprises a network of 300 offices in 100 countries. Both organizations gave their consents for participating and ensured free access to informants. One sample representing each organization was strategically selected by representatives from the organizations' HR departments. The structured samples comprised informants who could contribute with personal experience and reflections on present and future organizational change and organizational behavior. All informants received a written invitation by e-mail making an inquiry about participation. The sample from Organization A ($n = 7$) comprised leaders positioned in top management, whereas the sample from Organization B ($n = 8$) consisted of managers from a specific mid-level section. All informants from Organization A were men, whereas six men and two women comprised the sample from Organization B.

Measures

      Qualitative interviews of semi-structured character involved open questions based on the SWOT-format to obtain information concerning the informants' reflection on change. The interview guide comprised four main questions emphasizing the SWOT components (Appendix), primarily encouraging reflection on the organization's present strengths and weaknesses related to organizational change, and secondly encouraging reflection on the organization's opportunities and threats concerning future change. The questions were as follows: *Strength:* "Could you please tell us about the strengths Organization X has in relation to organizational change?", *Weakness:* "Could you please tell us about the weaknesses Organization X has in relation to organizational change?", *Opportunity:* "Could you please tell us about what opportunities Organization X has in order to succeed with organizational change in the future?", and *Threat:* "Could you please tell us about what might hinder Organization X in order to succeed with organizational change in the future?". The interview guide used in both organizations was identical, only distinguished by the name of the organization.

      Additional information was obtained by encouraging the informants to respond to supplementary questions, such as: "You have mentioned some strengths, are there other

strengths related to…?", "Did I get you right when you say that…?", "Could you illustrate this by giving an example?", and "Could you specify what you mean by…?". Follow-up questions related to the four main questions beyond this were asked when necessary, such as: "What factors are involved when planning and implementing change efforts in Organization X?", "How does Organization X communicate to and involve employees during change?", and "Can you refer to a current change initiative and exemplify what effects the specific change had on Organization X?".

Procedure

    Location and duration. Four interviews with Organization A took place at their headquarters between November 27th and 29th 2007, whereas three interviews were conducted as oversea telephone conferences to two of their international offices on December 17th 2007. All interviews with Organization B were carried out between November 28th and December 19th 2007. Six interviews were conducted at their headquarters, whereas two took place at a department's unit. The author and a co-student were present in all interviews ($N = 15$). The duration of the interview conversations with Organization A ranged between 35 (telephone interview) and 95 minutes ($M = 63$), and the duration of the interview conversations with Organization B ranged between 48 and 70 minutes ($M = 58$). Each interview was introduced by repeating relevant instructions, and answering the informants' prospective questions.

    Information to the informants. The informants received a written invitation by e-mail containing relevant information and instructions concerning the interview conversation, the study and its purpose approximately one week before participating. The interview guide was additionally distributed some days in advance explicitly encouraging reflection from an organizational- and interpersonal perspective. Reflection on the topic of study prior to an interview is presumed to enhance the level of reflection (Kvale, 1997). The interview was informed to be carried out as an open conversation, and permission was asked use a tape-recorder. Providing a permanent record of the interview, tape-recording was explained as advantageous for uncovering information that might otherwise be missed out on (e.g. hand note, or paper-and-pencil coding forms), as well as controlling for inter-rater reliability as both researchers could listen to the tapes independently (Bordens & Abbott, 2002).

Data Treatment and Analyses

    Transcription. The tape-recorded files were transferred to a PC for transcription immediately after each interview using *Digital Voice Editor 2*. Transcription is a necessary

step for interpreting data material when technical media such as audio- or videotaping is involved (Flick, 2002). The aim of transcribing is to get hold of the accurate sense of the information provided, present the informant in a respectful way, and ensure readability. A dilemma within the social sciences (e.g. Psychology) concerns how to make the interview conversation whole (Kvale, 1997) and emphasizes 'the essence of context' over 'exact phases' (Flick, 2002). As a result the transcriptions, conducted by the author and the co-student, were based on the informants' phases, and as far as possible made loyal to the informants. Where direct transcriptions did not make sense editions were made to obtain coherent language. As the most fundamental responsibility of the researcher is to hide the identity of the informant, total anonymity was ensured, and references to organizations, sections, departments and colleagues were replaced with codes to ensure confidentiality (e.g. Organization A, Section X). Only accessible to the researchers, all tapes were erased immediately after transcription. To ensure reliability and control for possible discrepancy in the textual material, one interview transcribed by each of the researchers was randomly chosen for the other to read, while listening to the tape. Consistent understanding was consequently indicated between the tape and the transcript.

Content analysis and defining statements. As one of the classical qualitative procedures (Flick, 2002) and the most commonly used analysis in organizational psychology (Arnold et al., 2005), content analysis was considered suitable for reducing the textual material by counting and classifying the occurrence of specific statements into manageable bits of data (Weber, 1990). A digital program for categorizing and coding textual data, *NVivo version 7*, was used to enable quantification of the qualitative data. The author and co-student decided how to define a statement based on Holsti's (1969) argumentation that statements should be defined after transcription, as familiarity with the textual data reduces the chance of encountering statements that do not match the categories. A statement was defined as *the smallest meaningful unit that reflects the informant's experience and understanding of the topic of interest, organizational change*. A statement involved one sentence, more sentences, or part of a sentence.

Categorization of statements – SWOT and Organizational levels. All statements were categorized within *one* of the four SWOT categories given the interview's foundation on the SWOT-format. All statements coded as Strength or Weakness included the informants' internal reflections on here-and-now conditions related to change in Organization X. Contrastingly, all statements categorized as Opportunity or Threat reflected the informants' responses regarding the future state of Organization X in relation to change, and responses

directed towards the external environment in which Organization X operates. This made up the fundamental criteria for coding statements. Nevertheless, in instances where the informants explicitly reported Strength or Weakness, Opportunity or Threat, the statement was consequently coded accordingly. For instance, if the informant emphasized external partners or consumers as strength of Organization X, the statement was accordingly coded as Strength despite involving external aspects. The SWOT analysis is always conducted in connection with an objective, which consequently defines the component of *Strength* to involve characteristics of the organization that are helpful in trying to achieve the objective, *Weakness* to involve characteristics of the organization that are harmful in trying to achieve the objective, *Opportunity* involves external conditions of the organization that are helpful in trying to achieve the objective, and *Threats* involves external conditions that are harmful in trying to achieve the objective. The objective in the present study is organizational change.

The aim of classifying the total number of statements was to get an overview of how frequently the informants referred to organizational change as Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, or Threat. To survey to what areas of the organization the SWOT statements were addressed, each statement was additionally categorized as belonging to *one* of four Organizational levels comprising Individual, Team, Leader, and Organization based on following criteria: *Individual* involves reflections referring to the individual employee's experiences, opinions, and feelings, *Team* involves reflections referring to departments, sections, project groups or work teams, *Leader* involves reflections referring to overall leadership behavior (e.g. management), a specific leader, or closest leadership, and *Organization* involves reflections referring to organizational behaviors, activities and attitudes concerning organizational culture, structures and strategies, organizational visions and missions, values and beliefs.

All statements fulfilled the criteria accounted for above, and there was consequently no need for a category to catch up statements not accounted for by the four SWOT categories or the four Organizational levels. However exceptions did occur in statements of identical or similar character, or statements occurring in the same context. Statements of identical or similar character were only coded more than once when appearing in different parts of the interview, when appearing in different sections or paragraphs, or when the informant responded to a new question raised by the researchers. The appearance of statements of identical or similar character in different parts of the interview could indicate that a specific topic was of considerable importance for the informant. Inter-rater reliability indicated

acceptable percent agreement of 83% for the SWOT categorization and acceptable percent agreement of 88% on Organizational levels.

Statistical analysis applied to the SWOT categorization. The total number of statements from the coding process was transferred to *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) *version 15.0*, a computer program for statistical analyses, and analyses of variance were calculated to evaluate main and interaction effects. Repeated measures ANOVA was used to uncover main effect between the SWOT categories and the Organizational levels, whereas an independent sample t-test investigated main effect between the organizations' distribution of SWOT statements. Repeated measures ANOVA was further calculated to uncover interaction effects between SWOT categorizing and the organizations, between Organizational levels and the organizations, and between SWOT categorizes and Organizational levels. As studies involving small sample sizes might complicate the process of obtaining statistical significance, it was decided to report the estimates of effect size in the present study ($N = 15$). Based on a repeated measure design partial eta squared was calculated as effect size, that is to say SS effect (SS effect + SS relevant error).

SWOT categorization on psychological models. The total number of SWOT statements was additionally coded on JCM and OCB, two psychological models explaining organizational behavior. The aim of a second coding was to evaluate to what degree the models were capable of capturing SWOT statements reflecting organizational change. The SWOT statements were coded on *one* of the dimensions in JCM and OCB, However statements that did not fit into the two models' dimensions were categorized as 'Not accounted for'.

Job Characteristic Model. All statements were categorized on *one* of the five dimensions comprising JCM. The coding was based on the original definitions initiated by Hackman and Oldham (1976): *Skill variety* involves the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out work, which involve the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person. *Task identity* involves the degree to which the job requires completion of a "whole" and identifiable piece of work; that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome. *Task significance* involves the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment. *Autonomy* involves the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out. *Feedback* involves the

degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior. The total number of SWOT statements was additionally categorized on OCB. Based on the lack of consensus within the empirical and theoretical literature regarding the exact number of dimensions, the SWOT statements were categorized on *one* of the seven redefined dimensions presented in a review article by Podsakoff et al. (2000): *Helping behavior* involves helping others with, or preventing the occurrence of, work-related problems. *Sportsmanship* involves people who do not complain when they are inconvenienced by others, but also maintain a positive attitude even when things do not go their way, are not offended when others do not follow their suggestions, are willing to sacrifice their personal interest for the good of the work group, and do not take rejection of their ideas personally. *Organizational loyalty* involves promoting the organization to outsiders, protecting and defending it against external threats, and remaining committed to it even under adverse conditions. *Organizational compliance* involves capturing a person's internalization and acceptance of the organization's rule, regulations and procedures, which results in a scrupulous adherence to them, even when no one observes or monitors compliance. *Individual initiative* involves engaging in task-related behaviors at a level that is so far beyond minimally required or generally expected levels that it takes on a voluntary flavor. *Civil virtue* involves a macro-level interest in, or commitment to, the organization as a whole. This is shown by a willingness to participate actively in its governance (e.g. attend meetings, engage in policy debates, express one's opinion about what strategy the organization ought to follow etc.) to monitor its environment for threats and opportunities (e.g. keep up with changes in the industry that might affect the organization), and to look out for its best interests (e.g. reporting fire hazards or suspicious activities, locking doors etc.), even at great personal cost. *Self development* involves voluntary behaviors employees engage in to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Statistical analysis applied to JCM and OCB. Analyses of variance, repeated measures ANOVA, was conducted in SPSS (version 15.0) to uncover main effects between the five dimensions comprising JCM and the seven dimensions comprising OCB, and possible interaction effects between the SWOT categorization and JCM, and the SWOT categorization and OCB. A paired-sample t-test compares the models' ability of capturing SWOT statements reflecting organizational change. Partial eta squared was calculated as SS effect (SS effect + SS relevant error).

Ethical Considerations

Voluntary participation and informed consent. Ethical considerations are similar to the questions of research fundamental parts of the qualitative research process, and should be of importance whenever interpersonal interaction occur (Kvale, 1997). The written invitation containing information on the interview and the purpose and scope of the present study, also gave information about the right to withdraw at any time during the process. Participation was emphasized as voluntary. All informants confirmed having received and read the invitation and interview guide, and gave us their permission to tape-record the interview. The present study complies with ethical standards given by the Department of Psychology at the University of Oslo.

Confidentiality. Confidentiality throughout the process, another issue of importance, was ensured in order to make informants feel secure and willing to provide personal reflection. It was emphasized that it would not be possible at any time to link information from the interviews to a specific identity. The profits should always outdo the risk of participating (Kvale, 1997). Although the identity of the informants was known to central persons in the HR departments, it was explicitly stated that participation would have no consequences (e.g. backfire of the information provided).

Results

Interview Conversations and Reflection on Change

The relationship between the duration of the interview conversations and the total amount of information provided by the informants, in the present study expressed as SWOT statements reflecting organizational change, was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was a small positive correlation between the duration of interview conversations ($M = 61$, $SD = 16.4$) and the total number of SWOT statements ($M = 44$, $SD = 10.05$), as $r = .055$, $n = 15$, $p = .847$. The findings show that there is no relation between the duration of each interview and the amount of information provided. Subsequent analysis will consequently not be oriented towards each informant. Table 1 presents the duration of each interview conversation, and the informant's distribution of reflections on organizational change categorized as SWOT statements over the four components of Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat.

Table 1

Interview conversations and reflections on change

Informants	Interview duration (min)	S	W	O	T	SWOT-total
1	58	9	8	5	4	26
2	47	15	15	3	4	37
3	35	12	14	1	3	30
4	65	32	12	8	7	59
5	95	16	19	3	3	41
6	97	16	12	5	6	39
7	52	25	19	12	6	62
8	48	27	15	4	6	52
9	55	21	14	3	3	41
10	55	24	7	4	1	36
11	59	27	16	5	4	52
12	60	17	19	5	6	47
13	58	19	19	5	4	47
14	59	19	11	6	5	41
15	70	20	22	2	6	50
Mean	61	20	15	5	5	44

Note. S = Strength, W = Weakness, O = Opportunity, T = Threat.

SWOT categorization: Main and Interaction Effects

  Distribution of SWOT statements. Based on the criteria defined for the SWOT-format a total of 660 statements were identified in the interview conversations ($N = 15$), and distributed on *one* of the four SWOT components Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, or Threat. The distribution of statements, the means, standard derivations, and calculations of percent are presented in Table 2. The table depicts Strength as the most dominant SWOT category coding 45% of the statements, followed by 34% coded as Weakness. Opportunity and Threat are the least reported categories by 11% and 10%, respectively.

Table 2

Distributions of statements to SWOT categories (N = 15)

SWOT	Total	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent
Strength	299	19.9	6.1	45%
Weakness	222	14.8	4.3	34%
Opportunity	71	4.7	2.6	11%
Threat	68	4.5	1.6	10%

Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted and the findings reveal significant main effect between the four SWOT categories, $F_{(3, 42)} = 63.48$, $p < 0.001$. Effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .819. Pairwise post hoc comparisons indicate significant difference between Strength ($M = 19.9$, $SD = 6.1$) and Weakness ($p = 0.016$), Opportunity ($p = 0.001$) and Threat ($p = 0.001$), respectively. It was further indicated significant difference between Weakness ($M = 14.8$, $SD = 4.3$), and Opportunity ($p = 0.001$) and Threat ($p = 0.001$), respectively. There was no significant difference between Opportunity ($M = 4.7$, $SD = 2.6$) and Threat ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 1.6$) ($p = 0.745$), respectively.

Distribution of SWOT statements on Organizational level. The total number of SWOT statements 660 was categorized on *one* of the four Organizational levels (Individual, Team, Leader, or Organization), based on the definitions accounted for under "Methods". The results for the distribution on Organizational levels, the means, standard derivations, and calculations of percent are presented in Table 3. Organization appears as the most dominating, reported with a frequency of 72%. Team is the second-most reported, addressing 14%, whereas Individual and Leader are the least reported with a frequency of 7% and 6%, respectively.

Table 3

Distributions of statements on Organizational level (N = 15)

SWOT	Total	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent
Individual	48	3.2	1.6	7%
Team	94	6.3	6.3	14%
Leader	42	2.8	2.3	6%
Organization	476	31.7	10.9	72%

Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted, and the findings reveal significant main effect between the four Organizational levels, F (3, 42) = 62.096, $p < 0.001$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .816. Pairwise post hoc comparisons depict significant difference between Organization ($M = 31.7$, $SD = 10.9$), and Individual ($p = 0.001$), Team ($p = 0.001$) and Leader ($p = 0.001$), respectively. Significant difference was also indicated between Team ($M = 6.3$, $SD = 6.3$) and Leader ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 2.3$) ($p = 0.034$). There was no significant difference between Individual ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 1.6$) and Team ($p = 0.081$) and Leader ($p = 0.619$), respectively.

Distribution of SWOT statements in Organization A and Organization B. The distribution of the total number of SWOT statements between the two organizations indicate that 45% of the statements are identified in Organization A ($M = 42$, $SD = 13.7$), whereas 55% of the statements are identified in Organization B ($M = 45.8$, $SD = 5.8$). An independent sample t-test was conducted and indicates that the variance between Organization A and Organization B was not the same. There is consequently no significant difference between the organizations' distribution on SWOT ($t = 0.707$, $p = 0.492$). The SWOT distribution, the means, standard derivations, and calculations of percent are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

The distribution of SWOT statements between Organization A and Organization B

Organization	SWOT	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent
Organization A ($n = 7$)	294	42.0	13.7	45%
Organization B ($n = 8$)	366	45.8	5.8	55%

SWOT categorizing and Organizations. Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted and the findings show no significant interaction effects between the four SWOT categories and Organization A ($n = 7$) and Organization B ($n = 8$), F (3,39) = 1.322, $p > 0.281$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .092.

Organizational Level and Organizations. Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted and the findings depict no significant interaction effects between the four Organizational levels and Organization A ($n = 7$) and Organization B ($n = 8$), F (3,39) = 1.386, $p > 0.262$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .096.

SWOT categories and Organizational level. Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to investigate interaction effects between the four SWOT categories and the four Organizational levels, and the finding indicate significant interaction effects, as $F_{(9,126)} = 22.646$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .618. The interaction effects displayed in Table 5, where each cell comprises ($N = 15$), indicate the distribution of the means and standard derivations of the total number of statements over SWOT categorizes and Organizational levels. Interaction effects are furthermore graphically depicted in Figure 1.

Table 5

Interaction effects between SWOT-categories and Organizational level

	Organizational level				
	Individual	Team	Leader	Organization	Total
SWOT					
Strength	*M* = 1.13	*M* = 3.67	*M* = 1.0	*M* = 14.13	*M* = 19.9
	SD = 1.46	*SD* = 3.56	*SD* = 1.56	*SD* = 5.25	*SD* = 6.1
Weakness	*M* = 0.80	*M* = 1.93	*M* = 1.60	*M* = 10.47	*M* = 14.8
	SD = 1.08	*SD* = 2.49	*SD* = 1.59	*SD* = 3.58	*SD* = 4.3
Opportunity	*M* = 1.13	*M* = 0.27	*M* = 0.13	*M* = 3.20	*M* = 4.7
	SD = 1.13	*SD* = 0.46	*SD* = 0.35	*SD* = 3.26	*SD* = 2.6
Threat	*M* = 0.13	*M* = 0.40	*M* = 0.07	*M* = 3.93	*M* = 4.5
	SD = 0.35	*SD* = 1.06	*SD* = 0.26	*SD* = 1.83	*SD* = 1.6
Total	*M* = 3.2	*M* = 6.3	*M* = 2.8	*M* = 31.7	*M* = 44.0
	SD = 1.6	*SD* = 6.3	*SD* = 2.3	*SD* = 10.9	

As presented in Table 5, informants report overall more statements addressed to Organization ($M = 31.7$, $SD = 10.9$) compared to statements addressed to Individual ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 1.6$), Team ($M = 6.3$, $SD = 6.3$) and Leader ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 2.3$), respectively. The SWOT statements categorized as Organization have a clearly higher mean value and differ from the three remaining Organizational levels. The two most frequently reported of the 16 possible combinations of SWOT categories and Organizational levels are Organization/Strength ($M = 14.13$, $SD = 5.25$), and Organization/Weakness ($M = 10.47$, $SD = 3.58$). The combination of Organization/Strength appears more frequent compared to the three

remaining Organizational levels combined with the SWOT category Strength. This is indicated when compared to Individual/Strength ($M = 1.13$, $SD = 1.46$), Leader/Strength ($M = 1.0$, $SD = 1.56$), and Team/Strength ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 3.56$). Similar results are indicated for Organization/Weakness, as the combination is clearly more frequent compared to the three remaining Organizational levels combined with the SWOT category Weakness, consequently Individual/Weakness ($M = 0.80$, $SD = 1.08$), Team/Weakness ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 2.49$), and Leader/Weakness ($M = 1.60$, $SD = 1.59$). Statements categorizes as Organization/Strength and Organization/Weakness are overall reported to a greater extent compared to the third most frequent combination which is Organization/Threat ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.83$).

Team/Strength ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 3.56$) is the fourth most reported combination, and is the most frequently reported of the four Team combinations. The findings show that Team/Strength is more frequently reported compared to Team/Weakness ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 2.49$), Team/Opportunity ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.46$), and Team/Threat ($M = 0.40$, $SD = 1.06$). Statements categorized as Individual appear to be reported with the same frequency and same mean value when reflecting Individual/Strength ($M = 1.13$, $SD = 1.46$) and Individual/Opportunity ($M = 1.13$, $SD = 1.13$). Both combinations are slightly more reported than Individual/Weakness ($M = 0.80$, $SD = 1.08$) and Individual/Threat ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$). The least reported of the possible combinations is Leader/Threat ($M = 0.07$, $SD = 0.26$).
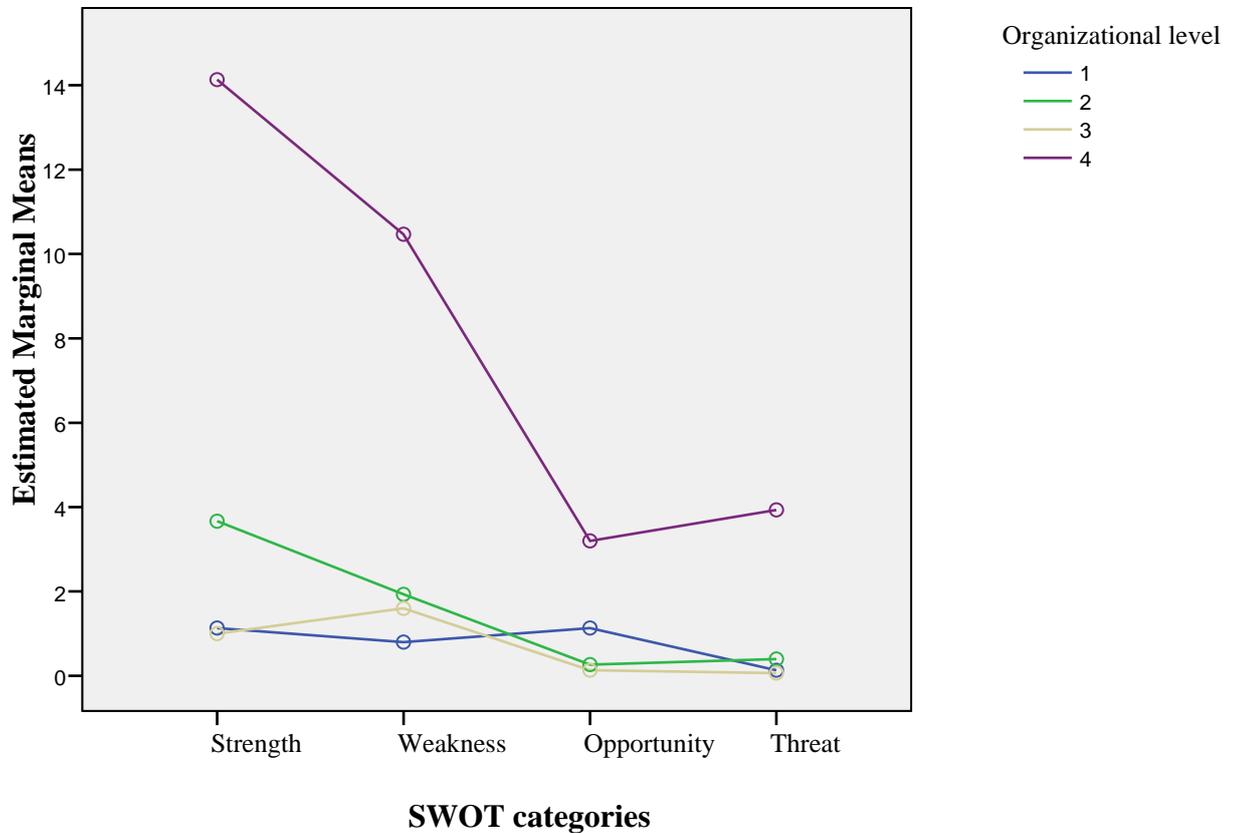
Figure 1. Mean distributions of statements over SWOT categories and Organizational level.

Note. Organizational level: 1 = Individual, 2 = Team, 3 = Leader, 4 = Organization.

The Sensitivity of SWOT on Psychological Models: Main and Interaction Effects

In order to evaluate the sensitivity of the SWOT-format the total number of 660 statements from the interviews ($N = 15$) was categorized on the dimensions comprising two independent models, the Job Characteristic Model (JCM) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). The categorizing of SWOT statements on JCM was done in accordance with the original five dimensions initiated by Hackman and Oldham (1976), whereas the categorization of SWOT statements on OCB was based on the seven redefined dimensions by Podsakoff et al. (2000). Statements that did not fit into the two models' respective dimensions were consequently categorized as 'Not accounted for'. Repeated measures ANOVA was

conducted to investigate and test possible main and interaction effects in the distribution of SWOT statements on JCM and OCB. Table 6 presents the distributions of SWOT statements on the five dimensions of JCM, the seven dimensions of OCB, the category 'Not accounted for' for JCM and OCB respectively, and calculations of percent.

Table 6

Distribution of SWOT statements on JCM

JCM	S	W	O	T	Total	Percent
Skill variety	28	3	6	0	37	6%
Task identity	28	8	4	1	41	6%
Task significance	90	31	17	11	149	23%
Autonomy	50	16	20	0	86	13%
Feedback	61	15	11	2	89	13%
Not accounted for	42	149	13	54	258	39%
Total	299	222	71	68	660	100%

Distribution of SWOT statements on OCB

OCB	S	W	O	T	Total	Percent
Helping behavior	49	10	8	2	69	11%
Sportsmanship	13	2	0	0	15	2%
Organizational loyalty	57	12	7	11	87	13%
Organizational compliance	37	13	0	2	52	8%
Individual initiative	18	2	1	0	21	3%
Civil virtue	42	21	30	37	130	20%
Self development	67	15	24	0	106	16%
Not accounted for	16	147	1	16	180	27%
Total	299	222	71	68	660	100%

Note. S = Strength, W = Weakness, O = Opportunity, T = Threat.

Distribution of SWOT statements on JCM. Out of the total number of SWOT statements there were 402 statements that could be coded on the five dimensions of JCM. The remaining 258 statements that JCM did not capture were consequently categorized as 'Not

accounted for'. Table 5 depicts that out of the 402 SWOT statements captured by JCM, there were altogether 149 statements captured by Task significance ($M = 9.9$, $SD = 5.85$), followed by 89 statements captured by Feedback ($M = 5.9$, $SD = 3.6$), 86 statements were captured by Autonomy ($M = 5.7$, $SD = 2.8$), 41 statements were covered by Task identity ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 2.0$), and the remaining 37 statements were captured by Skill variety ($M = 2.5$, $SD = 2.1$). Task significance was the most dominant dimension, capable of capture 23% of the SWOT statements. The second and third most dominant dimensions were Feedback and Autonomy, both covering 13% of the statements. Task identity and Skill variety are least capable to capture SWOT statements reflecting organizational change, both covering 6% respectively.

Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted and reveal significant main effect between the five dimensions comprising JCM, $F(4, 56) = 12.308$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .468. Pairwise post hoc comparisons indicate significant difference between Skill variety and Task Significance ($p = 0.001$), Autonomy ($p = 0.007$) and Feedback ($p = 0.001$), respectively. It was found no significant difference between Skill variety and Task identity ($p = 0.724$). The findings depict significant difference between Task identity and Task significance ($p = 0.001$), Autonomy ($p = 0.006$) and Feedback ($p = 0.005$), respectively. Significant difference was indicated between Task significance and Feedback ($p = 0.009$) respectively. The finding show no significant difference between Task significance and Autonomy ($p = 0.051$), and Autonomy and Feedback ($p = 0.873$), respectively.

SWOT categories and JCM. Repeated measures ANOVA were used to investigate interaction effects between the SWOT categories and the five dimensions comprising JCM. The findings indicate significant interaction effects, $F(12,168) = 3.691$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .209. The interaction effects between the SWOT categories and JCM are graphically presented in Figure 2.
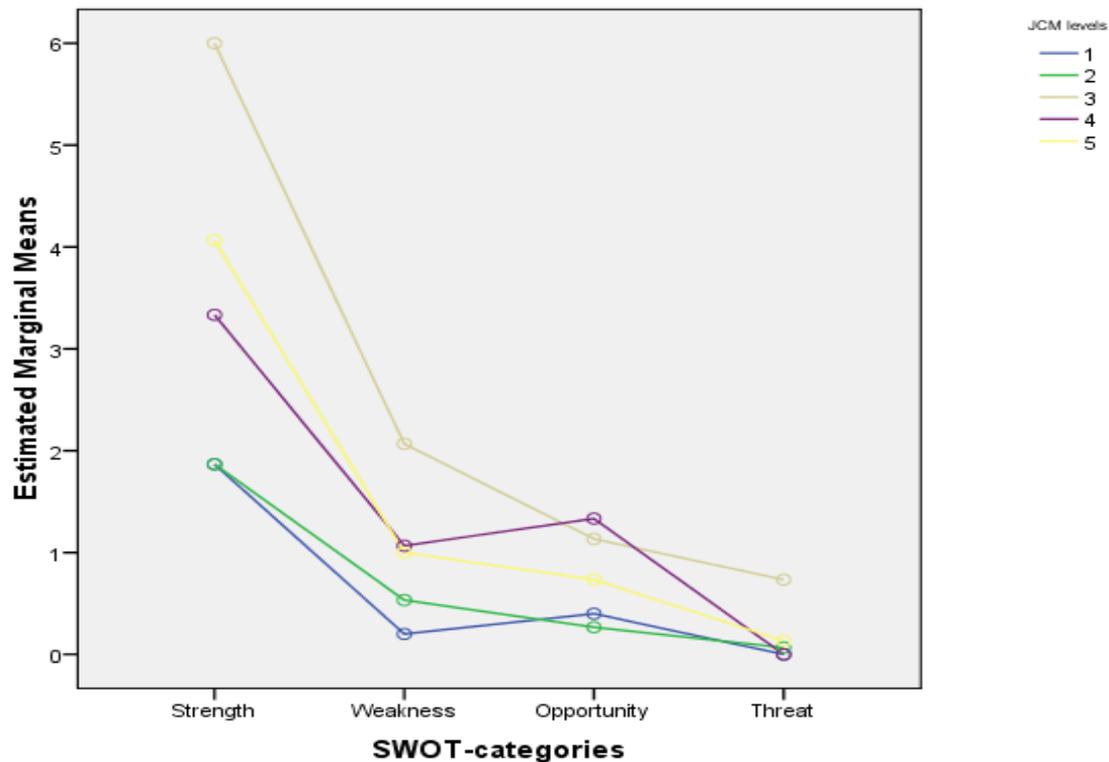
Figure 2. Mean distributions of statements over SWOT categories and JCM.

Note. JCM. 1 = Skill variety, 2 = Task identity, 3 = Task significance, 4 = Autonomy, 5 = Feedback.

Distribution of SWOT statements on OCB. Out of all the SWOT statements there were 480 statements that could be categorized on the seven dimensions of OCB. The 180 remaining statements that OCB did not capture were consequently categorizes as 'Not accounted for'. Table 6 depicts that 130 out of the 480 SWOT statements that OCB captured, were covered by Civil Virtue ($M = 8.7$, $SD = 4.0$), followed by 106 statements captured by Self development ($M = 7.1$, $SD = 3.3$). Organizational loyalty ($M = 5.8$, $SD = 3.0$) captured 87 statements, Helping behavior ($M = 4.6$, $SD = 2.9$) covered 69 statements, and Organizational compliance ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 2.1$) captured 52 statements. Individual initiative ($M = 1.4$, $SD = 1.7$) and Sportsmanship ($M = 1.0$, $SD = 1.3$) captured 21 and 15 statements respectively, and are the two dimensions least capable of capturing SWOT statements reflecting change. Civil virtue is most dominant, capable of covering 20% of the SWOT-statements, followed by Self development covering 16%. Third in line is Organizational loyalty capturing 13%, then Helping behavior with 11%, Organizational compliance with 8%, and least capable of

capturing SWOT statements reflecting organizational change are Individual initiative and Sportsmanship, covering 3% and 2% of the statements, respectively.

Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted and reveal significant main effect between the seven dimensions comprising OCB, F (6, 84) = 19.727, p < 0.001. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .585. Pairwise post hoc comparisons indicate significant difference between Helping behavior (*M* = 4.6, *SD* = 2.9) and Sportsmanship (*p* = 0.001), Individual initiative (*p* = 0.003), Civil virtue (*p* = 0.006) and Self development (*p* = 0.023), respectively. Significant difference was depicted between Sportsmanship and Organizational loyalty (*p* = 0.001), Organizational compliance (*p* = 0.001), Civil virtue (*p* = 0.001) and Self development (*p* = 0.001), respectively. The findings show significant difference between Organizational loyalty (*M* = 5.8, *SD* = 3.0) and Organizational compliance (*p* = 0.004), Individual initiative (*p* = 0.001) and Civil virtue (*p* = 0.010), respectively. It was indicated significant difference between Organizational compliance (*M* = 3.5, *SD* = 2.1) and Individual initiative (*p* = 0.012), Civil virtue (*p* = 0.001) and Self development (*p* = 0.002), respectively, as well as between Individual initiative and Civil virtue (p = 0.001), and Self development (p = 0.001), respectively. However, no significant difference was depicted between Civil virtue and Self development (p = 0.221).

SWOT categories and OCB. Repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to investigate interaction effects between the four SWOT categories and seven dimensions comprising OCB. The findings indicate significant interaction effects, F (18,252) = 4.382, *p* < 0.001. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .238. The interaction effects between the SWOT categories and OCB are graphically presented in Figure 3.
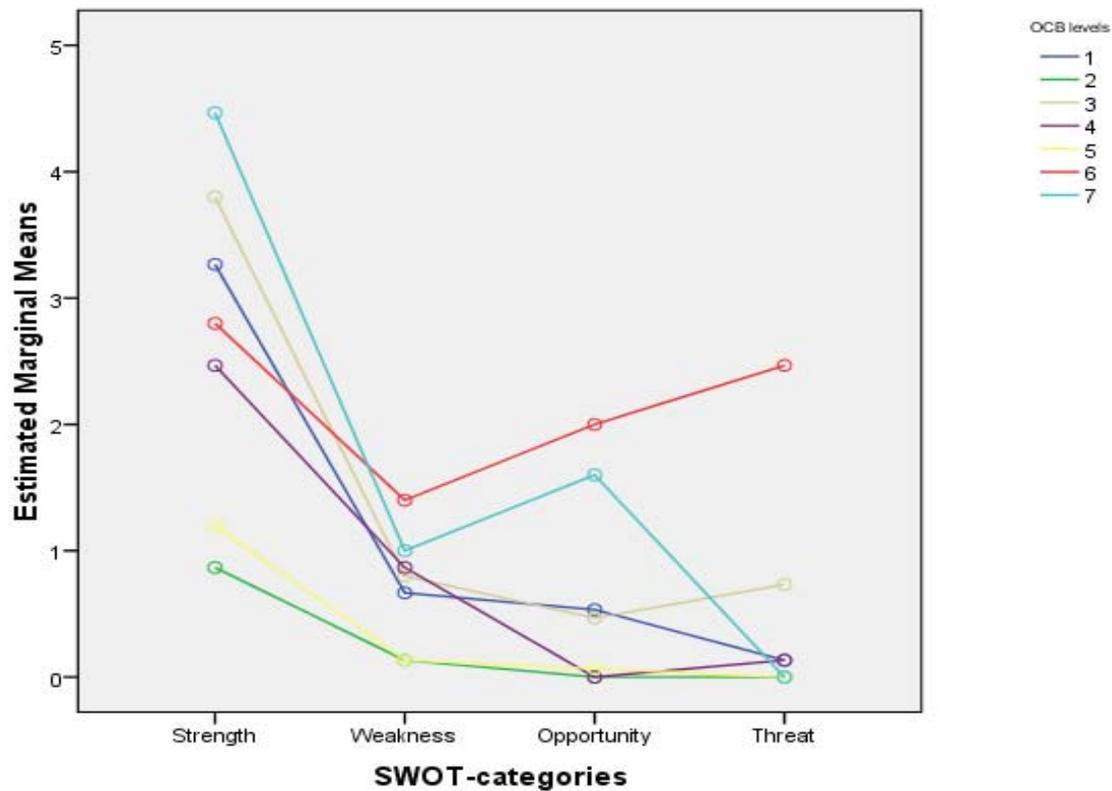
Figure 3. Mean distributions of statements over SWOT categories and OCB.

Note. OCB: 1 = Helping behavior, 2 = Sportsmanship, 3 = Organizational loyalty, 4 = Organizational compliance, 5 = Individual initiative, 6 = Civil virtue, 7 = Self development

Comparison of distribution frequency on JCM and OCB. A paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare how many SWOT statements reflecting organizational change could be categorized on JCM and OCB respectively. The findings indicate significant difference between the SWOT statements captured by JCM ($M = 26.8$, $SD = 9.7$) compared to the SWOT statements captured by OCB ($M = 32.0$, $SD = 10.27$), $t(14) = 5.642$, $p < 0.001$.

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

Summary of Research Findings

The present study has four main findings: *(1)* When encouraged to reflect on change, employees report overall more Strength and Weakness indicating a dominant present-time orientation. The level of reflection regarding future change, based on the frequency of Opportunity and Threat reported is contrastingly less dominating. *(2)* Change is most

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frequently addressed as a topic concerning the whole organization, such as being an integrated element in the organization's behavior, activities, and attitudes. Reflections on change addressed to other areas of the organization, Individual, Team, and Leader respectively, are less reported. *(3)* Additional categorization and comparison of the SWOT statements indicate that OCB is more capable than JCM of capturing reflections and relate to organizational change. *(4)* There are, however, certain subtopics underlying change that both models miss out on, such as reflections categorized as Weakness.

Focus on Organizational Change

Before presenting the main findings, it should be clarified that there is no relation between the duration of the interview conversations and the amount of information provided by the informants when encouraged to reflect on change. There is furthermore no significant difference between Organization A and Organization B in their pattern of reflection, neither regarding their distributions of reflections over the SWOT components, or towards what part of the organization their reflections are addressed. Based on this, it can be assumed that the organizations have a similar focus on change. Despite operating in different areas, the organizations have similarities, such as being under private ownership, and having an organizational structure characterized by employees spread over different positional levels and geographical areas. Being internationally well-established specialists within specific services- and production areas makes the ability to manage change, at strategic and operational levels, as well as maintaining a good name and reputation, a central feature and a high priority of both organizations. The following will consequently discuss the main findings on an independent organizational level.

Findings 1 and 2: SWOT characteristics and Organizational level

The present study indicates significant main effect between the four SWOT categories and the findings show that most Strength and Weaknesses are reported when the informants are encouraged to reflect on organizational change. The high frequency of statements categorized as Strength and Weakness combined, altogether 79% of the statements, indicates a strong present-time orientation towards planning and managing change. Such a dominant present-time focus could be explained by the occurrence of specific change initiatives in the organizations at the same time as the interviews were conducted. The appearance of ongoing change initiatives or changes that were about to be implemented, may have influenced the informants, and consequently enhanced the frequency of present-time reflections. This could

be linked to the tendency that it is easier to reflect on current happenings, compared to reflecting on what the future might bring.

The frequency of statements categorized as Opportunity and Threat are contrastingly lower, and the components combined (21%) indicate a less dominating orientation towards future organizational changes and changes that might occur in the external environment. Although it is clearly desirable to be aware of advantages and disadvantages, as reflection and insight are indicators of organizational success and goal attainment, one should at the same time keep one's eyes open and focused on the future if the intention is survival in the long run. Argyis and Schön (1996) consequently suggest a balance of present and future-orientation as the key to organizational success.

Positional levels could also have influenced the reflections on change, as the strategically selected samples comprised informants ranked relatively high in each organization: top and mid-level management respectively. The informants were invited to participate based on their ability to reflect and contribute with personal experiences on organizational change, and change-related behavior. When representing the management of an organization one might however expect a certain degree of insight and reflection regarding the organization as a whole, as well as knowledge related to its specific business- and production areas, organizational culture, visions and values. Positional levels and the specific work it involves could consequently be assumed to affect the direction, and at the same time perhaps increase the frequency of SWOT statements when encouraged to reflect on change.

A SWOT-based interview study in a Norwegian governmental department indicates however no significant difference between the frequencies of statements provided by top managers and mid-level employees, although there is a tendency for top managers to produce overall more reflections concerning the future state of the organization (Edvardsen, 2007). In comparison to the present study it is evident that top and mid-level managers in private Norwegian organizations report overall more SWOT statements than managers in a Norwegian governmental department. The top and mid-level managers in the present study had a mean value of 44 SWOT statements during one interview conversation, whereas the managers working under governmental directions had a mean value of 18 SWOT statements during the interview conversation. The present study furthermore indicates that managers in private organizations reflect considerably more on the present time compared to their associates in the governmental sector, as well as providing more reflections towards the future. Even if Edvardsen (2007) used SWOT-based interviews in order to study and obtain reflections on another topic than organizational change, a comparison should however be of

interest. The findings clearly indicate that managers positioned in top and mid-level positions in private Norwegian organizations have a solid focus and orientation towards the present-time and the organization's current activities. Even though the focus towards what opportunities and threats the future might bring could be argued as low, managers in private Norwegian organizations are however more oriented towards the future compared to managers working under governmental directions. As the SWOT-format is based on principles of reflection and proactive thinking, the findings from the comparison could indicate that private organizations have a better potential to manage and succeed with change. It could furthermore be speculated in possible reasons explaining the managers' differences regarding levels of reflection, such as suggesting that private organizations might have a more flexible structure, possess more resources, or have an organizational culture which encourage challenges, risk-taking, change and new experiences.

Studies indicate that managers with organizational responsibility tend to believe that their understanding and view is better compared to the rest of the organization (Rieley & Clarkson, 2001), and Cangemi and Miller (2007) argue that opinions fronted by managers have an overall influence on the organization and its members. Based on this, it could be expected that the patterns of reflection fronted by the top and mid-level management in the present study would have been of similar character if employees of different positional levels had been involved. Employees working under top or mid-level managers with strong focus on the present-time and current activities, and less focus on the future and its opportunities, could consequently be assumed to observe, adopt and express similar patterns as their respective managers. In a similar vein, Bandura (1977) argue that human behavior is learned by observing models, especially when the models are considered to have high social status, power and competence. It would additionally, based on this, be assumed that employees of different positional levels learn by listening to and observing the behaviors of their respective managers, as managers tend to posses the typical characteristics of models. Managers with a strong focus on present-time activities, such as current change processes, are consequently able to influence employees and their opinions, as well as enhance employees' enthusiasm, acceptance, and support of the ongoing change (Miller, 2002). Despite the low future-orientation depicted in the present study, it could be argued that the positive elements that are characteristic for present-time orientation will create a solid foundation for changes that the organization may confront in the future. Bamford and Forrester (2003) claim managers are responsible for make changing efforts significant, as they are the ones giving directions to the organizational population. Managers should not be the ones implementing change, but rather

focus on creating a good organizational climate that encourages risk-taking, experimentation, and employees' openness towards new experiences. It is important to influence the workforce in a positive way, and enhance readiness for change by fronting proactive behavior, as this consequently will benefit the organization as a whole.

It was furthermore investigated to what area of the organization the reflections on organizational change were addressed. The findings indicate significant main effect between the four Organizational levels, and the most striking result regarding the distribution of SWOT statements was the high frequency of statements addressed to concern the Organization. Covering altogether 72% of the statements makes Organization the most dominant of the four Organizational levels.

The high frequency of reflection on change addressed to Organization could primarily indicate that the participating organizations are healthy organizations, referring to their general strong focus on overall organizational issues. Change is, in any organizational setting, a complex process as it affects different parts of the organization. In relation to planning and implementing of change efforts one should consequently relate the change to overall organizational aspects such as organizational strategies, values, norms, and visions, as they are decisive for the behavior of the organizations and its' employees. The findings indicating a strong focus on organizational change as a topic concerning the whole organization, could be explained by the participating organizations respectively. Both organizations appear to have a thoroughly and extensive understanding of the organization as a whole, based on their organizational structures and organizational cultures (e.g. both organizations are under private ownership). As organizational culture could have influenced the frequency of reflections on change concerning the organization, it could be assumed that two other organizations of different organizational culture would have increased the frequency of reflections addressed to Organization, as well as to create an overall different reflection pattern. Based on this, one could raise the question of whether the findings will apply to other organizations.

The operational definition of Organization could furthermore be argued as *broad* compared to the three other categories, and consequently explain the high frequency of reflections on change categorized within it. As accounted for, the category refers to all reflections concerning organizational behaviors, attitudes and activities such as organizational culture, structure, values, and beliefs. In a similar vein, the high frequency of reflections addressed towards Organization could be explained by organizational change being a topic primarily concerned with overall organizational issues that furthermore tend to be approached from an organizational point of view. The informants' positional levels could as well explain

the high frequency, as it could be assumed that the informants have an overall perspective and insight towards the organization's activities, its visions and strategies. Consequently, when encouraged to reflect on change, they would speak from such a point of view. Managers, or people with dedicated jobs, generally tend to be the ones in charge and involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of organizational change efforts. In contrast to the strong focus on change on Organization, is the relative lack of focus on other areas of the organization. The low level of reflection on change concerning Individual and Leader level could be assumed to be a result of managers' focus on the organization as a whole. It is argued that the distance from managers to the employees, who actually are the ones undergoing change, tends to be longer than desired (Schabracq et al., 2003). Managers should consequently be encouraged to change focus to more actively prioritize the relationship between the change effort and the employees. Organizations would benefit from having managers help employees manage change, as understanding employees is considered more important in order to succeed with change than understanding the change it selves.

Investigation of the present study's significant interaction effects between the SWOT categories and the Organizational levels provides a more holistic picture of the focus on organizational change. The findings indicate that the advantages and disadvantages related to organizational issues (e.g. attitudes, behaviors, and activities), reported as Strength/Organization and Weakness/Organization respectively, are considered to be of overall importance in relation to change. There is, however, slightly more focus on Strength compared to Weakness on change issues concerning the Organization, which indicate a balance between the understanding of the organizations' positive or attractive traits, compared to the organizations' negative and less attractive traits in relation to change situations. Keeping the right balance is important in relation to organizational development, achieving goals and succeeding with change. The experience of organizational success involves, according to Burnes (2004), the maintenance of a realistic understanding of the organization and its abilities. Failing to do so might consequently involve negative experiences such as failing to manage change and organizational challenges, and struggling to plan the future. The high number of organizational threats compared to organizational opportunities in relation to future change situations could indicate a less optimistic perspective on the future.

The remaining interaction effects are less strong, but may nevertheless depict relevant aspects of the organizations' reflection on change. Although there is overall little focus on Team in relation to organizational change, Team is evaluated as a profitable factor in relation to change. The overall low reflection on Team indicates that teams are not a top priority when

planning and implementing change, and that teams and work groups are not considered important elements in order to succeed with future change efforts. It could consequently be assumed that change efforts in the participating organizations tend to involve the whole organization to a larger degree, than it involves teams. Teams are however considered a criteria of success for healthy organizations (Beckhard, 2006), and organizations would benefit from including team activities when implementing change (Piderit, 2000).

Findings 3 and 4: SWOT reflections in Relation to Psychological Models

The findings from the additional categorization of SWOT statements indicate that OCB is more capable of capturing SWOT statements reflecting organizational change than JCM, as there is significant difference in the models ability to relate to reflections on change. The seven dimensions of OCB capture 73% of the SWOT statements, whereas the five dimensions of JCM capture 61% of the statements. Although all dimensions of both models are able to capture reflections on change, some are clearly more capable than others. Based on the findings, it could be argued that organizational citizenship behavior is more sensitive in relation to organizational change, compared to motivational job characteristics.

Motivational job characteristics and change. The findings indicate significant main effect between the five dimensions comprising JCM, and significant interaction effects between the four SWOT categories and JCM respectively. All the five dimensions are proven capable of relating to reflections on organizational change, although some are more capable than others. *Task significance* for instance, the most dominant dimension in the present study, is operationally defined to concern the degree to which the individual feels the job has a significant impact on the lives and work of others, both within and outside the organization (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Such a definition makes Task significance the most external-oriented of the five JCM dimensions, which consequently may explain its ability to capture such a large amount of SWOT reflections on organizational change. As both participating organizations are well-established operators in a global market competition, it is clearly of importance to have an external focus as well as an internal focus regarding the organizations' work and production of services and products. A strong desire to contribute and make a difference for the customers and the external environment was expressed by the informants during the interview conversations. Being known as specialist within a field of practice, it was emphasized as a priority of the organization to fulfill the needs and obligations of one's customers, and to be innovative in order to adapt to the current market trends. Simultaneously, it was expressed as desirable to have the members of the organizations be proud of their

work-related tasks and feeling a significant meaning in the work. Based on this, it could be indicated a strong and balanced focus regarding the organizations' feeling of significance concerning the impact their work and productions have on the external and internal environment. The interaction effects indicate that Task significant is considered to be beneficial for the organizations in relation to change, especially present-time changes. Although Task significance is less related to reflection on what future changes might bring, it should be mentioned that the organizations' reflection on future change is relatively low.

The findings indicate moreover that *Feedback* and *Autonomy* are the second and third most capable dimensions in relation to organizational change. The two dimensions' ability of capturing SWOT reflections on change is rather similar, although the interaction effects indicate that Autonomy covers slightly more reflections related to the opportunities that future change initiatives might bring compared to the dimension of Feedback. Based on the operational definition referring to the degree to which the job provides interdependence and freedom for the individual employee, it could be assumed that the feeling of autonomy is a relevant aspect in order for organizations to manage change situations. There are overall no reflections categorized as threats captured by Autonomy, which may indicate that the employees' interdependence and freedom in relation to how to carry out work is not considered a hinder for future change efforts. Based on the findings of a meta-analysis of 28 studies, Autonomy is shown to be the highest correlated of all the job characteristics with job satisfaction (Loher, Noe, Moeller, & Fitzgerald, 1985), and the belief that Autonomy involves releasing one's potential and enhancing work performance (Jones & Fletcher, 2003), the presence of Autonomy should be seen as crucial for the organizational life and the challenges it brings.

Feedback, on the other hand, is when occurring in an accurate character considered to be an essential method and useful motivator for organizational change (Marcus, 2000). Although appearing in different forms, feedback is important in order to increase employees' understanding for the current or future change initiative, as well as to help employees realize the organization's need for change. Feedback and Autonomy are nevertheless both dimensions viewed as positive motivational aspects in relation to change, as the interaction effects show few reflections of weakness or threat linked to neither of them. When calculating the individual's MPS, Autonomy and Feedback are evaluated as more important for enhancing internal work motivation than the remaining three dimensions (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; 1980). Although able of capturing SWOT reflection on organizational change, the remaining dimensions' distribution and interaction effects will not be accounted for.

Organizational citizenship behaviors and change. The findings indicate significant main effect between the seven dimensions of OCB, and significant interaction effects between the four SWOT components and OCB respectively. A comparison of the ability of capturing reflection on organizational change indicate, as accounted for, that OCB is more capable than JCM to relate to SWOT reflections on change. Although the findings indicate that all seven dimensions are capable of relating to change issues, there is a large disparity between them.

Civil virtue is, in the present study, the most capable OCB dimension as it covers a total of 20% of the SWOT-statements. Contrastingly is Sportsmanship, capable of capturing only 2% respectively. The high frequency of reflections categorized as Civil virtue indicates that the members of the organizations possess macro-level interests concerning the organization, and are willing to participate in diverse activities that benefit the organization as a whole (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Civil virtue is moreover oriented towards external aspects such as opportunities and threats. Based on this, the dimension is expected to cover a large extent of the reflections on organizational change, as change is triggered by a combination of external as well as internal forces (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 1996, 2004; Dawson, 2003; Kotter, 1996). The interaction effects indicate that the organizations consider Civil virtue to be a behavior of importance both regarding current and future change processes. Being able to relate to and keep one's eyes open towards the external environment in which one operates is considered fundamental in order to succeed with change and achieve goals.

The dimension of Civil virtue has been referred to as organizational participation and protection of the organization (Podsakoff et al., 2000), both concepts involving committing behaviors towards the organization. Whether referring to Civil virtue, organizational participation, or protection of the organization it would be assumed that managers in high-ranked positions possess such extra-role behavior, especially during times of change. As change often is characterized as troublesome and demanding (Adand & Nicholson, 2004), it is clearly an advantage to have managers, and other members of the organization expressing responsibility and constructive involvement in the process. Although it has been argued that the dimensions comprising OCB should be seen as parts of the individuals' respective jobs (Arnold et al., 2005) rather than extra-role behaviors, motivation to do so is nevertheless a crucial aspect. Motivation is, as accounted for, a fundamental element in any change process, and to succeed with change it is important to have employees who are motivated for change. As employees' perception of their personal inputs to the change situation and the outputs they receive in return is mainly subjective, organizations should ensure that employees' fully understand the need for change (Furnham, 2005). Realizing the need for change and what

benefits and rewards the change may bring, could be assumed to enhance the employees' personal investments and willingness to act as 'good citizens'.

The findings furthermore indicate that *Self development* is related to organizational change, as it is the second most capable of the OCB dimensions of capturing the SWOT reflections. Self development refers to employees' voluntary behavior in order to enhance and improve their knowledge, skills and abilities. Both organizations emphasize the importance of keeping pace with the developments of the external environment by arranging for employees' self development and training. Such ideas are in accordance with the mentality of the modern organization as training and development are organizational activities argued to benefit the individual employee, work teams, organizations, as well as society as a whole (Arnold et al., 2005). As the organizational life and its work-related behaviors are characterized as being in constant change, it is indicated to be an organizational advantage having employees who willingly engage and participate in learning activities. The crucial element is, nevertheless if organizations are arranging for employees' self development, or not. Arnold et al. (2005) have observed a new trend in the current organizational life based on the findings that new recruits evaluate the organization's provision of training and development opportunities as more attractive, compared to pension and other more long-term and traditional benefits. In a similar vein, Pfeffer (1998) sees development of the human side of the organization as esstential in order to achieve organizational success. Organizations that provide employees with the opportunity to do so consequently reflect a healthy organizational culture, as employees are being integrated as in the organization's future.

Arranging for development, both personally and professionally, is a way of actively involving employees in the organization's activities, and is suggested to enhance motivation and job satisfaction, increase skills, and promote work-related opportunities. Studies indicate that employees who are provided the opportunity and the organizational arrangements to develop consequently produce higher-quality work, which is a clear benefit in relation to achieving organizational payoffs and succeed with change (Arnold et al., 2005). Most informants referred to specific training initiatives (e.g. courses, seminars), further education (e.g. Ph.D-programs), or the opportunity to work abroad for a certain period of time as part of the organizations' organized efforts of providing employees with initiative to learn and develop in their work roles. The interaction effects indicate that the organizations consider development of employees and their voluntary behavior to do, as strength of the organization in relation to change, as well as to concern the future. One should nevertheless keep in mind that the informants represent high-ranked positional levels and that their perspective on the

organizations' arrangement for employees' self development could have been of different character with informants representing different positional levels. Although capable of capturing SWOT reflection on organizational change, the remaining dimensions' distributions and interaction effects will not be accounted for.

An organizational life in change. The present study's findings in relation to the distribution on SWOT statements on JCM and OCB would benefit from being evaluated in a larger organizational context. The organizational life has, as accounted for, undergone radical transformations the last decades, which has resulted in a change of its needs, focus, and mentality. There have consequently been changes in the values and priorities the current organizations and employees, in order to adapt and stay competitive, as well as to ensure future survival. Being operators in a constantly changing environment (Arnold et al., 2005), and as the pace of change continue to challenge the twenty-first century businesses, there is a need for available organizational models that are capable of capturing the elements characterized as important for the current and future organizations. Based on Furnham's (2005) belief that the world will face more changes the next 20 years when compared to the last 10,000 years, more models would benefit by being able to relate to the concept of organizational change.

The findings of the present study indicate that organizational values and behavior fronted by well-established and traditional models explaining traditional behavior, motivation and job standards, such as JCM, have been ignored and replaced by modern models explaining 'nontraditional' job behaviors, such as OCB, when it comes to the ability to relate to organizational change. Citizenship behaviors have since the 1960s been considered important aspects of the organizational life in order to achieve organizational effectiveness (Katz, 1964). It has been argued that citizenship behaviors provide organizations with the flexibility needed to tackle unforeseen contingencies, and ensures 'non-traditional' participation (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983) which is evaluated as profitable (Moorman, 1991). Resent research have additionally started to provide empirical studies on change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior, a concept utilized in relation to the employee's OCB towards accepting and implementing organizational change (Bettencourt, 2004).

Content analysis of 'Not accounted for'. Despite being able of capturing reflections on organizational change, both JCM and OCB fail to cover all the SWOT statements with reflections on change. The present study indicates that JCM fails to cover 39% of the statements, whereas OCB fails of capturing 27% of the statements. The remaining SWOT statements that the two models did not manage to cover were categorized as 'Not accounted

for'. It could be of interest for a future and more comprehensive study to conduct a content analysis of the statements categorized as 'Not accounted for', with the aim of getting a better understanding of what subtopics underlies organizational change that neither match organizational citizenship behaviors nor job motivational characteristics.

The findings from the present study do however indicate that SWOT statements categorized as Weakness is the most difficult of the four SWOT components for both JCM and OCB to relate to. This is evident, as 82% of the reflections on organizational change that OCB does not manage to cover are categorized as Weakness. In a similar vein, reflections categorized as Weakness comprise 58% of the reflections on change that JCM fails of capturing. The high frequency of reflections on Weakness categorized as 'Not accounted for' in both models could be linked to the operational definition of the Weakness component. Weakness is, according to the SWOT-format, a component that reflects negative aspects and characteristics of the organization that are considered harmful in trying to succeed with change. Based on this, it could be argued that JCM and OCB fail to capture such a large amount of SWOT statements categorized as Weakness because both models have a positive orientation, and mainly seek to explain work-related behavior of positive character.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no other empirical studies have investigated organizational change by relating employees' reflections, obtained by the SWOT-format, on JCM and OCB. As the present study indicates that organizational citizenship behaviors and motivational job characteristics are present in employees' reflections on organizational change, new perspectives have been provided to the ongoing debate on how to manage and succeed with change. However, future studies should investigate the relationship closer, as comprehensive scientific work still remains.

Limitations and Critics Regarding Methodological Approach

Sample selection. The two private Norwegian organizations invited to participate in the study, were represented by *one* strategically selected sample each. The sample sizes were decided in advance, making the dilemma of theoretical saturation not necessary to take into consideration. Theoretical saturation involves the judgment of when to stop integrating new informants, based on the idea that more informants will not provide additional information to the topic under study (Flick, 2002). As low sample size is argued to complicate the attainment of statistical significance, and generalizing the results. Thus, research literature was consulted, indicating that the appropriate sample size depend on the purpose of the study. The sample should comprise enough informants to answer the question of research (Kvale, 1997). Based

on this, and as current qualitative interview studies indicate the sample size to be 15 ± 10, the total sample size in the present study ($N = 15$) was considered suitable.

Both organizations were informed in advance that the findings and specific feedback regarding the organization's reflection on change would be communicated. This could be argued as an influencing factor in the HR departments' strategic selection of samples, as both organizations were represented by informants who, based on their positional levels, were well-qualified to contribute with personal experience and reflections on present and future change. The frequency and level of direction on the reflections could consequently have had a different outcome if two other organizations had participated, or if the samples had been randomly selected or represented other positional levels. One could furthermore raise question concerning the informants' motivation for participating as all participation was emphasized as voluntary. An interview situation may be regarded as an opportunity to express one's opinions and to be listened to, and consequently attract a certain type of people. On the other hand, it could be argued that declining the invitation to participate would be regarded as having low organizational engagement.

Interview as research method. The question of research was approached with qualitative interviews, as studies indicate interviews to provide additional more information compared to surveys (Straumsheim, 2007). Interview conversations are, according to Kvale (1997), the exchange of points of view between humans regarding a topic of common interest. As the interview is a social situation dependent on the interpersonal interaction between the researcher and the informant, its duration will consequently vary. The findings indicate however no relation between the duration of the interview conversations and the amount of information provided by each informant. Interview conversations are consequently shown to be a suitable methodological tool for obtaining reflections on organizational change.

Critics concerning the SWOT-format. The interviews were structured on the SWOT-format based on the need to obtain detailed information in a short period of time. The SWOT-format was furthermore chosen as it is easy to use, and suitable for combining with qualitative interviews (Edvardsen, 2007; Straumsheim, 2007), as well as being a quick way to discovering reflections of different perspectives, and to identify problem areas related to the object under study (Sørensen et al., 2004). All information gathered was obtained using the SWOT-format, and the findings indicate that SWOT is a sensitive analytical tool for approaching the topic of organizational change from a qualitative perspective. The SWOT-format was able to capture all reflections on organizational change, and all four components are sensitive to reflections on change, although some more than others (e.g. higher frequency

of Strength compared to Threat). It should however be mentioned that the four questions making up the interview guide based on SWOT principles, were of open character such as: "Could you please tell us about the strengths Organization X has in relation to organizational change?". Consequently, all single statements reflecting organizational change were possible to categorize and distributed on *one* of the four SWOT components. Based on this, the question could be raised of whether the SWOT-format is a circular paradigm, or not. It could be argued that other questions of considerably more open character, or questions not based on the SWOT-format would obtain different information as the informants would not be primed in the same extent as with SWOT-based questions.

Another aspect to take into consideration is the SWOT-formats' lack of ability to capture reflections concerning the past, such as the informants' experiences of past organizational change initiatives. As the interviews were based on principles of dialogues, it is assumed that the informants develop opinions and considerations during the conversation. Their reflections and the information they provided might consequently go beyond what the SWOT-format is able to identify and categorize, such as reflection on past experiences. Although the findings indicate that SWOT is a suitable tool for capturing reflections on the present time (SW's) and the future (OT's), there are however no specific components in order for categorizing reflections on the past. Despite the fact that organizational change is a relatively present- and future-oriented topic, there is nevertheless an advantage to obtain reflections related to past experiences as it is considered valuable to learn from one's own as well as others' successful and less successful change experiences (Marcus, 2000).

The distribution of statements on the four SWOT components could furthermore be argued to be influenced by the composition of the interview guide, which comprised two separate parts. The informants were first encouraged to reflect on Strength and Weakness, before reflecting on Opportunity and Threat. The outcome could have been of a different character if external reflection had been encouraged before internal reflection. In a similar vein, Kotler (1999) suggests that the advantage related to organizational change and development is to encourage reflections on external before internal factors. External reflections are assumed to provide clues that might enhance prompt responses, and consequently benefit the actual change implementation. Based on this, the internal focus would furthermore be adjusted to involve only the most significant opportunities and threats related to organizational change. A future study based on the SWOT-format should consider dividing the interview guide in two, encouraging one sample to first reflect on Strength and

Weakness related to organizational change, and simultaneously encourage a second sample to first reflect on Opportunity and Threat related to change.

Although considered a classical strategic tool (Langer et al., 2005) with successful results in profitable and non-profitable settings, critical voices see the SWOT-paradigm as an outdated and ineffective analytical tool (Hill & Westbrook, 1997) as there is a lack of empirical research and empirical evaluations, which consequently decreases its validity (Chermack & Kasshanna, 2007). In order to obtain information on organizational change, alternative analysis such as the TOWS-analysis (Dyson, 2004), or the PESTEL framework comprising macro-environmental factors (Burnes, 2004) could be considered.

Content analysis, categorization, and defining statements. The study indicates the appropriateness of content analysis to extract and count the occurrence and frequency of SWOT statements reflecting change, and their appearance on different Organizational levels. A clear advantage of using content analysis is, according to Weber (1990), its ability to include qualitative and quantitative strategies, which is widely utilized in recent content-analytic studies. The categorization of statements in NVivo consequently enabled quantification of the qualitative data material. However, questions should be raised concerning the operational definition of a statement. The definition of a statement was decided upon, based on a joint understanding between the researcher and the co-student, after transcribing. *A statement* was, as accounted for under "Methods", defined as the smallest meaningful unit reflecting the topic under study. The findings from the present study are consequently based on this specific operational definition of a statement, and another definition could be argued to obtain statements of different frequency reflected in its distribution. The question concerning the operational definition consequently addresses two related methodological concepts of importance, reliability and validity.

The *reliability* of the coding process is, besides concerning the operational definition of a statement, related to the definitions of the four categories of Organizational levels. It could be argued that the categories were equivocally defined and wider or narrow definitions could have provided a different outcome. Calculations of *inter-rater reliability* indicate however high acceptable percent agreement of 83% on the SWOT categorization, and an even higher percent agreement of 88% on Organizational levels. The high values could be explained by the researchers' involvement throughout the process, such as making the interview guide, being present during the interview conversations, and coding of SWOT statements. Therefore, including an independent third person could have resulted in a lower reliability. Content analysis is susceptible to researcher biases, which can influence data

collection, analyses and interpretation (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991), and the researcher's wish to draw specific conclusions could interfere with the actual findings. The present study was however not an assignment from any of the organizations, rather a voluntary, independent research project aiming to investigate reflections on change. Although the dimensions comprising JCM and OCB were agreed upon by a co-student, the categorization was conducted solely by the researcher. Involvement of a second person could have ensured better reliability and provided a different distribution of statements.

The assessment of *validity* is a basic problem involved at all levels of the qualitative research process, and it has been expressed by Flick (2002) as the dilemma of how to specify the relation between the topic under study and the version of the topic provided by the researcher. Three perspectives on validity should be evaluated in relation to qualitative interviews, namely the validity of Craftsmanship, the Communicative validity, and the Pragmatic validity concerning respectively, the quality of the knowledge that is constructed, the communication of the results, and to what degree the method has any further impact or utility for the topic under study (Flick, 2002; Kvale, 1997). The present study indicates that models explaining organizational behavior, JCM and OCB respectively, are to some degree capable of capturing reflections and relating to organizational change. JCM and OCB are however not capable of capturing all reflections on change. The findings from the present study appear, based on this, promising for future research and the use of theories explaining organizational behavior to investigate and make predictions on 'key factors' related to change.

Future Studies

Alternative methods and designs. To obtain reflections on organizational change, a future study of larger scale would benefit from having qualitative and quantitative methods run sequentially. Combining methodological approaches is by Morgan (1998) argued to provide a more varied perspective on the topic under study, as *one* approach runs the risk of creating isolated poles of knowledge. In a similar vein, Brewer and Hunter (1989) suggest that divergent research methods enhance the validity of the final results as they tend to mitigate methodological biases. A future and more comprehensive study could consequently combine qualitative SWOT-based interviews with quantitative questionnaires, checklists or self-reports in relation to specific change efforts in the organization. Such an approach would enable a broad investigation of the organization's efficiency, and additionally predictions concerning its ability to succeed with change (Furnham, 2005). A recent contribution that could be considered for studies on organizational change is the Organizational Climate Measure

(OCM), determining what consequences specific change efforts have on employees (Patterson, West, Shackleton, Dawson, Lwathom, Maitlis, Robinson, & Wallace, 2005).

The present study was based on a cross-sectional design due to the benefit of obtaining detailed information over a short period of time (Bordens & Abbott, 2002). A limitation with cross-section designs is however the difficulties with causality between certain variables (Conway & Briner, 2005), which could consequently complicate the process of stating statistical relationships between reflections on change and JCM and OCB. To avoid such problems, it is argued that research on change would benefit from using longitudinal designs. Longitudinal designs additionally enable evaluation of samples at regular intervals before, during, and after change efforts (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Van de Ven & Huber, 1990). Nevertheless, longitudinal studies are restricted in organizational settings as the pace of change creates generation effects. During times of change employees tend to more frequently to change workplace, which makes it difficult to follow samples of employees over time. The generalization and relevance of data derived years earlier for current and future organizations should also be considered (Lawrence, 2002).

Conclusion

The present study shows that it is possible to evaluate the relationship between organizational change and organizational behavior by using qualitative SWOT-based interviews. SWOT is proven to be a sensitive analytic tool that captures reflections on change, and provides detailed information that can be quantified in NVivo. The findings indicate that the top and mid-level management in private Norwegian organizations have a strong and balanced focus on strengths and weaknesses in relation to present-time change processes. They would, however, benefit by more future-orientation, as proactive thinking is an indicator of organizational success. Change concerns, nevertheless, the organization as a whole. As OCB is more capable than JCM of capturing reflections on change, it can be assumed that there is more organizational citizenship behaviors present in change processes compared to motivational job characteristics. Despite JCM has been a model of great influence on the current organizational life, OCB and its 'non-traditional job behaviors' is expected to be more in accordance with the needs of the future organization. As both models fail to fully relate to change, future studies should continue to investigate the relationship between organizational change and organizational behavior in order to identify 'key factors' and make predictions about change.

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Appendix

The Interview Guide: Organizational Change in the Organization

We want to thank for your time and willingness to participate in the present study. As accounted for in the written invitation, the purpose of the study is to collect information on Organization X's experience with organizational change. Participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time. Total confidentiality is ensured, and it will not be possible to trace back any information to your identity. The interview conversation takes approximately one hour, and two researchers will be present. Permission will be asked to tape record the interview, due to its benefits related to transcriptions and statistical analysis. The tape-recorded files will be erased immediately after transcription, and the data material will only be accessible to the research group from the University of Oslo.

Based on the SWOT-format, the interviews focus on Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat related to organizational change. As a member of an organization with long-term goals and focus on change and development, you are encouraged to reflect on *your experience* with change in Organization X, and the organization's ability to manage change. Your reflections should be made from an organizational and interpersonal perspective. Divided in two parts, the interview comprises four main questions:

1. *Strength:* Could you please tell us about the strengths Organization X has in relation to organizational change?
2. *Weakness:* Could you please tell us about the weaknesses Organization X has in relation to organizational change?

3. *Opportunity:* Could you please tell us about what opportunities Organization X has in order to succeed with organizational change in the future?
4. *Threat:* Could you please tell us about what might hinder Organization X in order to succeed with organizational change in the future?