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A Cross-sectional Study of Quality Management and Continuous Improvement at SSC Space

Practical Project Steering Implementation and Executive Leadership Development in a Governmental Space Sector Context

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Abstract

Organizational change initiatives frequently encounter resistance, yet the understanding of resistance to change as a relatively stable individual disposition remains limited. This study examines whether dispositional resistance to change predicts organizational change recipients' beliefs during organizational change processes within a quality management and continuous improvement context. The findings are further interpreted through an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)-informed leadership perspective to provide insights into leadership, psychological flexibility, and organizational change.

A cross-sectional case study was conducted within a single organization undergoing a structured change initiative. Methodological triangulation combining quantitative and qualitative methods was employed. The quantitative analysis included regression analysis and exploratory subgroup analyses examining the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and organizational change recipients' beliefs. The survey instrument was developed based on the assumption that resistance to change functions as an antecedent trait influencing change-related responses. Qualitative data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis to identify organizational and leadership-related themes.

The results indicate that dispositional resistance to change does not significantly predict organizational change recipients' beliefs, although the relationship is found to be negative in the hypothesized direction. Exploratory subgroup analyses reveals a statistically significant negative correlation among employees with ten or more years of organizational tenure; however, Fisher's z-test indicated that differences between groups were not statistically significant. Six themes were identified, primarily highlighting areas for improvement in executive leadership capabilities. The final interpretation resulted in six ACT-based leadership principles:

acceptance, cognitive defusion, present-moment awareness, values clarity, committed action, and self-as-context.

The study contributes to the integration of psychologically informed leadership, organizational change, and quality management by combining trait theory and ACT-based leadership perspectives within a continuous improvement context. The findings suggest that psychological flexibility and leadership capability may influence organizational adaptability and change readiness, particularly among long-tenured employees.

Keywords: organizational change, change readiness, dispositional resistance to change, psychological flexibility, ACT-informed leadership, quality management

Sammanfattning

Organisatoriska förändringsinitiativ möter ofta motstånd, men kunskapen om motstånd mot förändring som en relativt stabil individuell disposition är fortfarande begränsad. Denna studie undersöker huruvida dispositionsbetingat motstånd mot förändring predicerar förändringsmottagares uppfattningar under organisatoriska förändringsprocesser inom en kontext präglad av kvalitetsledning och ständiga förbättringar. Resultaten tolkas dessutom utifrån ett ACT-informerat ledarskapsperspektiv för att bidra med insikter om ledarskap, psykologisk flexibilitet och organisatorisk förändring.

Studien genomfördes som en tvärsnittsstudie med fallstudiedesign inom en organisation som genomgick ett strukturerat förändringsinitiativ. Metodologisk triangulering användes genom att kombinera kvantitativa och kvalitativa metoder. Den kvantitativa analysen omfattade regressionsanalys samt explorativa subgruppsanalyser av sambandet mellan dispositionsbetingat motstånd mot förändring och förändringsmottagares uppfattningar om den organisatoriska förändringen. Enkäten utvecklades utifrån antagandet att motstånd mot förändring fungerar som ett bakomliggande personlighetsdrag som påverkar individers reaktioner vid förändring. Den kvalitativa datan analyserades med reflexiv tematisk analys för att identifiera organisatoriska och ledarskapsrelaterade teman.

Resultaten visar att motstånd mot förändring inte signifikant predicerar förändringsmottagares uppfattningar om den organisatoriska förändringen, även om sambandet låg i den hypotetiskt förväntade negativa riktningen. De explorativa subgruppsanalyserna visade en statistiskt signifikant negativ korrelation bland medarbetare med en anställningstid på tio år eller längre, men Fishers z-test visade att skillnaderna mellan grupperna inte var statistiskt signifikanta. Sex teman identifierades, vilka främst pekade på förbättringsområden inom den högsta ledningens

förmågor. Den slutliga tolkningen resulterade i sex ACT-baserade ledarskapsprinciper: acceptans, kognitiv defusion, närvaro i nuet, värdeklarhet, engagerat handlande och självet som kontext.

Studien bidrar till att integrera psykologiskt informerat ledarskap, organisatorisk förändring och kvalitetsledning genom att kombinera traitteori och ACT-baserade ledarskapsperspektiv inom ramen för ständiga förbättringar. Resultaten antyder att psykologisk flexibilitet och ledarskapsförmåga kan påverka organisationers anpassningsförmåga och förändringsberedskap, särskilt bland medarbetare med lång anställningstid.

Nyckelord: organisatorisk förändring, förändringsberedskap, dispositionsbetingat motstånd mot förändring, psykologisk flexibilitet, ACT-informerat ledarskap, kvalitetsledning

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1 Introduction

In most organizations, quality and leadership development have become increasingly important concerns (Day, 2014). Smith Rouse et al. (2026) argues that meaningful progress requires a stronger emphasis on leadership and organizational development. The authors highlight leadership as a critical mechanism for cultivating high-quality work cultures capable of sustaining performance over time. From this perspective, organizational change initiatives are not peripheral activities but central components of quality management (QM), positioning leadership practice at the center of long-term sustainability and continuous improvement (CI).

Systematic studies show that organizational change initiatives commonly encounter resistance from employees, indicating that resistance is a normal feature of change processes (Khaw et al., 2022). Matheny & Smollan (2005) suggests that individuals with high emotional intelligence i.e. self-regulation, self-awareness, and empathy, may experience emotions during change with less intensity according to their findings. And that constructs related to emotions e.g., temperament and mood, may have a cofounding affect, adding noise to their data.

Empirical research shows that organizational changes always involve some degree of resistance, particularly in strategic or transformational changes (Pardo-del-Val & Martinez-Fuentes, 2003; Rouissi, 2025; Valtonen & Holopainen, 2025). And that longer tenure is often associated with organizational resistance to change (Van Dam et al., 2008; Wechtler & Suseno, 2025). Nevertheless, organizational change initiatives often fail not because of inadequate technical solutions, nonetheless because of psychological reactions among employees – and as byproducts of management errors.

Previous research has shown that resistance to change is a multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing cognitive, affective and behavioral components (Rafferty et al., 2013), and that readiness for change can influence how changes are perceived and managed (Burnes, 2017; Oreg, 2006; Piderit, 2000; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006; Schuller et al., 1991; Vakola et al., 2004). Moreover, there is a lack of empirical studies that examine how these dimensions interact within the context of this study's specific organizational change initiative. Against this background, there is a need to analyze the relationship of resistance to change and how readiness for change is related to these reactions during the implementation in the given organizational context.

If resistance can be systematically identified and predicted, it creates opportunities within QM to develop and practice more proactive approaches and intervention models. The purpose of this study is to examine whether dispositional resistance to change negatively predicts organizational change recipients' beliefs. In addition, the findings are interpreted through an ACT-informed leadership perspective within a quality management and continuous improvement context. The research question guiding this study is: What is the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and readiness for organizational change?

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Background

The development of organizational change research since Kotter (1995, 1996, 2011), reflects a clear shift from strict leadership models toward empirically grounded, and behaviorally informed explanations of transformation. Kotter conceptualized failure primarily as the result of management process errors within a strategic leader-driven sequence of change. However, Kotter's eight step can be understood as a catalyst rather

than a limitation, prompting scholars to pursue greater theoretical rigor and practical refinement in the study of organizational change and development.

Later critiques challenged the one-dimensionality emphasizing context, organizational politics and emergent dynamics that cannot be fully controlled through Kotter's presented interventions (By, 2005; Pettigrew, 1990; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). This critique encouraged a methodological transition toward grounded theory approaches (Rouissi, 2025), allowing change processes to be derived inductively from lived organizational experience rather than imposed as universal prescriptions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Prosci, 2024; Carreno, 2024). In parallel, behavioral change models redirected attention to cognition, motivation, emotion and social interaction as central mechanisms of sustained transformation in clinical and-organizational psychology (Ajzen, 1991; Bandura, 1986).

Contemporary science models have redirected attention to individual and group processes such as motivation, agency and psychological adaptation as central mechanisms of sustained transformation (Phillips, 2022). The field has therefore moved from managing change as a structured program toward understanding it as an adaptive contextually embedded behavioral process. In short, Kotter stimulated critical engagement across the field, encouraging researchers to test, contextualize and expand his assumptions through empirical inquiry. This process contributed to a shift toward academically grounded investigation, fostering the development of processual, complexity-informed and behavioral approaches aimed at improving both the quality of research and the effectiveness of change practice.

2.1.1 Concept Definition

Project management (PM) methodology constitutes a systematic framework for organizing, managing and controlling project activities. It integrates shared principles, values and standardized terminology while

defining roles and responsibilities that support governance and accountability. The methodology further establishes guidelines, standards and documentation practices, alongside structured processes and procedures for project implementation. In addition, it encompasses methods, tools, techniques and templates that facilitate operational execution, as well as clearly articulated tasks, activities, milestones and deliverables used to monitor performance and progress. By embedding established best practices, PM methodologies aim to enhance consistency, efficiency and the likelihood of successful project delivery (Turkebayeva, 2017).

2.1.1.1 Agile, Traditional and Hybrid Approaches

PM practice in 2025 reflects a transition from single-method approaches toward flexible and context-dependent methodologies. Recent research from the Project Management Institute indicates that organizations increasingly adopt a fit-for-purpose approach, selecting project methods based on uncertainty, organizational strategy and project complexity rather than relying exclusively on one framework (Project Management Institute, 2025).

Agile methodologies continue expanding beyond software development into sectors such as healthcare, product innovation and service industries. Agile approaches emphasize iterative delivery, stakeholder collaboration and responsiveness to change enabling organizations to operate effectively in rapidly evolving environments (Rigby et al., 2016). Traditional or waterfall methods remain widely used in regulated or infrastructure-based sectors where detailed upfront planning, compliance requirements and sequential execution processes are necessary (Project Management Institute, 2021).

However, the dominant trend in 2025 is the increasing adoption of hybrid PM approaches, combining agile flexibility with traditional governance and risk control mechanisms. Organizations increasingly

integrate iterative delivery cycles with structured oversight to balance innovation with accountability and strategic alignment (Project Management Institute, 2025). In short, contemporary PM emphasizes adaptability, value delivery and organizational resilience rather than strict devotion to a single methodology.

2.1.1.1.1 Resistance

The concept of resistance as a psychological construct can be traced back to the nineteenth century. It may operate at conscious, preconscious or unconscious levels and is expressed through a range of affective, cognitive and behavioral manifestations, including emotions, thoughts, attitudes, actions, fantasies and impulses. At its core, resistance is generally understood as rooted in a deeply embedded psychological drive to preserve internal equilibrium and protect the integrity of the self (Schuller et al., 1991).

Oreg (2003) emphasizes that resistance is a personality trait consisting of four reliable factors; routine seeking, emotional reaction to imposed change, cognitive rigidity and short-term focus. Oreg (2003) measured its properties and construct validity in an exploratory confirmatory factor analysis together with the Big Five dimensions and controlled for individual components like tenure. In all seven analyses, resistance to change and its subscales achieved satisfactory reliability (Oreg, 2003).

From a psychological perspective, change-induced crises can be understood through the lens of cognitive appraisal theory, notably advanced by Richard Lazarus (1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Folkman, 2013). Individuals evaluate change in terms of its perceived threat versus their coping resources. When demands exceed perceived coping capacity, stress escalates into crisis. Leaders are particularly vulnerable because they must

process both their own stress responses and those of their teams, often under conditions of heightened responsibility and visibility.

At the organizational level, crisis emerges not only from external disruption but from internal resistance and identity threat. Change challenges established norms, roles and professional identities. This aligns with insights from the SCARF model by David Rock (2008), where resistance to change is less about irrationality and more about perceived loss of competence, status, or predictability. Similarly, some changes can be interpreted as threats because of the potential violations of the psychological contract that each employee has (Burnes, 2017). Resistance and conflict can therefore occur when these psychological contracts are threatened.

2.2 Leadership Development and CI

Leadership development is increasingly seen as strategically important for performance, engagement and sustainability (Geerts, 2024), and modern organizations rely on leadership development to strengthen resilience, innovation and change capabilities (Zafar, 2025). Traditional CI models often derived from QM traditions such as Lean or Total Quality Management (TQM) tend to emphasize process optimization, measurement and gradual change. While these approaches are valuable, their effectiveness ultimately depends on the individuals and teams responsible for implementing and sustaining improvements. Integrating insights from behavioral psychology therefore enables leadership development and CI initiatives to operate not only at the practical level, thus, equally at the level of human motivation, perception and interaction.

Psychologically informed leadership development enhances communication by promoting an understanding of interpersonal dynamics and cognitive biases that shape workplace interactions. Leaders who are trained to recognize emotional signals manage conflict constructively and

adapt their communication styles to various team members – fostering psychological safety and crisis resilience within organizations (Edmonson, 1999, 2014, 2023; Moran, 2011). Psychological safety is the shared belief that team members can express ideas, questions and concerns without fear of negative consequences, and is widely recognized as a requirement for effective CI. When employees feel safe to report errors, propose innovations and challenge existing practices, organizations gain access to a broader range of perspectives and learning opportunities.

In addition, psychological frameworks contribute to the clarification and internalization of organizational values. Leadership development that incorporates value-based and identity-based approaches helps leaders align individual motivations with collective organizational goals. Drawing on theories from social psychology, developmental and- clinical psychology leaders can cultivate shared meaning and ethical commitment within teams. This alignment strengthens organizational culture and facilitates the sustainability of CI initiatives, as employees are more likely to engage in improvement efforts when they perceive them as congruent (Rogers, 1995), and consistent with shared values and personal purpose.

Moreover, resilience represents a crucial psychological resource for leaders operating in environments characterized by uncertainty, complexity and continuous change (Moran, 2011). Psychologically informed leadership development often integrates concepts from positive psychology, research in health psychology about stress and intervention models, and theory from cognitive behavioral change to help leaders manage pressure, maintain adaptive thinking and recover from setbacks. Within CI contexts, resilience enables leaders and teams to persist through iterative cycles (Deming, 1994) of assessment, feedback and occasional failure. Rather than perceiving errors as threats, resilient leaders frame them as learning opportunities that contribute to organizational learning and innovation.

Finally, teamwork and collective performance are strengthened when leadership development incorporates group-level psychological insights. Research highlights the importance of shared mental models, trust and role clarity for effective team functioning (Edmonson, 1999). Leaders who understand group dynamics can structure collaboration in ways that enhance coordination and collective problem solving. In CI initiatives where cross-functional collaboration and collaborative learning are essential, these psychological competencies enable teams to integrate diverse expertise and respond adaptably to emerging challenges.

To summarize, psychologically informed frameworks expand the scope of leadership development and CI by addressing the human factors that underlie organizational performance. By strengthening communication, aligning values, fostering resilience and enhancing teamwork, such frameworks enable leaders to cultivate organizational environments in which CI is not merely a technical process but a sustained, collaborative and psychologically grounded practice.

2.2.1 Psychologically Informed Frameworks

As mentioned above, psychologically informed frameworks offer structured ways of interpreting behavior, emotional responses and the dynamics of threat and reward in organizational and personal change processes. Among some of the most cited models are the ABC model by Albert Ellis (1995), the SCARF model by David Rock (2008), psychological safety by Amy Edmonson (1999) and the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy model, sometimes referred to as psychological flexibility, by Steve Hayes (1999). Each of these frameworks provides a distinct lens, the ABC model emphasizes the relationship between activating events, beliefs and consequences. Psychological safety is a concept for high performing teams. The SCARF model focuses on social threat-reward

mechanisms, and ACT offers a process-based account of psychological flexibility and behavioral acceptance and adaptation.

While the ABC model is good for control, awareness, planning and working proactively against things such as ineffectiveness and procrastination, by drawing attention to consequences of actions and inactions. In contrast, the ACT model, emphasizes the acceptance of circumstances beyond one's control, e.g. inevitable organizational change required to ensure survival in the face of competitive pressures and new emerging technologies. One can argue that ACT functions as a bridge and is the extension of SCARF by David Rock (2008) and ABC by Albert Ellis (1995).

Despite the value of these alternative perspectives, the present study concentrates exclusively on a single framework, this choice is deliberate. ACT is a strongly empirical, evidence-based model that originates in clinical psychology and is grounded in cognitive and behavioral science, particularly within the broader tradition of contextual behavioral science. ACT emphasizes cognitive and behavioral processes that enhance psychological flexibility, defined as the ability to remain in contact with the present moment and to act in accordance with personally held values, even in the presence of difficult thoughts or emotions – qualities increasingly important during navigation of larger changes and high levels of stress.

In this way, ACT as a coaching leadership model becomes both practical and proactive over time. Leaders who personify and portray organizational values through consistent integrity, thereby functioning as role models, are more likely to sustain long-term organizational effectiveness and honorable continuity. Within developmental psychology, this process is conceptualized as shaping, wherein desired behaviors and norms are reinforced through observation and guided reinforcement over time. In clinical psychology the same process is referred to as modeling.

Although initially developed as a clinical intervention, ACT has increasingly been applied beyond clinical contexts, with empirical studies and systematic reviews documenting its use in health psychology, educational interventions, workplace well-being programs, and leadership development initiatives (Graham et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2025; Moran, 2010; Passmore, 2025; Prudenzi et al., 2022). Its process-based approach, combined with a substantial and growing empirical evidence base, has contributed to its reputation as a versatile and theoretically coherent framework. For these reasons, ACT represents a particularly suitable and methodologically robust choice for the present study, as it offers both conceptual clarity and practical applicability in understanding behavioral change within complex, real-world contexts.

Moreover, Gloster et al. (2021) argue that the context-sensitive nature of psychological flexibility makes the construct particularly suitable for repeated assessments intended to capture processes of change over time. Tynan et al. (2022) maintains that “ACT is a third-wave cognitive-behavioral treatment that targets psychological flexibility”, thereby distinguishing the therapeutic approach from the psychological construct it seeks to develop. This study adopts the latter perspective, conceptualizing psychological flexibility as an outcome cultivated through ACT rather than as synonymous with the therapy itself.

2.2.1.1 ACT for Leadership

Rather than attempting to eliminate stress, which is neither realistic nor desirable, ACT enhances the leader’s capacity to function effectively with stress. Using ACT as an ‘intervention model’ during organizational changes or crisis aligns with developments in resilience research and adaptive leadership theory. Boga & Ensari (2009) underscore that transactional leaders are more effective in steady times rather than in organizational change or crisis. Their study revealed no interaction between

transactional leaders and organizational change (β = .03 t(78) = .37, p = >.05) but an interaction between transformative leaders and organizational change (β = .42 t(78) = 2.05, p = < .05). Nevertheless, studies of the relationship between the leader's capacity to remain present, values-directed, emotionally regulated, and behaviorally adaptive under conditions of uncertainty and stress, and organizational changes are contemporarily underresearched.

However, while ACT offers a robust framework, its application in organizational contexts requires careful adaptation. There is a risk of individualizing systemic problems, meaning placing the burden of adaptation solely on leaders rather than addressing structural stressors e.g., unrealistic performance demands, poor communication systems. Thus, ACT should complement, not replace, sound organizational design and crisis planning. ACT positions leaders not as controllers of uncertainty, but as agents capable of navigating it with flexibility, awareness and value-driven action (Moran, 2011).

Traditional crisis management models emphasize control, rapid decision-making, and stabilization, e.g., top-down crisis response teams, where senior executives quickly impose decisions like restructuring, cost-cutting and communication lockdowns to regain control. While necessary, these approaches often neglect the intrapersonal dimension of leadership under stress. ACT offers a powerful framework, not only reactive but capacity-building. ACT is grounded in the principle of psychological flexibility, defined as the ability to remain in contact with the present moment while acting in accordance with values despite internal discomfort.

At a stress reduction conference at the American Psychological Association's Psychologically Healthy Workplace Conference in Washington, DC, a participant from the Federal Consulting Agency posed a question to an invited speaker regarding how to support government leaders

in functioning effectively under conditions of significant stress. The participant emphasized that such leaders i) face substantial demands and pressure, as they are required to operate both as agents of change and as crisis managers, ii) simultaneously meeting public expectations to demonstrate resilience in navigating crises and organizational transformation (Moran, 2011). This event constitutes a salient contemporary indicator of the ongoing challenges confronting leaders.

In turn, Moran (2011) examines the application of ACT as an executive leadership coaching model and proposes that ACT-based training may enhance work performance particularly in decision-making, while fostering innovation, reducing workplace stress and minimizing the occurrence of errors. The ACT for leadership model consists of 6 core processes: (i) self as context (ii) value based living (iii) committed action (iv) present moment awareness (v) defusion, and (vi) acceptance (Moran, 2011).



Figure 1. Venn diagram of the ACT Hexagon Model (Moran, 2011).

The ACT model may enhance interpersonal relationships within organizations by fostering present-moment awareness and metacognitive

processes, particularly through the acceptance of unpleasant thoughts and emotions. In this context, reduced automaticity in cognitive and emotional responses can improve interpersonal functioning by enabling individuals to recognize thoughts as transient mental events rather than objective realities, thereby promoting greater psychological flexibility (Passmore, 2025).

3 Method

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and organizational change recipients' beliefs. A mixed-method analytical approach was employed to test the hypothesized relationship quantitatively while exploring organizational and leadership-related factors qualitatively. The qualitative findings are interpreted through an ACT-informed leadership perspective.

This study adopted a primarily deductive research approach, grounded in established theory within organizational management and psychology, to examine the hypothesized relationship between resistance to change and readiness for organizational change. Based on prior literature, a hypothesis was formulated and tested using regression analysis. At the same time, an abductive element was incorporated to strengthen the analytical depth of the study. This methodological triangulation approach aligns with Creswell & Cresewell (2024) suggesting that qualitative methods can uncover latent variables and contextual influences that structured instruments may overlook. The survey consisted of 1 open-ended question which was analyzed iteratively alongside the quantitative findings to identify themes not fully explained by the initial theoretical model.

The qualitative data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019). The analysis followed an iterative and interpretive process involving repeated familiarization with the transcript, initial coding of meaning units, clustering of codes into candidate

themes and repeated refinement of themes to ensure internal coherence and distinctiveness (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Themes were developed by focusing on patterned meaning across the dataset rather than frequency alone. This methodological triangulation approach enabled the study not only to test existing assumptions quantitatively but also to explore alternative qualitative explanations and uncover additional variables influencing organizational change processes. By integrating deductive hypothesis testing with abductive reasoning, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

This study uses a cross-sectional study design, prior to the quantitative data collection, a preliminary interview, see **Transcript 1Transcript 2**, was conducted with a senior project manager at SSC Space associated with the PPS model (Tietoevry.com, n.d.) initiative. The recorded 60-minute interview was thus conducted as a preparatory step and was not part of the primary data. The purpose of the interview was to obtain a primary understanding of the model's implementation process, organizational structure and practical execution, see Qualitative Data from Interview. The insights gained from the interview served to contextualize the following quantitative measurement and to ensure theoretical clarity.

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

The study was conducted within a public-sector organization called SSC Space, former Swedish Space Corporation, undergoing a formal change initiative. The target population consisted of all employees exposed to the change process at the time of data collection. A survey sampling strategy was used, whereby all available 60 employees were invited to participate in the survey, a total of $N = 29$ employees completed the questionnaire and were included in the final analysis. All participants held managerial or leadership roles at the time of data collection.

Because all change exposed employees were invited to participate, the study reflects the perceptions of organizational members within this specific change concept rather than a randomly selected sample. Participation was voluntary and responses were treated confidentially. The findings are context-bound and cannot be statistically generalized beyond the studied organisation; however, it may provide analytical generalization to similar public-sector change contexts. The results should be interpreted as evidence of patterns within the studied organisation, while future research across multiple organizations is needed to enhance external validity.

SSC Space is a state-owned company operating under the Swedish government and constitutes a central actor within Sweden's space activities. SSC Space is part of a complex network of state institutions and authorities, including the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Defence, the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish National Space Agency, and the Ministry of Education and Research. Together, these actors form a group-like structure characterized by cross-sectoral collaboration.

SSC Space was established in 1972 and provides space services on the international market. SSC Space operates in several areas of the space industry, including satellite communication, spacecraft operations, launch services, and engineering support for space missions. Through these activities, the organization contributes to scientific research, technological innovation, and the development of satellite-based infrastructure.

A central part of SSC's operations is the management of Esrange Space Center, a major European facility for sounding rocket launches, high-altitude balloon missions, and space technology testing. The facility supports both national and international research projects and plays a key role in the development of future orbital launch capabilities. By providing infrastructure and technical expertise to space agencies, research institutions, and commercial actors, SSC Space contributes to the

advancement of space research and the expansion of the global space economy (Government Offices of Sweden, n.d.).

To summarize, SSC Space is a state-owned enterprise that provides advanced space services to governmental, scientific, and commercial clients worldwide. The company operates a global network of satellite ground stations and supports satellite communication, spacecraft control, and engineering services for space missions. In addition, SSC Space conducts launch operations for sounding rockets and stratospheric balloons used in atmospheric and space research. Through the development and operation of Esrange Space Center, SSC Space enables experimental launches, satellite testing, and technological development within the space sector. Overall, the organization plays an important role in strengthening Sweden's position in the international space industry while supporting scientific collaboration and innovation (Government Offices of Sweden, n.d.).

3.1.1 Validity and Reliability

For a simple regression analysis with 1 predictor, this sample size $N = 29$ falls below more conservative recommendations. Given the use of 1 predictor: resistance to change total score, the sample size remains limited and may restrict statistical power, particularly for detecting small to medium effects. The analysis should therefore be interpreted as exploratory and not confirmatory. However, the relatively focused organizational context supports the appropriateness of the sample size for detecting theoretically meaningful associations; resistance to change was hypothesized to negatively predict organizational change recipients' beliefs total.

According to Oreg (2003), resistance to change is conceptualized not simply as a situational reaction but as a dispositional construct reflecting stable individual differences in the tendency to resist or avoid change. In developing the Resistance to Change Scale, Oreg (2003) grounded the construct in trait theory, arguing that individuals vary systematically in their

cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses to change across contexts and over time. This conceptualization positions resistance to change as a relatively persistent personality characteristic rather than a momentary state dependent upon specific organizational circumstances.

From a methodological standpoint, the trait-like nature of resistance to change justifies its operationalization as an independent variable in the present study. Independent variables are typically assumed to possess a degree of chronological stability and conceptual superiority relative to the outcomes they are hypothesized to influence. Because resistance to change is theorized to represent a stable dispositional orientation encompassing routine seeking, emotional reaction to imposed change, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity – it can be treated as an antecedent factor that shapes individuals' attitudes, behaviors and performance in change-related contexts.

In addition, the survey demonstrates content validity by also covering key organizational variables relevant to the PPS model implementation including tenure, division and role within the PPS process. These factors allow for meaningful comparisons across different employees and perspectives. The inclusion of a free-text field further strengthens construct validity, as it captures nuanced experiences and suggestions that structured items may overlook, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation process.

Moreover, the interview with the initiator responsible for PPS model implementation has strong construct validity, as it directly targets a key informant with in-depth knowledge of the process. This ensures that the data collected is highly relevant and grounded in practical experience. The open-ended format allows for rich, contextual insights, contributing to ecological validity by reflecting real-world implementation dynamics. Regarding reliability, interviews are inherently less standardized than surveys, which

can introduce variability depending on how questions are posed and interpreted. However, reliability was strengthened by using an interview guide, consistent questioning and careful documentation. While findings may not be easily replicable, they provide valuable depth and insight that complement the broader survey data.

To summarize, the study's validity and reliability are overall strengthened through the combined use of a preparatory interview, two standardized scales and the survey design. The inclusion of resistance to change scale and organizational change recipients' belief scale enhances construct validity, as both are established instruments that capture key dimensions of organizational change beliefs and resistance in a theoretically grounded manner. Their integration with the background variables tenure, division, and professional role, allows for more precise analysis of patterns across groups, although only tenure was used in the model. At the same time, reliability is improved through the internal consistency of these item scales, enabling statistical assessment e.g., Cronbach's alpha 4.1.1.1 and ensuring stable measurement across respondents. The survey's free-text component adds depth, supporting validity by capturing perspectives not covered by fixed items. Finally, the preparatory interview with the implementation-responsible initiative participant contributes to experience-based insight that formed the development of the survey.

3.1.1.1 Resistance to Change

Individual resistance to change was measured using the Resistance to Change Scale (RTC) developed by Oreg (2003). RTC is a multidimensional instrument designed to assess dispositional resistance to change at the individual level. Unlike situational readiness measures, the RTC captures a stable personality-based tendency to resist or avoid change across contexts. RTC has demonstrated good psychometric properties, including satisfactory internal consistency and construct validity across multiple organizational

and cultural contexts (Oreg, 2003). The RTC consists of 17 items representing four theoretically derived dimensions: routine seeking, emotional reaction, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity, see table 4 on page 68. All items were rated on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 completely disagree to 6 completely agree.

Routine Seeking

The routine seeking dimension reflects an individual's preference for stable, predictable environments and habitual ways of working. It captures the extent to which individuals feel comfortable with established routines and resist disruptions to them. This dimension was measured with five items.

Emotional Reaction

The emotional reaction dimension refers to the degree of stress, anxiety, or emotional discomfort individuals experience when confronted with change. It assesses affective responses to change initiatives. This dimension was measured with four items.

Short-Term Focus

The short-term focus dimension captures the extent to which individuals emphasize the immediate costs or inconveniences of change rather than its potential long-term benefits. It reflects a tendency to prioritize short-term stability over long-term improvement. This dimension was measured with four items.

Cognitive Rigidity

The cognitive rigidity dimension reflects inflexible thinking patterns and difficulty adjusting one's beliefs, attitudes, or perspectives in response

to change. It captures an unwillingness to reconsider established viewpoints. This dimension was measured with four items.

Scoring

A total resistance score was calculated by averaging (*M*) all 17 items, with reverse-coded items recoded prior to analysis, as recommended by Oreg (2003).

3.1.1.1.1 Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale

The study employed the 24-item Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale (OCRBS) building on the readiness for change framework proposed by Holt et al. (2007). The OCRBS has demonstrated strong psychometric properties in prior research, including high internal consistency and construct validity across different organizational contexts (Holt et al., 2007). Readiness for organizational change was measured using OCRBS see table 5 on page 69.

OCRBS is a multidimensional instrument designed to assess employees' beliefs about a specific organizational change, it captures cognitive readiness for change. The version used in this study consisted of 24 items representing five theoretically derived dimensions of change readiness: discrepancy, appropriateness, efficacy, principal support, and valence. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

However, due to an administrative error at SSC Space when conducting the survey, 2 items were excluded from the distributed survey. Item 1: "there are legitimate reasons for this change" and item 24: "we have the necessary support system to implement this change". The analysis was therefore based on the remaining 22 items. Despite the loss of 2 items, the scale was retained, as most items remained and the internal consistency was considered satisfactory 4.1.1.1.

Discrepancy

The discrepancy dimension reflects the extent to which individuals perceive a need for change in the organization. It assesses beliefs that the current situation is inadequate and that change is necessary. This dimension was measured with four items, items 17-20.

Appropriateness

The appropriateness dimension captures the extent to which individuals believe that the proposed change is suitable and beneficial for the organization. It reflects the perceived fit between the change initiative and organizational needs. This dimension was measured with three items, items 2-4.

Efficacy

The efficacy dimension refers to individuals' and the organization's perceived capability to successfully implement the change. It includes both personal confidence in handling the change and collective confidence in organizational capacity. This dimension was measured with seven items, items 5-8 and 21-23.

Principal Support

The principal support dimension reflects the extent to which organizational leaders and top management are perceived as supporting and committing to the change. It captures visible leadership, authorization and provision of resources. This dimension was measured with four items, items 9-12.

Valence

The valence dimension represents the perceived personal benefits of the change. It assesses whether individuals believe the change will

positively affect their work situation or personal outcomes. This dimension was measured with four items, items 13-16.

Scoring

An overall readiness score was calculated by averaging all 22 items. All items were positively worded; therefore no reverse scoring was required, all items aligned in the same theoretical direction before calculating total scores.

3.2 Ethics

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, the respondent was informed that they could withdraw from the interview at any time without providing a reason and without any negative consequences (Åkerman, 2024). Prior to participation, the respondent was provided with an information sheet outlining confidentiality procedures and the protection of trade secrets in degree projects issued by the university. The interview consisted of open-ended questions designed to encourage reflective responses while avoiding the collection of personal, sensitive or private organizational information.

The data collected was coded and treated with strict confidentiality, ensuring that individual participants could not be identified in the research material. These procedures safeguarded both anonymity and data protection throughout the research process and ensured that the study was conducted in accordance with responsible research practices (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation). Studies conducted within the scope of advanced-level university examinations are not required to obtain ethical approval under the provisions of the Swedish Ethical Review Act (2003:460).

3.2.1 Transparency

Artificial intelligence has been used by the author as a tool for paraphrasing to optimize the writing process. In turn, the paraphrased text underwent continuous critical evaluation and was revised as recommended by Academy of Management Journal (Roberson, 2026). The author remains responsible for the integrity, originality and theoretical contribution of this paper. The analysis reflects the author's independent judgment and adheres to academic standards. The author of this study holds a master's degree in English and concurrently a bachelor's degree in psychology; this interdisciplinary academic background informed the analytical approach and may have influenced the interpretation of the results. Finally, the author has no personal connection to the studied organization ensuring that the analysis is objective and bias free.

4 Results and Analysis

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for all study variables. The assumption of normality was assessed visually using Q–Q plots, histograms, boxplots and scatterplots, see appendix 2 page 70.

Table 1

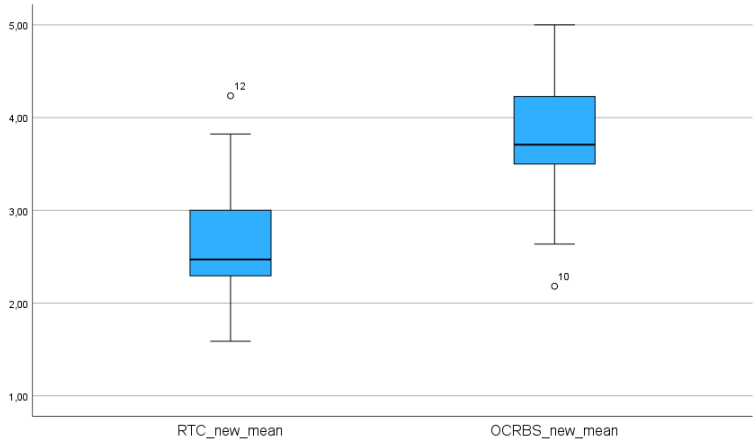
Mean, Standard Deviation and N

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*N*
RTC	2.65	.64	29
OCRBS	3.81	.63	29

Note. Extreme scores = OCRBS M = 2.18 1-6 years; RTC M = 4.23 1-6 years; Extreme scores were included in the model.

Figure 2

Boxplot, Mean, Distribution and Extreme Scores for RTC and OCRBS



4.1.1 Assumption Checks

No multicollinearity was detected, all condition indices < 30 indicating that both scales RTC and OCRBS do not measure the same constructs 4.2.1.

4.1.1.1 Cronbach's Alpha (α) if Item Deleted

Because 2 items from the original OCRBS-scale were missing, a reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the modified OCRBS 24-item scale, see figure on page 69. Cronbach's alpha tests the intern reliability ≥.90 = excellent reliability .80-.89 = good, .70-.79 = acceptable and <.70 = low. The remaining items demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, suggesting that the scale retained coherence after item removal.

Cronbach's alpha indicated excellent internal reliability (α = .94). All items contributed adequately to the OCRBS 24-2 items scale, as removal of individual items did not meaningfully increase Cronbach's alpha. Table 5 on page 69 indicates that most of the items were measuring the same construct and the five dimensions. However, although Cronbach's

alpha remained acceptable, the omission of 2 items may have affected the original factor structure and construct validity of the instrument. The 17-item RTC scale demonstrated good internal consistency reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of ($\alpha = .88$), see table on page 68.

4.1.1.1.1 Simple Linear Regression Model

RTC was treated as an independent variable and OCRBS as a dependent variable based on theoretical assumptions that resistance to change influences organizational change belief and behaviors. Organizational tenure was later included as a control variable to account for potential confounding effects related to experience within the organization.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine whether resistance to change predicted readiness for organizational change. The model was not statistically significant, $F(1, 27) = 0.54$, $p = .457$, explaining 2% of the variance in OCRBS score ($R^2 = .02$, $R^2_{adj} = -.02$). Resistance to change was not a significant predictor of readiness for organizational change $\beta = -.14$, $t(27) = -0.74$, $p = .467$). There is a negative but non-significant relationship between resistance and organizational change readiness, and the model explains only a very small portion 2% of the variance. The results therefore provide no support for resistance to change being a meaningful predictor of organizational change readiness in this sample.

Table 2

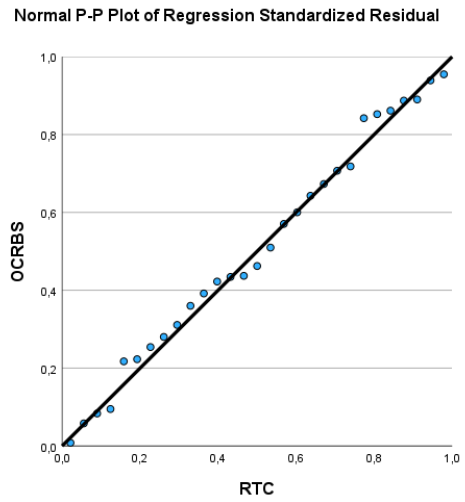
Simple Linear Regression with RTC as Predictor

Variable	B	95% CI for B		SE B	β
		LB	UB		
Constant	4.2	3.2	5.3	.51	
RTC	-.14	-.53	.25	.19	-.14

Note. CI = confidence interval; LB = lower bound; UB = upper bound; RTC = mean score on RTC.

Figure 3

Linear Regression RTC and OCRBS



4.2 Controlling for Tenure

To account for potential confounding effects, organizational tenure was included as a control variable in the regression model. Tenure may influence attitudes toward organizational change as longer tenure is often associated with greater investment in existing structures and routines. Controlling tenure allows for a more accurate estimation whether RTC still predict OCRBS when tenure is held constant.

4.2.1 Multiple Linear Regression Model

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether resistance to change predicted readiness for organizational change, while controlling for tenure. The overall model was not statistically significant, F(2, 26) = 0.27, p = .768, explaining 2% of the variance in OCRBS scores (R^2 = .02, R^2_{adj} = -.01). Resistance to change was not a significant predictor of readiness for organizational change β = -.15, t(26) = 0.74 p = .478. After controlling tenure, years in the company were not a significant predictor β = -.02, t(26) = -0.09, p = .931. No multicollinearity was detected < 30.

Table 3

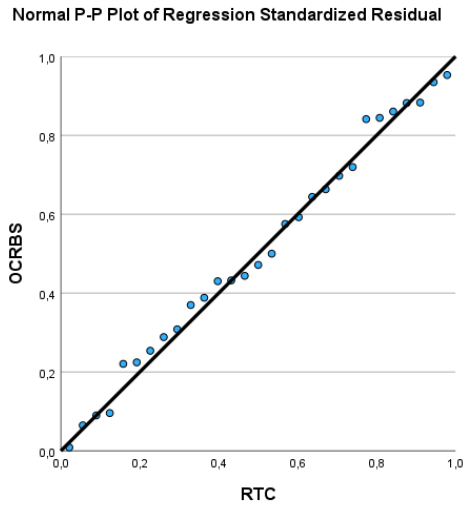
Multiple Linear Regression with RTC and Tenure as Predictor

Variable	B	95% CI for B		SE B	β
		LB	UB		
Constant	4.2	2.7	5.8	.74	
RTC	-.15	-.56	.27	.20	-.15
Tenure	-.02	-.54	.49	.25	-.02

Note. CI = confidence interval; LB = lower bound; UB = upper bound; RTC = mean score on RTC; Tenure = mean score on tenure.

Figure 4

Multiple Linear Regression Controlling for Tenure



Note. The coefficients and model fit statistics for the simple and multiple regression models were nearly identical. This indicates that the inclusion of additional predictors (tenure) did not substantially improve the model's explanatory power. Given the modest sample size (*N* = 29), small effects may not have been detectable.

4.2.1.1 Exploratory Subgroup Analyses

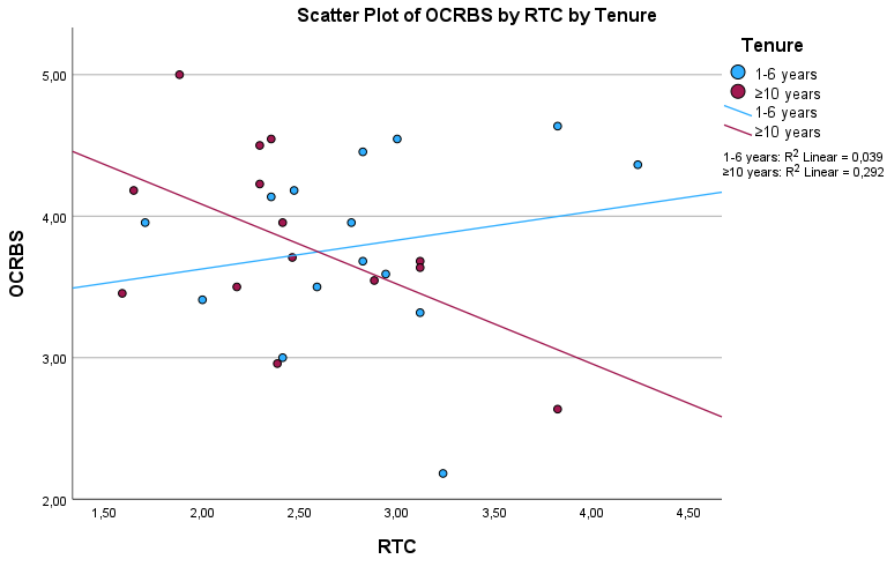
Exploratory subgroup analyses were also conducted to examine the RTC and OCRBS relationship within tenure categories. A Pearsons correlation analysis (2-tailed) revealed a significant negative relationship between resistance to change and readiness for organizational change in Group ≥10 years, r (12) = -.54, 95% CI [-.83, -.02], p = .046 whereas the association in Group 1-6 years was non-significant, r (13) = .20, 95% CI [-.35, .65], p = .479. A Fisher's z test showed that the correlation in Group ≥10 years did not significantly differ from the correlation in Group 1-6 years, z = -1.93, p = .054. [1]However, these subgroup findings should be

[1] Weiss, B.A. (2011). Fisher's r-to-Z transformation calculator to compare two independent samples [Computer software]. Available from https://blogs.gwu.edu/weissba/teaching/calculators/fishers-z-transformation/

interpreted cautiously due to the very small sample sizes within groups as it may reflect random variation in the sample rather than true effects.

Figure 5

Correlation and Scatter Plot for RTC, OCRBS and Tenure Groups



Note. z = -1.93, p = .054 is close to significant levels p < .05 and may indicate a tendency of difference between the 2 correlations/group. The correlation was negative in Group ≥10 years r (12) = -.54, p = .046 and positive in Group 1-6 years r (13) = .20, p = .479. = The interaction between years in the company and personality traits may influence organizational change readiness, but results did not reach significant levels in the model.

In the ≥10 years group, the correlation was moderately negative (r = -.54, p = .046). This means that among long-tenured employees, higher resistance to change is associated with lower readiness for organizational change. In practical terms, experienced employees who are psychologically resistant to change are substantially less likely to feel prepared, supportive, or willing to engage in organizational transformation.

The confidence interval (95% CI [-.83, -.02]) is wide but mostly negative, which indicates uncertainty due to the small sample size, yet still supports a likely negative relationship. In the 1-6 years group, the correlation was weak and non-significant ($r = .20$, $p = .479$).
This suggests that for newer employees, resistance to change does not appear strongly connected to readiness for change. Their readiness may instead depend on other factors such as onboarding quality, leadership communication, career ambitions, organizational identification, or adaptability.

The Fisher's z test compared the two correlations directly and found that the difference between groups was not statistically significant ($z = -1.93$, $p = .054$). This is important because although the older-tenure group showed a significant negative correlation and the newer group did not, statistically speaking, the study cannot confidently conclude that the groups truly differ from one another. The *p*-value (.054) is extremely close to the conventional .05 threshold, however, which may indicate a trend toward a tenure-based difference that could become significant with a larger sample.

4.2.1.1.1 Analytical Approach

The quantitative results indicate that participants $N = 29$ reported relatively low to moderate levels of resistance to change $M = 2.65$ indicating high adaptability and positive embrace of new experiences and routine changes, including a congruent attitude with acceptance of change but with possible preferences for routines in certain areas of work. The interpretation of mean was interpreted based on the assumption of results: 1-2 = low, 3-4 = moderate, and 5-6 = high (Oreg, 2003). The results indicate moderate but closer to high on organizational change readiness $M = 3.81$. The interpretation of mean was interpreted based on the assumption that mean 1-2 = low, 2-3 = moderate, and 4-5 = high (Abdel-Ghany, 2014; Burgan & Burgan, 2014; Holt et al., 2007).

Although the relationship between RTC and OCRBS was in the hypothesized negative direction (B = -.15, SE = .20, β = -.15 and tenure B = -.02, SE = .25, β = -.02) it was not statically significant. The findings imply benefits for SSC Space as they may suggest relatively low resistance to change and high readiness for change. The negative relationship can be interpreted as a tendency in data, meaning when resistance to change decreases, the likelihood of readiness for change increases. However, the observed tendency requires further investigation as the result was not statistically significant.

The qualitative findings from the survey suggest the presence of additional variables that were not captured in the quantitative analysis. Participants highlighted factors that extend beyond the predefined constructs included in the survey measures, indicating that the quantitative approach may not have fully encompassed the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation. This underscores the value of employing methodological triangualtion, as the qualitative data provide complementary insights and reveal dimensions that would otherwise remain unobserved.

One possible interpretation is that the operationalization of variables in the quantitative phase was too narrow to detect context-specific or subjective experiences expressed by participants. As a result, the qualitative data contribute to a more nuanced understanding by identifying emergent themes that may influence the outcomes. These findings align with literature suggesting that qualitative methods can uncover latent variables and contextual influences that structured instruments may overlook (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings highlights the importance of methodological triangulation.

4.3 Qualitative Data from Survey

The qualitative data consisted of 18 open-ended responses addressing perceived improvements to the implementation of the PPS model process in daily operations. A thematic analysis identified 6 primary categories: a) role clarity and ownership, b) leadership alignment and governance, c) process integration and usability, d) communication and change awareness, e) training and capability development, and f) flexibility and contextual adaptation.

4.3.1 Agile, Traditional, and Hybrid Approaches to PM

Survey findings reveal a need for greater clarity regarding the relationship between the PPS model and agile methodologies. Respondents highlighted uncertainty about how the model can be applied in conjunction with, or adapted to, agile practices.

4.3.1.1 Role Clarity and Ownership

A prominent theme concerned the need for clearer role definition and accountability structures. Several respondents emphasized the importance of a dedicated PM role to ensure consistent coordination and delivery. One participant stated that a “single point of contact for our clients once a contract is signed” would improve internal alignment and ensure that responsibilities are clearly distributed. Similarly, responses highlighted that without a formal project manager function, employees are often required to assume project responsibilities in addition to their primary roles, which was perceived as reducing efficiency and focus.

4.3.1.1.1 Leadership Alignment and Governance

Another key theme was the perceived lack of consistent engagement from senior leadership and line management in enforcing and modeling the PPS model. Respondents indicated that leadership involvement was insufficiently visible in daily operations. One participant noted the

importance of ensuring that executive leadership and managers “follow through” on the process. Others emphasized the need for stronger governance structures, including monitoring mechanisms and accountability systems to ensure consistent adherence across the organization.

4.4 Process Integration and Usability

Several responses highlighted that the PPS model is not yet fully integrated into daily workflows. Participants described a need for better embedding of the process into existing tools and operational routines. Suggestions included linking the framework more strongly to digital systems and making it easier to use in practice. One respondent emphasized that the process should be “made easier to use (so more actually use it)” and integrated into existing ways of working. Additionally, scalability was identified as an important factor, with respondents suggesting that the framework should be adaptable to different project sizes and complexity levels.

4.4.1 Communication and Change Awareness

A further theme concerned insufficient communication regarding the PPS model and related updates. Respondents reported limited awareness of recent changes, and a lack of consistent terminology use across the organization. One participant indicated that they were not aware of recent updates to the process and only discovered them informally. Others highlighted the need for clearer and more structured communication during change initiatives, including explicit explanations of expectations and objectives.

4.4.1.1 Training and Capability Development

The need for increased training and structured learning opportunities was also frequently mentioned. Respondents emphasized that education on the PPS should be more systematic and mandatory, particularly for

managers. One participant suggested that all managers should receive training to ensure a consistent understanding of goals and expectations. Additional responses highlighted the importance of onboarding processes, mentoring, and continuous learning to strengthen PM capabilities across the organization. Training will also decrease the likelihood of crisis escalation by increasing the subjective feeling of having capability to face the change (cognitive appraisal).

4.4.1.1.1 Flexibility and Contextual Adaptation

Finally, several responses emphasized the need for flexibility in applying the PPS model. Participants noted that projects vary in size and complexity and therefore require different levels of control. One respondent stated that the process should be adapted "to the type of project you do," indicating that some initiatives require more structured governance while others benefit from a lighter approach. This theme reflects a perceived need for a context-sensitive framework rather than a uniform application of PM procedures.

In short, the findings from the survey indicate that employees perceive the implementation as being influenced by structural, communicative and capability-related factors. The most frequently reported areas for improvement were role clarity, leadership engagement, process usability and communication consistency. Additionally, respondents emphasized the importance of training and flexibility in adapting the framework to different project contexts. The findings indicate that the implementation of the PPS model is not primarily constrained by the absence of a formal framework, but rather by limitations in leadership representation, organizational psychological flexibility and behavioral alignment. When interpreted through an ACT-informed leadership lens (Moran, 2011), the data suggest that the central challenge lies in the organization's ability to translate structured processes into values-

consistent, present-focused and committed action across all levels of the organization.

4.5 Acceptance and Avoidance in Leadership Practice

A recurring theme in the data is the gap between formal adoption of the PPS model and its consistent execution in daily operations. Employees describe unclear ownership, inconsistent follow-through and limited leadership engagement with the process. From an ACT perspective, this may reflect patterns of practical avoidance, where discomfort associated with complexity, accountability, or change is indirectly managed rather than directly engaged.

Moran (2011) emphasizes that leaders who attempt to regulate anxiety or uncertainty through avoidance behaviors such as disengaging from meetings, delaying decisions or prioritizing less demanding tasks – may experience short-term relief but simultaneously reduce access to critical organizational information and coordination structures. Over time, such avoidance can intensify the uncertainty it seeks to reduce. The lack of consistent leadership reinforcement of the PPS model may function as an organizational-level avoidance pattern, where ambiguity around responsibility and enforcement allows short-term ease but weakens long-term execution capability.

4.5.1 Cognitive Fusion and Process Interpretation

The data also reveals uncertainty regarding terminology, methodological alignment e.g., PPS versus agile, and the purpose of recent process changes. Employees express difficulty understanding how the framework should be applied in practice and report limited communication regarding updates. From an ACT perspective, this can be interpreted as instances of cognitive fusion, where individuals become overly entangled in

conceptual interpretations of processes rather than engaging in flexible, context-sensitive action. Moran (2011) argues that when individuals become fused with thoughts such as “this process is unclear” or “this is too complex,” these cognitions are treated as objective reality rather than transient mental events. In organizational settings, such fusion can reduce collaboration, delay decision-making, and limit adaptive problem-solving. The findings suggest that without clear behavioral transformation of mental process language, employees remain cognitively engaged but behaviorally uncertain. This gap between understanding and action contributes to inconsistent implementation and reinforces fragmentation across teams.

4.5.1.1 Present-Moment Awareness and Operational Execution

A further theme concerns the disconnect between strategic intent and operational execution. Employees highlight the need for clearer routines, such as regular check-ins, milestone tracking and more integrated tools. These concerns point to a lack of consistent present-moment operational focus, where attention to ongoing work processes is insufficiently structured or reinforced. Moran (2011) emphasizes that psychological flexibility requires sustained engagement with the present moment, supported by awareness practices such as mindfulness. In leadership contexts, present-moment awareness enables leaders and teams to respond directly to current challenges rather than relying on habitual or delayed responses. The absence of structured routines and real-time coordination mechanisms in the findings suggests that the organization may struggle to maintain this present-focused execution discipline. This lack of present-moment engagement is also reflected in respondents’ perception that they are not consistently aware of process updates or leadership expectations, indicating weak alignment between strategic changes and operational awareness.

4.5.1.1.1 Values Clarity and Leadership Direction

A prominent finding is the perceived lack of consistent leadership modeling and reinforcement of the PPS model. Employees report limited visibility of executive engagement and inconsistent use of PM terminology. From an ACT-informed perspective, this reflects a weakening of values clarity at the organizational level. Moran (2011) conceptualizes values as an orienting framework that defines what an organization or leader seeks to embody and achieve over time. Values function as a "North Star," guiding decisions and behavioral priorities. In the present case, the lack of visible alignment between leadership behavior and the PPS model suggests ambiguity regarding what is truly prioritized, formal process devotion or autonomy. Without clear and consistently performed values, employees are left to assume priorities, resulting in variability in implementation and reduced coherence across organizational units. This also contributes to uncertainty regarding whether devotion to the PPS is expected, optional or situational.

4.6 Committed Action and Execution Gaps

A central implication of the findings concerns shortfalls in committed action, defined by Moran (2011) as persistent or adaptive behavior aligned with chosen values and environmental demands. While the organization has established the PPS model, the data suggests that sustained behavioral commitment to this framework is uneven. Employees request clearer accountability structures, mandatory training and stronger execution mechanisms. These demands indicate that committed action is not yet fully institutionalized and requires external support to become regular practice. Moran (2011) further notes that committed action involves observable and measurable behaviors supported by structured goals, feedback systems and accountability mechanisms. In this context, the absence of consistent follow-through, role clarity and governance mechanisms suggests that the

organization has not yet fully translated its PPS model into sustained behavioral routines.

4.6.1 Self-as-Context and Leadership Flexibility

An additional insight can be derived from the ACT concept of self-as-context, which refers to the ability to observe thoughts, roles, and experiences without being defined by them (Moran, 2011). At an organizational level, leadership roles such as project manager, line manager, or executive sponsor can become overly fixed with their self-as-content and identity constructs, limiting adaptive behavior. Some participants indicate strictness in how roles and responsibilities are enacted, with employees stepping outside their primary functions to compensate for structural gaps. This suggests that role identity may be constraining rather than enabling flexible action. Developing self-as-context at a leadership level would support the ability to step back from fixed role interpretations and respond more flexibly to situational demands, particularly in cross-functional or resource-constrained project environments.

Overall, the findings indicate that the challenges in implementing the PPS model are not primarily technical but behavioral and psychological in nature. Through an ACT-informed leadership lens (Moran, 2011), SSC Space appears to face consistent limitations in: a) Acceptance by managing uncertainty without avoidance. b) Cognitive defusion by reducing fixed interpretations of process complexity. c) Present-moment awareness by strengthening operational focus and real-time execution. d) Values clarity by aligning leadership behavior with stated priorities. e) Committed action by ensuring consistent, observable execution of the PPS model. f) Self-as-context by enabling flexible role-based behavior in leadership and teams.

5 Discussion

As leadership practice is central to organizational sustainability and CI (Smith Rouse et al., 2026), the findings of the present study suggest that leadership and CI can be strengthened by ACT-based leadership and psychological flexibility (Moran, 2011) specifically during change initiatives similar to PPS. The results suggest that leadership competencies associated with psychological flexibility may contribute to the development of organizational cultures better equipped to manage change processes. And that SSC could benefit from measuring resistance and organizational change readiness through standardized psychometric scales, triangulating data to better understand teams, and change processes in a more nuanced way.

The present study supports the broader understanding that resistance to change should not necessarily be interpreted as organizational dysfunction (Khaw et al., 2022), but rather as a characteristic aspect of strategic and transformational change initiatives. In contrast to the work of Matheny and Smollan (2005) on change and emotions, this study uses a foundation of trait theory and conducts a triangulation methodology to deepen the understandings of the phenomenon under investigation.

Moreover, the tendencies observed in the explorative subgroup analysis ($r(12) = -.54$, $p = .046$) suggest a similar pattern as those theorized by (Van Dam et al., 2008; Wechtler & Suseno, 2025) as resistance to change appears to undermine readiness for organizational change primarily among long-tenured employees (≥10 years), although the difference between tenure groups did not reach conventional statistical significance, see figure 5 on page 37. These findings will need further investigation.

However, this study recognizes a resistance trait as an antecedent factor that shapes individuals' attitudes, behaviors and performance in change-related contexts, broadening the perspective of cognitive, affective and behavioral components in a "multilevel framework" (Rafferty et al.,

2013). The qualitative result confirms that effective implementation and change readiness are affected by leadership style and capabilities to align with ACT-based principles, positioning leadership qualities at the focus, and as an important factor for optimizing organizational readiness, and successful outcomes.

An important implication of the present study is that leaders should not be viewed solely as facilitators of change readiness among employees. The findings suggest that leaders themselves may experience varying levels of readiness for change, influenced by individual psychological factors and organizational context.

5.1 Methodological Discussion and Limitations

As all participants occupied leadership positions, the findings primarily reflect leaders' perceptions of change readiness and resistance to change. Consequently, the results may not be generalizable to non-managerial employees or other organizational groups.

The qualitative findings suggest presence of additional variables that were not captured in the quantitative analysis. Participants highlighted factors that extend beyond the predefined constructs included in the quantitative measures, indicating that the quantitative approach alone may not have fully encompassed the complexity. This underscores the value of employing methodological triangulation, as the qualitative data provide complementary insights and reveal dimensions that would otherwise remain unobserved.

The richness and variability of the open-ended responses suggest that respondents did not limit themselves to socially desirable or minimal answers, instead they engaged in more open reflection. This pattern is consistent with (Edmonson, 1999, 2014, 2023) where individuals feel comfortable articulating both positive and critical viewpoints. Consequently,

the study can be considered to obtain satisfactory qualitative input, enhancing the overall interpretive value of the findings.

The survey went out to 60 employees, and the response power was 48% which raises questions of why there is low response power at SSC Space. It can indicate an organizational or social culture not unique to SSC Space, thus, an important quality aspect to improve as one recommendation is to increase the likelihood of response power within the organization.

What is more, it is important to acknowledge the potential of response bias in the dataset, whereby employees who chose to participate in the survey may be those more positively inclined toward change, while individuals with more negative attitudes may have opted not to respond. Consequently, the perspectives of a potentially substantial, non-responding segment of employees remain unrepresented. This absence of data from the invisible majority limits the comprehensiveness of the analysis and should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings.

The study encompasses both a i) statistical and a ii) psychological line of inquiry, with the latter positioned as secondly. The psychological inquiry is regarded as more leading, primarily because it addresses the critical question of why statistically significant results are not obtained. It is therefore analytically prudent to distinguish between statistical outcomes and underlying psychological phenomena, particularly considering the limited sample size and the observed negative trend in data.

Another aspect to consider is the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments. If RTC or OCRBS do not capture their intended constructs with sufficient precision, this may attenuate observed relationships. Measurement error typically leads to an underestimation of true associations, which may partly explain the weak effects observed. In conclusion, the findings do not support the alternative hypothesis that RTC

predicts OCRBS. A limitation of the study is that 2 items from the OCRBS-scale are missing, which affects the representation of the dimension's appropriateness and efficacy. This may reduce the scale's content validity and the ability to fully capture the different aspects of readiness for change. The results should therefore be interpreted with some caution.

The purpose was to examine whether dispositional resistance to change negatively predicts organizational change recipients' beliefs. The results indicate a negative but non-significant relationship, suggesting that RTC is not a statistically reliable predictor of OCRBS in the present sample. The low proportion of explained variance ($R^2 = .02$, $R^2_{adj} = -.02$). further indicates that the model accounts for only a marginal share of the variability in the dependent variable.

One possible interpretation is that the relationship between RTC and OCRBS is weak or indirect. Although the negative β coefficient suggests that higher levels of RTC and tenure may be associated with lower OCRBS, this tendency should be interpreted with considerable caution given the lack of statistical significance. Consequently, no causal assumptions can be drawn, nor can a robust association be established based on the present data.

A central methodological limitation is the small sample size $N = 29$, which likely reduced the statistical power of the study. Low power decreases the probability of detecting true effects, particularly when effect sizes are small to moderate. This increases the risk of a Type II error, meaning that a real association between RTC and OCRBS may not have been detected. With a larger sample, the likelihood of identifying a potential underlying relationship can be higher.

5.1.1 Practical Implications

A suggestion is that SSC Space uses this study's developed survey to systematically measure change and readiness over time. The survey is not

limited to a specific context and can be applied across multiple change processes and throughout all divisions of the organization. However, caution should be exercised when interpreting results from small samples. Organizations that systematically measure (Check), before, during, and after are more likely to have accurate oversight leading to opportunities to take the right decisions (Do) and implement support where needed (Act), which leads to more sustainable implementations and improvements over time. A recommendation is to make it attractive to participate through rewards and social inclusion, implement TQM, CI culture and systematically use frameworks as PDCA where measure will be the key crucial point.

Secondly, a formal recommendation is for SSC Space to provide leadership training or education targeted at senior executive leaders. ACT-based leadership emerges as particularly salient in the context of this study, as SSC Space operates within an environment characterized by compliance, rapid, continuous and unpredictable change. In such context, the core principles of ACT leadership become critical for fostering adaptability, resilience, and long-term organizational sustainability.

The underlying rationale is straightforward, organizations typically operate within a hierarchical, pyramid-like structure in which senior executive leaders occupy the apex and are responsible for driving change and ensuring organizational sustainability – a big responsibility. It is therefore essential that these individuals possess the necessary capabilities to effectively fulfil such critical roles mentioned continuously throughout this study.

Moreover, these findings suggest that effective implementation requires more than procedural refinement. It requires leadership principles that cultivate psychological flexibility across the organization. Specifically, strengthening values-based leadership, reducing avoidance patterns and reinforcing committed action through structured routines and accountability

mechanisms may significantly enhance the institutionalization of the PPS framework.

The author has developed a formal recommendation report for SSC Space, outlining key areas for improvement. These include the implementation of executive leadership development initiatives, such as senior-level executive education programs and courses (IMD Business School, 2026). In addition, it includes a recommendation to recruit a qualified quality manager to support and strengthen organizational QM initiatives. This recommendation is particularly relevant given the current absence of a QM within SSC Space.

What is more, strengthening communication across organizational divisions may help address the issue of how PPS can be applied or adopted with agile practices. By articulating that hybrid approaches, integrating both traditional and agile elements, are both recognized and encouraged at SSC (Project Management Institute, 2025). Adopting and promoting a hybrid approach may be particularly suitable given the organizational context, which is characterized by complexity, compliance, uniqueness and continuous change. Such an approach allows for flexibility while maintaining structural guidance. In turn, this may enhance adaptability and effectiveness in project execution within dynamic business environments.

At last, the findings indicate that employees at SSC Space do not resist change or lack readiness for organizational change. Rather, they articulate a pronounced need for more robust leadership engagement and greater structural clarity at the executive level. Finally, it is important to recognize that most change initiatives require patience, and that long-term sustainability should be systematically evaluated over time to enable leaders to make informed and effective decisions. Given that the sample consisted exclusively of leaders, the findings may provide insight into factors

associated with change readiness among organizational leaders rather than employees more broadly.

This study deepens the understanding of how change and quality initiatives can be designed and implemented in a more predictable and evidence-based manner, with a particular focus on the psychological mechanisms underlying resistance and implementation delays. The study contributes knowledge on how change management initiatives can better anticipate, identify and understand the occurrence of resistance during the implementation of new models, processes and ways of working. This was achieved by integrating psychological assessment tools and theoretical frameworks into the change process, enabling a more systematic analysis of individual and collective reactions to change. By combining organizational and psychological perspectives, resistance can be understood as a complex phenomenon influenced by cognitive, emotional, and social factors, rather than simply as an expression of unwillingness or lack of competence.

Second, the qualitative findings suggest that leadership principles may influence organizational change processes. Lastly, a central assumption is that decision-making in change processes should rest on empirical data and psychologically informed analyses, rather than on generalized assumptions or popular models. By using psychometrics and evidence-based frameworks (Holt et al., 2007; Oreg, 2011), leaders can adapt their change efforts to the specific context (Moran, 2011), thereby increasing the likelihood of sustainable outcomes.

6 Conclusion and Future Research

This study examined whether dispositional resistance to change predicts organizational change recipients' beliefs during organizational change processes. RTC alone was not found to be a sufficient predictor of OCRBS. However, the qualitative findings suggest that leadership

engagement, organizational clarity, and psychological flexibility may influence change readiness. OCRBS emerged as a multidimensional construct shaped by interacting factors, including leadership engagement, organizational clarity and contextual implementation conditions. The results highlight the need for robust integrative analytical frameworks that capture the dynamic interplay between individual personalities and organizational factors in change processes.

The case organization provided a context for examining the relationship between RTC and OCRBS. The findings suggest that the implementation of the PPS model was influenced by leadership engagement and organizational conditions. The findings indicate that the implementation process was constrained by inadequate governance structures, reflecting weak executive leadership and limited strategic oversight. The absence of clear direction, accountability and reinforcement from top management hindered the effective institutionalization of the model across the organization.

The explorative subgroup analysis shows a possible trend in data that may indicate that organizational tenure moderates how employees psychologically respond to change initiatives, but larger samples are needed to confirm the effect. Trend in data may imply that longer-tenured employees in combination with a resistance trait, are more likely to demonstrate resistance toward organizational change processes, potentially due to stronger attachment to established routines, organizational norms, existing work practices and a resistance trait containing the dimensions of routine seeking, emotional reaction, short-term focus and cognitive rigidity.

From a TQM perspective, leadership development and CI can be enhanced through stronger communication, shared values, resilience and teamwork when supported by psychological flexibility that address the cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of human behavior within

organizations during change initiatives. This study contributes to a more nuanced and practically applicable understanding of resistance in quality and change initiatives, as well as to highlight how leaders can work in a more systematic, proactive and evidence-based manner in complex organizational change contexts.

6.1 Future Research

Although RTC did not significantly predict OCRBS in the present sample, the findings suggest that organizational readiness for change is shaped by multiple interacting factors, including leadership engagement, organizational clarity, and psychological flexibility. Future research should investigate these relationships in larger samples.

Future research should consider incorporating additional variables into quantitative models to improve explanatory power and strengthen the validity of the findings. Larger and more representative samples, as well as the inclusion of additional predictors, may better capture the complexity of the relationship. Longitudinal designs and multivariate analyses may also contribute to a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms.

Moreover, future research could examine the predictive value of the four RTC subdimensions – routine seeking, emotional reaction, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity – using multiple regression analysis. For confirmatory purposes, a larger sample size (e.g., $N > 100$) would be desirable and is consistent with commonly recommended guidelines suggesting approximately 10-15 observations per predictor variable. Different components of RTC may differentially influence change-related beliefs.

The study also highlights an important avenue for future research: the development and validation of ACT-based leadership measurement scales. Although psychological flexibility has been conceptualized as a

relevant leadership capability within ACT frameworks, there is currently no standardized psychometrically validated instrument integrating ACT-based psychological processes with leadership constructs.

Existing ACT-related measures (Rolffs et al., 2016) and workplace ACT instruments such as the AAQ-II and WAAQ (Bond et al., 2011; Bond et al., 2013) demonstrate strong psychometric properties. While leadership research contains validated measures of transformational and authentic leadership, leadership-specific ACT constructs remain empirically underexplored. Future studies could therefore benefit from developing and validating such instruments through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (Orcan, 2018), thereby providing a stronger empirical foundation for ACT-informed leadership research.

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7 Appendix

Appendix 1

Table 4

Item-Total Statistics (RTC 17 items)

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I generally consider changes to be a negative thing.	43,67	119,846	,381	,677	,872
I'll take a routine day over a day full of unexpected events any time.	42,11	119,103	,217	,718	,881
I'd rather be bored than surprised.	42,89	111,410	,615	,811	,863
I like to do the same old things rather than try new and different ones.	43,59	124,251	,180	,701	,877
When things don't go according to plans, it stresses me out.	42,48	105,105	,798	,921	,854
Whenever my life forms a stable routine, I look for ways to change it.	41,67	114,538	,426	,646	,871
If I were to be informed that there's going to be a significant change regarding the way things are done at work, I would probably feel stressed.	42,96	112,191	,587	,775	,865
When I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit.	42,81	110,618	,625	,593	,863
I often change my mind.	41,15	115,900	,429	,749	,871
If my boss changed the criteria for evaluating employees, it would probably make me feel uncomfortable even if I thought I'd do just as well without having to do any extra work.	42,81	104,695	,772	,928	,855
If I were to be informed that there is going to be a change in one of my assignments at work, prior to knowing what the change actually is, it would probably stress me out.	42,52	106,413	,618	,849	,863
Often, I feel a bit uncomfortable even about changes that may potentially improve my life.	43,22	111,487	,709	,919	,861
I don't change my mind easily.	42,11	118,026	,345	,827	,874
When someone pressures me to change something, I tend to resist it even if I think the change may ultimately benefit me.	42,96	111,729	,686	,723	,861
I sometimes find myself avoiding changes that I know will be good for me.	43,52	115,798	,573	,824	,866
Once I've come to a conclusion, I'm not likely to change my mind.	42,22	111,795	,440	,767	,872
My views are very consistent over time.	41,44	116,410	,285	,681	,879

Table 5

Item-Total Statistics (OCRBS 24-2 items)

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I have the skills that are needed to make this change work.	79,83	181,862	,485	.	,930
I believe the organization will benefit from this change.	79,52	174,544	,851	.	,924
This change will improve the organization's overall effectiveness.	79,62	174,601	,721	.	,926
Top management supports this change.	80,41	186,323	,298	.	,934
I feel confident that I can handle the challenges associated with this change.	79,48	187,759	,305	.	,933
I can perform my job effectively after this change.	79,55	177,685	,724	.	,926
Organizational leaders are committed to this change.	80,48	189,116	,234	.	,934
I expect to gain something positive from this change.	79,59	177,251	,794	.	,925
Management has encouraged employees to embrace this change.	80,62	179,601	,577	.	,928
I have the ability to adapt to this change.	79,38	181,244	,674	.	,927
This change is necessary for the organization to succeed.	79,86	172,837	,746	.	,925
This change will benefit me personally.	79,93	171,709	,769	.	,925
The current way of doing things is no longer effective.	80,03	174,963	,602	.	,928
Management has provided the resources necessary for this change.	80,66	186,091	,305	.	,933
The organization has the capability to carry out this change.	80,45	186,042	,310	.	,933
This change will improve my work situation.	79,86	176,123	,758	.	,926
The organization needs to change to remain competitive.	79,52	178,473	,681	.	,927
I believe the organization can successfully implement this change.	80,10	183,739	,521	.	,929
We must change in order to solve existing problems.	79,90	174,667	,718	.	,926
People in this organization are willing to make this change work.	80,45	178,328	,595	.	,928
There is a clear need for this change.	79,72	171,850	,804	.	,924
This change will make my job easier.	79,97	175,034	,740	.	,926

Appendix 2

Figure 6

Normal Distribution, Histogram RTC

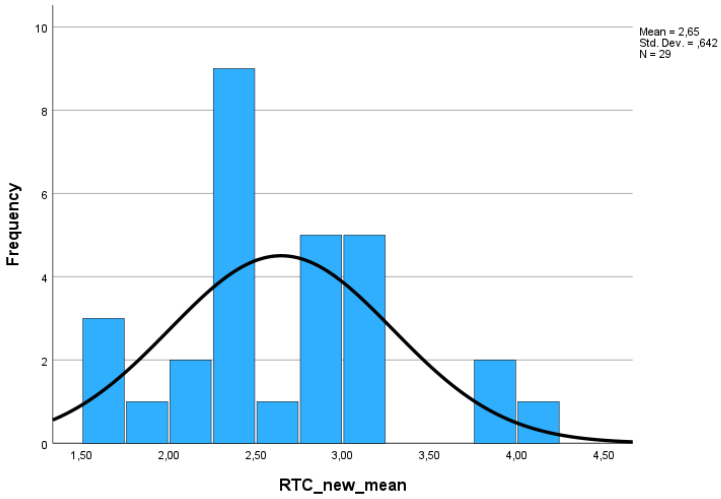


Figure 7

Normal Distribution, Histogram OCRBS

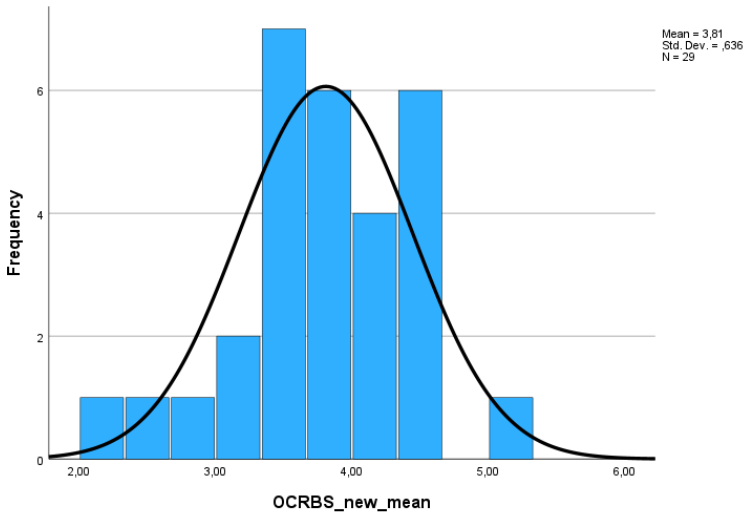


Figure 8

Normality Check with Q-Q-plot RTC

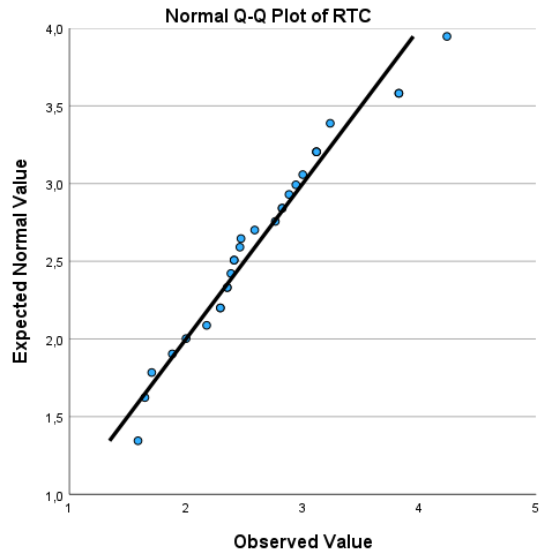


Figure 9

Normality Check with Q-Q-Plot OCRBS

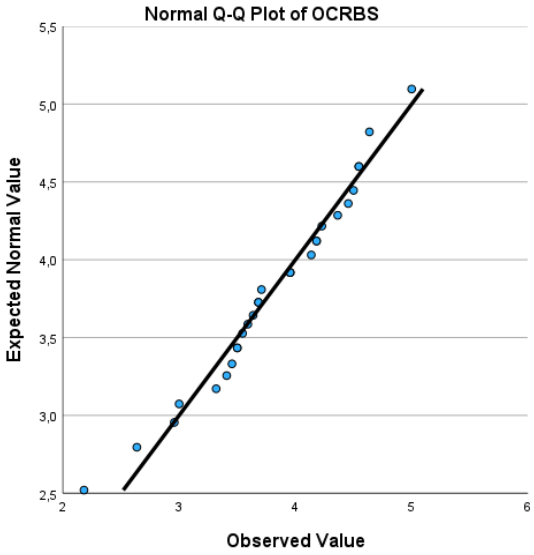


Figure 10

Mean, Distribution and Extreme Scores on OCRBS for Tenure Groups

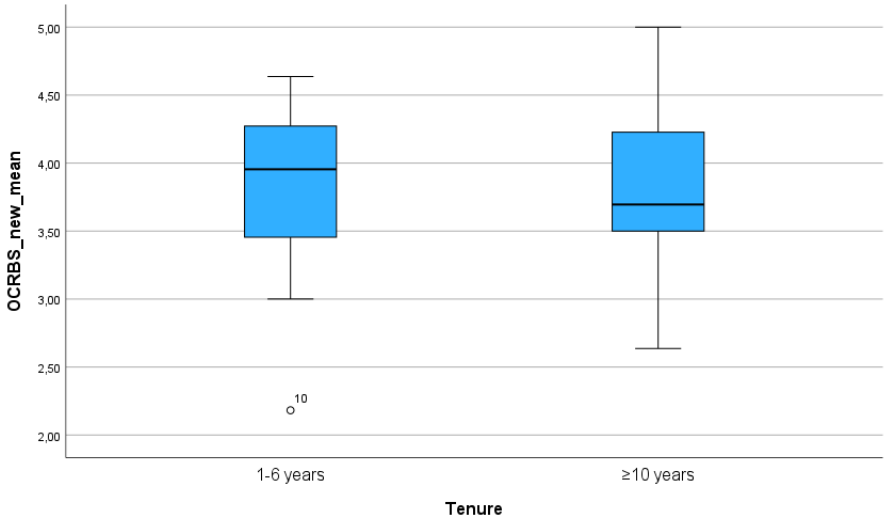


Figure 11

Mean, Distribution and Extreme Scores on RTC for Tenure Group

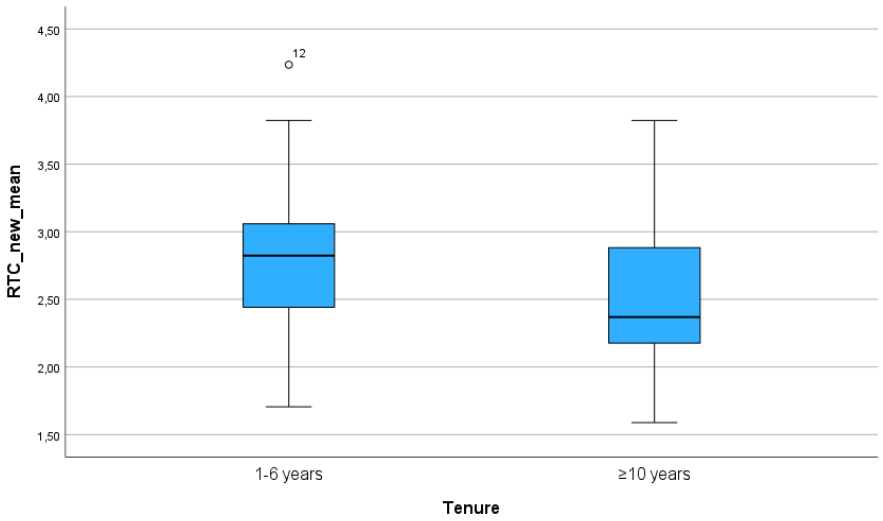


Figure 12

Mean, Distribution and Extreme Scores for Tenure Group 1-6 Years

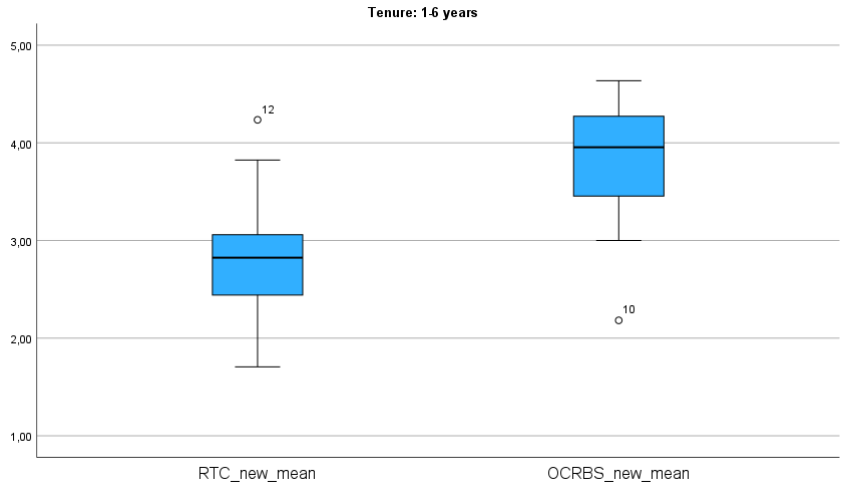


Figure 13

Mean, Distribution and Extreme Scores for Tenure Group ≥10 Years

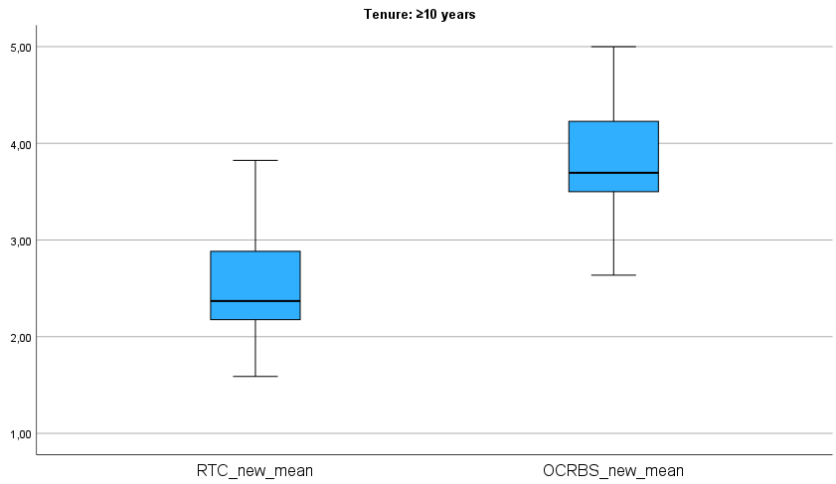
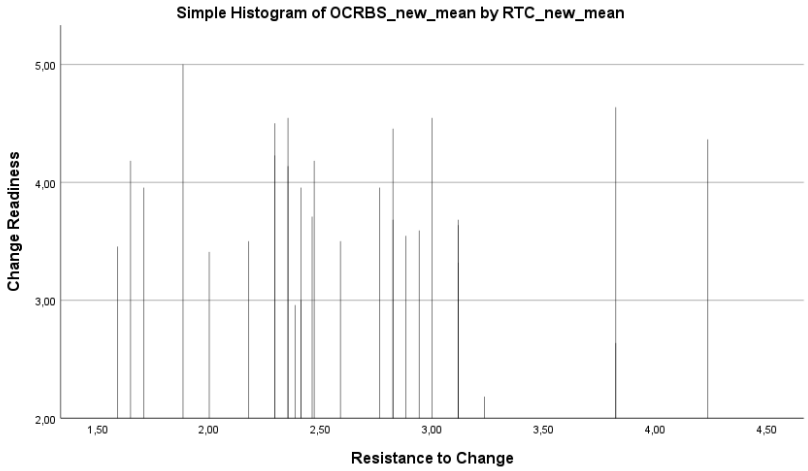


Figure 14

Simple Histogram of RTC and OCRBS Total Scores



Appendix 3

File

Video Project.m4a

Transcript 1

INTV 1

So these questions of this interview is part of an individual research project for, as you know, a master thesis in Quality Management and Leadership at Mid Sweden University, spring semester 2026. And the purpose of this interview is to explore how the respondent perceives the implementation process of the PPS model. All information obtained will be treated with strict confidentiality. The questions are not intended to elicit any personal or sensitive information pertaining to individuals or organizations. The information sheet, Confidentiality and Protection of Trade Secrets in Project and Degree Projects from Mid-Sweden University, will be provided. The interview is expected to last approximately 60 minutes and will consist of open-ended questions. And these questions are designed to encourage in-depth and reflective responses and participants are therefore invited to answer as openly, honestly, and thoughtfully as possible. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and in accordance with established research ethical principles and applicable legal frameworks. Participants retain the right to withdraw from this interview and discontinue their participation at any point without providing a reason and without any negative consequences. All collected data will be coded and handed in strict confidence. This procedure ensures that material cannot be tracked back to or linked with individual participants by safeguarding anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process. The conversation is concluded by reviewing what has been said, the main points that have been addressed, and by giving the respondent an opportunity to add or further develop their thoughts. So the questions are designed to explore the subjective experience and therefore do not address matters that could reveal organizational information that may be considered sensitive. So do you agree to participate in this interview?

IP 2

I do.

INTV 1

Have you been provided the information sheet and given your consent?

IP 2

I have and I read it.

INTV 1

Are you ready to start the interview?

IP 2

Yes, let's go.

INTV 1

Okay. So the first question, how would you describe the organization's approach to project management before the PPS model was introduced?

IP 2

Well, that's a good question because To reverse back in time, about approximately 1 1/2 years ago, there was a strategic planning was made at SEC where we said that one strategic initiative had to be improve our project management and governance, specifically when working with working methodology, that is, projects. And then why are you asking? Well, because the quality was shattered, or in a sense, the mainstream or many managers said that they're not satisfied with the quality and the output of the projects that were conducted in operations. So in a sense, it was a problem. They said, well, this is not working. suffice to what we want to achieve to our end customers and internal projects. So it was identified at strategic level that this is an unheard area. We need to prioritize this work and improve it. So the first thing I did, because I'm the strategic initiative operative owner or not owner, but the operative leader for the strategic initiative and the owner is the CIO, was to conduct a maturity survey. And the maturity survey was done with the framework standards of PMI, that's OPM-TRIA, that gave us end result saying, okay, we're shattered with maturity level one and two, which are the two lowest, and we wanted to improve it. So that's the origin of why we wanted to do this and improve ourselves. And also worth noticing is that we're an ISO 9001 quality

certified company. So we need processes and government documents. But maybe we'll come into that later with different questions.

INTV 1

So how would you describe how, so before this model was introduced, how was the approach to project management before?

IP 2

Well, we're organized in four divisions and five functions or group functions, and it was shattered. And what I mean with shattered is that we didn't use one common project management framework or governance model. So each division worked in their own way within projects. So some had their own project management way of working and another division didn't have anything. They just worked ad hoc and thought that would suffice. So no unified process was implemented. That was the core status when I started.

INTV 1

Okay, so if I understand it correct, when you say shattered, you actually mean it was not coherent how the organization was working with projects before?

IP 2

That's correct.

INTV 1

Okay, good. So what structures, methods or project management practices were in place prior to the implementation? You just said there were different. Can you tell me a little bit more about that? There were different ways of how people were working with project management.

IP 2

Well, yeah, even going back further in history, around six to seven years ago, there were, within one division, a PMO office, that's project management office, that was mainly running customer projects. That was also shattered and all project managers were reorganized out in different

divisions and the PMO was dissolved. So there were no governing process anymore. And would that mean that would mean Then, going back to the first question, what was the status of how they worked? Was that the question or... Please give me the question again.

INTV 1

How would you describe the organization's approach to project management before this model was introduced?

IP 2

I would say that some division was initial ad hoc behavior. So some some people don't understand what project management means. There were no governing model, they were just doing. So they called it a project, but in a sense it's not a project because it's not classified, it's no steering group. There's just one person trying to lead a group of people forward in a methodology. But that's initial low-level maturity, just ad hoc behavior. So that was one of the levels. The second level that were more of service delivery, that was within two divisions, that was more of a basic project management control framework, which was, they were repeatable in delivering the same service or four different services. over and over again, so they have done that hundreds of times. But they called the service delivery for a specific, they called it projects. So it's repeatable. It did have scope, time and cost, and a procurement work, so we offered our services with a cost to an end customer. And there was some kind of integrations with a few templates, but not more than that. So that was basic control. At best.

INTV 1

Okay. To what extent did you perceive project work to be standardized or consistent across the organization before PPS model? Maybe you already answered that.

IP 2

Yeah, there were only one process for delivering service within one division. but not unified, not globally, just in one division out of four, and that was for delivering four different services, not a combined new

framework. So just for delivering services. That was what was implemented before.

INTV 1

In your view, how did you, how did the existing level of project management maturity influence the organization's reception of PPS.

IP 2

Well, the response was positive. Within the framework, we come to a new level of maturity, which is defined as a complex project management. So that's level 3. It means that the process is defined. We do have risk. We have Quality, earned value management, communication, stakeholder management, policies. So we created, the main part is that we created a project management process that became standalized globally within SSE. because we're an ISO 9001 company. So when we embarked on this standardization and bought PPS by license, by Tieto, we took the whole framework, the governance model, specifically for project management, and we We branded and controlled all the templates and the instructions with head of quality. We created a standalone process, and we made it globally accessible for everyone at SAC. So that is what we achieved. We got standardization of the project management process, and that gave us a short level #3.

INTV 1

So the existing level of the project management maturity, has that influenced the organisation's reception of PPS?

IP 2

Are we talking the future vision here or where we're standing?

INTV 1

Your existing maturity level, has that influenced the organisation's reception of PPS?

IP 2

Yes, it has. I do believe in a positive way, mostly for project managers. We have around 50 of them. And I've conducted and coordinated education for around 30 of our project managers, which has, they received a development plan. spending over three years. So every product manager that has the official title as a product manager are in the educational plan on strategic level how to improve their skills within the profession. So they received it with just not that we gave them a process, but we're actually also saying, how are we helping you as a leader to be better in your profession? that was the big part. So yeah, and just to be clear, what did I do? So we had a three-year education plan. We branded the product process PPS that quality qualified. In January last year, we had a basic product management course in Kiruna and in May we had one in Swalna, our main office in Stockholm. We created a We did a pilot mentorship program for mentee and mentors. We also did a separate internal education within leadership, that's situational leadership skills and effective teams. That is for just reference Susan A. Wieland and Dr. Ken Lenshard. We have also started educating our management within specific roles. What does it mean when you're sitting in a steering committee, or someone calling it a steering group? What's your role and responsibilities? So, taking responsibility for your role when working in projects, that has also been received possibly. Now, 2026, we're extending with the education plan year number two, which is advanced project management leadership courses in Solna and Kiruna. And with that said, for personnel project managers out of Sweden, some of them were brought in and live there in hotels to be able to attend the courses. So we flew project managers in from all over Europe. So with that said, when the company is actually spending time, investment and costs in educating both our project managers and our managers with people responsibility, and saying that this is a strategic initiative, I do believe that the feeling or the commitment from our colleagues are actually improved because they feel that this is for real. It's not just a paper product. We're doing it. We're saying that we're doing it and we're committing cost, time and resources. doing the work. So we're walking, walking, doing the talk, so.

INTV 1

Okay.

IP 2

Yeah.

INTV 1

We might come to those questions later. Sure. Just a little input. Try to answer the questions that I'm asking you as much as possible and try not to...

IP 2

Sure, as the red line.

INTV 1

Try to not “fly away” too much with answering the questions if it's possible. So do you perceive any clear differences in how projects are conducted today compared to before the PPS implementation? And if so, which ones?

IP 2

I do see some improvements, specifically because I targeted hygiene documents. So I say that this is minimum quality that we must have. So as a member of the strategic PMO team, I'm directing all managers and product managers to always deliver three key documents. And that's a classification document, which explains if it's an assignment of project mini, mega project in size. We have the product directive, which tells us what's the scope and answers the question, why are we doing this project? And finally, the third hygiene document, which is the project plan, which the project manager creates. And I'm seeing that actually we have a lot more of these hygiene documents created than was earlier missing. So that's a big improvement. And I'm slicing the elephant, but that's a concrete fact that I see that we're improving it.

INTV 1

Okay, so this is called the three M's.

IP 2

Three M's.

INTV 1

What was it called? You mentioned it.

IP 2

No, it's hygiene documents, three of them.

INTV 1

Three hygiene documents.

IP 2

Yes.

INTV 1

Okay, and you call them hygiene because...

IP 2

It's the lowest level of quality that we can accept.

INTV 1

Okay, good. Now we're moving further.

IP 2

Yes.

INTV 1

So how would you describe the way in which the PPS model was implemented in the organization?

IP 2

Well, we bought it by license. We branded it with the SSC specific logo and each document was quality control by Head of Quality. And when that was all the supporting documents was accepted, we draw the project process in our internal network or intranet, that is a SharePoint solution. where we draw the project process with all the templates in the process. When that process was accepted, we talked with all employees at, or we call it an SEC internal, all staff internal meeting, where our CEO, Harlotta Sun, that's head

of the company, told everyone that we bought a new product process by license, it's quality certified, this is the new way of work. So we addressed it in that way and that was the steps.

INTV 1

Okay. To what extent do you perceive PPS as having been Fully implemented, as opposed to selectively adapted.

IP 2

And that's why I want this survey, because I don't know if it's fully implemented. I have a gut feeling that it's not. And I want to have this your help to answering it and giving me recommendations from how to proceed if it's not implemented everywhere. And I'm assuming people are people and people are faulty and we need to address human behavior and why, what's the resistance for using this? Yes.

INTV 1

Which elements of PPS, do you consider to be most and least integrated into everyday work practices? For now. You said you have a gut feeling. Maybe you can, even though you don't have proof, but you have a gut feeling. So if you think about what you know for now, How would you consider it most or least integrated into everyday work practices with what you know today?

IP 2

Well, I do know that we have branded some project templates. within some of our projects or project management tools. We're using one that is called Jira, and that's a classical kind of Gantt chart planning. But what we have done is automated the templates, which means that if you're creating a project mini or medium, you can automatically spawn up the whole project process with all activities, and that is linked and connected to the formal project process. So that's something I can see. I can actually see that we have a lot of projects that have been automatedly created which are following the standard. And that's really positive.

INTV 1

Would that be the most integrated way then?

IP 2

Within a few divisions, yes, but for the bigger projects, that is taking a lot of resources, that is Miagium and Miaga projects, and we are just into a handful of projects here. They're done manually, more to say, because they started and have been running for a long time. But the way for me to follow up that is because I'm usually coaching those project managers within their day-to-day work. So I'm giving them reference and helping them setting up the structure for the projects. So because the strategic prioritized projects, I've been helping myself, making sure that they have the right structure in place. But for the main part where?

INTV 1

And when you do, you use the PPS model practices, yes, of course, yes, step by step.

IP 2

Yeah, and then with that done with a finalized folder structure, so we're copying the whole folder structure into SharePoint, and then they have all the documents that they need to fill in, so yeah.

INTV 1

And if you think about the least way of how this PPS model is integrated into everyday work practices, can you tell me something about that?

IP 2

I would assume that they're not using JIRA and they're not following the process, they're working in another way and they're not under my radar and I'm missing tools to follow up. see how the quality is. And my gut feeling might be that some managers or project management teams are not doing it. I don't know, but they might have been still working in the old way. and never change their way of working. That's my biggest concern, but I don't know. So I want to identify any groups which are not following the new process that needs assistance from me. I'm hoping that our work together can identify our weakest links in the company.

INTV 1

How did you experience the balance between standardization and local adaption during the implementation process? Well, so the balance between standardizing this and then also having the local adaption during this implementation process.

IP 2

Yeah, I felt that There was some restraint, or in the beginning, a few top management didn't support the new way of working. They were saying that, why should we do this? We don't see the need. That's classical. The change wasn't supported at that top C-level. This was addressed by me and the CEO and CIO where we made sure that this C-level management was informed that you need to adapt to our quality way of working. So I did, in the beginning, identify one division that didn't support the new way of working. But our mindset was and has always been to allow time for change and be patient through the process. So by staying the course, inspiring, coaching and assisting the project managers and the managers, they opened up and want to adapt a new process. That is where we're standing today, but it didn't happen overnight, so to say. It took several months.

INTV 1

In what way have any adoptions of PPS affected work processes, role, clarity or decision making?

IP 2

Well, it affects all of them.

INTV 1

In what way?

IP 2

Well, in the first way, role description is clarified. We have role descriptions with mandate and responsibilities within the process, so everyone knows what's expected of that. And I'm also educating, and it's a part of the education plan, so you get more in-depth knowing of what's expected of you, and I'm seeing a shift. When we're talking decisions, that's the most important thing, because we're getting better at steering committee work,

because this is a governance model on sea level for the steering committee members, which means that all steering group members have to understand the eight decision points which is and are taken within all projects. They are the same, they will always be static. And when steering group members understand the decisions that they're doing, they get more comfortable and want to have the same structure when you're sitting several different steering groups, because it's the same framework within all of those. And what was the third one?

INTV 1

Work processes.

IP 2

The work process is available for everyone and I know that a lot of my colleagues are in RDR daily and looking and learning because it's built as a Wiki function with a lot of instructions. So it gives you guidance of how to conduct your work if you're Yeah, if you don't know how to do a risk meeting per se, it's an instruction that explains how you conduct yourself and lead that meeting. Yes.

INTV 1

How did you perceive leadership engagement and support during the PPS implementation?

IP 2

Well, I did secure support from the CEO, the CIO and some other top level executives. That was key to even get started. I had head of quality at my side and there were only one or a few persons who didn't support it. But the main bulk of all C-level management supported it and after a while they thought they accepted the truth and followed. what we did decide. So that was really important, one of our best tips to get a change like this, an organizational behavior change, that you have to have top level with yourself or else you're not going to succeed.

INTV 1

In what ways, if any, did leadership communicate the importance of the PPS within the organization?

IP 2

Yeah, the CEO told everyone at a global all-staff meeting formally.

INTV 1

To what extent do you perceive PPS as being integrated into the organization's governance system, such as goal setting, performance monitoring, or decision-making structures?

IP 2

Yeah, so We're an ISO quality company, we have a CMS, and when we certify the new process, it's a part of the CMS and governance system. So, and I personally have been responsible for an external audit from a company which gave us the certificate for quality when during 2025, I was audited for this new project process and the external viewing gave us the acceptance. So from a way of seeing quality, which includes goal setting, KPIs, measurements and all the standard reporting, it's accepted because that's a part of the product process.

INTV 1

So you would perceive that the PPS model is being integrated into the organization's governance system?

IP 2

Yes.

INTV 1

Has PPS been linked in any way to reward, incentive? or performance evaluation systems. How was this experienced?

IP 2

Well, I've gotten personally good feedback, but we haven't formally acknowledged any We haven't given any, how to say...

INTV 1

Reward. Reward or social?

IP 2

Yeah. No, we haven't set up any of those plans. That might have been a good idea to do now. So, but let's not jump into how or recommendations already, but no, we haven't set up anything like that.

INTV 1

Okay. How do you think leadership actions have influenced the overall impact and sustainability of the PPS implementation?

IP 2

Some are really supporting it, are driving it, others are following. But I do believe that there might be some people who are slow adapters. And those are the ones I want to identify. But I know that the main bulk of personnel are start doing this. But let's say that we have personnel in Chile and USA, which are maybe only just one or two project managers at best. Are they actually doing this in with PPS? I'm not sure. Because I'm saying that we're winning the battle in Scandinavia and Europe. But maybe because we have branch offices in Japan, Chile, Holland, US. So from a global perspective, I don't really know.

INTV 1

So how do you think that leadership actions have influenced the impact of the PPS implementation, leadership actions. How do you think that those leadership's actions has impacted generally and overall the sustainability of this PPS implementation? Although you might not know how sustainable this implementation is, I understand that. But how do you think leadership actions could have if they have influenced the overall impact of the PPS implementation, taking into account that it's been sustainable, sustainable, sorry.

IP 2

Yeah, sure. Well, I didn't, they did do a stakeholder, key stakeholder analysis of and the most influential leaders within SSE that I targeted as key

players for driving the new public process in operations. So I did a plan, strategic planning, which said, These people are important to actually support from a leadership where you're thinking about it for the operations. So how to gain friends? Well, I've talked to them separately and get them on board within the strategy, making sure that they have understood how the project process should be implemented. And then we collaborated, making sure that the education plans were in place. and where then we supported them with building structure and finding all the documents and whatever they might need in their day-to-day work to follow this process. As I mentioned before, we need to allow time for change and be patient through the process because it takes time to change people's behavior and mindset. But I'm addressing it by finding top management. And after we have top management, we take middle management, that's people managers, product managers, and making sure that they're following the process. And some are really adapting it, and those groups will probably show a good result. And then we might have one or two groups which are inconclusive that I will address in the future.

INTV 1

So a follow-up question then. Do you think that there has been any transformative leadership styles?

IP 2

Transformative leadership styles. Can you elaborate a little?

INTV 1

So there are different styles that leadership can be done or how they are being executed. And the transformative is exactly that. It's more of a transformative leadership style. Or do you consider that maybe it's been more of a collaborative communicative, you said, “how am I making friends?”

IP 2

That's the way of influencing people to want themselves to be a part of the change. There's a theory, MacGregor's leadership theory with X and Y in basic forms where some think that I will be a part and lead the change where other people believe that they can just delegate and be rough and say, now

we have to follow. Personally, I believe that it works better with business change if you conduct yourself to the more modern way of seeing leadership that's a part of the change, leading by example, instead of just delegating and trying to control, that's a little bit more classical. But I'm addressing this as that way. How our leaders have been conducting themselves, I don't know. I'm guessing there's both versions. Yeah.

INTV 1

Looking at the process now as a whole, which factors do you perceive as having had the greatest influence on the extent of organizational change resulting from the PPS implementation.

IP 2

Well, we're talking benefits here. So our greatest benefits are, let's see, I'm going to find it. Bear with me. So, the project management process benefits or within the way of working are the following. We can communicate openly. We manage risks and issues and changes actively within the projects. We track process and inspect the deliverables. We have clear defined roles and responsibilities. We can plan objectively and realistically. We engage users and stakeholders by collaborating and inviting them in a transparent way. And by having this project directive as a hygiene document, we gain a defined and scoped objective for the project in a clear and measureable way. That's our core benefits.

INTV 1

Okay. So which factors do you perceive as having had the greatest influence on the organizational change?

IP 2

The most positive benefactors, was that the question?

INTV 1

No. Which factors do you think or perceive or understand as having had the most influence on the organizational change, which has been coming from the implementation of PPS model.

IP 2

Yeah, I see. I would say, guessing for my way as responsible for implementing this project process as the operative leader of the strategic initiative, firstly, support for management. Secondly, my capability and charisma of motivating and inspiring colleagues to adapt the new way of working. And thirdly, the destruction organization of the process and the governance model. all the end users and project managers and managers receiving it can see that this is really well implemented and there's a lot of time behind it, so they get a sense of quality. And in the end, for our managers and project managers specifically, I think that they feel involved because they're part of an educational plan. So if you get a win-win scenario where you get an education that you can put on your CV, you get more motivated because you in your profession has higher value when working at the SSC and being part of the transformation and learning this new governance model. And yeah, that's the answer.

INTV 1

Okay, so we will have a five to 10 minutes break right now and then we will continue.

Appendix 4

File

Video Project 1 1.m4a

Transcript 2

INTERV 2

So we just had a 5, 10 minutes break and we will continue with the rest of the questions. So the first question is, Can you tell me about your experience of implementing the project steering model, PPS, in your role as a project manager?

IP 1

Do you want to know the steps or what I did? Okay, so the steps were the following. So, firstly, I did, I wanted to understand the current situation, so I did a gap analysis, so a maturity survey. Then I bought the governance model PPS by license by Tieto. I branded it and created a project process at SSC. We published it in the intranet. We had communications for all staff delivered by our CEO. We did automate project templates in our project tool called Zira. We did create a strategic PMO for strategic level monitoring, which gave us reporting on initiative and key strategy projects, traffic lights reporting and KPIs. We also did a resource management pre-study for implementing a global resource management system for all managers and project managers. We created EC, that's executive reporting structure, once a quarter for all strategic initiatives and projects, which are marked as key for our strategic work at SAC. And they are reporting to me every three months. I'm gathering all the data and presenting it to EC once a quarter. And also I created a product forum which are the shared knowledge globally between our product managers. So that is what I've done.

INTERV 2

So what stands out most when you think back about this experience? Think about your experience of the implementation.

IP 1

It's been fun. I get a lot of good feedback that people feel that we're moving in the right direction and they're somewhat relieved that someone else the sites themselves are taking responsibility for actually doing the work that is needed. So that's my answer.

INTERV 2

Was there a particular phase that felt especially challenging or successful?

IP 1

Most challenging was in the beginning when we published the new process. there were some feedback or some who didn't want to follow it. That's mostly internal politics. So that's probably usual when you're conducting big business change. And the most...

INTERV 2

Successful.

IP 1

Yeah, that needs to be all the positive feedback that I got from specific personnel and colleagues, and I can't say that it's just one specific time, but it's the overall feeling when I'm talking eye by eye with people regarding this that I get. Mostly everyone is supporting and overwhelming and never anyone is actually angry at me, so to say, they're more supportive. That's my answer.

INTERV 2

What did the PPS model mean to you personally when it was introduced?

IP 1

Not much. I have no bias, more than I have been working with it before. It's one of the biggest and most serious models in Scandinavia and Europe. I also know that some of our key customers in defense are using it as a precursor for procurement. So my feeling was that it's so functional and It's well established. It's over 150 companies in Sweden. We should use it today, big names. So if we're following the same path as so many other companies have traveled, we're taking a sound decision. We're not

embarking in the wrong direction. So that field makes me sleep better at night, I would say.

INTERV 2

So how did you initially understand its purpose?

IP 1

I was educated in the governance model several years ago before I even got to SEC.

INTERV 2

Did you understand change over time?

IP 1

Yes. And I've set up a business change plan also. but we haven't had the internal resources to conduct it. But we're doing a recap now with your recommendations, and we'll see if we can get some more. We'll see how we will proceed from here.

INTERV 2

I misspoke the question. I'm sorry. Did your understanding change over time? But maybe you answered that already because you understood.

IP 1

Maybe I'll get a little bit more educated. Of course, you're never fully learned, so to say. But I'm getting maybe more niched. Some are calling me black belt in project management. That's flattering, but I mean, you can always evolve yourself in different areas within leadership and such. So, yeah, to be polite to say, yeah, I've learned something.

INTERV 2

So, before the model was introduced, how did you perceive the way projects were managed in the organization?

IP 1

I didn't really. That was one of my first assignments as an employee at FCC to address this problem. So that's one of the main reasons why I'm hired to make this change.

INTERV 2

Was there anything that was working well? I mean, what was working well.

IP 1

Some service delivery, basic project management. delivering the same service over and over and over again. That is still and was working.

INTERV 2

And what was not working?

IP 1

The ones who embarked on projects where there were no finalized product or service, so they had to start from scratch and they didn't know how to proceed.

INTERV 2

How did the implementation project make you feel, both initially and over time?

IP 1

I would say that I felt steady from the beginning to where I am today. The feeling is more or less the same. And I do want to say that I believe I have a good day at work. I like what I'm doing, so I'm on to it. I think this is fun.

INTERV 2

Were there moments of frustration, motivation, uncertainty?

IP 1

No, I wouldn't say that. There were some ambivalence with support from one division for the new process in the beginning, but that was handled. I wasn't stressed out over it. I know that business change takes time and I was

mentally prepared for the road and that there will be some bumps on the road, so to say.

INTERV 2

And what was influencing those feelings?

IP 1

My experience. I've done this before at other companies.

INTERV 2

Were there moments where the PPS model felt difficult to use or align with your way of working?

IP 1

Well, I have to look broader than myself because I'm A certified professional in project manager. So I'm more or less not looked at as a senior project manager. So for myself it's easy. But what does that really mean when we have 50 other project managers who are not as senior as me? So of course there are people who might look at this governance model for the first time and get a little bit scared and think, oh, this is a real lot of work. And the only way to get further through that is education. Slice the elephant, learn as you go.

INTERV 2

That's my answer. So you were already working with this PPS model or you were familiar with it already, is that correct?

IP 1

Great.

INTERV 2

How did colleagues, stakeholders or leadership influence your experience of implementing the PPS? So supportive or constraining behaviours.

IP 1

Supporting, I would say. Some were. unaware of what actually happened. It was, for most of them who looked at anything at my education, they were supportive. And for some other ones there, it was a bit funny when they, I presented the educational, internal education and showed them the whole process with all the documents and informed them of their role. They were a bit shocked. because they had never seen a governance model implemented with all the structure, which actually is a part of PPS. So they understood that the structure and everything is a result of 30 years of experience from Tieto, who is selling this by license. And when you see it for the first time and understand how how massive the material is, some colleagues and managers got humble. So that's what happened.

INTERV 2

So was there any differences across units and roles with what you just mentioned?

IP 1

Yeah, I would say that for those who have been working at the company for many years, we're talking tech kids who are a bit comfortable in the normal day of working, protecting maybe status quo. They were surprised for those who come from different, who haven't been working necessarily so long, been on different workplaces in their profession. they were more supportive because they actually probably had been working something in a governance model that was more or less structured in the same way. So my answer is for those who have been working for a really long time, they were the ones that were most affected by the change, I would say.

INTERV 2

How was the change communicated and supported by the organization? What helped you engage with the model?

IP 1

Well, I was supported by C-level, formerly by the CEO. I'm a part of the strategic PMO team. So, because we have a strategic initiative called Today, excel in project management, it's on a strategic level. So I got strategic support at sea level, and that is key, I think, for success.

INTERV 2

What do you feel was missing? in how the chains was communicated and supported by the organization.

IP 1

If I had redone anything today, knowing what I know, I would have established an executive decision forum for managers who have personnel who are product managers. So we have around 5 projects. managers, a lot of people managers for project managers scattered within the global company, I would have created a specific forum just for them to get them into the change early. That's what I would have done differently.

INTERV 2

In what way did you adapt, modify or interpret the model in practice?

IP 1

I did do a proof of concept project when I started. So we implemented a project that gave us a new identity system that was collaborated with us changing the global HR system, so there were two important projects at the same time. And we thought it was a good way of showing proof of concept. So we worked with PPS for those strategic projects and they were successful.

INTERV 2

Did you use it as intended or differently?

IP 1

As intended.

INTERV 2

What guided those choices?

IP 1

Experience. And of course our governance model. So I followed our own process.

INTERV 2

Can you say that again?

IP 1

I followed our own process. So the way for us to support our quality work is to follow the project process that we created. And when you follow the process from a quality perspective, you're using PPS as intended.

INTERV 2

What impact, if any, has the project steering model, PPS, had on your work and project outcome?

IP 1

Well, I think I did deliver my key goals and our deliverables, and in the end, we I could show the proof of concept. We created a new capability for SSE within the project as intended and planned. And because that was really important for SSE, everyone was also happy that we did it by the book and didn't take shortcuts.

INTERV 2

If there was any impact, then what impact did the PPS model have on the project outcomes and decision-making?

IP 1

Well, we made sure that we tailored the project from start to end, and we did take formal decisions when we're needed on steering group level, that's on the decision level. So when we needed, per se, extend a testing work with another three weeks, then we took a formal decision to say, well, we need to extend the project timeline with three weeks because we're not finally finished with the tests. And that was a Official decision, and that's a way to make sure that answers your question.

INTERV 2

On efficiency or quality.

IP 1

Quality.

INTERV 2

Based on your experience, what factors do you think are most important for successful use of this model? across the organization? Individual factors, organizational conditions.

IP 1

I would say both. Sometimes when you have an experienced senior project manager, they can actually successfully drive a project. But my experience is why are they successful? Well, the answer is because they're doing steering committee personnel's roles responsibilities. With that said, actually, it's not uncommon when you have an unsure company that the project manager is doing the manager's works, which is not the way it's intended to do. Just because you have strong leadership within project managers doesn't mean that the company is effective. So the way to address that is to educate managers in steering group work. So one person are not doing someone else's responsibility or their work.

INTERV 2

And based on your experience, what factors do you think are most important for successfully use this model across the organization? Any individual factors?

IP 1

To have time for education, to understand that it takes time, to mentally commit yourself and do the work, to learn it. So it's I would say that it's a learning curve. In the beginning, you need to take your time to actually look at the structure, look at the documents and understand it. And it might take three months to half a year to even understand it by fully. And then it gets easier. So if you don't commit, you will not succeed. There's no way around it. You have to do the hard work.

INTERV 2

So you will need someone with individual or You would like to have individuals who are motivated, self-determinated, who also are willing to learn and understand that this takes time.

IP 1

Yeah, in the final result, in the end, each individual has to learn it themselves or else they can't conduct their work in the final evaluation a few years in the future.

INTERV 2

And the organizational conditions?

IP 1

Supporting, giving time, supporting the strategic PNO with personnel costs, and also formally committed by doing commitment work or supporting the new process. So it's a mental thing that you're talking possibly about the change and that we're talking OBM, organizational behavior management, how you're conducting yourself as a leader, representative for a company that you have to think about the manner of how you're conducting yourself and if you're sending supportive vibes, so to say. for the new business change.

INTERV 2

Is there anything about your own role, values, or experience that you think shaped how you engaged with this change?

IP 1

If I'm changed, can you please take it again?

INTERV 2

Is there anything about your own roles, your own values, or your experience that you think has shaped how you engaged with this change?

IP 1

Yeah, I have several years of experience. I've done this before. Great support from the vendor of the license.

INTERV 2

Anything about your values?

IP 1

We're talking project culture. and have an healthy working environment that is sustainable. That means that when we understand our roles, that they're clearly defined, we together take responsibility for the project's success, and we're not exposing one person who might have had a fault. What I'm trying to say is the following: Small-minded people blame other people, smart people blame themselves, and enlightened people understand that there's no one to blame. So, that's my philosophical answer.

INTERV 2

Okay, so now we have gone through all these questions together. And I will just make a quick review of what have been said, the main points that have been addressed, and I will try to give you, the respondent, an opportunity to add or to further develop your thoughts.

IP 1

Okay.

Appendix 5

Qualitative Data from Interview

The analysis of the interview aimed to capture how the participant constructed the implementation process, its organizational implications and perceived outcomes. The thematic structure (Braun and Clark, 2019) consists of 9 themes representing contextual conditions, implementation processes, leadership dynamics, behavioral responses, structural effects and sustainability considerations. The transcription of interview was made in Microsoft Word Documents.

Pre-Implementation Context: Fragmentation and Low Project Maturity

The participant described the organization prior to implementation as fragmented and lacking unified governance structures. Project work was characterized as inconsistent across divisions, with limited coordination and no standardized framework guiding execution. The absence of a centralized Project Management Office (PMO) was highlighted as a critical gap. According to the participant, project classification was unclear, and many initiatives were conducted without formal steering groups or defined decision gates. This was framed as corresponding to a low level, approximately level 1-2 using the PMI maturity model OPM3 scale, where practices were largely ad hoc and dependent on individual competence rather than structured systems. Although some operational units demonstrated repeatable service processes and basic project templates, these practices were not integrated at the organizational level.

Strategic and Structured Implementation of the PPS Model

Implementation began with the formal acquisition of the PPS from Tietoevry. The model was internally branded and adapted to fit organizational terminology and infrastructure, including integration into SharePoint and governance documentation systems. The strategic program management office was established to support and monitor implementation.

The participant described the introduction of executive-level reporting, including key performance indicators and quarterly reporting to senior leadership. These structures formalized oversight and integrated visibility of project performance. A core component of the implementation was the introduction of three mandatory hygiene documents:

1. A project classification document
2. A project directive
3. A project plan

These documents were presented as a minimum quality standard applicable across divisions. The governance model was further embedded into the organization's ISO 9001-certified QM-system. According to the participant, this integration resulted in external audit validation, thereby formalizing the model within existing compliance structures.

Leadership Engagement and Strategic Alignment

Leadership involvement emerged as a central theme. The participant emphasized the importance of top-level sponsorship, including approval by the CEO and CIO. Communication of the initiative at an all-staff meeting was described as a symbolic and strategic signal of organizational commitment. Beyond formal approval, the participant described deliberate stakeholder engagement. Leadership was portrayed not as strong but as patient and relationship-oriented. The participant emphasized "making friends," maintaining long-term commitment, and "leading by example" throughout the change process.

Resistance, Adaptation, and Gradual Acceptance

Initial resistance emerged in at smallest function, where the introduction of standardized governance was questioned. The participant described reactions framed around preserving autonomy and scepticism

toward centralized control. Uncertainty remained regarding the depth of implementation across international units, including operations in Chile, the United States, Germany and Japan. The participant expressed concern that certain units might operate under the radar, indicating partial or inconsistent adoption.

Education and Professionalization as Change Mechanisms

Education was described as a primary mechanism for enabling change. A structured three-year development plan was introduced, including foundational and advanced training for project managers and steering committee members. A mentorship pilot program was initiated to strengthen role clarity and practical capability. Leadership training in situational leadership was also incorporated in one division. Project managers were described as gaining clearer role definitions, increased competence, and enhanced professional credibility.

Structural Effects on Governance and Decision-Making

The implementation was associated with several structural changes in project governance: i) Role clarity reportedly increased, mandates and responsibilities were formalized, reducing ambiguity and clarifying accountability. ii) Structured decision-making processes were introduced through 8 defined decision gates. Steering committees were strengthened, and formal approval processes were required for timeline extensions or scope changes. iii) Documentation and risk management processes became standardized. The participant described improved transparency in stakeholder communication and clearer project objectives.

Perceived Organizational Impact

The participant described several benefits of the implementation. These included improved quality control, devosion to formal procedures, and increased organizational transparency. The governance framework was associated with enhanced communication regarding risks and project

progress. According to the participant, the organization had moved toward a more defined maturity level, indicating increased capability to manage complex projects, however, standardized PM model like PPS automatically moves the maturity level 3 when implemented in a QM-system.

Sustainability and Ongoing Challenges

Despite reported improvements, the participant expressed uncertainty regarding full implementation of the governance model. A gut feeling was articulated that implementation might not yet be complete. Two primary challenges were identified: i) The absence of formal incentive or reward systems linked to governance compliance. ii) The lack of a dedicated executive decision forum at certain organizational levels. These are potential barriers to long-term sustainability.

Concept Definition and Inconsistency

According to the participant, the concept of a project is frequently applied inconsistently in practice. This suggests a lack of shared understanding among project managers at SSC, which constitutes a quality concern in terms of conceptual clarity and operational alignment.

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