Tia Yliskylä

A CHANGE PROCESS IN A NEWSPAPER AND HOW TO MANAGE IT

A case study of change processes in the newspapers Ilkka and Pohjalainen

University of Tampere
School of Communication, Media and Theatre
Department of Journalism
and Mass Communication
Media Management
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Abstract

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A change processes in a newspaper and how to manage it.  
A case study of change processes in the newspapers Ilkka and Pohjalainen.

The aim of this Master's Thesis is to investigate how change should be managed in Finnish newspapers. The subject will be approached through a case study. In this study, I will examine how two regional Finnish newspapers, Ilkka and Pohjalainen, executed their large-scale change project in 2010.  
The objective of this thesis is to create a useful model that can help newspaper companies to execute large-scale change projects with the greatest possibility of success, as well as to understand what went well in the change project of Ilkka and Pohjalainen and what would need to be improved. The objective is not to prescribe what newspapers should do in order to survive the current crisis, but rather to determine how to execute changes with the best possible results.  
In the analysis, I will concentrate on the manner in which Ilkka and Pohjalainen implemented these large changes in practice, and then compare it with the theoretical model of change management in newsroom. I will also examine what they and other Finnish newspaper companies can learn from this project.  
The theoretical framework of this study is based on the work of several highly esteemed change management researchers. The macro level theory consists of a model called Unfreeze, Change, Refreeze that was developed by Kurt Lewin. The micro level theory, for its part, consists of several change management theories, which together form a nine-step model for change management in newsrooms. The most relevant researchers that contribute to the creation of this model are John P. Kotter, Sharon Peters, E. H. Schein and Gary Yukl. Some theories of news media business environment complete the model.  
The method of this qualitative study was a case study. The case study was conducted by observing work culture in the editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen and by interviewing both managers and employees of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. The interviewees were chosen by convenience sampling. All interviews were conducted in Finnish and translated into English. The data was analyzed with the help of Material Focused Content Analysis, which was developed by Miles and Huberman. The results of this study were confirmed by two surveys.  
As a major finding, this study confirms that the manner in which change projects are executed does matter. The model of change management in newsrooms can prevent failures and help newspaper companies to avoid having exhausted employees and financial losses. This model provides new insights for dealing with all the threats, challenges and problems, which change management in newsrooms causes. This model is a valid guide for managing newsrooms in the continuously changing field of media business.
I am grateful to C. V. Åkerlund Foundation for supporting my studies.

Special thanks to my husband Pasi and my parents Anne and Lasse for all the help and support that I have been given.

*Change*

Many says, I want change  
Want change in my time  
Want change in my life  
I want a change badly  
I want change, many say

They pray for a change  
They wish for a change  
They look for a change  
But they will not change  
They just wait for change

It never happens to them  
It will never ever happen  
By mere prayer or wish  
It must start from inside  
With tons of determination

Change is not so easy  
It takes lots of time  
So it needs determination  
The will to make change  
The will to see change

Then only things will change  
Then only time will change  
Then only life will change  
So go and get change  
To see the bliss of change

Kranthi Pothineni
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1.0. Introduction

In Elizabeth Gaskell's novel, huge changes are turning the everyday life of the small English town Cranford upside down in the middle of the 19th century. Gaskell’s novel is a description of change resistance in a society that is accustomed to things remaining unchanged. When reformists started to speak on behalf of a railway, the original population of Cranford was distracted. The railway was seen as a severe threat that would throw Cranford into degeneracy. The conservative people of Cranford wanted to preserve the status quo in order to avoid all the trouble railway would 'naturally' bring.

The resistance of the conservatives drove the younger generation of Cranford into desperation. This new generation saw the railway as nothing else but a promise of development, new working possibilities and as a mark of a new era.

The conservatives of Cranford did not see the other point of view until the talented carpenter of Cranford moved away. The carpenter wanted to live near the railway, because he believed that the railway would bring him a great variety of working opportunities, so that there would be an alternative to making coffins to aging people in the regressive town of Cranford. This opened the eyes of the conservatives and a few of the more active ones among them started to campaign on behalf of the railway. The campaign was based on the idea that there was no point of saving old Cranford as it was, if the next generation would not want to live there. If the railway could keep the next generation in their hometown, developing and building it, it was worth the effort. The railway was built and the life rhythm of Cranford changed. (Gaskell 1853.)

The story of Cranford is a good example of how large changes are adopted in the best case scenario. There was understandable change resistance at first, but when the people of Cranford understood why change was urgently needed, they were motivated to participate in executing the change. This simplified model shows what needs to be taken care of when managing change projects.

Almost all newspaper companies worldwide are now facing at least some phases described in Gaskell’s novel. The demand for change has forced its way into media companies like the railway to Cranford. Different newspaper companies are in different phases of change: in
some companies, there is still a strong division between the supporters and opponents of the railway; in some companies, rails are already being laid down; and in some companies, even the maiden voyage has been completed. In the present day, however, not all change projects end as harmonically as in Cranford. Changes bring along excitement, hope, challenges and tensions all at once. This can be seen especially clearly in the media industry, which spent its days of glory in a relatively stable and profitable market before instability and changes started to shake its business models (Sylvie & Gade 2009, Wilenius & Malmelin 2009, Vehkoo 2010, Helle 2010, Jyrkiäinen 2008, Gade & Raviola 2009, van Weezel 2009).

Change as a word and a concept has become so commonplace that only a few researchers have made the effort to define it. According to Legge, change in its simplified meaning is a process during which something becomes different from what it was before (Legge 1984).

Change has become an everyday word in the field of media industry. The enormous technological developments and the triumphal march of Internet newspapers during the past 5 years have revolutionized the foundations of the newspaper as a printed medium. Media markets were relatively stable for decades, but the 21st century has produced rapidly changing conditions, which are characterized by ongoing technological innovation and high levels of uncertainty. News media companies have been shaken from complacency by the need to innovate. (Gade & Raviola 2009, van Weezel 2009.)

The news media are facing uncertainties and complexities, and this requires news organizations to re-examine their missions, their focus and their organization. They also need to re-evaluate both the required and available resources, as well as the environment in which they work. (Sylvie & Gade 2009, Wilenius & Malmelin 2009, Vehkoo 2010, Helle 2010, Jyrkiäinen 2008.) The notion of the crisis of the traditional media is widely acknowledged (Vehkoo 2010).

Newspapers are threatened by the new media in many ways (see e.g. Peters 2001, Picard 2009, Raviola & Hartmann 2009, Sylvie & Gade 2009). Not only are they losing readers, but they are also losing newsroom employees to 'dot-com raiders'.

Newspapers are being forced to change. The period of structural changes, which the news media have been undergoing, has become evident and undeniable. It is not possible for the news media to keep their old routines and methods and hope to survive. Not only have the job designs, organizational structures, management systems and work
routines in newsrooms changed as a consequence of the inevitable technological change, but the journalistic work has also changed from specialization to multi-skilling. Specialization is decreasing and the number of different work tasks is increasing. This pushes journalists towards superficiality, supported by the speed of online information. (Raviola & Hartmann 2009, Sylvie & Gade 2009.)

Some researchers argue that change is a normal part of the life cycle of news enterprises and that organizations must adapt to survive changes in their environments and markets (see e.g. Picard 2009, Raviola & Hartmann 2009). This is not completely true, because the history of newspapers has rather entailed steady development than change and turbulence during several decades. Magazines are used to targeting their content to specifically defined audiences and desire permanent reader relationships, but news journalism has only recently started to pay attention to how to make communication interesting, the way communication is presented, the layout, and how to achieve the attention of the reader groups that advertising and marketing departments desire (Helle 2010, 27). The changes have been spread a generation or more apart, resulting in the personnel thinking that the existing work culture and structures have always been in place (Picard 2009). Many media CEOs admit that media companies are in fact rather conservative, because there are strong and long-standing traditions in the industry that often stand in the way of new methods of doing business (Wilenius & Malmelin 2009). This is what I consider an important insight, which may even partly explain why there is so much change resistance among newsroom employees.

From another point of view, news media organizations were generally slower than other companies to adopt modern management approaches because of a relatively stable environment. They benefited from large mass audiences, well-established market positions and significant scale economies.

The stability of the early business environment can be seen as one explanation for the phenomenon where many news managers admit that they are trying to survive in an uncharted territory, where challenges are beyond their experience and training. These conditions make leading change even more complicated, with the management attempting to mobilize employees to abandon the known for the unknown and trying to stay flexible and ready for the unexpected change at the same time. (Sylvie & Gade 2009.)
1.1. The objective of this study

As early as during the very first semester of my Master's Studies at the University of Tampere, I knew that change management of print media was the subject on which I intended to concentrate. I had various reasons for this. Firstly, the ongoing crisis of newspapers made me worried about how all the needed changes were executed. Was there a compact plan or did managers just 'bumble around' under the pressure? Secondly, I wanted to conduct a practical study, which at its best might yield some concrete advice on how to implement changes in newsroom management. Thirdly, I had worked in newspapers for over 11 years before I began to study and have a strong belief in their future despite the current recession. My objective is to help newspapers to go through these changes. Additionally, I wanted to give newsroom managers some concrete tools to lead change, because change is inevitable in the media business but leading skills are not.

The aim of this Master's Thesis is to investigate how change should be managed in Finnish newspapers. I will try to build a model of change management, which will be a combination of several traditional theories of change management. My input is tailoring this model specifically for change projects in newspapers.

This subject will be approached through a case study. I will try to determine how two Finnish regional newspapers, Ilkka and Pohjalainen, execute their large-scale change projects. I will present these cases later in this thesis.

Silverman remarks that each case study has boundaries, which must be identified at an early stage of the research (Silverman 2005, 127). My first boundary was found when I was choosing the case to study. Initially, I wanted to examine two newspaper companies in order to compare their methods of managing change. Last autumn, I realized that I was about to attempt to accomplish more than would be possible in this limited time that I have to graduate. For this reason, I decided to study only one case. However, the case that I have chosen contains two different work cultures. It is a very large and significant case of two companies with different traditions, cultures and identities being forced to merge and create something new for both sides. This is what makes the case ideal for my interests.
I chose Ilkka and Pohjalainen, because so far no other Finnish newspaper has executed such a large scale change project in only one year. There are thus many interfaces that other newspaper companies can profit from. The second reason for choosing Ilkka and Pohjalainen was the fact that they were in a convenient phase of development for my thesis. They have already undergone the major changes and are about to begin the rooting phase.

The research challenge of this thesis is to create a useful model that can help newspaper companies to execute large scale change projects with the greatest possibility of success, as well as to understand what went well in the change project of Ilkka and Pohjalainen and what would need to be improved. Additionally, a third research objective is to examine how valuable and practical this model is to use in similar change processes in the future.

My argument is that there is a need for special theoretical and practical model in the field of newspaper business to help newsrooms to plan and implement large-scale change processes.

In my analysis, I will concentrate on how Ilkka and Pohjalainen executed a large change project in practice, as compared with the theoretical model of change projects. I will also examine what they and other Finnish newspaper companies can learn from this project.

I will narrow my study to the newsroom level. I will review how the changes in structural reorganization and editorial functions were executed and what the possible impacts on work culture were. I am intentionally leaving the rest of the company without attention in order to narrow the topic enough and to be able to focus on the most relevant aspects. The research questions will be approached through interviews. My aim is to examine two different views of change: those of managers and those of employees. By analyzing both views, I expect to form a general idea on how change was executed in these newspapers.

This Master’s Thesis is very current and relevant as many newspapers are undergoing huge changes. For example, inter-firm integration is in a key position in my case study. Inter-firm integration can be understood as strategic alliances between two or more companies. These alliances redefine organizational boundaries and the nature of news media competition. According to Gade and Raviola, ongoing structural changes have a profound effect on news organizations. The concept of competition is changing, the design and routines of news work
are transforming and the professional values of journalism and the culture of news organizations are being re-built. (Gade & Raviola 2009.)

The lack of research in the field of change management in newspaper companies increases the importance of this study. I will present an overview of the previous research in Section 1.4.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the work of several highly esteemed change management researchers. By combining their concepts, I will attempt to develop a new approach for change management in newsrooms that is both integrated and targeted. It is integrated because I connect several approaches to better address the realities of what I am going to study, and it is targeted because I am doing this with a tight focus on newspaper companies. The objective is not to prescribe what newspapers should do in order to survive the current crisis, but rather to determine how to execute changes with the best possible results.

I will begin this thesis with an overview of the extent to which previous research has covered change management in the news media. Next, I will present my case, the cooperation between the newspapers Ilkka and Pohjalainen.

1.2. Previous research

Organizational change has been studied since the beginning of the 20th century. Even though there are various theories and interpretation models of organizational change, there cannot be found a theory in which the factors of successful change would have been examined systematically. The theories and studies of change mostly discuss some occasional questions and different fields of change without dissecting the change as a multidimensional entity. (Burke 2002.)

Since the 1980’s, rational change models and change processes proceeding in a linear fashion have received increasing criticism. Additionally, the concept of change as a more complicated and comprehensive process gained increasing acceptance. Changes were interpreted not only by structures and through rationality, but also through irrationality, the humane touch and the social reality of organization. In recent years, the predominant opinion among change researchers has been the impossibility of creating universally applicable models of change. On
the contrary, change should always be studied from a local point of view. (Nyholm & Airaksinen 2009.)

Despite the major changes that the media industry has been undergoing, change management has been studied surprisingly little in the media business. Aldo van Weezel has studied organizational changes in newspaper companies and their relation to performance. His study shows that the higher the degree of integration is within the organization, the more positive will the performance of the newspaper company be. Additionally, he realized that outsourcing had a negative impact on performance. (van Weezel 2009.) Massey and Ewart have studied the commitment of Australian journalists to change programs (Massey & Ewart 2009).

In Finland, Merja Helle has conducted a study on the working habits and the changing environment of the newsroom of the Finnish daily Helsingin Sanomat. She developed a new methodology called the media concept laboratory, which is intended for use in media research and development, in particular. In the developmental interventions based on the activity theory, researchers and participants analyze disturbances and contradictions in the work and search for alternative ways of working in the future. (Helle 2010.)

The notion media concept was developed to understand and analyze the multifaceted phenomena of producing journalism. The media concept consists of three levels: a) the values and goals of the media publishers, the interests and needs of the audiences as well as the situation in the media field, b) the architecture of the organization and the content of the media, c) the daily management of work and the journalistic tools. (Helle 2010.) Even though Helle’s theory provides new tools for analyzing ongoing media convergence, it is inadequate for answering my research challenge.

Jyrki Jyrkiäinen has studied the work experiences of Finnish journalists in the changing environment of the media industry. He found that journalists have a critical attitude towards increasing efficiency and profitability objectives. Additionally, journalists were lacking feedback. Interviewed journalists valued a good atmosphere in the work community highly. (Jyrkiäinen 2008.)

Nadia Paavola has studied the attitudes that Finnish newspaper journalists have towards change. Paavola’s licenciate study shows that the attitude is often critical. She found that a
common disposition was being passive and distant. (Paavola 2010.)
Both Jyrkiäinen and Paavola illustrate how uncertainty brands the common attitude towards change, but neither of these studies concentrates on change management directly.
Wilienius and Malmelin have concentrated mostly on what Finnish media companies should do in the near future, instead of examining how to manage these objectives. Wilienius and Malmelin studied reflections of CEOs on the future of responsible business in the media industry. Their study was based on research interviews with the CEOs of some of Finland's biggest media corporations. The purpose was to see how the principles of responsible business were understood by the leading figures in the industry. (Wilienius & Malmelin 2009.)
Thurman and Myllylahti have studied change in the Finnish financial daily *Taloussanomat.* The newspaper was no longer published in print after the 28th of December 2007, after which it focused exclusively on digital publishing on the Internet and via e-mail and the mobile phone. Thurman and Myllylahti were not particularly interested in how these changes were executed. (Thurman & Myllylahti 2009.)
Juha Herkman touches the concept of convergence in newspapers in his dissertation, but his research concentrates mostly on analyzing the extent to which afternoon papers provide publicity for television (Herkman 2005).
Ari Alm is conducting a study on change in the management of the public service Finnish Broadcasting Company during the years 1989–2004. This study has not yet been completed. Maija Töyry has analyzed and developed work processes and newsroom practices of 12 magazines during the years 2005–2008, but her work does not cover newspapers (Töyry 2008). In her Master's Thesis, Saara Tahvanainen examined the role of communication in change management, the premises and presumptions that steer change management, as well as communication strategies used in it, but her thesis covers communication in general and is not focused on newspapers (Tahvanainen 2000). Juhani Wiio has studied the management of strategic change in the changing radio and television market by examining the strategic activity of the Finnish Broadcasting Company in 1985–1998 (Wiio 1998). Wiio's study only covers Finnish public service channels and thus excludes newspapers. Taisto Hujanen also concentrated on Finnish public service television in his study on programme management in the transformation of Finnish public service television (Hujanen 2002). Noora Alho studied the role of content development in a layout renewal project of three Finnish regional newspapers in her Master’s Thesis (Alho 2005).
None of the studies presented above has focused on how changes should be implemented in
newsrooms from the point of view of the management. My objective is to provide new knowledge of the best practices for change management in newsrooms. I will also attempt to clarify what change management means in practice and contribute to the search for a viable solution.

1.3. Ilkka and Pohjalainen as a research subject

The regional newspapers Ilkka and Pohjalainen (formerly known as the newspaper Vaasa) are former rivals, and they have competed for readers for several decades. At first, these rivals were both published in Vaasa, but Ilkka relocated its editorial office from Vaasa to Seinäjoki in 1962, and concentrated on the news and marketing of the Seinäjoki region (Suomen lehdistön historia 5, 173–176).

Ilkka was established in 1906 and has a strong history as an organ of the Finnish political party Suomen Keskusta (Salminen 1988).¹ The newspaper Ilkka adopted an impartial style of communication as late as 1997, when all the other regional newspapers had already in some way abandoned their political detachments. Nevertheless, Ilkka embraced its ideological heritage and the spirit of the party Keskusta for a relatively long time with the influence used by the then editor-in-chief, Mr. Kari Hokkanen. (Hokkanen 2006.)

Pohjalainen was established in 1903. Until 1984, it was called Vaasa. Pohjalainen also had a history as an organ, but the political party concerned was Kansallinen Kokoomus.² (Laukonen 1978, Nurmoon Kokoomuksen historia.) Pohjalainen abandoned its political detachments long before its rival Ilkka.

The competition between Ilkka and Pohjalainen was so fierce that this rivalry was nicknamed “The War of Newspapers in Lakeus”. This heated competition did not end until Ilkka bought its rival in 1992. (Hokkanen 2006.)

This rivalry reveals for its part why this case is well worth analyzing. The merging of these work cultures and identities show aspects that are fundamental to the operations and orientations of both. Merging them will obviously be fraught with complexity and complications.

Ilkka and Pohjalainen started their co-operation in 2006, when the two newspapers began to make shared pages in the economy section. In 2008, the editorial offices revealed their

¹ Suomen Keskusta is a Central party and one of the three main parties of Finland, and has a history as an proponent of agrarian interests in rural areas.
² Kansallinen Kokoomus is a right-of-centre party and one of Finland’s three main parties.
working agendas to each other and in 2009, Ilkka and Pohjalainen introduced a new shared newspaper editing system. The rather slow development of cooperation after 1992 can be explained by the competitive history of these newspapers. The retirement of the conservative editor-in-chief also helped to break the mental barriers to change. The new editor-in-chief, Mr. Matti Kalliokoski, was appointed in April 2007. (Ilkka-Yhtymä 2010, Kalliokoski 2010.)

At the turn of the year 2010, the companies publishing Ilkka and Pohjalainen merged into I-Mediat Oy. The editorial offices of Ilkka and Pohjalainen were also combined. Despite the combined editorial offices, both newspapers have remained their unique news punchlines, but they can also print the same stories if they want to. The editorial office is led by a management group consisting of four people: the chief editor of Ilkka, Mr. Matti Kalliokoski, the chief editor of Pohjalainen, Mr. Kalle Heiskanen, the managing editor of both newspapers, Mr. Kauko Palola and the news producer of both papers, Ms. Satu Takala.

The combined editorial offices were just one part of changes. In the autumn of 2009, both newspapers started to work with a new editorial system, Saxotech. In June 2010, the layout of both newspapers was renewed. This change meant that the newspapers began to use a predictive make-up of the layout. The predictive make-up system increases the amount of automatism in the layout of a newspaper. Stories are written in segments, which have been determined in advance. This means that the make-up of the newspaper has become predictive. During the layout renewing project, one third of the team that used to be working on the make-up were dismissed as a result of the statutory employer-employee negotiations, co-determination negotiations. This naturally lowered the motivation of the remaining employees. In November 2010, a new organizational model was launched and put into practice. (Kalliokoski 2010.)

The co-operation between Ilkka and Pohjalainen is a part of the development programme at Ilkka-Yhtymä. The goal is to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of both publishing and printing. This remodeling entails focusing on the brands of customer-oriented

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3 Co-determination is a practice whereby the employees have a role in management of a company. In Finland these negotiations usually relate to companies’ needs to decrease the amount of employees or other saving operations. Employees and employer negotiate in order to achieve a shared view of needed operations.
newspapers, while enhancing the efficiency of operations by means of more extensive networking and co-operation.

According to the survey on the atmosphere at the workplace, conducted in the early autumn 2009, the employees’ satisfaction with work and the atmosphere at work remained unchanged from 2007. The image of the employer, organizational structure and change management became targets for development. The latest survey on workplace welfare yielded different results, however. In this survey, the employees regarded the flow of information and change management as the most critical, problematic issues requiring immediate action. The results of this survey will be presented in more detail in Section 3. (Ilkka-Yhtymä 2009, 2010.)

Ilkka and Pohjalainen also have other co-operation partners. The newspapers of Väli-Suomi, consisting of Ilkka, Pohjalainen, Karjalainen, Keskisuomalainen and Savon Sanomat, established a shared Sunday pull-out section called Sunnuntaisuomalainen in 1998. The newspapers of Väli-Suomi and Turun Sanomat also share an editorial office in Helsinki. Additionally, Ilkka and Pohjalainen started a co-operation project covering several pull-outs with the newspapers Kaleva and Keskipohjanmaa in 2010.

Figure 1. I-Mediat Oy in a nutshell.

I-Mediat Oy is the publishing company of Ilkka-Yhtymä Corporation. I-Mediat Oy was established at the end of year 2009, when Pohjanmaan Lähisanomat Oy and Sanomalehti Ilkka Oy were merged into Vaasa Oy. The name Vaasa Oy was changed into I-Mediat Oy on the 1st of January 2010.

I-Mediat Oy publishes the regional newspapers Ilkka and Pohjalainen, and the local newspapers Viiskunta, Komiat, Järviceutu, Jurvan Sanomat, Suupohjan Sanomat, and free city papers Vaasan Ikkuna and Etelä-Pohjanmaa.

There are 97 journalists working in the editorial department of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, 54 of which are men and 43 women. The total amount of employees at Ilkka and Pohjalainen is 120.

The circulation numbers: Ilkka 53 768, Pohjalainen 25 517 (Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations 2010)

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4 The workplace welfare survey 2010 was conducted by Innolink Research Oy on assignment of Ilkka Corporation.
1.4. The change package of Ilkka and Pohjalainen

I will study a period that spans from autumn 2009 to February 2011. It has been limited in this manner in order to prevent the study from being too extensive and to be able to focus on the aspects that I consider the most relevant. This particular period was chosen because it was a period of essential changes. During this period, all the essential changes of the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen were executed, although the planning of the changes had already started in 2008. The timeline of changes is described in Figure 2.

**Figure 2.** The timeline of changes in Ilkka and Pohjalainen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMELINE OF CHANGES AT ILKKA AND POHJALAINEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New editorial system Saxo is launched</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen consisted of four separate change projects: the creation of a combined editorial office, the renewal of the layout, a new editorial system and a new organization. These changes were all executed in the year 2010, which is notable, because despite the fact that Finnish newspapers are changing their organizations and work cultures, no other newspaper or news media firm has executed so many large-scale changes in only one year. This is a period of great challenges for the newspaper industry in general, which provides a context that both justifies changes but may also create more emotional and serious consequences than might otherwise be the case. In what follows, I will call these change projects a change package. Figure 3 briefly summarizes the content of this change package as well as the reasons for it.
Figure 3. The change package of Ilkka and Pohjalainen in a nutshell.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE CHANGE PACKAGE OF ILKKA AND POHJALAINEN IN A NUTSHELL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT HAPPENED:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) New editorial system</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Combined editorial office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Renewal of layout</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4) New organization</td>
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Executing this change package began by launching a new editorial system partly in September and October 2009, although the old editorial system was still partly being used. The planning of the change package had already started in 2008, when Ilkka and Pohjalainen began to share information, but the major changes were made in 2010.

The first significant step was to combine the editorial offices of Ilkka and Pohjalainen at the beginning of the year 2010. In practice, this meant that the former rivals began to share their stories and labor force. Both newspapers revealed their daily agendas to each other, and every story and photo could be published in both newspapers. This also meant that the journalists of the newspapers needed to rethink their viewpoints when writing stories: what once was broad enough for one’s newspaper was now not broad enough for the new partner newspaper.

The journalists needed to bear both audiences in mind while writing their stories. For some journalists, this has been a more challenging psychological obstacle than to some. “It is not easy to have your name and story published in their newspaper,” as one journalist described this mental barrier.

Some journalists were pleased with these new opportunities for co-operation, however: in some special editorial sections, new colleagues were more than welcome to share the workload. There is no accurate estimation of the number of employees who saw changes as beneficial or who saw changes as a burden. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents tended to see the situation as a combination of benefits and burdens, but there were also remarkably many respondents who were more one-sided in seeing the changes as a burden.

This change, the combining of the editorial offices, was justified by both the renewal of the
old-fashioned work culture and economical reasons. The idea was that these former rivals could be more successful with co-operation than without it. The main objective was to improve quality by increasing resources and by having more reasonable expenses than before. Updating the work culture of both newspapers was one of the objectives, as well. For example, Ilkka had neglected reforms for many years.

A part of the change package was reconsidering the necessary number of employees. In spring 2010, Ilkka-Yhtymä began co-determination negotiations in order to decrease the number of employees.

Unfortunately, the results of the co-determination negotiations at Ilkka and Pohjalainen were revealed immediately before launching the new layout. As a result of the negotiations, eight employees were dismissed. Most of these dismissed employees worked in the make-up section and played a crucial role in launching the new layout. When they realized that they would not have a job after the new layout and organization were launched, they stayed home on sick leave.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of labour force, the new layout was launched as rescheduled on the 17th of June, immediately before the Midsummer holiday. Initially, the new layout was expected to be launched as early as in May, but because of the extremely tight schedule, some additional weeks of work were permitted.

Nevertheless, the new layout was planned, built and executed very fast and with a small number of employees. In fact, one single person was entrusted with the practical execution. She received help from the news producer, the layout consultant and a couple of make-up workers, but in the end, she felt that she was responsible for the whole layout renewal project alone.

The reason for planning a new layout in the first place was that the old layout was considered outdated. The new layout was expected to attract new subscribers and to keep the old audience interested.

The last important step was launching a new organization and starting to use the new predictive make-up programme in autumn 2010. This new make-up system is, as its name suggests, supposed to be predictive, and its main function is to make work routines easier and more efficient. In practice, this means that the content of the newspapers is planned more carefully and more in advance than before.
The purpose of the new organization was to render work more effective with a smaller number of employees. The idea was to have more employees do basic news work than before and move employees from one news desk to another smoothly. This was supposed to serve the purpose of the combined news editorials the best.

Because of the demand for improved effectiveness, some former positions of specialized journalists were abolished. This concerned ten employees altogether. The salaries of half of them were cut by approximately a fourth because of their changed work tasks. Four reporters were promoted altogether. The new title of two of them was newspaper manager in charge, one was promoted to producer of the current affairs section and one to photography journalist. The salaries of these employees were raised.

According to the managers, some of specialized positions were mostly unnecessary and they had been established by a former editor-in-chief in order to reward some of his favorite employees. In the new system of a combined editorial office, the need for multitalented general reporters was greater than the need for specialization. This meant that some specialized journalists lost their positions and began to work in regular news shifts. However, not all the special sections of the newspapers were discontinued. For example, the economy, politics and sports sections were allowed to continue as before, but they also needed to learn to co-operate with each other.

Even though some special positions were abolished, other reporters were given the opportunity to write pull-outs and theme pages, which used to be the privilege of specialized reporters.

The organization also needed to be reformed in order to benefit the most from the new predictive make-up system after eight employees were dismissed. The sub-editors were given new titles, namely newspaper managers in charge, but their job descriptions were almost the same as before, except for the increase in planning and predictability. The number of new sub-editors was increased and instead of working only the night shifts, they began to work the day shifts, as well. This was an enormous change for those sub-editors who had only worked the night shifts for many years.

The idea was that the sub-editor of the morning shift would not only begin to draft the next day’s newspaper but also plan the content of the newspaper for the day after tomorrow. The sub-editor in charge of the night shift would finalize the next day’s newspaper. In the old organizational system, there was hardly any time for planning future issues. All the time was usually spent on the drafting of the next day’s newspaper.
Since eight employees had been dismissed, the reporters had to learn to participate more fully in the creation of the finalized product than before. This was made possible by the new predictive make-up system. In the new system, there was a new platform that had to be taken into account when writing news stories. It had a pre-designed layout, which is why the newspaper was practically ready to be printed right after the stories were finished. This new way of drafting a story made the journalists reserved at first, but at least some of them now actually find the new system quite practical in use.

Even though the new editorial system was launched as early as in the autumn 2009, the predictive make-up system and the new organization changed the work routines significantly. At this point, the old editorial system was also removed from use.

The objective for the year 2011 is to reform the content of the newspapers. This means changing the traditional ways of making a news story and concentrating on journalistic values. This change project has yet to begin.

The particularity of this case has two dimensions: First, this change project has had a broader scope than any other change project has recently had in the Finnish newspaper industry. Second, the history of rivalry causes special tensions. These two dimensions make this case an unusually relevant subject of analysis and increase the importance of my study.

1.5. The special characteristics of news media

The media business is often seen as a unique business field because of the duality of its nature. The interaction between content and advertising is one of the characteristics that make the field of media business extraordinary (van Weezel 2009). Media companies sell their content to their audience first and then the audience is sold to advertisers (e.g. Albarran 2002, Doyle 2002). The basic characteristics that make the media industry a unique field of business will be presented next. First, I will discuss the concept of the value chain and then continue with the dual tensions of media companies and changing job descriptions of a journalist.

1.5.1. The structure of news media and the value chain

News organizations are traditionally structured in a dominantly functional form. The division of labor is designed on the basis of the function that the work, the product and the market require (Raviola & Hartmann 2009). Raviola and Hartmann distinguish three main functional
departments in news organizations: the newsroom and the departments of advertising and management. They represent different goals: advertising revenue, audience revenue and non-revenue. This three-fold organizational structure reflects the chain of activities creating value in news organizations. (Raviola & Hartmann 2009.) This is called a value chain (Porter 1990).

The concept of the value chain (Porter 1990) is valid when assessing the ability of an organization to create customer value through work activities, which are performed by specific organizational routines and processes. The value chain concept focuses on the value added in each step of an organization’s work activities. Value should be added by each unit involved in an organizational process chain by receiving inputs, processing them and then passing them to the next unit. This ultimately leads to competitive advantage. (Porter 1990.)

There are various value creation challenges facing journalism that are caused by technological, economic and social changes. These changes reduce the importance of the roles played by journalists and news enterprises in modern society and provide alternative means for the public to obtain, create and distribute news and information. According to Picard, “these phenomena are destroying economic value created by current journalistic practice and replacement value can only be created by developing new journalistic practice.” He stresses that creating value is a co-operative process, in which recognizing and addressing the interests of the employees, suppliers, distributors and customers are required. (Picard 2009b.)

In newsrooms, there is a division of work tasks between journalists and technicians. Journalists gather, select and edit news. Technicians take care of the technical preparation of the product, or deal with the design of the pages and websites, the choosing and inserting of pictures, the design of graphic elements, the editing of videos and audios, and so forth. The line between these two groups has become narrower, but according to my own experience as a journalist in the newsroom, this differentiation is still present. The newsroom structure can be seen as a pyramid hierarchy going from interns and junior journalists up to the editor in chief. The newsroom is divided into thematic sections, which reflect the sections in the final product, for example Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Politics, Markets and Finance, Culture, Sports and Fashion. Newsrooms can be seen as the bureaucracy of news, because the essence of working in a newsroom is the processing in a highly routined way of unexpected events that emerge in an exceptional manner. (Raviola & Hartmann 2009.) This routine way of
working can be seen as one of the reasons for the relatively great amount of change resistance in newsrooms. Nevertheless, these routines are changing as more and more stages of journalistic work processes are centralized into the hands of a few people. In local newspapers, it has been common for the journalist to write and edit the story as well as to design the layout alone, but now the practice is also spreading to dailies. (Helle 2010.)

The structure of the newsroom has implications for the management, as well. The work tasks and responsibilities are divided between journalists and managers on the basis of a long tradition and strong professional norms. Tensions are very strong and become part of the identity of the organization and its members (Raviola & Hartmann 2009).

1.5.2. Duality management and balancing tensions in newsrooms

Newspapers are a unique field of media industry because of several dual tensions. One unique feature of newspaper companies is the dual orientation, artistic and commercial. News media products are the result of business activity, but they are seen as art and creative work. (Achtenhagen & Raviola 2009, Lowe 2009.) The dependence on two different markets constitutes the other duality. Media companies operate in two quite different markets at the same time: they produce content for audiences and audiences for advertisers. Media products can also be regarded as 'attention goods': while being consumed by the consumer, media products consume the consumer's attention. (Lowe 2009.) There is perpetual competition between product design and management in newspaper companies. This means that newspapers often have two product managers: the editor-in-chief, who is responsible for the daily product, and the publisher, who is the business director and responsible for the circulation on which the advertising sales depend. (Achtenhagen & Raviola 2009.)

Because of these dualities, media companies face inherent organizational tensions. These tensions are especially significant now that the recent technological innovations force companies to resort to so-called media convergence. (Achtenhagen & Raviola 2009.) Media convergence is defined as the blurring of boundaries between different media sectors (e.g. Helle 2010, Evans & Wurster 1999). Media convergence can be considered as another duality. The expansion of the internet and the new media into newspaper markets have aggravated tensions between print media workers and new media workers even though they work in the same companies and try to appeal partly to the same audiences. It seems to be poorly
understood what the existence of such tensions means for the management of media companies that undergo organizational changes in order to profit from technological convergence. (Achtenhagen & Raviola 2009, Küng 2007, Caves 2000.) These tensions may increase restraining forces in change projects.

Achtenhagen and Raviola divide these dual tensions into structural, processual and cultural tensions.

The source of structural tensions is the formal structuring of organizational tasks. These tensions can manifest themselves as a confrontation between the Internet newsroom and the newspaper newsroom, for example. One of the strategies for managing this tension is the reorganization of the organizational structure. In my personal experience, however, the Internet newsroom is still seen as a separate unit inside the newsroom despite the efforts to combine the writing of stories for the Internet and for the newspaper.

Processual tensions develop from contradictions in organizing and coordinating the workflow. These tensions can be seen in confrontations between editorial and business staff, for instance. The strategies used in managing these tensions include training courses, increasing collaboration, facilitating knowledge-sharing and communication through physical proximity. In my experience, tensions between editorial and business staff are even more common than tensions between the Internet newsroom and the newspaper newsroom. There is a saying in the field of print journalism that “The advertising sales department makes money so that the journalists can waste it”.

Cultural tensions develop from differences between professions. Confrontations between print journalists and online journalists are one example of these tensions. These tensions can be managed by developing a new mindset. Achtenhagen and Raviola argue that if the employees are given enough freedom and support, a new combined culture that builds on older successful professional cultures might eventually develop. (Achtenhagen & Raviola 2009.) I doubt that freedom and support would be enough. Sometimes it is necessary to inform the employees about the desired new culture and how the workplace intends to achieve it.

Achtenhagen and Raviola admit that most tensions can hardly be completely solved, but their potential disfunctionality can be reduced and managed. What makes things more difficult is
that these different kind of dual tensions coexist and are interrelated and interlinked. (Achtenhagen & Raviola 2009.)

1.5.3. The changing job description of a journalist

Newsrooms in Finland have followed the trends that have been developing during the 2000s throughout Europe: these trends include an increase in multi-tasking and a decrease in specialization. Organizational reforms have resulted in newsrooms that emphasize the importance of leadership. This means that the autonomy of individual journalists is decreasing. (Nikunen 2011.)

Nikunen studied the ways in which the latest recession (2008–2009) affected journalism in Finland. The research focuses on the recession and its implications for journalistic work practices. Nikunen discovered, for instance, that journalists make various versions of one news story because of the use of multiple platforms. The need to make several different versions has forced journalists to write news stories in a hurry, as they have less time to spend on individual stories. Publishing news online has shifted the timeframe in the newsrooms and former deadline culture has transformed into online culture. According to Nikunen, these changes show convergence culture at work: it is characterized by increased multichannel publishing as well as by a dissolution of the boundaries of different specializations. (Nikunen 2011.)

The results of the Finnish survey Journalists in changing media tell the same story: financial efficiency demands have increased and the number of personnel has decreased in the field of media business in Finland. The job description of a journalist has changed from independence and specialization into flexibility, teamwork and multi-tasking. The amount of experiential and entertaining journalism has increased. (Jyrkiäinen 2008.)

In all, 641 Finnish journalists replied to the survey and described their opinions on the changing media. 75 percent of the respondents were from the field of newspapers and publishing. Half of the respondents argued that multi-tasking, which means producing journalistic content for different media platforms, has increased. According to the respondents, there is only half as much time as there used to be to write a story. The time spent in creation or planning has been cut down by one third. Management, meetings and information technology take much more time than before. All in all, 22 percent of the respondents estimated that it was considerably more common to write the same story for
various media platforms nowadays than it used to be. Additionally, 22 percent of the respondents regarded the decreasing time in which the stories had to be written and deadline pressures as very significant problems. 47 percent of the respondents considered these quite significant problems. (Jyrkiäinen 2008.) This is a notable finding: increasing amount of multitasking and haste make journalists worried and stressed.

2.0. Theoretical framework

2.1. The theory of change management and Force Field analysis by Kurt Lewin

The concepts of Kurt Lewin, who presented his three stage theory of change as early as during the Second World War, form the basis of my theoretical framework, in a macro level. This theory is commonly referred to as the Unfreeze, Change, Refreeze model. Despite the passing of the years, this theory of change is still very usable.

At the first stage, unfreezing, the objective is to make the target understand that change is necessary and become ready to leave the current comfort zone. At the second stage, changing, the necessary changes are executed. Kurt Lewin understood change rather as a process than an event, and called that process a transition. At the third stage, refreezing, the target is to establish stability after the changes have been made. At this stage, changes are accepted and become the new norm. Lewin did not expect this rooting phase to happen immediately and argued that stabilization takes time. (Burnes 2004.)

Lewin’s Force Field Analysis describes the forces that have an effect on change. According to Lewin, an issue is held in balance by the interaction of two opposing sets of forces: those that are seeking to promote change (driving forces) and those attempting to maintain the status quo (restraining forces). Furthermore, Lewin discussed the existence of a quasi-stationary social equilibrium. The status quo or equilibrium will change whenever driving forces are stronger than restraining forces. This means that successful change needs either strengthening the driving forces or weakening the restraining forces. (Lewin 1951.)
Kurt Lewin’s theory has been criticized for being no longer valid, since the concept of freezing does not fit with modern thinking about change, where change is considered as a continuous, often even an unforeseeable process that requires great flexibility. Lewin’s work has increasingly begun to be seen as outmoded and irrelevant to the needs of modern organizations. Lewin’s supporters argue, however, that theories like the force field model and the theory of change should rather be seen as windows to the future than as archaic concepts from an old-fashioned world. (Burnes 2004b, 309.) The refreezing phase of Lewin’s theory can also be seen as a strength. As Gregory F. Lowe (2011) emphasizes, “stability matters to productivity as much as adaptability matters to effectiveness. When managers launch a large scale change process with significant implications for the firm, there must be a rooting phase, otherwise it is impossible to consolidate your gains.”

Lewin’s work on change has been criticized for only being suitable to be applied to small-scale changes in stable conditions and for ignoring issues such as organizational politics and conflict. Many writers have argued that change is a constant and political process within organizations (e.g. Dawson 1994, Pettigrew et al. 1992). Burnes is one of the loudest defenders of Lewin’s theory, and he argues that rather than being outdated, Lewin’s Planned approach is still very relevant to the needs of the modern world (Burnes 2004, 978). I consider Lewin’s approach a fundamental theory of change, which can be applied to today’s changes with the input of Lewin’s followers, as they have updated and made additions to Lewin’s concepts, theories and models. Lewin’s theory forms the macro level of my theoretical
framework.

There are some deficiencies in Lewin’s theory, which later research has tried to address. One of the problems in Lewin’s theory is that different phases of change are taken for granted. For example, he assumes that deciding what needs to change, when and how to change, is not problematic. Lewin does not discuss the requirements for change or what should be taken care of before a change process can begin. If necessary preparations are neglected, the unfreezing phase cannot happen. These problems are addressed in a newer theory, which will be presented in Section 2.2. Another problem in Lewin’s work is that he was not able to clearly indicate what the phases of a progressing change project were. He understood the main elements, but it has been necessary for those that continued his work to clarify the steps and to identify the critical factors for success. This is why I consider Lewin’s theory as the cornerstone of my theoretical framework, but in order to build a firm foundation for my model of change management in newsrooms, I will also include elements from the work of other researchers, since they have taken many such elements into account that Lewin either did not address or did not emphasize as much as I think is important for my purposes. Next, I will narrow my theory to micro level theories and to the newsroom level. I will also present the essential additional theories in order to address the problems in Lewin’s theory.

2.2. Managing change step by step

Careful planning is the key to a successful change project (Stenvall & Virtanen 2009). Naturally, the actual results of a project are not always similar to those foreseen in the initial plan, but according to several researchers, planning is worthwhile. Barker and Cole have listed five good starting questions to ask before starting a project. (Barker and Cole 2009, 13.)

Figure 5. A quick project health check.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A quick project health check: five good starting questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Are the project's objectives clear and measurable?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Has anyone documented what the project needs to deliver – and have your customers signed up to this?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. At first sight, do existing commitments to deliverables, timescales and resources look realistic?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. If work is already well under way, is there a clear audit trail of significant decisions taken and underpinning assumptions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is your team working together productively and does everyone know what they're expected to deliver?</td>
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</table>

Source: Barker and Cole 2009
James P. Lewis remarks astutely that if you have no plan, you have no control. If managers have a detailed plan like a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and executive control, they are able to compare the progress of the project with the initial plan so that corrective action can be taken when a deviation occurs. (Lewis 2006, 38, 102.)

The organization is ready for change if all three of the following conditions are present: a) Leaders are respected and effective, b) People feel personally motivated to change, c) The organization is nonhierarchial and people are accustomed to collaborative work (Harvard Business Essentials 2003, 18). While I do not doubt the importance of these conditions, it is questionable whether it is possible to make changes only when the organization is ready for it. In today's hecticly changing working life there is rarely, if ever, time to wait for all of the employees to be ready and motivated to change, not to mention the requirement that the employees need to be accustomed to collaborative work. Unfortunately, the uneffectiveness of leaders and the disrespect for them are often the starting point when an organization begins to change.

The supporters of Kurt Lewin's theory have developed his change management concepts further. For example, John P. Kotter and Gary Yukl argue that successful large-scale change is a complex affair that happens in eight stages. The stages are:

- Establishing a sense of urgency
- Putting together a guiding team
- Developing the vision and strategies
- The communication of the vision and strategies
- Empowering the employees for broad-based action
- Generating short-term wins
- Consolidating gains and producing more change
- Creating a new culture to make new behavior stick.


I regard these stages as good tools when planning changes.

Schein argues that change causes a certain amount of anxiety, which can be reduced by increasing psychological security (Schein 1999, 124–125). This requires the creation of a positive vision of change, training, empowering the people involved with the change, feedback and trainers, positive role models, supporting groups and a logical system and structure. Schein admits that creating psychological security is challenging. (Schein 2003, 4.) I want to
emphasize the importance of this kind of security, as it is often too easily forgotten in changes that prefer rapid moves and effectiveness at the expense of the well-being and motivation of the employees. This is one of the problems in Lewin’s theory: it does not discuss how people can be motivated.

According to Maslow, to achieve adequate workplace motivation, it is important for the management to understand which needs are crucial for motivating the employees as individuals. The basis for Maslow’s theory of motivation is the suggestion that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs and that certain lower level needs have to be satisfied before higher level needs can be addressed. According to Maslow, there are general needs, like physiological safety, love, and esteem, which have to be fulfilled before a person is able to act unselfishly. These needs are called deficiency needs. When a person is able to fulfill these basal desires, they continue to move toward growth and eventually self-actualization. If these needs remain unfulfilled, the person becomes ill or begins to act evilly. (Maslow 1999, 2011.)

**Figure 6. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs chart**

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Chart](Source: Maslow 2011)

Maslow’s hierarchical model indicates that basic, low-level needs, such as physiological requirements and safety, must be satisfied before higher-level needs such as self-fulfillment can be pursued. As depicted in Figure 6, when a need is satisfied, it no longer motivates and a higher level need takes its place. (Maslow 1999, 2011.)

Another aspect that is missing in Lewin’s theory is the importance of communication. Communication is considered to be the foundation of a successful change project. Successful
communication does not only support the execution of change but also helps the members of the organization to commit to the content and the objectives of the change process (Åberg 2006). Change management is endless communication with people (Juuti & Virtanen, 2009). The motivation and commitment to change are the greatest when the people who are making the change and who have to live with it are instrumental in identifying the problem and planning its solution (Beer et al. 1990, Lewis 2006). The employees need to be told what part each of them plays in the process (Juuti & Virtanen 2009, Peters 2001). The importance of communication cannot be emphasized too much, because in my personal experience, managers often see communication as unilateral announcements of coming changes instead of interactive communication between managers and employees where managers also listen. The participation of employees in the process is considered an important sign of good change management (Kotter 1996, 18, Legge 1984, 19).

Communication does not only consist of dispassionate and cold facts without feelings. Feelings should be considered one of the most crucial things in change projects. People change what they do less because they are given an objective analysis that shifts their thinking than because they are shown a truth that influences their feelings (see e.g. Peters 2001, Kotter & Cohen 2002). Kotter emphasizes the importance of this phenomenon especially in large-scale organizational changes, which entail new technologies, mergers and acquisitions, restructurings, new strategies, cultural transformation, globalization or e-business, for instance. (Kotter & Cohen 2002.) In order to appeal to the feelings of the employees, managers have to be able to recognize and understand the emotional situations of the employees (Juuti & Virtanen 2009).

Sharon Peters has studied change management in newsrooms in particular, and she has listed five things to be taken into account when managing change projects in newsrooms. These are honoring the past, asking for the opinions of the employees before making the final announcement, setting achievable targets, avoiding changing the change directive, and giving a lot of incremental praise as people start moving in the right direction. (Peters, 2001, 31–32.) Peters’ points are worth taking into account as the history of an organization always has a deep impact on its future (e.g. Schein 1992). This is why a skillful change manager reflects on the past in order to understand the limits of the organization and to create a solid basis for the future (Stenvall & Virtanen 2007, 43).
Peters has discovered that newspaper employees receive little information about the results of their work. The reason for this is that the newsroom culture is not one that would promote internal feedback from the supervisor to the employee, although the situation is beginning to shift slightly in some newsrooms. Positive reinforcement from the public is rare. Jyrkiäinen has also made the remark that journalists are in need of feedback (Jyrkiäinen 2008).

Sharon Peters and James P. Lewis emphasize the significance of motivating employees. Motivation is the driving force that energizes, channels and sustains behavior (Peters, 2001). Managers have to understand how the employee can be motivated if they want to be able to make the employee do what needs to be done (Lewis 2006, 101). Five basic motivators are: achievement, recognition, challenging, varied or interesting work, responsibility, and advancement. (Peters 2001.) Motivating and giving feedback should be an integral part of every change project.

Change resistance is present in every change process. Employees do not want to change as they see change as a threat and want to preserve the status quo instead (look e.g. Picard 2009, Peters 2001, Yukl 2010).

And the reality is, most people would rather maintain the status quo — no matter how troubled and vulnerable that might be — than detour onto a new, unmarked path with incalculable perils.

(Sharon Peters, 2001, 28.)

Peters concludes that the vast majority of change aversion in organizations is not rooted in individuals’ personal and innate loathing for reform, but is rather fostered by the behavior of superiors who unwittingly induce the staff to react badly. (Peters, 2001.) Yukl emphasizes the importance of understanding why the employees resist change. If the leaders are aware of the reasons for the aversion, the efforts to implement change in the organization are more likely to be successful. (Yukl 2010.)

There are a number of different reasons for resisting major changes in organizations and Yukl gives a comprehensive list of them. First of all, there may be a lack of trust between the managers and the employees or a belief that change is not necessary or feasible. The change project is likely to fail if people do not trust the person suggesting it. After a long successful period, it is not easy to convince people that change is needed. Even when problems are acknowledged, a proposed change may be resisted because it seems unlikely to succeed. (Yukl 2010, 298.)
In many change projects, employees believe that they will lose more than they will gain if the proposed change occurs. This is not necessarily a wrong assumption. To solve this dilemma, the manager needs to understand the problem, communicate clearly and admit that every change involves some gains and some losses. (Yukl 2010, 298, Peters 2001, 28–29.) This is an important factor, because when change is not chosen but rather mandated, as it normally is in news organizations, employees tend to focus more on the losses. Sharon Peters argues that it is the best to admit that there will be losses during the change project, but it is also worthwhile to emphasize the possibility of gains and positive consequences at the same time. If the manager does this, resistance will probably be effectively diffused, although it will not be eliminated entirely. (Peters, 2001, 28–29.)

Another reason for avoiding change is that the employee does not know how to change (Peters 2001, Picard 2009). The employee may not have the skills or the ability to do things differently. In this situation, managers are required to teach each employee how to accommodate the new directives in their everyday work.

Employees may also resist change because they do not want to be controlled by others. These people should be helped to realize that there is a need for change and to understand that they have a choice in determining how to change. (Yukl 2010, 298.)

Many employees resist change because they are afraid of it and fear that it is not safe to change. They fear failure, because changes require the learning of new ways of working. Employees may also be afraid of losing their status and power. Major changes in organizations invariably result in shifts in relative power and status among individuals and in subunits. Additionally, change that appears to be inconsistent with strong values and ideas will be resisted. (Peters 2001, 28–29, Yukl 2010, 298.)

In order to change the attitude of the resistant employees towards change, the manager needs to reward new innovations in very vocal and public ways and to regard mistakes as lessons learned rather than disastrous errors. Peters stresses that it is very important that the editor gives every new idea a full hearing and attempts to find ways to modify unworkable suggestions into workable ones. (Peters, 2001, 29.)
2.3. The concept of change management in newsrooms

By combining the theories above and special characteristics of news media I have created a concept of change management in newsrooms. This concept is presented in Figure 7 in page 30.

In this model, the driving forces derive from the current situation in the field of newspaper industry in Finland. One of the driving forces accelerating changes is the decrease in circulations and revenues. The majority of newspaper companies want to keep their business profitable. A third driving force causing changes is the need to reformulate the business model of the newspaper.

As discussed in Section 1, this need is mainly caused by Internet newspapers. Reformulating the business model leads to a need to reorganize working routines. The opposing forces try to prevent or decelerate changes. The most common and strongest restraining force is change resistance. Dual tensions often found in newsrooms also tend to slow the momentum of changes. Poor planning can stall the whole change process. The history of relative stability in media markets is one of the factors that can cause news media companies to feel that changes are not needed. The changing job descriptions of journalists can also hinder the change process, as changing job descriptions are seen as a significant problem in the research presented earlier.

This model describes the driving and restraining forces that interact in a changing news media organization. The forces in the boxes describe the force field that motivates change in the newspaper industry today. To best guarantee reaching the defined objectives, and thus achieving the desired state, company managers must pay attention to the nine steps specified in the model. If any of these steps are missed or are not sufficiently taken into consideration, the risk of failure correspondingly increases. It is difficult to say by what percentage at this point. That will require more research and a much larger sample of cases. But the literature on research about change management is very clear that these are essential steps and skipping any one of them causes a grave risk of failure.

The arrows describe the effect, which restraining and driving forces have on the ongoing change project. The arrows could actually be seen as bidirectional, describing a two-way effect. The manner in which the change project is executed has impacts on both restraining forces and driving forces. Change management can strengthen or cushion these forces.
Naturally, restraining and driving forces also have an influence on project management.

**Figure 7.** The concept of change management in newsroom.

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<tr>
<th>DRIVING FORCES</th>
<th>DESIRED STATE</th>
<th>RESTRAINING FORCES</th>
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| The decreasing circulations and revenues | **Unfreezing**
1. Creating a sense of urgency while honoring the past
2. Putting together a guiding team
3. Creating vision and strategies
4. Communication of vision and strategies
| Change resistantancne |
| A desire to make/keep business profitable | **Changing**
5. Empowering employees for action
6. Creating psychological safety:
  - Feedback
  - Training
  - Support
  - Noticing feelings
  - Motivating and engaging in changing working culture
| Dual tensions in newsrooms |
| A need to reformulate the business model of newspapers | **Refreezing**
7. Generating short-term wins
8. Consolidating gains and producing more change |
| A poorly planned change project |
| A need to reorganize the working routines | **Refreezing**
9. Rooting phase |
| The history of relative stability in media markets |
| A desire to develop and make things different |
| The changing job descriptions of journalists |

It is impossible for both this and any other theory to give answers to all questions that are raised in different change projects, situations and companies. This theory can be criticized for not being able to demonstrate or take into account all the real world change management issues. The real world is complicated, of course, and there might be other factors and elements that need to be considered. But these stages have been proven to be essential and the future development of the model must be conducted on the basis of analyzing what happens and why in each case where it will hopefully be applied.

Even though this concept of change management in newsrooms offers useful tools for planning and executing changes in newspapers, following these steps does not guarantee success and dismissing them does not automatically lead to a complete failure. As John Kotter
puts it, no perfect change project exists and it is also very rare to find a completely unsuccessful change project (Kotter 1999, 30).

3.0. Methodology

The basic idea of a case study is that one or a few cases are studied in detail, using whatever methods seem appropriate. The researcher may have several specific purposes and research questions. Nevertheless, the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of the case in question as possible. (Punch 1998, 150.)

My method was to interview both managers and employees of my case companies and compare their experiences with each other as well as with the theory of change management in newsrooms. I chose to interview both managers and employees in order to have as comprehensive a picture of the change process as possible. Had I only interviewed either managers or employees, the viewpoint would have been biased.

Silverman reminds us that it is important to reflect on whether interview responses are to be treated either as giving direct access to ‘experience’ or as actively constructed ‘narratives’ involving activities which themselves require analysis. Silverman remarks that observation is sometimes a better solution. (Silverman 2005, 48.) This is why I decided to combine interviews with observation. I spent two days altogether observing the work environment and routines at Ilkka and Pohjalainen. Another two days were spent interviewing both employees and managers.

I chose personal interviews because of my background as a journalist. I preferred a personal contact in order to achieve trust with the interviewee and to ascertain that each one of the interviewees would be heard, not only the most talkative ones. In a group interview, the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee may remain reserved and distant, and that was something I wanted to avoid. After the first round of interviews, in which ground data was collected, personal interviews were seen to be the right choice.

My plan was to interview at least ten journalists and all of the four managers who are in charge of executing these changes and managing daily work. In the end, I managed to interview all four managers and thirteen employees altogether. The interviewed employees represent about 14 percent of all employees at I-Mediat Oy. About 44 percent of the
employees at I-Mediat are women. This ratio was taken into account as eight male and five female employees were interviewed. Originally, the plan was to interview six female employees, but one of the female interviewees became ill and her replacement happened to be male.

According to Eskola and Suoranta, there are no particular rules that would guarantee that the scope requirement is fulfilled when determining the size of the data. It is the obligation of the researcher to evaluate whether there is enough data to analyze the phenomenon. By this, the authors refer to the saturation of the data: when the level of saturation is high enough, increasing the amount of data by conducting more interviews, for instance, will not provide any new relevant information. (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998, 60–62.)

I justify my decision to interview thirteen journalists and four managers by having reached the saturation level and by having a time limit. Because of the time limit, it was not possible to interview more employees, but I doubt that a larger number of interviewed employees would have increased the validity of the study, because the last several interviews were not generating much new information, but rather only different expressions caused by different personalities and ways of speaking.

The principal criterion for choosing interviewees is not the number but the representativeness of the interviewees. The researcher needs to consider carefully how well the chosen interviewees represent the phenomenon studied. (Jyrkiäinen 2011.) I have every reason to believe that my sample represents the employees of the combined editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen well. I am aware that in all kinds of research, it would be ideal to study the entire population, but as in most cases, the population was simply too large. It would have been impossible for me to include every individual.

I chose the interviewed employees by using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. The subjects are chosen because they are the easiest to recruit for the study and the researcher does not consider selecting subjects that are representative of the entire population. (Castillo 2009, Dillman et al. 2008, Patton 2002.) Convenience sampling has been criticized for a sampling bias and it has been argued that the sample is not representative of the entire population. This may be the biggest disadvantage when using a convenience sample, because it leads to more problems and criticisms.
Castillo argues that a systematic bias stems from a sampling bias. This refers to a constant difference between the results from the sample and the theoretical results from the entire population. It is not uncommon that the results from a study that uses a convenience sample differ significantly from the results from the entire population. (Castillo 2009.) I was aware of these bias traps and tried to avoid them by choosing the sample myself. I did not want to ask anyone’s opinion on whom to interview as no neutral person could have been found to make recommendations. Everyone was involved in changes in some way and that means that internal politics could possibly have been an influential factor. Managers might have suggested that I interview those employees who had the most positive attitude towards change, whereas employees might have recommended their friends or employees with the most negative attitude towards change.

Originally, I planned to use random sampling, but when I visited the editorial offices of Ilkka and Pohjalainen for the first time in November 2010, I realized that random sampling might not necessarily work in this case.

During the first visit, I learned how important personal contact was. I was treated suspiciously by the employees at first. I was asked by more than four employees whether the employer had paid for me to do this study. They were clearly thinking that I was doing a biased study on the employer’s behalf. They were also very concerned about the confidentiality of research interviews. The majority of the employees who participated in background information interviews were keen to know whether I was going to reveal who said what exactly. I promised to treat all respondents as anonymous without even revealing their gender or position at work. After winning the trust of the interviewees, I managed to gather plenty of essential data for my study. When the ice was broken, these employees were keen to talk with me and seemed to be very worried about the change process.

I began to fear that employees would refuse to take part in the research interviews if I contacted them randomly instead of giving them a personal invitation to the interview. This is why I decided to conduct short background interviews in order to collect background information for my study and to contact potential interviewees. I simply wandered around the editorial offices and interviewed volunteers. I was not familiar with them or their opinion about the change process in advance. In fact, I did not have any background information about any employee. Every employee that I asked to be interviewed agreed.

When analyzing the results of the first interview round, I realized that the data that I already
had was very valid and the relationship that I had with the employees was good. This is when I decided to use convenience sampling and to invite the employees that I had already interviewed to participate in the actual research interviews.

I had already chosen the background interviewees from different age groups and working positions in the newsroom. All I needed was a couple of extra interviewees in order to have the right ratio of male and female interviewees so that it would correspond to the actual gender distribution in the combined editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. To reach these extra interviewees, I had to ask the news producer for the contact information of suitable employees. This is the point where a manager might have had some effect on my choices, but because this concerned only three interviewees, I did not consider it a significant factor. Additionally, when analyzing these three interviews, I realized that the manager was not trying to protect himself against possibly undesirable results when recommending these interviewees, as the case was almost the opposite.

Even though the number of interviewees does not guarantee the quality of research, I regard thirteen employees and four managers as a valid sample of all the 94 journalistic employees that work in the newsrooms of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. This sample is both accessible and feasible considering the time limit that I have, since I have to graduate this spring. Interviewing more employees would not guarantee new relevant information. I was also fortunate when picking up interviewees as there are both opponents and supporters of change in the sample.

Another significant criticism about using a convenience sample is the limited possibility to make generalizations and inferences about the entire population. Since the sample is not representative of the population, the results of the study cannot speak for the entire population. (Castillo 2009.)

I am aware of this limitation, but I have full trust in the validity of my study, because the workplace welfare survey that had the whole population of the combined editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen as subjects confirms my findings6. This is why I have good reason to believe that my sample provides valid data and can be generalized to cover the whole combined editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. As was discussed earlier, it would have been ideal to test the entire population, but similarly to most cases, the population was too large. Sampling was necessary.

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6 The workplace welfare survey 2010 was done by Innolink Research Oy on assignment of Ilkka Corporation.
I did all the interviews in Finnish and translated the results into English myself. My interviews were semi-structured. I asked almost the same questions of every interviewee in almost the same order. The questions were derived from the concept of change management in the newsroom, which I presented earlier. The purpose of my questions was to find out how strictly the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen follows the nine steps presented.

According to some authors, the order of the questions can be changed. There is no complete consensus on how semi-structured interviews should be conducted. I chose a method between a structured survey and a theme interview: partly an open interview and partly an organized interview. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 47.) Semi-structured interviews are very suitable for situations in which the researcher has already decided which matters they need to concentrate on, thus making it unnecessary to let the interviewees talk about matters of their own choosing. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006.)

I had prepared certain themes that were derived from my theoretical model. I also had a list of questions with me, but I varied the order of questions and listened carefully to see if some themes seemed more important to the interviewee than others. I asked everyone the same questions but left the interviewees enough time to focus on what they considered the most important themes or to raise new themes. The questionnaires are available as appendices.

I had prepared to spend one hour with one interviewee at most. The time estimation proved correct, because interviews lasted between 30 and 55 minutes. Building a mutual trust is essential when interviewing someone. When I listened to the recorded interviews, I could sense that a mutual trust was achieved. As a matter of fact, the closeness between the interviewer and the interviewee was so strong in some interviews that some interviewees felt free to talk about the painful aspects of the change process.

When all the recorded interviews had been transcribed, I had 146 pages of transcribed text altogether. To analyze the data I used a method called Material Focused Content Analysis that was developed by Miles and Huberman (Miles & Huberman 1984). In this method, the data is analyzed in roughly three stages: 1) simplifying, 2) grouping and 3) developing theoretical concepts. Tuomi and Sarajärvi have adapted this method of analysis into eight different steps, which are presented in Figure 8.
Figure 8. The eight steps of Material Focused Content Analysis.

**THE EIGHT STEPS OF MATERIAL FOCUSED CONTENT ANALYSIS**

1. Listening to the recorded interviews and making a transcription word by word
2. Reading the interviews and making oneself familiar with the content
3. Searching for simplified expressions and underlining them
4. Listing the simplified expressions
5. Searching for similarities and differences among the simplified expressions
6. Combining the simplified expressions and creating subclasses
7. Combining the subclasses and creating more general categories
8. Combining the general categories and creating an accumulating concept

Source: Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 111.

The problem in material focused research is the fact that the researcher has already had an influence on the results by choosing the research frame, method and concepts. These problems can be avoided by using the theory-oriented analysis, in which the effect of previous information is identified in order to find new prospects. In this way, the researcher begins the analysis by focusing on the material, but at the end of the analysis, already known classifications are brought in. In this kind of an analysis, the focus alternates between the material and completed models. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 98–99.) The theory-oriented analysis is a particularly strong area in my study.

After analyzing the results of my study, my original objective was to use a focus group to validate my findings. The method of using a focus group refers to conducting a group depth interview, in which a group of interviewees are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea or packaging, for example. This method is among the most widely used research tools in the social sciences. (Stewart et al. 2007.)

After the interviews, I decided to modify the idea of using a focus group, and instead of a group interview, I sent an inquiry by e-mail. The reason for this was preserving the confidentiality of my study. Had I invited all managers and employees, or even only some of them, into a group interview, some employees might have been too scared to share their true opinions. Using a focus group might thus have reduced the quality of the results by making the interviewees soften their previous statements in front of their managers. My guiding
professor, Mr. Gregory F. Lowe, suggested that I send an inquiry by e-mail. This proved to be a good solution. All interviewees received a questionnaire of 26 statements, which were derived from my analysis. The majority of interviewees responded to me personally by e-mail and indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements. The results of this validation inquiry were rewarding: my findings were mostly confirmed. Furthermore, I managed to validate my findings without endangering the confidentiality of the study.

However, this validation by e-mail confirmed my previous hypothesis that only personal contact would guarantee that there would be enough respondents for my study. Indeed, even though I already had had personal contact with the respondents, I had to remind the majority of them to answer my questionnaire, several times in some cases. Altogether ten of thirteen interviewed employees and three of four managers responded to my validation questionnaire. Naturally, the upcoming Finnish parliamentary election was a disruptive factor that could have caused the delays, but I believe that an e-mail or Internet survey is easier to forget than a personal meeting. This is one of the reasons why convenience sampling seems to have been a reasonable choice.

4.0. Findings

In what follows, I will analyze how identical the execution of the change package at Ilkka and Pohjalainen was with my model of change management in newsrooms, and what the results of the change project were. All these remarks are based on both the interviews and the observation I did at Ilkka and Pohjalainen. The concept of change management in newsrooms was presented in Section 2.

After that, I will examine what impact driving and restraining forces had on this change package. I will then present three different views on this change package and how it was executed: one perspective is based on the interviews of the managers, the second is based on the interviews of the employees and the third on the results of the recent work welfare survey at Ilkka Yhtymä.

4.1. How identical was the execution of the change package at Ilkka and Pohjalainen with the model of change management in newsrooms?

According to the model of change management in newsrooms, there are nine steps that should be taken when implementing a large-scale change project in a newsroom. Next, I will
analyze step by step how similar the execution of the change package at Ilkka and Pohjalainen was to these steps and what happened.

4.1.1. Step one: Creating a sense of urgency, but honoring the past

The first step in a large-scale change project is to examine the market and the competitive environment, identifying and discussing crises and potential crises and creating a sufficient sense of urgency in fellow managers and employees. If the complacency level is too high, transformations fail to achieve their objectives. (Kotter 1996, 4, 21). It is also crucial to honor the past, because doing otherwise would signal that everything done before was wrong (Peters 2001).

The management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen had studied the background and the environment well and calculated that co-operation would be more profitable for both newspapers than competing against each other. Based on the interviews of four managers, who form the management team of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, the reasons for the change package were both journalistic and economical. The objective of co-operation was to achieve broader and better quality content and economic profit, as journalistic resources could be redistributed.

Creating a sense of urgency was partly successful. Eight of the thirteen interviewed employees were convinced that changes were necessary, but only a few of them could state any reasons for feeling that changes had to be made. “The editorial system and the layout were simply out of date”, as some interviewees argued. Additionally, the rest of the interviewed employees were not convinced that there was an urgent need for changes.

One major observation that was made in many interviews was that it was the desire of the management to make changes that created the sense of urgency. Four interviewees felt that changes had to be done because the management wanted it. “We can say whatever we want, but they have already decided to make changes, and that is why there will be changes, whatever we do,” one interviewee explained. This opinion was also expressed in other comments, in which it was emphasized that “there was no point in resisting changes, because the managers had already decided everything.”

This indicates that the managers were more competent at convincing themselves than the employees. It can be argued that the managers did not devote enough time and effort to both explaining the reasons to the employees and finding ways to explain it in a clear and
convincing manner. The problem was that the employees were not convinced about the necessity of all the suggested changes, and were consequently not committed to these reforms either.

Honoring the past was a controversial issue. The management team thought that some aspects of the old system and working culture were preserved. To illustrate this, the same division of the editorial staff still exists: sports, culture, economics, politics and city news. The work of the photographers also remained almost the same, with the exception that there was a new manager, a photojournalist. “The people who make this newspaper are almost the same as before the changes, and the spirit of making this newspaper still remains,” as one manager described the situation.

Almost all interviewed employees agreed that not all had changed and that several basic routines were preserved. Stories were written with the same methods as before, albeit in a more limited time. “You hardly ever have two days to write a big story. Everything has to be ready in only one day. That is sad.” Some thought that the basic news work was now more systematic and pre-planned than before. From the employees’ viewpoint, the past was not always honored. For example, some journalists had more influence on their future work tasks than others. “Personally, I feel that my experience and way of thinking have been honored, and I have had plenty of influence on the content of my work. I have noticed, however, that not everybody were treated equal in this respect. I have seen colleagues whose knowledge and expertise have been ignored. This ‘honoring of the past’ has absolutely not been impartial.” One of the interviewed employees described this inequality as one of the most significant problems in the change package. Some managers emphasized the fact that the main objective was to make the new organization function and not to focus on the choice of the right person when making organizational changes.

Some interviewees were also not convinced at all of the reasons for making all the changes in the first place. “I do not understand why practices that have been proven to be well-functioning need to be made obsolete without telling us what was wrong with them. They were changed for the sake of change.”

This shows that the managers and the employees understood the concept of honoring the past differently. The managers thought that honoring the past meant preserving some of the well-functioning practices, or those practices to which they did not have a better alternative yet. The employees believed that honoring the past involved respecting them, their work, their
skills and contributions in a historical manner, or actually the whole 'heritage'. Additionally, the employees did not realize that nothing can be created without destroying something else. This means that these two groups of people had different perspectives. In this case, the most serious failure in managing change was the fact that the management did not truly realize the problem of these different perspectives, nor did they handle it directly. It was a significant fact that the realities of these two groups were different. Changes always cause uncertainty, challenges and even pain. It is important to avoid causing unnecessary pain, however.

4.1.2. Step two: Putting together a guiding team

If there was a guiding team in this change package, its existence was far from well-known to both the employees and the managers. Half of the management team said that there was a guiding team and that the team was the same as the management team in practice. The other half argued that there was no real guiding team. “Maybe the reason why we did not have a guiding team was the pressure to save money. We were in a greater need for people doing actual work than for a guiding team,” as one manager commented.

From the opposite point of view, there was a guiding team, namely the management team, and it worked well. However, this guiding team was established somewhat too late, in March, when half of the changes were already in motion. “We had to make the guiding team functional immediately. On the other hand, had there been a separate guiding team, there would probably have been overlapping work.”

Similarly to the managers, the interviewed employees also had different ideas of the guiding team. Some of them recalled that there was some kind of a guiding team in the layout renewal project, and some recalled that the editorial system reform project had a guiding team. Nobody was absolutely sure whether there was a guiding team or what these teams actually did. Eight of the thirteen interviewees had never even heard of or seen a guiding team. Those interviewees would have liked to have a guiding team, because “it could have brought some order to this chaos.” If there was a guiding team, it seems that it was quite invisible for both the managers and the employees.

A guiding team is essential for realizing visions and strategies. The team needs to have enough power over the others, broad expertise and high credibility. Leadership and management skills are needed too. The objective of a guiding team is to create trust in the change project by offering carefully planned off-site events and plenty of discussions and joint activities. The
Purpose of the guiding team is to create a common goal, which is sensible to the head and appealing to the heart. (Kotter 1996, 66.) The results of the interviews show that the management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen did not have a sufficient understanding of the functions of a guiding team.

4.1.3. Step three: Creating vision and strategies

The vision and strategy of the change package at Ilkka and Pohjalainen can be briefly summarized: the objective was to reform old working practices and layouts in order to have a more secured position in the struggle against decreasing circulation numbers and to gain profits by combining the former rivals Ilkka and Pohjalainen into a single editorial office. All the four managers in the management team had slightly varying ideas of the strategy, but these general concepts were repeated in all four interviews. The order of importance was clarified by the results of the validation round. Nevertheless, some managers doubted that even they knew what the objectives were and how they were supposed to accomplish the tasks. “Sometimes, when the reporters asked me what the objectives of all this were, even I was also forced to reflect on whether I had truly understood the big picture.”

The reason for the insufficient understanding of the strategy might lie in the recession. Because of the severe recession in 2008, Ilkka and Pohjalainen were forced to execute the change package faster and more comprehensively than in the original plans. Because of the recession, advertising sales decreased by about 20 percent. The board of Ilkka Corporation demanded large reductions in expenses. The change package was launched and executed in only one year.

According to the interviewed employees, the vision behind the change package was economic gain above all. Some interviewees believed that the struggle against decreasing circulations would have required investments, not reductions.

However, economic issues and the pressure to reduce expenses were not the core problem or even an explanation for the lack of vision. The main problem was the fact that the management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen could not see change from a larger perspective, and thus could not possibly have internalized something that was non-existent. The management had practical objectives, but there was no grand vision that would have inspired the employees to join the process and to contribute to it in order to develop it further, so that they would not have simply adjusted to the changes or accepted the requirements as they did now.
4.1.4. Step four: Communication of the vision and strategies

The interviews create a contradictory picture of how the vision and the strategies of the change package were communicated. Some employees seem to have been absolutely unaware of the contents of the change package. They did not know or understand beforehand what was about to happen. Some managers admit that there was not enough communication between the managers and the employees. On the other hand, some of the managers believed that everything had been told at the right time, but there are always people who simply fail to understand, regardless of how much one tries to inform them. “Apparently, I should have told everyone personally that this change concerned them as well. It was a big surprise to me that some people thought that none of the coming changes concerned them. This is why they did not listen to everything: they did not consider those changes their business. I have reflected on these problems myself and tried to learn how to improve communication in the future,” one of the managers said. “Journalists are such self-assertive people that you can never give them enough information, or if you can, they regard it as faulty information,” another manager argued.

According to the management team, the vision and strategies were communicated step by step in the weekly editorial meetings as well as in group e-mails. The majority of the management team thought that every employee could obtain this information. They were certainly aware, nevertheless, that few people read all e-mails, and that the employees who were usually assigned to night shifts were unable to participate in the weekly meetings. Nevertheless, the descriptions that the managers gave about communicating vision and strategies varied so much that it is reasonable to remark that there was no precise communication or information strategy in this change package. According to the management team, however, there was a communication strategy and that it entailed informing the employees of all the changes as early as possible.

One of the managers admitted that there were simply too many changes in such a short time, which resulted in difficulties in communication and in an insufficient amount of information. “I frankly admit that internal communication was very faulty at times, and we were also not able to give enough information early enough. This has been seen as a serious criticism against the management team in the recent workplace welfare survey. There were simply so many occasional issues to be handled all the time, which is why communication failed sometimes.”

The managers also realized afterwards that one should consider carefully what information can justifiably be given and when. “For example, I presented pictures of the new organization
too early, when they were nothing but drafts. Some employees thought that they were the final pictures and became stressed when the plans were developed further. The next time, I will only present more finalized plans,” another manager promised.

All managers should adopt a critical way of thinking. There is a significant difference between conveying information and communicating a vision. It is not enough to tell the employees about certain issues. Managers must exercise leadership and that requires talking with people about important matters. Despite the fact that communicating too little is a common, typical and standard practice, it is not an acceptable one. This administrative style of giving information is not enough when the change package in question is as large and significant as in this case.

Only two employees had a positive opinion on the manner in which information of the change package had been conveyed, and eight employees thought that it had failed badly. The majority of the employees felt that they had been poorly informed of coming changes, and they did not clearly understand all the reasons for these changes. Those who felt that they had been well informed nevertheless understood their colleagues. “I think we were very much in touch, but it must have been such a new and vague situation for the management team as well, which is why they could not inform us better. I also understand why some of my colleagues feel like outsiders.”

When asking the employees about communication, the most common feeling was that information was kept vague far too long. The interviewed employees also missed concrete information. “I remember one informative meeting. We sat there, and we were shown many slides, even if in a rather hurried manner, and none of us knew what to ask, and it was all very confusing,” as one reporter described the situation. “What they should have done is clarifying what actually was happening and why. I knew that there was going to be a new editorial system, a new layout and organizational changes, but I did not know when, how or why,” another reporter said.

Because of unclear communication, some employees felt that their knowledge about the planned changes depended on rumours. “The first time I heard about many different matters was while having lunch. The lunch room was quite an ideal place for rumours, and the information naturally changed along the way.” Rumours made some employees afraid of their future and the fate of their jobs. “There was a phase when everyone was scared that they would lose their jobs, because nobody gave us answers, even though we asked for them.” Many
interviewed employees demanded better, concrete and more transparent communication. "If important issues are not kept secret, one feels that he or she can actually participate in them."

This demand made by the employees is reasonable. In this case, the management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen handled it in a manner that was the easiest for them. They forgot the fact that very often real communication with people is difficult and challenging work during a period of change. The management must tell the employees things they do not like, things they do not want to hear and things that probably increase the amount of change resistance. There are tears, anger and hurtful statements. People do not behave in a normal way during a large-scale change process, which is why ordinary methods are not appropriate. It requires an unusual approach from the managers. Furthermore, as always with good communication, it requires a large dose of humility.

4.1.5. Step five: Empowering employees for action

As already discussed in the theory section, successful communication does not only support the execution of change but also helps the members of the organization to commit to the content and the objectives of the change process (Åberg 2006). Motivation and commitment to change are the greatest when the people who are making the change and have to live with it are instrumental in identifying the problem and planning its solution (Beer et al. 1990). The participation of the employees has been seen as a sign of good change management (Kotter 1996, 18, Legge 1984, 19.)

Empowering employees for action was partly successful in the reformation of the layout of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. This is the only part of the change package in which the majority of the interviewed employees felt that they were not neglected and that they were quite well informed. Even though the layout renewal project was led by only one person, she was able to communicate relatively clearly about different phases of the change project and also managed to empower other employees. Nevertheless, it was impossible for most interviewed employees to participate in the planning of the rest of the change package. Only four out of thirteen employees felt that they had a chance to have some influence on the change package. “The decisions were made a long time ago and our opinions were never asked,” as one interviewee described the situation. “I have learned that when the management decides
something, they will see it through,” another interviewee explained.

Some interviewees said that their work motivation had decreased because of the change package. “There are simply so many things going on, and in the end you cannot do much about them. You just try to hang on.” Some employees demanded that the managers listen better to what they have to say. They felt that the wishes of the employees were not heard.

The impression that one has when interviewing the employees is that their understanding of the empowerment of employees is completely different from that of the management team. For example, Ilkka’s editor-in-chief argued that he had a discussion with every reporter before the execution of the change package even started. Three out of the four managers were of the opinion that the employees were able to participate in the planning of changes. For instance, approximately ten representatives of the reporters were heard when choosing the new editorial system. All four managers emphasized the fact that not all changes can be decided on in a democratic manner. Some changes need to be discussed in the management only. One manager saw change resistance as one of the factors that prevented the employees from participating: “There was such fierce resistance among the employees that the opinions and feedback that we were given were not especially fruitful.”

Some managers admitted that the change package was not a good example of a democratic change process. “But we had to do it, because the listed company was putting pressure on us,” one manager argued.

This also demonstrates that the managers and the employees had very different perspectives. The managers also had different pressures than the employees. This is natural, because the management is required to have a vision and strategy for the organization. This is not required of the employees, even though the importance of an entrepreneurial attitude of even ordinary employees is often emphasized in the modern work environment.

The challenge here is to find a way to deal effectively with the fact that two different worlds exist. The management needs more competence to understand both worlds. Instead of trying to understand these two different worlds, the management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen saw only one perspective. They refused to see the flip side of the coin, so to speak. Nevertheless, the fact that the management cannot always be democratic is not a reasonable excuse for being an unfair or incompetent manager. The management should have regarded the employees more as a positive resource accelerating the change than an obstacle. Thus, it is clear that the
managers were simply resorting to excuses.

4.1.6. Step six: Creating psychological safety

The objective of the sixth step is to create psychological safety by giving employees feedback on the ongoing change process, training them to adapt to the new work culture, supporting them and noticing their feelings, and motivating and engaging them in the changing work culture. According to the interviewed employees, the majority but not all of them felt that they were motivated to make these changes and regarded at least some of the executed changes as necessary. Only a minority of the interviewed employees said that they were not motivated to make changes.

I have divided the analysis of the sixth step into five sections: feedback, training, support, noticing feelings, and motivating and engaging the employees in the changing work culture.

Feedback

Half of the management team felt that feedback was given and the other half argued that there was hardly any feedback given. "Employees were mostly given normal feedback on their performance in the daily routines, but not feedback related to the changes in particular," one manager explained. According to an opposing opinion, "there was always generous praise when things were done as they should be." One of the managers admitted that there should have been more feedback.

When asking the employees about feedback, the answer was more black and white. Only one interviewed employee recalled receiving feedback during changes. The others had either no experience of feedback or remembered receiving feedback only once, and even that concerned some small detail. Three interviewed employees remembered hearing one single compliment when the predictive make-up programme was launched. Nevertheless, the employees hoped anxiously for feedback. "But not only compliments, because they do not help us to continue. We need concrete feedback to make this new system work," one of the employees suggested.

The importance of feedback lies in recognition. Employees begin to feel frustrated towards changes quite quickly if their efforts are not recognized. Feedback should be a part of the daily
routines during a large-scale change project. The management should have planned a strategy for giving feedback in advance.

**Training**

One striking factor in this case is that the only thing on which the managers and the employees completely agree is the lack of training. Only one single manager thought that there was enough training, but all the other interviewees, both the managers and the employees, said that there was not enough training. It was the most common issue in the interviews. “We did not have enough time for training, and the method of ‘a colleague teaching another colleague’ did not work as well as expected,” one manager complained. This is a clear sign of poor planning.

The management team arranged one day of training for the new editorial system, but unfortunately not everybody was able to participate. Some employees were assigned to another shift or were on leave, and were therefore forced to learn the new practices by themselves. “It was almost like throwing one into water to find out whether one would be able to swim,” as one of the managers and one of the employees described the situation.

According to the management team, one of the reasons for the lack of training was the simultaneousness of reforms and reductions of expenses. “It led us into a situation in which there was a scarcity of employees working in development projects,” one manager explained.

The employees argued that someone should have been in charge of the training. Now it seemed to the employees that no one was in charge and that was why it failed. “I did not have any training at all for the new make-up system, but instead I spent many hours learning how to use my new e-mail programme,” one employee said ironically.

Some interviewed employees suspected that the managers did not want to spend money on training because of pressures to reduce expenses, and that they also counted on the work motivation of the employees, believing that the employees would try to learn the new systems themselves regardless of how difficult the task would be. “There should have been some guidance, because some of the employees are mentally exhausted at the moment, and that has been caused by these changes”, one of the employees argued. Some employees saw the lack of training as a waste of money, since a good knowledge of the new systems could have saved money in their opinion.
The lack of training increased the expenses of the change package, as the employees were forced to spend plenty of valuable working time solving technical problems or trying to learn new systems on their own. I believe that a few days of appropriate training would actually have been cheaper than learning to use the systems without help. The lack of training was one of the problems caused by poor planning.

**Support**

According to the management team, support was provided to the employees during the change project. The team members admitted, however, that it was not enough. The employees saw the situation as completely the opposite. According to the interviewed employees, there was no support at all. This was the only idea that was present in all the interviews of the employees. “It felt as if we were in constant motion, and because of that, there was no time for support. It felt like a crime to interrupt the managers in order to have a talk. We would have needed the managers to ask how we were doing”, one of the employees explained. “Everybody has managed on their own. There has been no support at all,” another employee said.

The interviewed employees felt that the lack of support made the atmosphere at work worse. “There is more and more fighting and moping, because people are scared of what these projects will change and what kind of influence these changes will have on their jobs. That increases stress.” One of the managers argued that the issue that had had the most adverse influence on the atmosphere was the need to reduce expenses, not the lack of support. “These reductions would have been even more drastic, had we not executed the renewal programme at the same time,” the manager argued.

**Noticing feelings**

Handling feelings is definitely not the easiest task in a change project, but nevertheless it is one of the most crucial ones. As discussed before, people change what they do less because they are given an analysis that shifts their thinking than because they are shown a truth that influences their feelings (see e.g. Peters 2001, Kotter & Cohen 2002).

When asking the management team about dealing with feelings, I very soon realized that there was no strategy or common policy at all for the handling of the employees’ feelings. The management team had an unanimous belief that they were aware of the employees’ feelings,
but none of the managers had a clear vision of how these feelings were handled or when. “I kind of tried to understand and, and... listen... and I think I partly succeeded, because some of the most experienced journalists came to apologize to me afterwards for using harsh words and to emphasize that it was nothing personal,” as one manager explained. “We had no common strategy for dealing with feelings, but every manager tried to listen to the employees as well as possible,” another manager said.

Some managers understood the power of feelings and how strong an influence they had on the well-being of the employees. “I saw people getting physical symptoms, because they were so stressed about their jobs,” one of the managers said. Another manager was worried that some employees did not enjoy their work sufficiently. “I have been wondering whether I should have been softer or promised that things would remain as they were before, in order to avoid a few sick leaves. I even asked some employees whether they were on sick leave because of the cold facts I had told them,” another manager admitted. One of the managers felt that the pressure had been strong, but regarded it as a problem of only a few employees and not as affecting the whole working community.

In the interviews of the employees, one general idea was ubiquitous: feelings were not noticed. “The management did not invest in mental well-being at all. If you had something to complain about, you had to turn to occupational health care,” one of the employees argued. Only one interviewee felt that feelings were noticed and two interviewees had no opinion. “The managers were rather silent and probably thought that these feelings could be dealt with later. I had a feeling that they knew quite early that this thing was getting out of their hands,” one employee revealed.

Some employees considered it insulting that feelings were ignored. “It felt like bullying,” one of the employees said. “They just wanted to shut their eyes and ears from our need to complain,” another employee argued. “How can a manager who is never around know the feelings of the employees or understand them? Feelings have been completely ignored. It has been more important for them to lead this organization than to listen to what people have to say,” a third interviewee complained.

The interviewed employees expressed the need for emotional intelligence. “I guess they have not even heard of emotional intelligence here. This has just been about cold facts, and feelings have been ignored.” Some employees wanted the managers to distinguish between daily complaints and real complaints.
It seems that the management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen attempted to avoid emotional confrontations as long as possible. This is partly a characteristic of the Finnish culture. Finnish people are not considered to be comfortable with handling their emotions openly. Emotions are seen as a private matter and a source of embarrassment. This cultural background is not a valid excuse for avoiding dealing with feelings in an organization, however. The managers must cope with feelings, especially when planning and executing a large-scale change project. Feelings are a cornerstone of change projects (Kotter 1996). Feelings had a special role in the change package of Ilkka and Pohjalainen because of the history of these newspapers as rivals. This is why the management should have paid more attention to dealing with feelings.

Motivating and engaging in changing work culture

Raising salaries and giving employees new responsibilities have been traditional ways to motivate employees at Ilkka and Pohjalainen. Unfortunately, the recession and the change package had a dramatically adverse effect on these motivating elements.

In the collective labor agreement of Finnish journalists, there is a possibility to apportion a small amount of the total salaries, the so-called local portion, in a manner agreed on by the employers and the employees. Immediately before the recession, this local portion was given to employees who were talented at providing content for various channels. According to Ilkka’s editor-in-chief, Matti Kalliokoski, the rewarding strategy would have been more focused on orientation toward changes and the newspaper, if the management had been able to predict what was about to happen.

Additionally, motivating employees by giving them new responsibilities worked only partly. Some were given new responsibilities, but some also lost responsibilities, when some former specialized positions were abolished. “After the recession, the incentives have been rather negative. The employees had to give up their additional vacation pay, and then there were these co-operation negotiations and dismissals,” Kalliokoski admits.

Other managers agree that there should have been more ways to motivate the employees to commit to the changes, but some managers think that the changes themselves were sufficient motivators. “Many employees got new opportunities when the systems and the organization changed,” one of the managers stated.

The majority of the interviewed employees felt that they were motivated to commit to the
changes even though they did not approve of all the changes or understand why they were necessary. “I prefer an environment in which things are changing and every day is different,” one of the employees explained. Some saw changes as an opportunity to advance in the organization. “I was quite motivated because I knew that these changes would present some benefits to me.”

Even though the initial situation was favorable for the objectives of the management, the majority of the interviewed employees felt that their motivation decreased during the execution of the change package because of a lack of information, training and support, contradictory advice and plans as well as ignored feelings, ideas and proposals of the employees. It seems that the management was unable to increase the motivation that the employees already had and to create a positive vision of change. The most serious problem here was that the employees were not motivated enough to support the goals of the company and the work of the managers completely. Naturally, a lack of motivation can endanger the whole change project and needs to be taken into account. As failure is obviously not the objective of any change project, the management needs to consider carefully all possible ways to motivate employees.

4.1.7. Step seven: Generating short-term wins

According to the management team, there was no particular plan to celebrate short-term wins. All four managers recall that the first issue with the new layout was celebrated with the employees by having a glass of sparkling wine. “Maybe it is only hindsight, but more attention could have been paid to the employees after a succesful project, and some employees could even have been rewarded. There should at least have been more parties with cake during the change project,” one manager admitted.

Employees saw the situation in a different light. In all, eight of the thirteen interviewed employees recall that the employers thanked them for some short-term wins, but most of them recall that the compliments were given by e-mail, rather than by giving them an opportunity to have a glass of sparkling wine with the employer. “The employer thanked us by sending us an e-mail when the predictive make-up system was well adopted,” one of the employees explained. “There was a feeling of celebration in the air when the new layout was launched, but I do not remember whether there was a cake or something else,” another employee recalled.
In all, four of the interviewed employees fail to remember any compliments or celebration of short-term wins. “What were the short-term wins? I do not know. I would not say that this has been a success at all,” one of the employees said. “There has not been any sign of success yet, because we do not know how to do this well enough. We have rather been afraid of what comes next,” another employee said. “Everybody had so much work to do with adapting to the changes that we have not had much enthusiasm for having a joyous celebration. We have been too preoccupied with worrying about whether we will be able to adapt to these new routines at all, now that so many changes are being made,” a third employee explained.

Discretion is always necessary when creating short-term wins. Cake and sparkling wine are not always appropriate, particularly when fellow workers have just been dismissed. That does not mean that the employees should not be rewarded for achieving their goals, however. The key is to give more positive feedback when people begin to move in the right direction.

4.1.8. Step eight: Consolidating gains and producing more changes

The changes were made so fast at Ilkka and Pohjalainen that there was actually no time to consolidate any gains. This was the opinion that was the most ubiquitous in the interviews of both the managers and the employees.

The wheel of change moved so fast that some employees felt that it was very difficult to persevere. The management team did succeed in producing more changes during the change project than was originally planned, and they did not change the deadlines even though the employees asked for extra time.

This means that the management was succesful in avoiding changing the change directive, which was something that Peters stressed as important, but the answer to the question of whether the objectives were achievable depends on whom one asks (Peters 2001). The employees considered the objectives too ambitious, but the management considered them achievable. “The dismissal of some employees was done at the wrong time. We did not have enough personnel for the daily routines. Had we had four or five months more, we would have suffered only minor damages,” one manager argued. “They were stubborn about the schedule. Nothing was postponed or reconsidered even when it would have been reasonable,” one of the employee commented.

The original objective was to execute a constant line of changes with no whirlwind crashes. According to the management team, this objective was achieved, but most of the interviewed
employees saw the changes as one big bang. “When one crash was handled, another came right away, and we had no time to concentrate on our normal work,” one of the employees said. Many employees described the change project as a continuous crash. “These changes came one upon the other and were interlocked. There were so many changes at once and you were supposed to handle them all,” as another employee described the situation.

Consolidating gains is not easy during the implementation of the change project. But it is a mistake not to evaluate the progression of the change process at time and to ensure that the implemented changes are adopted, accepted and understood. Otherwise, the process might end in chaos.

4.1.9. Step nine: The rooting phase

It is quite obvious that the rooting phase has not even begun yet either at Ilkka or Pohjalainen. Changes are not being made any longer at the same speed as before, but new customs are still being learned. However, the objectives for the year 2011 are slowing the speed of changes and concentrating on the renewal of the content of the newspapers. One of the managers even suggested having a break and reconsidering the objectives of co-operation. “I do not know any other Finnish media firm which has made as many big changes in such a short time as we did. My personal opinion is that now it is reasonable to take a break and rethink whether we should increase or decrease the amount of co-operation.”

Only a minority of the interviewed employees felt that the situation was becoming stable. On the contrary, most of the employees emphasized the fact that the aftermath of a change process poses challenges, as well. “These changes are not complete yet. We are still learning how to deal with them,” one of the employees explained. “Things still look unclear to me,” another employee said.

In what follows, I will analyze the role of driving and restraining forces in the change package.

4.2. The role of driving and restraining forces in the change package

4.2.1. Driving forces

One of the driving forces behind the change package of Ilkka and Pohjalainen has been the trend of decreasing circulations and revenues in the field of the newspaper industry in Finland. The circulation of paid-for dailies has decreased by about 3,6 percent between the
years 2008 and 2009 in Finland (Nordicom 2011). Unfortunately, there are no more recent statistics available yet.

The circulation of Ilkka decreased by only 0,5 percent between the years 2009 and 2010 (Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations). The situation was more serious at Pohjalainen: the circulation of Pohjalainen saw a decrease of 4,3 percent in 2010 as compared to the year 2009 (Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations). Even though the circulation of Ilkka did not decrease as much as the circulations of Finnish newspapers did in average, the tendency is alarming everywhere in the world and needs to be taken account.

The net revenue of Ilkka Corporation decreased by 4,7 percent between the years 2009 and 2010 (The annual report of Ilkka Corporation 2010). Unfortunately, no comparable global information about the development of the net revenues of newspaper companies is available, because the comparable data of the year 2010 has not been completely gathered yet.

Advertising in Finnish newspapers showed signs of recovery: it increased by 2,4 percent between the years 2009 and 2010. In the beginning of the year 2011, this trend seems to continue. The amount of advertising increased by 6,6 percent in Finnish newspapers during the first two months of the year 2011. (TNS-Gallup.)

In general, the decreasing circulations and revenues of the newspaper industry had an effect on the change project of Ilkka and Pohjalainen as well, because Ilkka Corporation has a clear objective to keep their publishing business profitable. “The growth target for operating net sales will at least correspond to the level of growth in the purchasing power of domestic consumers” (Annual Report of Ilkka Corporation 2009, 2010).

The driving forces of the recession, decreasing circulations and revenues and the desire to keep the business profitable did not only act as a catalyst for the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, but also tightened the schedule in which the changes were to be made. According to the management team of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, a few extra months or a year more would have made changes much easier to execute. They admit that haste marked this change process. The driving forces mentioned above had a remarkable impact on the manner in which the change process was planned. Because of a history of reforms ending in stagnation, Ilkka Corporation wanted to reform I-Mediat Oy as fast as possible in order to be able to fight against the recession. This was one of the reasons for planning the change process in an insufficient time. Another reason that prevented careful planning in advance was the lack of executive managers. Half of the executive management team was either changed or hired as
late as in March 2010. A new editor in chief was appointed in February 2010 at *Pohjalainen* and the current news producer was hired in March 2010. Before the changes to the management team were completed, the planning of the change project was the responsibility of only two managers: the editor in chief of *Ilkka* and the managing editor of *Ilkka* and *Pohjalainen*. Naturally, the managers of Ilkka Corporation gave the guidelines, but the executive planning team was rather small.

Despite this, the change process can also be seen as a stabilizing factor during the period of economic crisis, which the recession caused. “If the editorial office had not had a change plan, the result would have been increasing and much more drastic cost-saving measures,” one of the managers explained.

A need to reformulate the business model of the newspapers was one of the driving forces behind the change process of *Ilkka* and *Pohjalainen*, but it was not as strong a driving force as the need to reorganize the work routines and the desire to develop and to make changes in the organization. The aim was not to reformulate the business model of the newspapers completely, but rather to create new value for the newspapers.

When planning the change process, it seems to have been well understood that creating value is a co-operative process (Picard 2009b). One of the reasons for the combined editorial office was the desire for deeper co-operation between *Ilkka* and *Pohjalainen*. Co-operation was seen as giving a greater advantage than competition and as giving new value. According to Picard, recognizing and addressing the interests of employees, suppliers, distributors and customers are required in a value-creating process (Picard 2009b). It seems that the interests of customers were considered carefully in the change process of *Ilkka* and *Pohjalainen*, but the interests of employees were not recognized so well, for example. Co-operation was advantageous for the customer, since more resources were directed to local news production than before, and at same time the threshold of news was raised. Some employees had a significant mental obstacle to beginning co-operation with a former rival. Not everybody understood the reasons for the changes or knew what their role was in the change project.

The idea behind the combined editorial office was that more resources could be directed to local news production with the help of co-operation, since some news would be shared. The idea was that the emphasis on local news would add value for both newspapers.
One of the purposes of the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen was to make these rigid and traditional newspaper companies more flexible in order to face value creation challenges and to make a transformation from being a company oriented toward only one media channel into being a company oriented toward several media channels. The shifts of writing Internet news became alternating and involved more employees than before. Even though flexibility was one of the objectives, the official change strategy of Ilkka Corporation emphasizes the importance of the core business: “We will focus on our core businesses, publishing and printing cross-media newspapers, and investigate opportunities for expanding into other fields of the media industry” (Annual report of Ilkka Corporation 2010).

For the sake of improvements and efficiency, there was a desire to reorganize the work routines at Ilkka and Pohjalainen in this change process. The former editor-in-chief of Ilkka had been in charge for over two decades, and many work routines were kept unchanged during that period. According to the management team, there was a serious need to reform the most outdated work routines. This included abolishing some specialized journalistic positions, which were no longer considered necessary, and reorganizing the work routines of the former sub-editors. These changes are described in detail in the Section 1.4.

Because of the dismissals, the editorial office lost its photograph editors and a few make-up workers. The idea was to train the rest of the make-up team to edit photographs in the near future.

Although some work routines were completely reformed, writing news stories and many other practices remained almost the same as before. The predictive make-up system gave guidelines for choosing the length of the story, but despite that, the basic routines of writing news stories did not change. Even though the changing work routines did not concern every employee directly, the stress of adopting new practices was a challenge for many employees. “I do not know who is doing what, and I guess that the managers do not know it either,” as one employee described the new situation.

One clear objective of the change process was to develop and make changes. Some managers regarded this as the most important purpose of the change process. For example, the layouts of both newspapers were considered to be outdated.
Renewing the layout is one of the most traditional ways to develop content in newsrooms. This is not merely an esthetical project, but also entails a remodeling of the content of the newspaper, as the sections are usually reorganized because of the new layout.

The layout renewal project was launched as early as in the autumn of 2009, but the leader of this project was not able to concentrate full-time on the layout renewal project until March 2010. The initial deadline was as early as in May, but was moved to June to give the project more time to be properly finished.

One of the designers of the new layout was a Swedish newspaper consultant called John Bark. He warned the managers of Ilkka and Pohjalainen that the schedule was too tight and that it would probably be impossible to adhere to it. However, the management team was unyielding and gave them only a month more time, even though Mr. Bark had asked for a couple of months.

Those in charge of executing the transition to the new layout worked overtime every day. These employees were exhausted. The situation escalated because of statutory employer-employee negotiations. The negotiations ended about two weeks before the new layout was supposed to be launched. As a result of these negotiations, every third employee in the make-up team was dismissed. They went home immediately and stayed there on sick leave. The layout renewal project was in serious trouble. The management team remained inflexible and demanded that the project be completed in schedule. The rest of the executing team worked almost around the clock. Surprisingly, the new layout was launched as scheduled, right before Midsummer. The cost was the loss of energy and motivation of the employees. Some employees were still exhausted in November, when I interviewed them.

4.2.2. Restraining forces

Change resistance had a considerable role in this change process, despite the fact that altogether nine of the thirteen interviewed employees felt that they were motivated to commit to these changes in the beginning. The majority of the interviewed employees saw changes as a positive sign of a developing company. “I understood immediately that these changes would bring some benefits to me,” one employee said. “In my opinion, the work of a journalist is nothing but change. So these changes should be a piece of cake,” another employee argued.

Even though most of the interviewed employees saw themselves as motivated to commit to
changes, many of them were afraid of changes at the same time. They were unsure about whether the executed changes were necessary and some were afraid of losing their jobs. “The fear of losing your job is always present here. It is quite a lousy starting point if you are supposed to be excited about the changes, if you do not even know whether you will still be a member of the organization afterwards,” another employee explained.

One form of change resistance derives from the idea that a proposed change may be resisted because it seems unlikely to succeed (Yukl 2010, 298). In the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, some employees failed to understand the reasons for the changes. “I was not convinced that we needed these changes,” one of the employees admitted. “Changes are good, but these reasons did not motivate me,” another employee explained. Some employees felt that they were more motivated to commit to some changes and less motivated to commit to some other changes. For instance, the new organization divided opinions. Some employees saw the new organization as exactly the right move and some saw it as the most completely failed reform in the whole change package. “The new organization is somewhat anonymous. We are seen as resources, not as human beings. They said that they would take our strengths into account, but now we are herded like cows,” one of the employees lamented.

Some interviewed employees admitted that they resisted the change process. The most common factors increasing their change resistance were uncertainty about the future, the negative impact of the statutory employer-employee negotiations and a lack of confidence in their own capability to learn new work routines. Some employees wanted to avoid change because they did not know how to change (Peters 2001, Picard 2009). “I guess it is my own fault. Maybe the train has passed by?” one of the employees wondered.

In many change projects, employees believe that they will lose more than they will gain if the proposed change occurs (Yukl 2010, 298, Peters 2001, 28–29). This also happened in the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. Many interviewed employees felt that they lost almost everything that was good in the old system: the knowledge of what everyone was supposed to do, technical skills which one’s work required and their position in the work organization, among others. “The essence of journalism is completely forgotten when technical performance dominates all discussions. It is funny that writing a good story is not enough anymore,” one employee argued.

The management team did not pay enough attention to these feelings of change resistance, even though the initial situation itself was challenging as two former rivals were merged.
dealing with these feelings more effectively and by noticing their existence, the management could have weakened the power of change resistance as a restraining force.

The dual tensions of a newsroom can most clearly be seen in the co-operation in writing pull-outs. Ilkka and Pohjalainen launched a weekly pull-out called Muru together in 2007. In 2010, co-operation in writing pull-outs increased and now several pull-outs are published every week in co-operation with the newspapers Kaleva and Keskipohjanmaa.

These pull-outs have shown to be very profitable from a financial point of view, but it also costs plenty of money to make them. This naturally decreases the amount of editorial resources available for daily news work. In fact, these pull-outs seem to consume all those resources that were supposed to be reallocated from former special journalistic positions to be used by news journalists. According to one of the managers, there is an ongoing dispute about the amount of resources that these commercial pull-outs should be allowed to take from regular news work. In addition, some journalists see the content of these pull-outs as far too commercial, which is why they do not want to write stories for them. “There are not enough reporters to do all this. They [managers] should hire more journalists or write these pull-out stories themselves,” was the advice given by one of the employees.

This is quite a classic example of the dual tensions between different orientations in newspapers, the artistic and the commercial. The marketing department regards pull-outs as an excellent way to make money, and the editorial department treats pull-outs as if they were necessary but not comparable at all with regular news work with high standards.

The differing viewpoints on the production of content are another example of tensions between the marketing department and the editorial office. Those working at the marketing department of Ilkka and Pohjalainen see the predictive make-up system as complex and believe that selling advertisements has become much more complicated than before. On the other hand, the editorial office does not want to let the sales of advertising space to dictate their working rhythm.

Poor planning was one of the most crucial restraining forces in the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. Naturally, the management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen and the management of Ilkka Corporation had plans for executing these changes. The problem was that those plans
were too general, or at least not specific enough, and they were communicated in a very incompetent manner. Furthermore, the vision changed during the process, justified by the need for an evaluation of the situation and feedback.

None of the interviewed employees had an absolutely clear picture of the change process as a whole. The amount of knowledge varied: some of the employees had a better understanding of what was happening than others.

When the plan for the change process, as far as its content was publicly known, is compared with Barker and Cole’s checklist for assessing project health (Barker and Cole 2009), it is justified to say that process planning failed in three aspects at least. According to the interviews of both managers and employees, the objectives of the project were not clear and measurable. Additionally, it’s uncertain whether anyone had documented what the project needed to deliver. At least the majority of the interviewed employees were not aware of it.

The estimation of the realistic stage of the existing commitments regarding deliverables, time scales and resources also had problems. It is too strong to say that the planning failed completely, because in the end all the changes were executed in only one year without a single newspaper issue being left unpublished. Nevertheless, the amount of exhaustion and the ruined atmosphere at work show that the schedule was too tight, the resources were underestimated and the existing commitments were not as strong as they should have been.

Besides, there was a lack of a clear audit trail of significant decisions. This was mentioned very often in the interviews of the employees: they suspected that even the management team was unsure about what was going to happen, when and how. Some employees remarked that it was easy to make the change process look good on paper. “A new newspaper in one night! Wow! But it has caused such pain and distress. In my opinion, the managers should be more interested in the journey than in the destination. They just start projects, daydream and wake up after all the dirty work has been done, but they do not experience the journey,” as one of the employees criticized the management.

At this point, it is quite obvious that the teams of Ilkka and Pohjalainen did not work together productively, and nobody knew what they were expected to deliver. The lack of a clear communication of vision and the strategies of the change process prevented employees from working productively, because they were not always certain what the objective was and how they could reach it.
The changing job description of a journalist had a considerable role in this change process, even though the role was not as crucial as that of the restricting forces mentioned above. During the change process, many interviewed employees believed that the pace of working had accelerated. “Sometimes, we used to get two or three days to write longer or demanding stories, but not anymore. Every idea has to be realized in only one working day,” one employee explained.

As also shown in previous studies (Jyrkiäinen 2008, Nikunen 2011), the job description of a reporter has changed from relative independence and specialization into flexibility, teamwork and multi-tasking. This was seen in the most concrete manner when some specialized journalistic positions were abolished and the responsibility for Internet newspapers was shared between several people.

In addition, the idea behind organizational change was to give employees more impartial opportunities to write different types of stories for different sections of the newspaper. For example, the writing shifts of the pull-out Muru are now alternating. However, as some former reporters writing for Muru admit, they still write more often for Muru than the other reporters, because they know the plan of action and have a routine for feature stories. Some employees also mentioned that some employees had more influence on their current job description than others. “I’ve been listened to, but I know that not everybody is,” one of the employees admitted. This inequality made some of the employees frustrated. “I think the employer has lost their ability to profit from the strengths of employees by treating everybody in a fair manner,” another employee suggested.

The manner in which the reformulating of the job descriptions was executed at Ilkka and Pohjalainen seems to have provoked plenty of jealousy and envy. This has undoubtedly had a role as a restraining force in the change process.

The role of the relatively stable history of media markets as a restraining force was minor in the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen. Particularly in the case of Pohjalainen, the employees and the management were used to changes and seem to have reacted to the whole change process in a somewhat more moderate manner than the employees of Ilkka. Ilkka suffered more from a relatively stable history. According to Ilkka’s editor-in-chief, Matti
Kalliokoski, the need for so many changes had been ignored for such a long time that this change package must have felt like a new world order for the employees of Ilkka, who had been used to having the same routines and ways of working for several decades.

4.3. Two conceptions of the change package

The managers and the employees of Ilkka and Pohjalainen differed in their opinions on the change package.

4.3.1. The managers' conception of the change package

From the point of view of three managers, this change package was moderately successful, and one of the four managers even felt that the change package was successful. The managers do not deny the existence of some mistakes, challenges and problems that were encountered during the implementation of these changes. These challenges included an extremely tight schedule and a lack of preliminary planning, for example. Problems and mistakes also occurred due to an insufficient amount of training.

All four managers were surprised that the change package eventually proved to be even this successful. They all agreed that the schedule was rather too tight, but they seemed to regard it as an order that could not be modified. "A few times I felt as if we were on the razor's edge here. I was very surprised that this project went so smoothly in the end," one of the managers commented. The most important and meaningful result for the managers seemed to be the fact that every one the planned changes was executed even if it required plenty of "blood, sweat and tears." In their opinion, all of it was worth enduring, since the implementation of the changes was the most important thing. Abandoning the project or postponing different tasks considerably was not an option. "For our readers, there was no decrease in the quality of the newspapers, the issues have been good and the feedback from our subscribers has been positive. Circulation numbers are a good indicator. The circulation of Ilkka has decreased by about 0,5 percent since last year and the circulation of Pohjalainen decreased by about 4 percent. The average percent has been about 2,5-3 percent for Finnish newspapers," one of the managers argued on behalf of the change package.

Being able to stay within budget was seen as one of the indicators of success. Some managers were positively surprised about the commitment, which the employees showed during the
change projects. However, the managers admit that the price of the changes was high. "One of the objective indicators is the number of sick leaves. This number has shown an upward trend."

4.3.2. The employees' conception of the change package

Seven of the thirteen employees whom I interviewed felt that this change package had been executed moderately poorly. Three interviewees said that this change package was moderately successful, but on the other hand, one of the interviewees found the results poor. Two interviewees said that it was far too early to evaluate the success of this project.

A very common opinion among the interviewees was that the schedule had been too tight. Even those interviewees that were the most motivated to commit to changes were disappointed in the tight schedule, lack of training and having too many changes in only one year. "There should have been more time to implement all of these changes. As it was, they just fired people, and suddenly we were supposed to know how to use a predictive make-up programme," one of the interviewees argued. There was only one commentator who had not regarded the changes as surprising, because they "had been given enough information early enough, and information was also given in the middle of the projects." The opposite opinion was that "the changes were too extensive, there was too little time, training and guidance, and there was no chance that it could have been successful."

A very common problem, which bothered many interviewees, was the lack of proper preliminary planning. Some interviewees suspected that not even the managers knew what would happen next and what the objectives were. "Every day, it felt as if nobody was in charge of this," one of the interviewees remarked. "It was like a ship without a captain," another commented. In the most critical comments, nothing good was found in the change package at all: "If somebody claims that this was done without any pain, well, then he has been given money to say so, I can tell you that."

Many interviewees complained about unclear communication and an increasing amount of bureaucracy. "It was a chaos from the beginning to the end," an interviewee argued. Not one single interviewee was satisfied with the training that they had had for the new systems. Everyone thought that there was not enough training. "We practiced things by doing them."

Many interviewees were convinced that this change package could have been executed in a more harmonic and peaceful manner. "I doubt that the personnel even considers these changes necessary yet," some of the interviewees remarked. Many interviewees agreed that changes
needed to be made, but disagreed on the schedule. They would have liked to have more time for the changes, which were now executed simultaneously.

Not every interviewee regarded all of the changes as necessary. Some interviewees demanded to know the reasons for them and some examples of what would have happened if the old system would have been left unchanged. “Why was there a need to fire people? And why does the company tell outsiders that we are doing very well, and why does the company make millions in revenue? They worship some people and give the finger to some other people,” as one of the interviewees criticized the management.

These two different opinions on the change package illustrate the fact that the managers and the employees have different mindsets, goals and pressures. A crucial factor is distinguishing what is valued by each group, as they do not have the same values. Employees value respect, discussion, opportunities to express their opinions and to be taken seriously, and so forth. Managers value compliance, self-reliance, being positive and supportive despite problems and mistakes, and gaining the approval of the owners. A conflict of values is unavoidable. The task of the management is to be aware of this conflict and to cope with it. The model of change management in newsroom gives managers many tools to investigate these tensions more profoundly and to find guidance for dealing with the conflicts.

Next, I will present the results of a workplace welfare survey conducted at Ilkka and Pohjalainen in November 2010. This survey confirms my findings regarding the opinions of the employees on the change package.

4.4. The results of the employee welfare survey

The employee welfare survey covered the whole Ilkka Corporation. The survey was conducted in November 2010 by Innolink Research Oy, assigned by Ilkka Corporation. I was fortunate to be given the permission to use the results of this survey as one part of my study. The survey was not based on my framework, but the general findings of this survey increase the importance of my findings. In my own study, I investigate more thoroughly all the descriptions given by different people of the situation. Nevertheless, this survey makes me even more confident that my findings indeed matter.

In all, 75 percent of the employees of I-Mediat Oy participated in the survey. Altogether, 73
out of the 97 employees working at the combined editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen responded to it. Replies were collected on the Internet and on paper.

The objective of this survey was to examine the opinions that the employees had on their employer, the objectives and values of the company, the structure of the organization, managing change, communication, the atmosphere at work, different operations of the company as well as the quality of these operations. In addition, the opinions of the employees on manager work, development discussions, and the capability and professionalism of the employee were investigated. The respondents also had an opportunity to give development proposals and feedback freely.

In this survey, success and failure were measured with the help of values derived from the results. The situation is good and there is nothing to be concerned about when the value is higher than −1,2. Something needs to be done when the value is between −1,3 and −1,6. The situation is critical and requires immediate action when the value is lower than −1,7. This is illustrated in Figure 9.

**Figure 9.** The indicators in the workplace welfare survey for Ilkka and Pohjalainen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation of situation</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fine, there is nothing to worry about</td>
<td>&gt; −1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something needs to be done</td>
<td>Between −1,3 and −1,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical, requires immediate action</td>
<td>&lt; −1,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Innolink Research Oy

The results of the survey confirm the existence of the same problems with the atmosphere of the editorial office of Ilkka and Pohjalainen that I presented above.

These 73 respondents saw the flow of information and change management as the most critical and problematic issues requiring immediate action. The average value for the flow of information was −1,98 at the editorial office of Ilkka and −1,46 at the editorial office of Pohjalainen. These figures are extremely alarming as they fall below the threshold of a critical situation, which was −1,7.

The values for change management were even more alarming. All the different aspects of change management at I-Mediat Oy received very poor grades. The average value for change
management in general was –2.81 at Ilkka and –2.42 at Pohjalainen. This demonstrates quite clearly how disappointed the employees were in the managers who were in charge of the change project. The employees were asked whether the changes had been properly prepared, whether the employees had been heard, whether they had been informed of coming changes well in advance, and whether the executed changes had been necessary. The results were rather definitive and bleak: a categorical 'no' to all the questions. From the point of view of the employees, the managers had failed at every different aspect of change management, which resulted in alarmingly low values in the survey.

The results were mostly quite similar at both Ilkka and Pohjalainen, but when asking about the atmosphere at work, the difference between these two editorial offices was clear. At Pohjalainen, the atmosphere was quite satisfactory, and while it needed some improvements, there did not seem to be any crises. The average value was −1.45. In contrast to Pohjalainen, Ilkka had serious problems with the atmosphere. The average value was −2.11, and all the different aspects had alarmingly low values. This proves that there were conflicts, the atmosphere did not promote solidarity, the professionalism and skills of different employees were not sufficiently profited from and there were no open and constructive discussions in meetings.

What was considered satisfactory, then? According to the assessment done by the employees, the immediate superiors of the reporters had been quite successful at their jobs. The employees of Pohjalainen were not as satisfied with their immediate superiors as the employees of Ilkka, but the figures show that there was not such an immediate need for reform as was the case with the flow of information and change management. Furthermore, the employees of both editorial offices were quite satisfied with their own professionalism, capabilities and the work tasks, which they had been given. (Workplace welfare survey 2010 of Ilkka-Yhtymä.)

5.0. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to create a useful model for managing change in a newspaper company. The model that was developed is both prescriptive and diagnostic. It is prescriptive in that it provides a formula that indicates what needs to be included and in what order to best guarantee success in reaching change objectives. It is diagnostic because the model
provides a schema for analyzing how a change project was executed in practice, and for evaluating what went well and what went wrong. The model was tested by conducting a case study of a major merger between two important Finnish dailies, Ilkka and Pohjalainen. The findings were then confirmed by sending a survey to the subjects. The model was found to be a valid diagnostic instrument in practice. Because of this finding, it can be suggested that the model would be an appropriate instrument to be used prescriptively, as well.

5.1. The conclusions of the change project of Ilkka and Pohjalainen

The change project of Ilkka and Pohjalainen has been a success in terms of achieving its objectives. Nevertheless, there are obvious failings in the manner in which the management team handled the process, neglecting some crucial factors.

As of the spring 2011, the project has not been completed yet, but the rooting phase is about to start. The project has reached its goals: all the stages of the change process were executed, only short delays were accepted and the original objectives of the combined editorial office, the new layout, the new organization and the new editorial system were achieved. For a regular reader of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, these changes did probably not cause any worrying or anxiousness. Both newspapers were published normally and delivered to the mailbox every morning as they always had. A new layout may have attracted more attention than usually, but there were hardly any complains about the layout. The customer was served well.

Nevertheless, it is fair to say that there have also been failings, as the application of the model demonstrates. The costs of the hastily executed change project were high, including the decreased work motivation of the employees, their feelings of frustration, disappointment and weariness as well as an increase in sick leaves. In practice, this meant a great amount of wasted money, energy, motivation, commitment and enthusiasm. Expenses also grew, which was the worst consequence. It would be unlikely for any management team to plan a change project that included sick leave costs of employees in the budget. In most change processes, the management tries to avoid costs incurred by sick leaves. By executing changes in other manner, these failings and expenses might have been avoided or at least taken into account.

Therefore, it is also fair to argue that this kind of project could be managed in a more competent manner in the future by using the model for change management in a newspaper company.

The principal conclusion of my study is that by adopting the model of change management in
newsrooms, which I presented in Section 2, and by executing a change project that follows the recommendations made in that model, most of the negative side effects could have been avoided or their impact on the results decreased. In what follows, I will present the grounds for these conclusions. The conclusions are based on the theoretical framework presented in Section 2.

The change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen was not properly planned, because the management lacked a thorough understanding of the requirements for mature managerial practice in a change process. Additionally, the execution of the project did not take sufficient account of the emotional aspects that are crucial for a success that exceeds expectations.

The heart of change lies in emotions. The sequence of see-feel-change is more powerful than that of analysis-think-change. The central challenge when executing a large-scale change process is not strategy, systems or culture. The core problem is inevitably the behavior of the participants: what people do. According to Kotter and Cohen, managers should let people see first. This means visualizing problems and solutions and letting people create solutions. This leads to feeling. Visualization evokes feelings that facilitate useful change and subdues feelings that prevent change. Eventually, these feelings change or reinforce behavior and people try much harder to turn a good vision into reality. They continue until they reach their goal, even if the road seems long. (Kotter & Cohen 2002, 2, 10.)

The model of change management in newsrooms demonstrates well what is involved in finding the best practical solutions.

The management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen did not let employees see, feel and change sufficiently. Because the creation of a sense of urgency succeeded only partly, the employees were not committed to the change process. Many of the interviewed employees did not regard the change process as necessary. They could not see in the way described by Kotter and Cohen, or in other words, they did not understand.

A guiding team, in this case the management team, could have helped employees to see the need for change. It seems that some kind of a guiding team was used in this change process, but it did not work especially well. Most of the employees were not even aware of the existence of the team, and those who were, were rather critical about it. It is obvious that there was no guiding team in the sense that the model of change management in newsrooms sees it. A guiding team is always an essential part of the early stages of any effort to
restructure, reengineer or retool a set of strategies (Kotter 1996, 53). Some interviewed employees felt that this change process was a complete chaos from the beginning to the end. This is the clearest indicator of the importance of establishing a well-functioning and active guiding team.

Furthermore, communication problems prevented employees from seeing and feeling the change. A strategy had been formulated for the change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, but its content was not even familiar to all managers. Vision is what was missing. There was no grand narrative or a compelling dream, an objective that everyone understood and felt motivated to pursue. This was another significant problem.

Communicating the vision and strategies to the employees failed, as most of the interviewed employees considered economic pressures the most important reason for the change process, even though the management team emphasized the revision of working practices as the most crucial factor. Additionally, many interviewed employees were completely unaware of the reasons for the change project. As stated before, the employees were not able to see.

The management team argued that there was a communication strategy, the purpose of which was to inform the employees about all the changes at the first opportunity. What the managers did not realize regarding this strategy was that information needs to be selected, summarized, copy-edited and modified before it is ready to be disseminated. It would be a waste of the reporters’ time to have to distinguish essential information from irrelevant. If people are given information too often or too early, or if the presentation of the information is too lengthy, people lose their interest in it. They begin to ignore messages and before long they may miss important information as well.

The management team of Ilkka and Pohjalainen should have given more thought to information politics, because communication is an important foundation for change. It may be true that not all employees were receptive for new information regardless of the efforts to communicate with them, but sometimes it is worthwhile to inform people in small groups even in larger companies. The management team of Ilkka and Pohjalainen could also have used information agents (Yukl 2010), who could have forwarded messages to the others. The management team could have given some employees more information than others and given them an assignment to deliver the information to a group of their colleagues. When significant news of the change process are heard from a well-known colleague, it may increase the credibility and weight of the message.
Since the employees felt that they were disinformed, there were plenty of rumours, which created jealousy as some employees seemed to be better informed than others. Rumours also created frustration, because some of them were false.

Kotter stresses that the real power of visions is unleashed only when most of the people in an organization have a common understanding of its goals and directions. That shared idea of a desirable future can help motivate and coordinate actions that create transformations. Kotter warns of the risks of undercommunicating, because it will lead to delays in the transformation process. (Kotter 1996, 85.)

This is why giving enough thought to what information is given, when and how, is so important in every change project. E-mail and public announcements are important, but alone they are insufficient in such a large and significant change project. It is more important to communicate. Communication implies dialogue and discussion, not only or mainly transmission of information. The problem was that the mindset of the managers of Ilkka and Pohjalainen was more closer to that of publishers than that of managers, and more closer to the mindset of administrators than that of leaders. These problems are not unique, but the model of change management in newsrooms and my research have highlighted the existence of these problems and the significance of these problems as challenges.

The management team could have let the employees feel the change by empowering them to take action. Motivation and commitment to change are the greatest when the people who are making the change and who have to live with it, are instrumental in identifying the problem and planning its solution (Beer et al. 1990). The participation of employees has been seen as a sign of good change management (Kotter 1996, 18, Legge 1984, 19.)

Being empowered is not the same as participating. Some employees were able to participate in the layout renewal project and some in choosing the new editorial system, but they were not empowered. They had almost no influence at all on the results of the change projects, their opinions were not genuinely asked for and they were not allowed to make their own decisions. Only one employee, who was in charge of the layout renewal project, had the privilege of making decisions of her own, but in fact she felt overladden and would have needed support in making decisions and in executing the layout renewal project.

It is very important and fruitful to take the aspect of empowerment into consideration. Had the management team succeeded in making the employees realize in the beginning that there was a need for change and had the employees been empowered to take action, the employees
would have felt the change, and the transformation would have been smoother, more efficient and comprehensive. This is not a minor problem, because failing to empower has as a consequence failing to involve. When employees are not involved they will more often and more strongly resist change. The empowerment of people might not seem very efficient at times. It can feel as if plenty of time was being wasted talking about the same issues and getting everyone on board. Nevertheless, it is actually highly effective as it is the best method to guarantee that the development develops and that the objectives are achieved. The results are always better when there is mutual engagement and collaborative effort than when these factors are absent. Without them, a company may achieve some changes, but it is very unlikely that transformation will be the result. Transformation refers to a change at the most essential level and of a broad scope.

Another way to increase the commitment of employees to change would have been creating psychological security (Schein 1999). This could have been done by giving feedback, training, supporting, noticing feelings and motivating and engaging employees into changing work culture.

The lack of feedback made the interviewed employees of Ilkka and Pohjalainen indifferent to the change process. Because they did not know well enough how good their performance was, they felt it did not matter. A lack of feedback is a common trend in the field of newspaper industry in Finland (Jyrkäinen 2008). In the middle of a change process, however, feedback is very essential in order to keep employees motivated and committed to change. Feedback is one of the means to make people feel, as well.

Both the managers and the employees agreed that there was not enough training for the new work practices. Managers blamed the lack of time and personnel. This can be seen as a huge mistake in the initial plans: proper training would have saved both time and money, since the employees could then have adopted new working methods faster and more easily than they did without training. Furthermore, the lack of training increased frustration among the employees, because daily routines suddenly seemed to become much more difficult to handle than they had been before. At the same time, the original objective was to develop and facilitate daily routines with new systems and technology. There is a clear contradiction between the objectives and the execution. In this way, careless execution ruined the objective of making routines easier. Now it will take a long time before the employees trust the new system and learn to use it in the best way possible, because the employees have invented
some tricks of their own to handle the new system. These tricks are not necessarily the most suitable ones.

The lack of support and the employees’ impression that their feelings had been ignored were detrimental to the efforts to increase the amount of commitment to change among the employees. Feelings can too easily be categorized as belonging only to the world of love songs, but they also have a crucial role in change projects, in fact: people change what they do less because they are given an analysis that shifts their thinking than because they are shown a truth that influences their feelings (see e.g. Peters 2001, Kotter & Cohen 2002).

The key word for giving support and noticing feelings is listening. When I was interviewing the employees of Ilkka and Pohjalainen, I was thanked several times for listening carefully and for being genuinely interested in the points of view of the employees. I was also told that “they [managers] never do this. They do not care”.

If the managers do not listen, it means that they do not respect the employees. This is why I recommend that managers talk with employees every once in a while and listen personally to their concerns. Naturally, there is always the risk that the feedback that the manager receives is never as sincere as the feedback that an impartial researcher might receive. Some issues may be kept from the managers or embellished. I experienced this myself when I was conducting background interviews: an employee criticized the change project with strong negative words and talked very harshly about the managers. Afterwards I heard that the same employee had praised the change project in front of the managers and thanked them for an opportunity to learn new things.

As discussed earlier, there is a correlation between motivation and feedback. The management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen had a one-dimensional picture of what is motivating. They had too much trust in financial incentives, while the employees would have needed mental support or feedback. It is important to keep in mind that the majority of the interviewed employees felt that they were motivated to participate in the change process at the beginning. Nevertheless, the majority of the interviewed employees felt that their motivation decreased during the change process because of a lack of information, training and support, contradictory advice and plans, and the impression that the feelings, ideas and proposals of the employees were ignored. The management was unable to strengthen the motivation that the employees already had and to create a positive vision of change. The lack of motivation prevented employees from executing changes in the best possible manner.
The management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen seem to have failed at generating short-term wins during the change process. If only a few people recall that there was “almost a party feeling in the air”, it is impossible to consider it a planned strategy for celebrating short-term wins. The management should have made the effort to generate short-term wins, because the positive message created by them would have helped in executing the changes. The role of short-term wins is to provide evidence that sacrifices are important and worthwhile. Wins greatly help to justify the short-term costs involved. After plenty of hard work, positive feedback also builds morale and motivation. Additionally, short-term wins give the guiding coalition concrete data on the viability of their ideas. This is the right time to fine-tune the vision and strategies. An important function of short-term wins is reducing the influence of cynical and resisting employees: clear improvements in performance make it difficult for people to prevent the necessary change. Short-term wins are not only useful for employees, however, as they also help to keep the managers motivated. Short-term wins provide evidence for those higher in the hierarchy that the transformation is progressing as expected. Yet another function of short-term wins is building momentum: to turn neutrals into supporters, reluctant supporters into active helpers and so forth. (Kotter 1996.)

The work communities of Ilkka and Pohjalainen would definitely have needed evidence that they were on the right track with the change process, as well as positive feedback that would have helped to build morale and motivation. These opportunities were missed. The fine-tuning of the vision and strategies was also needed, not to speak of keeping the managers informed. The management team of Ilkka and Pohjalainen did not see all the opportunities for generating short-term wins, and probably considered them a waste of time and money instead.

The change process of Ilkka and Pohjalainen succeeded in producing changes, but not in consolidating all the gains. So many large-scale changes were executed in such a short time that the consolidation of gains was not possible. The employees felt that these changes were very hard to endure. Suspicion towards changes increased, because the management did not realize that not all employees adopted the new practices and routines. Consolidating change does not mean ending the change process. The key element is to keep the momentum going and to assure at the same time that the executed changes will be adopted by the employees and consolidated. Kotter remarks that resistance is always waiting to reassert itself, and it can stall the change process if the sense of urgency is lost too soon.
The guiding coalition is expected to use the credibility afforded by short-term wins to tackle additional and bigger change processes. This requires more help, which means bringing additional people in to develop and help with changes. Consolidating gains and producing more changes require even more careful planning in advance. (Kotter 1996.)

The lack of a guiding team as well as of short-term wins and of a sufficient number of personnel in both the execution and planning of the change project of Ilkka and Pohjalainen led into a lack of trust and credibility. This harmed both the execution of additional changes and the consolidation of gains. The management team of Ilkka and Pohjalainen failed to realize that change resistance and disinterest were increasing among the employees, and the cost of that was the failure to consolidate the gains. The changes did not come one after the other, but were rather interlocked and piled one upon the other. As late as in April 2011, some interviewed employees complained that the new systems were still confusing and challenging. They did not have enough time or skills to adopt them.

After the execution of all planned changes, the rooting phase begins. The rooting phase refers to the anchoring of the new approaches to the existing work culture. The rooting phase has not yet begun at Ilkka and Pohjalainen, but it is very important to stabilize the situation in the editorial office now and to let the achieved changes finally consolidate. Stability matters to productivity as much as adaptability matters to effectiveness. If the rooting phase is overlooked, there is a huge risk that changes are not adopted and do not form a new work culture, and that they are ignored and soon forgotten instead.

Kotter emphasizes the importance of anchoring the change to the existing work culture. This is the last stage of a long process, however, not the first one. The results of the change process matter as well: new approaches are usually not adopted in an organization until it becomes clear that they work and are superior to the old methods. The rooting phase sometimes requires the replacement of some key people in order to make the culture more responsive for new methods. (Kotter 1996, 157.) The management of Ilkka and Pohjalainen now needs to re-evaluate the situation, plan how to help employees to adopt the new ways of working so that they can become daily routines.

5.2. A review of the way the study was conducted and the usefulness of the theoretical model

The present study was successful because of careful preliminary planning. I was able to gather all necessary information and managed to analyze it thoroughly. Had I had more time, I would
have chosen two different examples of change projects and compared them, but it was a wise decision to limit my data to only one case study because of the restrictions caused by the schedule.

The interviews succeeded well because of sufficient preparation and also because I was receptive to any themes and ideas that the interviewees might mention. Personal interviews proved to be an excellent solution, since many interviewed employees seemed to very appreciative of the confidentiality that I was able to offer. In fact, confidentiality formed a cornerstone of this study. The data would have probably been very different if I had chosen to use group interviews, for example. As the employees had a chance to speak freely, they also discussed sensitive subjects: the fear of losing their jobs, depression and the critical opinions that they had on the manner in which the project was executed, for example.

The sampling could have been done in some other manner, but I have every reason to believe that I managed to obtain a reliable sample by using convenience sampling. This is one of the potential risks in the present study, however, and it needs to be recognized.

I confirmed my findings in two ways: First, I compared my results with a workplace welfare survey which was conducted in November 2010 by Innolink Research Oy and which was commissioned by Ilkka Corporation. Second, I conducted validation interviews by e-mail. The results confirmed my findings.

This study provides useful and practical new information about the different aspects and challenges of implementing a large-scale change in a newsroom. It also provides knowledge of the kind of environment in which media business operates nowadays. The contribution of this study is guiding and helping newspaper companies to implement change projects with the best possible results, and also helping companies to evaluate their management culture during changes.

The model of change management in newsrooms proved to be very useful because of its prescriptive and diagnostic dimensions. This model does not only provide a formula for what needs to be included and in what order in a large-scale change process, but it also contributes to the analysis of how well the change project was executed in practice.

A limitation of this study was the fact that my case did not permit the analysis of the refreezing and rooting phases. This was due to the fact that the company in question had not reached the rooting phase yet. This refreezing phase is an area that is in particular need of
further studying.

Another limitation of this model was its requirement for a large-scale change process. This model is probably not very suitable to be applied to small changes. It would be a heavy instrument that might require more time and energy than the change objectives would justify.

The third limitation is the stage eight of this model. It is slightly contradictory that in this stage the key element is to keep the momentum going, but also to ensure that the changes that have already been made are adopted and consolidated at the same time. I am not completely certain as to how the changes can be consolidated and the number of them increased at the same time. This stage of the model needs developing. It would probably be more appropriate to argue that during the eighth stage, the objective is to keep the momentum going and to force the execution of the changes. The time for consolidating changes could be during the ninth stage.

The fourth limitation is that this model neglects the fact that journalism is creative and innovative work. The aspects of creativity and innovativeness are significant characteristics of journalistic work and the identity of journalists. Creativity and innovativeness can be seen as both driving and restraining forces in change projects in newsrooms. This factor needs further research in order for the model to be improved.

The fifth limitation of this model is that it does not take the role of saving pressures as driving forces for change sufficiently into consideration. Because of the recession, it is likely that demands for reducing expenses are a forceful driving force for changes in many newspaper companies. This could also be seen to be included in another driving force described as “a desire to make or keep business profitable.” In the present circumstances, however, pressures to reduce expenses can justifiably be discussed as a separate factor.

5.3. The need for well-organized management in the near future

It is of great importance how a change project is executed and with what costs. It gives relevant information about the company as an employer: How are employees treated and valued? How well has the change project been organized? How updated and capable is the management of this company? These questions also matter to potential employees. Even though there has been an abundance of potential employees in the field of journalism in recent years, the trend is about to change because of a lack of labor force. Even during this decade, the number of people belonging to the retiring age groups is much higher than the corresponding number of people becoming available to be recruited (Statistics Finland 2011).
According to Young and a study on the attitudes of young adults toward choosing their occupation (Nuoret ja työelämä), the attitudes toward work have changed. Young adults appreciate work, but they also value free time and self-development more than the older age groups do. According to this study, young adults especially value the content of their work, colleagues, the work community and the atmosphere. They have high expectations for the management of companies, which has been considered to increase the risk of confrontations if the management methods in the organization do not fulfill these expectations. Young adults value comfort and good leadership skills of the managers more than a high salary. (Nuoret ja työelämä 2010.) These trends set extremely high expectations for future employers and are likely to increase the competition for talented employees.

Furthermore, the field of journalism in Finland has special pressures for skillful management, because according to studies conducted by The Union of Journalists in Finland (henceforth UJF) and Kaarina Nikunen, young Finnish journalists are exhausted. According to a study conducted by UJF called The exhausted generation (Uupunut sukupolvi), more than one third of the respondents have asked for professional help to deal with exhaustion. Every fourth respondent admitted that they resorted to sleeping pills or antidepressant drugs. (Uupunut sukupolvi 2010, Nikunen 2011.) These alarming findings need to be taken seriously. This means that media companies cannot afford bad management. Finnish media companies need strong leadership to guarantee the best management in the changing work environment in order to ascertain that their employees are healthy enough to work and as well as to attract new employees.

These findings also confirm that it does matter how change projects are executed. The model of change management in newsrooms can prevent failures and help companies to avoid having exhausted employees. This model provides new insights that have not been previously acknowledged for dealing with all these threats, challenges and problems, which change management in newsrooms causes. This model is a valid guide for managing newsrooms in the continuously changing field of media business.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

The model of change management in newsrooms is promising, but the model as such obviously requires validation in other newspaper companies, as well. The next step would be reproducing the study at another newspaper company that has executed comparable changes.
lately. Fortunately, there are many opportunities to do this, because there have been other mergers of editorial offices among the Finnish newspapers after the merger of Ilkka and Pohjalainen.

Furthermore, it would be very reasonable to test this model at a newspaper company which has not made any major changes yet, but which would be interested in starting a large-scale change process with the help of this model. The usefulness of this model could be proved by comparing the results of this change project with change projects that have been completed without an intentional use of this model. For example, if the results of a workplace welfare survey prove to be more positive during a change project executed with the help of the model than during a change project executed without the model, the model would reveal its true value.

Another possibility for future research is to test this model in other branches of media business. The findings of this study are likely to be worth wider application than only in newspaper organizations. The model seems to offer plenty of promise for mass media companies in the fields of broadcasting and multimedia, as well. But that is mere speculation at this point and needs to be tested in order to be either confirmed or refuted.
Appendices

The initial questions that formed the basis for the theme interviews of the employees
(translation from Finnish)

1) In your opinion, how well did this project go in general?
2) Was it clear to you what the results of this project would be and how you were going to get there?
3) Did the management give you an explanation of what was going to happen?
   3B) How was it rationalized?
   3C) If the answer was no: Was it a problem?
4) Was there any sense of urgency here?
   4B) If yes, where did that feeling derive from? If not, why not?
5) Was there anything in the old system that was kept? Do you feel that history or old ways were treated with respect?
6) Plenty of research highlights the importance of a guiding team. Was there a guiding team in this project?
   6B) If yes, tell me about it. Who were in the team, how did it work? Do you think they were effective?
7) Did you feel motivated to commit to these changes?
   7B) If yes, how? If not, why not?
8) What do you think was done the best and what the worst or not at all regarding communication in this change project?
   8B) If this company did this all over again, what would you recommend?
9) Did you have an opportunity to participate in the change projects?
   9B) If yes, how? If not, did the employees get to express their opinion? Were they listened to?
10) Was there any training?
    10B) If yes, what kind of training? Was it enough?
11) Were employees supported in this process of change?
    11B) If yes, what kind of support did you get?
12) Did you get feedback during these change projects?
    12B) If yes, what kind of feedback?
13) Did the managers seem to care about how people felt about this? In what way?
   13B) Were feelings taken into account? How/ how not?
14) Were successes acknowledged along the way?
   14B) And were they celebrated? How?
15) Where the objectives of the project consistent from the beginning to the end?
   15B) If not, what was changed?
16) Is the situation becoming stable now? Is the situation clear and comfortable at this point?
17) Is there something else you would like to tell me regarding these change projects?

The initial questions that formed the basis for the theme interviews of the managers
(translation from Finnish)

1) In your opinion, how well did this project go in general?
2) What were the objectives of these changes?
3) Did the management give the employees an explanation of what was going to happen?
   3B) How was it rationalized?
   3C) If the answer was no: why not?
4) How were the changes communicated to the employees?
5) Were there some efforts to motivate the employees to commit to changes?
   5B) If yes, what were they?
6) Was there anything in the old system that was kept? Do you feel that history or old ways were treated with respect?
7) A lot of research highlight the importance of guiding team. Was there any here?
   7B) If yes, tell me about it. Who were in the team, how did it work? Do you think they were effective?
8) Did you feel motivated to commit to these changes?
   8B) If yes, how? If not, why not?
9) What do you think was done the best and what the worst or not at all regarding communication in this change project?
   9B) If this company did this all over again, what would you recommend?
10) Did employees have any chance to participate in the change projects?
    10B) If yes, how? If not, did the employees have the opportunity to express their
opinion? Were they listened to?

11) Was there any training?
   11B) If yes, what kind of training? Was it enough?

12) Were employees supported in this change process?
   12B) If yes, what kind of support did they get?

13) Did employees receive feedback during these change projects?
   13B) If yes, what kind of feedback?

14) Did the managers care about how people felt about this? In what way?
   14B) Were feelings taken into consideration? How / how were they not?

15) Were successes acknowledged along the way?
   15B) And were they celebrated? How?

16) Where the objectives of the project consistent from the beginning to the end?
   16B) If not, what was changed?

17) Is the situation becoming stable now? Is the situation clear and comfortable at this point?

18) Is there something else you would like to tell me regarding these change projects?
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