The relationship between managers and employees in a virtual context
Abstract

Introduction: In today’s global work environment, virtual work has become a useful concept for companies to expand and reach markets around the world. This work setting has both its benefits and challenges for the managers and employees. Those who work virtually are forced to overcome hurdles such as lack of face-to-face interaction, time differences and difficulties with communication tools. This is something that managers of virtual teams must handle. They also have to find ways of creating and maintaining their individual relationships with their employees, which can be a challenge due to the geographical distance. Leader-member exchange (LMX) is an established theory that focuses on the manager-employee relationship.

Purpose: The purpose for this study is to see if a geographical distance between managers and employees may influence the LMX relationships at the Marketing department, SDE, Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB. We also aimed to investigate what can influence the quality of the LMX relationship and if there are any possible improvements that can be done to enhance the relationship.

Method: In this study, a qualitative method was used. Totally 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers, employees located abroad and in Örebro. The interviews were conducted in person or by Skype. For the analysis of the empirical material gathered, the theory of LMX was used.

Result: The results in this study suggest that the managers and employees in some cases have different opinions about the virtual work and their relationships. There were also different factors that were found to influence LMX.

Conclusion: The relationship can be influenced by the geographical distance but it is not only the distance that influences the LMX relationship between managers and employees working virtually at Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB; there are also differences in culture, personality and language that were seen to have an effect on the relationship. Some improvements can be done to enhance the LMX relationship.
Preface

A special thank to:

Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB for giving us the opportunity to do a research at the company, and a special thank to our mentor and the people who participated in the study.

Peter Langlott, our mentor at Örebro University, for the guidance and advices during this study.

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Örebro, January 2013
Table of Contents

1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 7

1.1 Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB ................................................................................................................. 7

1.1.1 Atlas Copco’s leadership model ......................................................................................................... 8

1.2 Problem .................................................................................................................................................. 8

1.3 Purpose ................................................................................................................................................ 9

1.4 Delimitations ........................................................................................................................................ 9

2 Theoretical framework ............................................................................................................................ 10

2.1 Manager-employee relationship ........................................................................................................... 10

2.2 Leader-member exchange .................................................................................................................. 10

2.2.1 LMX and antecedents ....................................................................................................................... 12

2.2.2 The managers influence on LMX ....................................................................................................... 13

2.2.3 LMX and outcomes/consequences .................................................................................................. 13

2.2.4 LMX and contextual variables ......................................................................................................... 14

2.2.5 LMX 7 ............................................................................................................................................... 15

2.3 Virtual work ......................................................................................................................................... 15

2.4 Leadership in virtual teams ................................................................................................................. 16

2.5 Communication ................................................................................................................................. 16

3 Method .................................................................................................................................................... 18

3.1 Scientific data ....................................................................................................................................... 18

3.2 Selection and criteria for the interviews ............................................................................................... 18

3.3 Semi-structured interviews ................................................................................................................ 19

3.4 Questions for the interviews .............................................................................................................. 19

3.4.1 LMX antecedents ............................................................................................................................. 20

3.4.2 Relationship and LMX 7 .................................................................................................................. 20

3.4.3 Communications ............................................................................................................................... 20

3.5 Conducting the interviews ................................................................................................................ 21

3.6 Ethics .................................................................................................................................................... 21

3.7 Reliability, validity, generalizations, transparence .............................................................................. 22

3.8 Presentation of the empirical material ................................................................................................. 23

3.9 Strengths and limitations ................................................................................................................... 24
4 Presentation of the result .............................................................................................................................................. 25
  4.1 Manager's expectations on employee's success ................................................................................................. 25
  4.2 Contingent reward behavior ............................................................................................................................. 26
    4.2.1 Feedback ..................................................................................................................................................... 26
    4.2.2 Appreciation/recognition ......................................................................................................................... 27
    4.2.3 Rewards .................................................................................................................................................... 27
  4.3 Transformational leadership .............................................................................................................................. 28
    4.3.1 Communicating the company's vision ....................................................................................................... 28
    4.3.2 Encouragement to accept the group goals ................................................................................................. 29
    4.3.3 Inspiration and motivation ....................................................................................................................... 29
  4.4 Trust ................................................................................................................................................................. 30
  4.5 Relationship ...................................................................................................................................................... 31
    4.5.1 How the managers create and maintain the relationships with the employees ...................................... 32
  4.6 Communication ................................................................................................................................................ 33
    4.6.1 Does the communication affect the relationship ...................................................................................... 34
  4.7 Working at a distance ........................................................................................................................................ 34
  4.8 Summary result .................................................................................................................................................. 35

5 Analysis ................................................................................................................................................................. 37
  5.1 Manager's expectations on employee's success ................................................................................................. 37
  5.2 Contingent reward behavior ............................................................................................................................. 39
    5.2.1 Feedback ..................................................................................................................................................... 39
    5.2.2 Appreciation ................................................................................................................................................. 40
    5.2.3 Rewards .................................................................................................................................................... 41
  5.3 Transformational leadership .............................................................................................................................. 42
    5.3.1 Communicating the company's vision ....................................................................................................... 42
    5.3.2 Encouragement to accept the group goals ................................................................................................. 43
    5.3.3 Motivation and inspiration ....................................................................................................................... 44
  5.4 Manager trust ...................................................................................................................................................... 45
  5.5 Manager-employee relationship ...................................................................................................................... 46
  5.6 Leader-member exchange .................................................................................................................................. 46
  5.7 Communication .................................................................................................................................................. 47

6 Conclusion ......................................................................................................................................................... 50
  6.1 Practical Implications ......................................................................................................................................... 51
7 Discussion ........................................................................................................... 52
  7.1 Antecedents .................................................................................................. 52
  7.2 Communication ............................................................................................ 54
8 Further research ................................................................................................. 56
References ............................................................................................................ 57
Appendix 1 – Interview guide for managers in English ..................................... 62
Appendix 2 – Interview guide for employees in English .................................... 64
Appendix 3 – Interview guide for managers in Swedish .................................... 66
Appendix 4 – Interview guide for employees in Swedish ................................... 68
Appendix 5 - Quotes in Swedish ......................................................................... 70
1 Introduction
Virtual teams are an increasing trend in companies today (Hambley, O’Neill & Kline, 2007). It is a more complex, dynamic and global work environment that have made virtual work grow and virtual teams are important for the organizations to be successful in the demanding global market today. The advanced technology has made it possible for geographically dispersed managers and employees, to work together, communicate and interact (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). These teams also make it possible for people to work faster than if they have to meet face-to-face (Townsend, DeMarie, & Hendrickson, 1998). Virtual work though has it challenges (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002) and it can be a result of the decrease in face-to-face interactions (DeRosa et al. 2004). Virtual work therefore increases the requirements on the managers and employees (Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1999) and virtual team managers may face different challenges than managers of traditional teams (DeRosa et al. 2004). It is for example unclear if the technologies that are used for communication is a good substitutes for face-to-face interaction. The limited face-to-face interactions are an aspect that can have an impact on managing a virtual team. Research has highlighted that virtual team managers must devise new methods to perform traditional duties such as providing feedback and motivating the employees (Zigurs 2003). It is also important for organizations to study the relational and leadership issues that can arise as a result of the geographical distance between managers and employees (DeRosa et al. 2004). Especially the employee-manager relationship is important to study (Golden & Veiga. 2008) and then develop new ways of improving the interpersonal relationships between them (DeRosa et al. 2004). One of the problems for managers of virtual teams can be that some find it hard to build good relationships with their employees because of the lack of visibility in the employees' daily work (Watson, 2007).

A theory that has gotten attention in research is the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory; it describes that an exchange occurs between a manager and an employee. The relationship between a manager and an employee is according to this theory a result of the exchange (Dansereau et al. 1975, Graen & Cashman 1975 in Yukl, 2012, pp. 249). LMX also indicates that the manager does not have the same relationship with every one of his employees (Gerstner & Day, 1997 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). For the organizational functioning the LMX relationships can be very important (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and research has shown that the quality of LMX is linked to important work outcomes (Golden & Veiga, 2008). Contextual variables can moderate the quality of LMX, but limited research has been conducted on the work context and its effect on LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012).

1.1 Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB
Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB is a global organization that has activities all around the world. The company was founded 1873 and in the end of year 2011 they had 37 500 employees. They are a world-leading provider of solutions for industrial productivity solutions. Atlas Copco is divided in to several divisions and one of the divisions is Surface Drilling Equipment (SDE). This division specifies as the title indicated on Surface drill rigs and equipment. The division has production centers in Sweden, China, Japan, Austria, Italy and India. The company has approximately 670 employees at the division’s product companies
and distribution centers and around 1000 employees at the Customer Centers around the world. (Atlascopco.com)

Atlas Copco Surface Drilling Equipments marketing department is mainly located at the production facility in Örebro, Sweden, but they also have middle range managers and employees located at different locations around the world. It means that managers, middle range managers and employees are located at different places and there are limited face-to-face interactions between these parties. The virtual work is important for this department because the company can be active in markets all around the world.

1.1.1. Atlas Copco’s leadership model
Atlas Copco Rock Dills AB put a lot of effort in leadership because they state that it helps people grow and when people grow, the company grows. The company has a model for their leadership (figure 1).

![Figure 1. Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB’s leadership model (Atascopco.com)](image)

The company explains that their leadership model is quite simple but very effective when it comes to providing opportunities for their employees. The model is according to the company very successful as it provides clear responsibilities. It also creates distinct responsibility areas as it provides clarity with the assignments and expectations of responsibility for the processes and entrepreneurship. (Atlascopco.com)

1.2 Problem
Virtual teams are important for organizations to be successful in the demanding global market today (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002) as stated earlier. The marketing department at SDE, Atlas Copco, can partially be seen as a virtual team because the employees are located in different countries and this department is important for the division’s success. The work they do is possible because of the advanced technology available today (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). However, virtual work also has its challenges, for example due to the lack of face-to-face interactions between people (DeRosa et al. 2004). It can be challenging to build relationships between managers and employees (Watson, 2007) and this is a challenge the marketing department also may face. When reading literature about virtual teams it is apparent that limited research has been done on the manager-employee relationship in virtual teams and how the relationship may be affected by the geographical distance and lack of face-to-face interaction. The relationship theory of leader-member exchange (LMX) is an example of a
theory that has got a lot of attention in different researches (Yukl in Kaulio, 2012, pp. 249) but limited research have been done on how the work context effect the LMX relationship (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Therefore, it is important to study the manager-employee relationship in a virtual context to contribute to previous research. It has been stated that it is important to develop new ways of improving the relationship between managers and employees in virtual teams (DeRosa et al. 2004). It can therefore be beneficial for Atlas Copco to do this study as well, because they might be dealing with problems and challenges connected to virtual work. When studying the Atlas Copco’s leadership model it is also apparent that the relationship is not included in the model. We therefore do not know how the managers at Atlas Copco work on their relationships with the employees or how they handle the relationships in virtual teams. The research question for this study will therefore be;

- How can a virtual context influence the relationship between a managers and an employee?

1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to see if a geographical distance between managers and employees may influence the LMX relationships at the Marketing department at SDE, Atlas Copco. We also aim to investigate what can influence the quality of the LMX relationship and if there are any possible improvements that can be done to enhance the LMX relationship.

1.4 Delimitations
This study will have a leadership perspective. It is of interest to see how the managers at Atlas Copco work on the relationships with their employees. The relationship theory, LMX, which has been chosen for this study state that a relationship can be more affected by managers than by employees (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and therefore we have a leadership perspective in this study.
2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Manager-employee relationship

Uhl-Bien (2006) states that the relationship is something that in recent time have started to be associated with the leadership. Focus is now more on the relationship as a part of the leadership (Drath, 2001 in Uhl-Bien 2006). Many studies have been done on the role of the manager when it comes to leadership but less on the subject of relationship. It is therefore necessary to conduct more research on this aspects and its connection to the leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The development of technologies has had an effect on the relationship between managers and employees as the virtual workplace emerged (Mackenzie, 2010). The distance can make it more difficult to build relationships between managers and employees. Managers of virtual teams can find it hard to build good relationships with their employees because of the lack of visibility in the employees’ daily work (Watson, 2007). Another problem in virtual teams is the communication between managers and employees, which often is more about the assigned tasks and not used for relationship building (Warkentin, Sayeed & Hightower, 1997 in Watson, 2007). Some researchers have emphasized the importance of studying the relational and leadership issues that can arise because of geographical distance between managers and employees (DeRosa et al. 2004). It is important to see how the virtual work may change the important manager-employee relationship in comparison to the traditional teams (Golden & Veiga, 2008). New ways of improving the interpersonal relationships between managers and employees must be developed (DeRosa et al. 2004).

2.2 Leader-member exchange

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory has been central when it comes to study of the relationship in leadership (Uhl-Bien 2006). LMX have a relationship-based approach to leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The theory focuses on the relationship between the manager and the employee and explains how an exchange takes place between them (Yukl, 2012, pp. 249). There is also a role defining processes, which takes place between the manager and the employee. LMX also describes how the relationships which evolves between a manager and every one of his or hers employees is a result of the exchange between them (Dansereau m.fl, 1975, Graen & Cashman 1975 in Yukl, 2012, pp. 249). The exchange between the manager and the employee can be both material and non-material and these exchanges contribute to the quality of the LMX relationship. Non-material exchange can be the social exchange, such as support, and a material exchange can for example be salary. Both the manager and the employee have recourses that the other one value and these can be used in the exchange. The exchange is both behavioral and emotional (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The LMX theory was in the beginning groundbreaking. The theory focuses on the separate relationship between the manager and each of the manager’s employees. The theory was groundbreaking because it explains how the managers adapt and change his or hers ways of interacting with different employees and that the interaction in turn affects the relationship with every employee and makes the relationships different from each other (Gerstner & Day,
1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). LMX therefore indicates that the manager does not have the same relationship with every one of his employees (Sparrowe & Liden, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) states that the leadership become more successful when managers and employees create and maintain high-quality LMX relationships. Research has found that the quality of LMX can change during the relationship, but it can be hard to overcome the first impressions the manager and employee get of each other. It is although when the manager and employee experience new things and learns more about each other that the relationship can change and become better (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

![Figure 2. The LMX model](image-url)

*Figure 2. The LMX model (Dulebohn et al. 2011, pp. 4).*
Dulebohn et al. (2011) presented a model, which illustrates LMX and its linkage to several antecedents, outcomes and contextual variables and how it mediates between its antecedents and outcomes (figure 2). We will now describe this model further.

2.2.1 LMX and antecedents
LMX has been linked to several antecedents (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999), which can be seen in figure 2. The factors, which had highest correlations with LMX, with support in several scientific articles, were chosen for this study and these are; manager’s expectations of employee’s success, contingent reward behavior, transformational leadership and manager trust (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Hereafter these factors will be described shortly.

Included in the study because of its significant influence on LMX are the manager’s expectations of employee's success (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Researchers have stated that managers and employees who had high expectations of each other in the beginning of the relationships were more likely to report a high-quality LMX later on. The expectations that manager have on their employees influence the quality of the interaction between them (Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993). The manager's expectations of employee’s success may lead to improved behaviors in the work setting, because when the managers have high expectations it may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, which can improve employee self-efficacy and therefore improve work behaviors (Dulebohn et al. 2012).

Contingent reward behavior is an antecedent that also was included in this study because of its high correlation with LMX. Contingent reward represents a transaction between managers and employees, which is positive, and constructive (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Contingent reward behavior means that the managers give feedback, rewards and recognition/appreciation for accomplishments to the employees (Dulebohn et al. 2012). The managers contingent reward behaviors make it clear for the employees what is expected from him/her and what rewards they will receive if they achieve what manager expect from them (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999). Respect, trust and mutual obligation is hard to maintain if the managers does not explain the expectations he or she has on the employees or do not recognize and give rewards when the employees are performing well. So the employees who are receiving clear and good feedback, clarification, recognition, and praise for their work will become more obligated to their managers. This can contribute so the employees experience a better and higher quality of the LMX relationship with their managers (Wayne et al. 2002 in Dulebohn et al. 2012).

Another factor that is relevant for this study, because it is linked to a high quality LMX relationship, is transformational leadership behaviors (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Transformational leadership means that the manager communicates an appealing vision and encouraging the employees to accept the team’s different goals (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Another part of the transformational leadership is to motivate and inspire the employees (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). High motivation and inspiration can influence the employees to want to work harder on creating high quality LMX relationships with their managers (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001, in Dulebohn et al. 2012).
The next factor with high correlation with LMX relationship is the manager’s trust in the employees and it was therefore included in this study. The managers need to trust that the employees are competent and can perform their work tasks to be able to build a high quality LMX relationship (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Research has shown that trust violations might affect LMX negatively, even for those relationships that have a high quality LMX. The LMX relationships are not stable so effective managers need to learn how to sustain the employee trust, it may not be enough to only gain their trust (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2008). Trust is positive because it can enhance the employee’s job satisfaction, which in turn can make them more dedicated to their jobs and to the organization, according to Gill (2008).

2.2.2 The managers influence on LMX
From the things described above, it become clear that it is the behavior and perceptions of the managers that explains the most variance in LMX. The manager’s expectations of employee's success, contingent reward behavior, and transformational leadership have shown to have the largest associations with LMX. This point toward that LMX strongly is influenced by the managers. This mean that developing a strong LMX relationship can be affected by managers more than by employees (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and this is why we in this study have a chosen to have a manager/leader perspective.

If the manager has a contingent reward behavior and transformational leadership, it will show the subordinates that the manager is willing to put extra effort into the relationship. This will increase the likelihood that the subordinates give more back to the manager than he or she anticipated. The manager’s expectations of employee's success may lead to improved employee behaviors (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and this also shows that manager behaviors is significant for the LMX relationship.

2.2.3 LMX and outcomes/consequences
LMX have been shown to be related to several positive outcomes (Golden & Veiga, 2008; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and some of them are illustrated in figure 2. There has been a lot of research done on the quality of the LMX and linkage to important work outcomes. LMX has been related to positive outcomes for the managers, employees, and the whole organization (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The LMX relationships can therefore be very important for the organizational functioning (Dulebohn et al. 2012) because a high quality relationship is important for the improvement of work performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment for the people in the organization (Golden & Veiga, 2008). Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999) also found that the employee performance is positively linked to LMX and they mean that the managers therefore should work to get a high quality LMX relationship with their employees because it would lead to higher performance from the employees. LMX have also been linked to employee satisfaction with the management, satisfaction in general and commitment for example (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Golden and Veiga (2008) states that a high quality LMX relationship also is important for employees who work virtually so they can get positive outcomes.

It is important for this study to highlight that LMX is a mediator between its antecedents and relevant outcomes (see figure 2). This means that the outcomes are determined by the quality
of the LMX relationship, it is not the behaviors and perceptions of the manager or the employee per se. The antecedents are central for the understanding of LMX quality but LMX is the factor that mediates between the antecedents and outcomes (Dulebohn et al. 2012).

2.2.4 LMX and contextual variables
Contextual variables can have an effect on the relationship between antecedents and LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). These contextual variables can be seen in figure 2 and are; LMX measure used, work settings, participant's location and cultural dimensions. A study that has looked at geographical distance between managers and employees showed that a high LMX affects the employee performances in a positive way regardless of physical distance (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999) which shows that a good LMX can be important in virtual contexts. It has been suggested that further research should be done on how contextual variables can affect the LMX relationship (Gerstner & Day, 1997) and this is why this study will look at the geographical distance and its effect on the LMX relationship.

The antecedents chosen for this study is, as described earlier; manager’s expectations of employee’s success, contingent reward behavior, transformational leadership and manager trust. These can be seen in figure 3, which is a model that will be used for the analysis in this study.

![Antecedents](image1)

![Contextual variables](image2)

Figure 3. Model for the analysis.

*Figure 3 illustrate that we will study the relationship between the antecedents and the quality of the LMX and how it may be affected by the contextual variable; geographical distance. With this figure, we also want to show that a high quality LMX can lead to positive consequences/outcomes but in this study the purpose is not to look into this further. We just want to illustrate that there is a relationship between LMX and consequences/outcomes found in previous research and therefore it is a dotted line. This model will be used throughout the analysis, but we have chosen to break out the various parts in the model, for example the antecedents, so it will be easier to see this study's results and findings.*
2.2.5 LMX 7

LMX 7 is a tool, which has been developed to measure the relationship between managers and employees and it is usually used for quantitative research. It consists of seven items as the title imply. The questions are answered, by choosing a number on a scale that the respondent thinks is most suitable as an answer to the question. LMX 7 is not the only measure used for LMX, different items have for example been added, but it have been stated by Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995) that LMX 7 is the most appropriate tool and they recommend this to measure the LMX relationship.

2.3 Virtual work

“Virtual settings are interactions between people who are working at different locations and often in different time zones. Communication is mainly computer-mediated (for example e-mail, video-conferencing and teleconferencing), but face-to-face interactions are used in addition. Each of the team members as well as the leader is located in a different place” - Zimmermann, Wit and Gill (2008, pp. 322).

The quotation above is one of many definitions that can be found on virtual settings or virtual teams. Virtual teams is a concept that more and more organizations use today (Horwitz, Bravington & Silvis, 2006) and it is a result of developments in technology that make it possible for employees who are geographically dispersed to work together, communicate and interact (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002; Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1999). The global market is more competitive today than before and virtual work has therefore become more important for organizations to be successful (Townsend, DeMarie & Hendrickson, 1998). The use of virtual teams also make it possible for people to work faster compared to if they had to meet face-to-face (Townsend, DeMarie, & Hendrickson, 1998). This kind of work setting also saves time and reduces travel costs (Kock, 2000 in DeRosa et al. 2004). Virtual work has increased in organizations and will increase even more in the future according to Cascio and Shurygailo (2003).

Virtual teams are facing challenges that ordinary teams do not face. For example challenges due to the lack of face-to-face communication that occurs when team members are located in different places (DeRosa et al. 2004). Time constraints and travel cost may restrict the possibility for the employees to meet in person (Baltes et al. 2002). Geographically distributed work can prove challenging to both managers and their teams (Watson, 2007). A virtual team can have different types of dispersal. For example, a virtual team can have spatial, temporal, cultural and organizational dispersion. Spatial dispersion explains the different locations that the members of the team work in. Temporal dispersion refers to the time difference that the members operate in. Cultural dispersion explains the cultural differences between team members due to the different countries they operate in. The last one, organizational dispersion, refers to the extent virtual team member’s work across organizational boundaries (Shin, 2005).
2.4 Leadership in virtual teams

The leadership in virtual teams has been called virtual leadership or e-leadership and is defined by Avolio, Kahai and Dodge (2001, pp. 617) as:

“A social influence process mediated by advanced information technologies to produce changes in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behavior, and/or performance of individuals, groups, and/or organizations.”

Managers that are managing their teams from a distance may face different challenges compared to managers of traditional teams that are located at the same place (DeRosa et al. 2004). The manager of a virtual team must find ways to handle different degrees of autonomy, interdependence and of course face-to-face contact. This can be hard because traditional leadership that are practiced in teams where the employees are located in the same place, may not always be suitable to practice in virtual teams (Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1999 in DeRosa et al. 2004). The traditional method of controlling and influencing the employees might not work in virtual teams (Warkentin, Sayeed & Hightower, 1997). Therefore are managers of virtual teams forced to find new ways to perform traditional leadership tasks, for example provide feedback and motivate the employees (Zigurs, 2003). Virtual work therefore increases the requirements on managers of virtual teams (Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1999). This may be challenging even though the technologies have made it easier to communicate and create new ways for managing virtual teams (Avolio, Kahai & Dodge, 2000).

2.5 Communication

Communication is as described earlier mainly computer-mediated in virtual teams; teleconference, videoconference, and e-mail are for example used. Face-to-face communication can although be used in addition (Zimmermann, Wit & Gill, 2008). Face-to-face settings can according to Zimmermann, Wit and Gill (2008) be defined as interactions between people who are at the same location at the same time. Face-to-Face communications means that people are located at the same place and can see and hear each other. The synchronicity is high and allows people to interact quickly and they can observe and convey facial expression and body language. Face-to-face communication means that people also can convey, listen and speak (DeRosa et al. 2004). These different aspects can be hard to fulfill in virtual teams when communicating.

Research has found that face-to-face communication is the most effective way for people in teams to interact with each other (DeRosa et al. 2004). Face-to-face communication is also important when building relationships and research have shown that employees prefer face-to-face communication (Mackenzie, 2008). However, it may not always be possible in today’s organizations for employees and managers to meet face-to face. Time constraints and travel cost may restrict the possibility for the employees to meet in person (Baltes et al. 2002). The lack of face-to-face communication has its disadvantages for employees in organizations. For example, the interaction between people tends to be less verbal and social when they do not physically meet. This can lead to that the members of virtual teams experience social isolation.
Face-to-face communication has from an evolutionary perspective, been the primary mode of communication for humans from the beginning of time. People are optimized for this sort of interaction where they actually meet, and people prefer face-to-face interactions because it is the most natural form of communication. The types of communication that are most similar to face-to-face interaction should therefore be more natural for humans. Some communication media's used today are designed to be similar to face-to-face interactions and include as many elements typical for this interaction as possible. However, humans might not be optimized for many of the technological media's used today, because many of these media suppress the features of face-to-face communication (Kock, 2002 in DeRosa et al. 2004).

An effective communication is very important for the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships (Zimmermann, Wit and Gill, 2008). The effectiveness of information exchange is positively related to the quality of the relationship. Because the exchange is less in virtual teams, Warkentin, Sayeed, and Hightower (1997) have stated that traditional meetings, face-to-face, should be used in addition to the computer-mediated communication tools. These meeting will contribute to that team members feel like they belong to the team; it might especially be beneficial to have face-to-face meetings in the beginning when the employee is hired.
3 Method
We have conducted a qualitative research because the focus in this study was to understand the social environment at Atlas Copco and the emphasis is on how the respondent describes their world. When collecting data from our semi-structured interviews our purpose was to get every respondents opinion and angle on the chosen subject for our research, and qualitative research means that you often try to understand the situation through the respondent’s eyes (Bryman & Bell, 2005, pp. 313).

3.1 Scientific data
In the beginning of this study, we began to search for scientific articles. The articles had to have been reviewed and published in a scientific magazine and be available at any of Örebro University databases. The articles had to have scientific character and be available in full text and have references. A number of articles were not included in the study because they were doubtful in the question of scientific and reviewed matter.

After reading several abstracts and different articles, we choose a number of them to read and view deeper. We also looked at the articles references to find if they have referenced to common authors. This helped us in our search for more articles related to the subject virtual work, virtual teams, virtual leadership, relationships, communication and theory such as LMX. This was beneficial because we were able to find the source of many articles and use the direct and firsthand reference instead of secondhand references. Many of the articles used the same kind of source or authors for references so searching for those authors provided us with a wider range of useful articles for this study. This meant that we had more scientific articles to read, but as a result, we were able to find useful materials for our theoretical framework and most of all we learned more and deeper about the chosen subject for the study. Models and theory from the scientific articles that we collected also became a base when we formed our interview questions. This helped us when we did the analysis as well because from the theory found in the articles we could create a useful tool and model for the analysis.

3.2 Selection and criteria for the interviews
In this study, we conducted 13 interviews with managers and employees at Atlas Copco. In the first stage of the study, we had a meeting with the Vice President at the marketing department, SDE, in Örebro to discuss research questions and structure of the study. The VP became our mentor for the study and during the meeting we consulted him which of the employees who would be interesting to interview and be able to answer our questions. The mentor did choose the employees that he thought would be able to contribute with their knowledge to our study. We decided to include and conduct interviews with four managers included the VP and 2-3 employees belonging to each manager. The criteria for the employees were that we wanted two from each manager’s team. At least one employee had to be located in Örebro and one abroad. To study if the relationship is affected by the distance we decided to interview employees located in Örebro so we would be able to do a comparison between them and employees abroad.
The choice of respondents in this study, was partially affected by our mentor and other managers at Atlas Copco because they were involved in choosing which one of the employees that we were going to interview. This was good because the choice of respondents for this study was based on the manager’s knowledge. Therefore we interviewed people that according to the mentor and managers would be able the answer our questions. The negative aspect is that the choice of respondents may not have been objective and it might have affected the results of this study differently compared to if we would have chosen the respondents ourselves.

3.3 Semi-structured interviews
We choose to use semi-structured interviews because it is was an appropriate method for this study. It gave us the opportunity to steer the interviews and collect deeper information if any answer from the respondent was particular interesting and needed to be discussed further. This because semi-structured interviews mean that the interviewers are not forced to follow a specific order of questions when conducting the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2005, pp. 595). The semi-structured method also gave us the opportunity to ask follow up questions and explain to the respondent if he or she did not understand the question.

The interview questions were formed so that the respondent could not answer yes or no and the reasons for this, was that we wanted them to share as much information as possible and did therefore not ask leading questions. At the end of every interview, we also asked if the respondent had something more they wanted to say. According to Bryman and Bell (2005, pp. 372) the relationship between the interviewers and respondent at that point have become better and it is therefore possible that they share information that they have not done earlier during the interview. It also makes it possible for the respondents to talk about things that were not asked. That did contributed to the study in a positive way because we got more information that we initially did not get during the interview.

3.4 Questions for the interviews
Before we conducted the interviews, we formed templates with questions, which we used during the interviews with the respondents. Four different templates were made for this study. First, we had to create one for the managers and one for the employees. Because the purpose for this study was to get a leadership perspective, the template for the manager was formed to mainly get answers regarding how they work. The template for the employees was on the other hand formed to find out how they perceive the work the managers do. Because we conducted interviews with managers and employees who spook different languages we were also forced to form two interview templates for the managers, one in English and one in Swedish. We also had to form two interview templates for the employee in Swedish and English. The templates for the managers were both in Swedish and in English even though all managers were located in Örebro because one of the managers does not speak Swedish. This may have had consequences for the study because when translating the interview questions to another language some words may not have the exact same meaning.
When we formed the templates, we decided to divide them into three parts. The first part included questions about the factors that may affect the relationship between managers and employees taken from LMX theory. The second part included questions regarding how the relationship between the managers and the employees are right now and the last part was about communication (see appendix 1-4). The following parts in this method chapter will describe how the LMX model and theory was used when we formed our interview questions.

3.4.1 LMX antecedents
As described in the above some antecedents have shown to have significant effect on the LMX-relationship and we therefore decided to include questions about manager expectations of employee’s success, contingent reward behavior, transformational leadership and trust in the interview templates (see appendix 1-4). To get answers regarding the manager expectations of employee’s success we asked what expectations the managers have on the employees and how the expectations are communicate. When it comes to contingent reward behavior, we formed questions regarding feedback, appreciation and rewards for performance. The aspects which characterize transformational leadership is communicate the company's vision to the employees, encouraging the employees to accept the group goals and inspire and motivate the employees, therefore questions was formed considering these aspect. Finally, when it comes to trust we formed questions to find out what the managers and employees think about trust and how the managers show the employees that they have trust in them.

3.4.2 Relationship and LMX 7
LMX 7 is a method for measuring the relationship and it is used in quantitative researches, so for this study it was not appropriate. However, it was relevant for this study to see how the managers and employees at Atlas Copco perceive the relationships and therefore, one questions from LMX 7 was chosen because it was seen as appropriate for this study. We wanted to see how the respondents, both managers and employees, would characterize the relationship. The original question from LMX 7 was:

1) How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader? (Your member)

The respondents could answer the question on a scale from extremely ineffective to extremely effective but because this is a qualitative research we choose to ask it like an open questions so the respondent themselves could explain how they would characterize the relationship (see appendix 1-4).

It was also relevant to ask questions regarding how the managers work to create and maintain the relationship and what they would do if they had the opportunity to work more on the relationship with the employees. These questions were asked to see if the managers have different ways of working with employees in Örebro and abroad.

3.4.3 Communications
Communication is an important aspect when it comes to virtual work and it was therefore essential for this study to form questions regarding communication. The questions handled how often managers and employees communicate, what type of communication they use and
which type of communication they prefer. We decided to ask if the respondents think the way they communicate affects the manager-employee relationship (see appendix 1-4).

3.5 Conducting the interviews

After it had been decided who, of the employees and managers we would interview we sent out e-mails to them or talked to them in person. We did this to introduce ourselves, our thesis and of course the purpose of contacting them, which was to see if they could participate in our study. Everyone whom we contacted chose to participate in our study. We then had 13 interviews planned over a period of two weeks. Five interviews were with employees located abroad, four with employees located in Örebro and four with managers located in Örebro. The interviews we conducted with employees and managers located in Örebro were all, except one, in Swedish. It was only one interview with a manager in Örebro that was conducted in English, because Swedish was not that manager’s mother tongue. The interviews with the employees abroad were conducted in English. We chose not to conduct all the interviews in English, because we thought it would be easier to conduct the interviews in Swedish when the respondents had Swedish as mother tongue. This would help us get better answers. We chose to use recording devices so the transcribing would be easier. It made it possible for us to listen to the interviews several times. While conducting the interviews we divided the questions between the interviewers so that the one that did not ask a question could take notes. Both interviewers asked follow up questions. The follow up questions to the managers was regarding the differences between how they worked with their employees abroad and in Örebro. This was something we asked about throughout the interviews with the managers although it is not written in the interview guide (see appendix 1-4). We had the same structure for the interviews conducted face-to-face and the interviews we conducted over Skype.

When conducting the interviews with managers and employees in Örebro the interviewers visited Atlas Copco and had face-to-face meetings with them. For the interviews with the employees abroad, Skype, a video-based communication tool was used instead. Skype was used, because it was seen as the best tool because it is most similar to face-to-face communication. This gave us a better setting for the interviews because we were able, in most cases, to see the respondents and they were able to see us. Two of the respondents did not have access to a video camera and in those cases we only used the talking device on Skype. The authors experienced that those interviews was not as easy to conduct compared to the interviews with video camera because we could not interpret their facial expressions and gestures. This is a negative consequence of interviewing over Skype and it might have an effect on the study.

Considering the fact that we were not able to meet all of our respondents was interesting for the purpose of this study because we then got insight in how it is to communicate and understand someone over a video-based communication tool, and it was not in all cases easy. This gave us some knowledge in how the managers and employees work. The language differences, bad technologies and sound made it hard to sometimes understand and interpret
the respondents, which led to a lot of follow up questions to understand the answer that were given to us.

As discussed earlier in the chapter we realized that the translation of the interview guides into another language was a disadvantage in the study because the same words in Swedish translated to English may not have the exact same meaning. This is something we are aware of and had in mind while we conducted the interviews. If the respondent was unsure of how he or she should answer the question or gave a answer that suggested that he or she had misinterpret the questions we asked a follow up question. We wanted to lead the respondent to answer the question in significance to our research questions and the purpose of this study. The language was a challenge because none of the respondents abroad had English as their mother tongue so all of them, more or less, broke in their native language which made it more difficult for us to understand some words. This made the transcription of the interviews a bit difficult.

3.6 Ethics
The authors of this study take ethical issues seriously and are aware of the fact that this study handles manager-employee relationship which can be a sensitive subject for the respondents. To ensure that the participant’s personal data and any information about them not would be revealed to the public we chose not to use their names in this study. Before the interviews were conducted we informed the respondents about the anonymity in this study so they would feel free to answer the question sincerely because the answers would not be able to trace back to them.

Bryman & Bell (2005, pp. 227) exemplify a number of requirements that should be followed when conducting research and interviews. One of the requirements is about information, and how the respondent must be informed about the study in the most honest way. The second requirement is a consent requirement, which means that the respondent participates out of free will. If, during the interview, a respondent do not longer want to participate they can chose to discontinue the interview. The next requirements are about confidentiality and anonymity, and states that the information about the respondents participating in the study, for example names, titles, and working positions should be handling with care and stored in a way that unauthorized people do not have access to them. A usage requirement is also important and this requirement is about how the information that has been gathered for the purpose of the study is not used otherwise then in this specific study. The last requirements states that you should not give out false pretenses to the respondents participating in the study and always give correct information before, during and after, the interviews were conducted. These are requirements that we aimed to follow so that this study should be as ethical correct as possible.

3.7 Reliability, validity, generalizations, transparence
Some researchers state that it is possible to generalize findings from qualitative data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, pp. 277) but it can be problematic to generalize from a limited sample studied
in a specific context (Bryman & Bell, 2005). In this study only a few interviews were conducted and the aim was to study a specific context, the marketing department, so the generalizability can therefore be questioned. But the focus for this study was to find out how the marketing department work on their relationships and it was therefore not relevant for this study to be able to generalize the result to other contexts.

Reliability and validity originates from the natural science and are used for quantitative research and therefore it has been questioned if they have any value in determining if a qualitative method is good or not (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, pp. 270). We were aware of the fact that it may be difficult in qualitative research to replicate the research because it is not possible to study the exact same context due to the changes in the social environment (Bryman & Bell, 2005, pp. 306). We will therefore not put any emphasis on them. Instead we will highlight the matter of transparency. We have as detail as possible tried to explain how this study was conduct to increase the quality of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2010, pp. 320).

According to Bryman & Bell (2005, pp.306) intern reliability is about how the researchers agree on how to interpret the material that have been collected. It is important that the result from the interviews are interpreted in the same way to get the best results (Bryman & Bell, 2005, pp. 94) and that is why both authors have been present during the interviews and worked together with all the material gathered from the interviews.

3.8 Presentation of the empirical material

When compiled the empirical results we used a narrative method (Bryman & Bell, 2010) and used quotes from the interviews to illustrate the results gathered. A problem arose when we choose quotes to present because the interviews that had been done were conducted in two different languages. Therefore some quotes had to be translated from Swedish into English. Trough those translations a reinterpretation of the original quotes were made by the authors of this study. We are aware of how some quotes are an interpretation and translation from the original quotes made in Swedish. The original quotes are to be found the enclosed section of this paper (see appendix 5). When conducting the interviews in English, which was no one of the respondents’ native language, some quotes are not grammatically correct but we chose to include them anyway without correcting the errors. This because it is important when using quotes that they are exactly as the person who said the quote, even though it might not be grammatically correct. The respondents in our study were anonymous and therefore we did not write their names after the quotes. When presenting the quotes in our result we gave each respondent a letter instead, so we would be able to keep track of which of the respondents who had said which quote and to illustrate that there are different people that we have been quoted. However, when it comes to the rest of the result we decided not to show that different respondents had said different things by giving the answer a number or a letter in the text because some of the answer would be easy for Atlas Copco to track and find out which person said what. For ethical reasons we choose to show the result more in a telling way.
3.9 Strengths and limitations

One of the limitations of this study was that the employees we interviewed were located all around the world. It was therefore not possible for us to conduct all the interviews face-to-face. This can have made it more difficult to interpret the answer from the respondents. Other limitations of this study were that the authors were not able make choices on their own because they needed to get an approval from the mentor at Atlas Copco. The result might have been affected, because the authors had to adapt and consider the requests from the company.

Some of the interview questions may have been sensitive as stated earlier and because of that, we cannot tell for sure that we got honest answers, which may be a limitation for the study. Another aspect that may affect the result of a study is the objectivity of the authors. Even though we tried to be as objectives as possible it is always a risk in qualitative researches that interview material may be interpreted in another way than the respondent meant. The reason that we got the opportunity to conduct our study at Atlas Copco was that one of the authors had worked there. This can also have some effect on the result because it may be more difficult to be objective. It was therefore especially important for this study that both authors worked closely together with the interviews, empirical material and the analysis. By doing this we could reduce the risk of one author interpreting interview material wrongly.

One of the authors of the study has, as earlier mentioned, worked at the company, which may also be of strength in this study. This means that we had a good insight to the company and how they worked so it became rather easy to find an interesting subject for this study. One of the authors has therefore been in contact with some of the people participating in this study, which facilitated the contact with company and the interviews. The other author had no connection to the company or the employees, which was also good for the study because she could be more objective.
4 Presentation of the result

There are some routines and guidelines at Atlas Copco, which describe how the managers should work. There is also a coach program for managers at SDE, but this is nothing that controls how the managers work daily; it is very individual how the managers work. When it comes to routines and guidelines for how the manager should work on the relationship with the employees there were not any specific routines and guidelines. There were only some general guidelines saying how the people in the organization should act with each other. The guidelines for example stated that people should respect each other, and that it should be individual meetings once a year. Atlas Copco leaves the responsibility to the managers so it is up to them what they want to do.

4.1 Manager's expectations on employee's success

The general expectations the managers have on the employees is that they should live up to the company's vision and mission, but there are different expectations for different people in the marketing department. The four teams in the marketing department have different roles and therefore there are different expectations on the employees. For some managers there are also different expectations on the employees in Örebro and abroad. It may be a little bit lower expectations on the employees abroad because some of them need more guidance according to the managers, it depends on the fact that people from some cultures are more likely to take own initiatives than others and some want more approval. But there are also in some cases higher expectations on the employees abroad because it not possible for the managers to see what they do abroad and also because they are seen as representatives for the marketing department in the other countries. Some employees abroad also have a second manager located in the same place as them so there can be some expectations from them. But some managers mean that it is not the geographical distance that affects the expectations;

"I would not say that the geographical location influences the expectations from them, it is actually the role they have within the organization that determines the expectations" (A)

The expectations on the employees, no matter where they are located, should be told by the manager within 6–9 months after they have been employed. The other way of communicating the expectations, which most of the managers use, is during team meetings and individual meetings. The vision and mission is a way for the employees to get knowledge about the expectations. In some cases the mission for the whole team is established together, which also makes the employees aware of the expectations. They can also get information by e-mail and verbally. The expectations are communicated to all the employees but not that much in all cases, some employees are seen as having quite senior roles and therefore doesn’t need it communicated. Although the expectations are communicated differently by the managers all the employees are aware and know what expectations they have on them, but the expectations are very different from employee to employee. For example, this is the expectations for one employee Örebro;

"Take own responsibility, take own initiatives, of course do what is expected to be done, come with own ideas and be creative" (B)
Even though some managers mean that, there is no difference in how the employees receive the expectations in Örebro or abroad, there actually are some differences. The job description is a way of communicating the general expectations for the employees abroad. They also receive the mission in writing at the beginning of each year, so they can go back and read the mission again, for guidance. There are some cultural differences, some want more guidance and it affects how the expectations are communicated. One manager describes it like this:

"They expect culturally that I will tell them what they should focus on.” (C)

The employees abroad have variable salary, which also clarifies the expectations. The employees in Örebro instead get it communicated more spontaneous in a verbal fashion because it is easier when they are located at the same place as their managers.

4.2 Contingent reward behavior

4.2.1 Feedback

The marketing department has a manifest that state how feedback to the employees should be given as soon as possible and if possible in a face-to-face manner. What could been seen is that the feedback is given in many ways to the employees and it differs between the managers in how much and in what way they communicate the feedback. The feedback is given face-to-face, by e-mail, telephone calls, Skype, Sametime (chat) and also during individual meetings, monthly meetings or during the appraisal once a year. For the employees in Örebro a lot of feedback is given verbally and more spontaneous whereas the employees abroad receive feedback in a more structured way, for example in meetings, by e-mail or by telephone calls. Some of the managers feel that telephone calls are better for providing feedback to the employees abroad for the reason that e-mails can easily be misunderstood, especially if the feedback is negative. An e-mail is not as rich communication tools compared to the telephone. However, in one team the employees abroad get a lot of feedback by e-mail;

"The ones who are located in the other factories, it may actually be that it is much mail, partly because of the time difference, It is easier I think, to communicate mail were I have control and they can read several times, compared to telephone with language problems and trying to communicate something that can be assume” (C)

The manager acknowledges that e-mails are as not as rich as other communication tools and feel it is a pity that it is mostly e-mails which are used to the employees abroad. The manager thinks that the feedback needs to be more human.

How often the managers provide the employees with feedback vary, some everyday and some less frequent. The managers try to give the same amount of feedback to employees in Örebro and abroad but also acknowledge that there is a difference. The time difference may hinder the communication to employees abroad. The distance also makes it hard for the managers to see the daily performance, which affects that feedback cannot be given as frequent as for the employees in Örebro. But most of all, the lack of face-to-face interaction was seen by the managers as having most affect on how much feedback they provide. Most employees in
Örebro confirmed that they get feedback on a daily basis and mostly by mouth. The employees abroad are, despite that they do not receive face-to-face feedback, quite satisfied with the feedback. It is only in some cases the employee feels that the feedback is not received in time;

“Sometimes they fail; they don’t feedback in time because of the time difference, because of the distance” (D)

It is stated, by one manager, how people from different cultures respond different to feedback, in western countries people are more straight forward and giving feedback is easier. Which means that is important to take the culture in account when the managers give feedback.

4.2.2 Appreciation/recognition

The managers have rather different views on appreciations. Appreciation was for example, seen as being involved in what the employees do and show them that they have the manager’s attention. Alternatively, tell them that the teams they work in have fantastic roles in the company so they feel that they are part of something bigger and that their work contributes to the success of the whole division. Some of the managers give appreciation by telling the employees directly if they have done something good or highlight it at meetings for the whole marketing department so the employees get attention and acknowledgment. However, for some managers the appreciation is not seen as equally important.

The amount of appreciation given is the same to employees in Örebro and abroad, according to some of the managers, but the others have different opinions. It is not as easy to give appreciation to the employee abroad as for employees in Örebro, because it is not possible to see facial expressions or give hugs to the employees abroad. The employees located in other countries instead get the appreciation more by telephone, e-mail or during the appraisal. Language difference was also a factor that can make it more difficult for the managers to give appreciation to those abroad. However, it is not only the geographical distance or language that causes differences in the amount of appreciation given; it is also the personality of the employee. One manager expresses it like this;

“Different people respond different to appreciations” (A)

In general the employees abroad seems satisfied with the appreciation but some employees stated that they are rather self-motivated and do not need that much appreciation even though they do appreciate when their manager tell them that they have done a good job. What could be seen was also how employees, even though all are located in the same place as the managers, get appreciation in different ways. The employees in Örebro usually get appreciation for their work trough the daily communication with their managers. It can be both by e-mail or mouth and sometimes they get appreciation in group. In most cases, they were satisfied with the appreciation given to them but in some cases when the employee’s work is rather independent, there is a lack of appreciation from the managers.

4.2.3 Rewards

The salary is the main reward for the employees, but there is a difference between the employees in Örebro and abroad. For the employees in Örebro the managers are responsible
for the salary, but for those abroad the salary is not decided directly by the managers in Örebro. The employees abroad have another manager as mentioned earlier and the managers in Örebro only do an assessment of the employees work and suggest to the managers abroad what the salary, or possible increase should be. This causes challenges according to one manager:

“Obviously it’s easier to notify success is next to you, observe their work them on a daily basis, understanding of what they are doing. People abroad is tougher sometimes, you know people are give their best effort but for some reason the result is just not there. If you judge them only based on the result you might miscalculate their performances” (A)

Another difference is that some of the employees abroad have variable salaries, which are based on performance. The managers did not always see this as good, it would be easier for them if all employees had the same salary and bonus system, and it would be fairer to have it that way. The differences in salaries are because countries have different systems and cultures, which can have an influence:

“But think that it also depends much on the culture. It would be easier for me to have the same, but it is not so. You are born in to a system so it works better if I adjust after them instead of that I try to adjust the world after what works for me” (E)

When it comes to getting rewards based on accomplishments, the employees abroad feel that it is something good. The employees who have variable salaries like it and the ones that do not have it are satisfied without it.

There are also some bonus systems for the employees, which are decided by the company and these bonuses are something the employees in Örebro get as well. An employee in Örebro feel that he/she are not able in any greater extent influence the outcome the bonus are based on and therefore the bonus is nothing that the employee think about much in the daily work. For the employees in Örebro the salary is seen as an important reward. Some think that their salary is based on accomplishment, which is good. A number of the employees think that it is good to have performance based salaries but some of them do not like or want performance based salaries.

4.3 Transformational leadership

4.3.1 Communicating the company's vision

The managers communicate the vision in different ways. One team does work daily with the vision so the employees get a lot of communication about the vision. Other managers communicate the vision at yearly meetings, during the appraisal, during department meetings or by e-mail. The vision can also be found on the intranet and in an Atlas Copco book.

“Every boss/managers are responsible to communicate vision/mission to his subordinates” (A)
The managers communicate the vision in the same way to employees in Örebro and abroad, no matter what communication tool they use. But there can be some difference in how much exposure of the vision the employees get from their work environment. There are more meetings in Örebro than abroad, which increases the communication of the vision. One manager also state that it is difference in how much the vision/mission needs to be communicated. It is more important to inform the employees abroad because of the fact that they cannot meet every day. In some cases, the managers talked more about the mission and financial goals than the vision.

The vision is something that all employees abroad are aware of and think that they get enough information about. The employees in Örebro also knew about the vision but no one could describe the vision in detail. None of the managers are, according to the employees, talking about the vision in any greater extent. It they want to know more about the vision they can look in the collection of documents, but that is something that is done on their own initiative.

4.3.2 Encouragement to accept the group goals
It is difference in how the managers encourage the employees to accept the group goals and how much they do it. For one manager it a continuously process, if something is not working you handle it when it occurs. The team spirit is also important and one manager tells the employees that they are a part of the marketing department and that the division’s success partially is their responsibility to encourage them to accept the goals. In one case the manager tries to be clear on what should be done and do not feel that is necessary with encouragement to get the employees to accept the group goals. It was, stated by one manager that it is no problem with acceptance, there are no controversial goals so there is no one that are questioning them. There should not be any difference in how much encouragement given to the employees in Örebro and abroad according to the managers, but some smaller differences, could be seen in this study.

The employees abroad confirm that they get encouragement to accept the group goals by their manager in different ways. The encouragement can for example take place at meetings and at face-to-face meetings a couple times a year. That the managers trust the employees to deliver all the results was also seen as encouragement. Some of the employees abroad feel that they encourage themselves and that was more important for them. However, encouragement from the manager was also experienced as good. Most employees in Örebro feel that their managers encourage them to accept the group goals. In some cases, the managers do this by including the employees in establishing the goals, which was experienced as good. However, sometimes it was not that much encouragement in the daily work; instead, there was more of a directive of what should be done, which had a negative effect on the motivation according to an employee.

4.3.3 Inspiration and motivation
The managers have somewhat different ways of inspire and motivate the employees. Build trust, be honest, open, care about the employees and listen to them are some examples. Recognition is also seen as motivational and acknowledges the existence of every single employee is important. Golden moments, is a topic during weekly meetings, were the
employees can talk about something good that have happened, both work related and private, are used for inspiration and motivation. That the employees are working for the marketing department will also show the employees that they are needed for the organization and are appreciated which should motivate and inspire them according to one manager. Another manager thinks it is important to show the employees that their work contributes to the division’s success state;

"Hope that it inspire and motivate, I feel it and assumes that others think the same” (C)

The employees abroad have different views on how the managers motivate and inspire them. Training and encouragement when they have done something good is one way. Another way that the managers use according to one employee abroad is by comparing Atlas Copco to its competitors. When the manager is seen as a strong person with lots of passion for the job it also motivates the employees. But motivation and inspiration beyond getting clear instructions about the job was seen as unnecessary by some of the employees abroad. Motivation and inspiration occurs by telephone, Skype or Sametime because the managers and employees abroad cannot physically meet often.

There are also differences how the employees in Örebro experience the motivation and inspiration from their managers. What motivates and inspire the employees in some cases are the daily communication they have with their manager, that they have an open dialog and that the manager listens. To get recognition is also good that the manager is available. In other cases the manager more point out how a special task is an important responsibility and a challenge, but this was not seen as fully motivating and inspirational. However, some employees are really satisfied with the manager because they can look up them.

Some managers mean that there is no difference in how they work to inspire and motivate the employees in Örebro and abroad, but some difference was seen, this because the managers cannot inspire and motivate the employees abroad in a face-to-face fashion. It was also stated by some managers that personal differences affects how much inspiration and motivation the employee need and what type. It is experiences, personality and culture that make these differences.

4.4 Trust
The managers show the employees trust differently. For example, by delegating and in some cases the manager is more involved in the employees work in Örebro compared to those abroad and therefore it is not as much delegation in Örebro. Another way was to give the employees trust in the beginning of the relationship and then it is the employees' task to keep the managers trust. Also by encourage the employees to speak up at meetings trust are built along with sharing a lot of information with the employees. The situational leadership was seen as part of trust by one manager and that the employees need to be shown trust in different ways depending on their person and the situation. It was stated that there are potential for improvements and that trust can be better in some manager-employee
relationships. However, all managers think that trust is important and that it is important for the relationship between managers and their employees;

"If trust is not there, that kind of relationship is not going to work" (A)

Some manager state that there is no difference in how trust is shown for employees in Örebro and abroad, but other think that it might be some differences. The differences can be caused by the geographical distance because meeting the employees was seen as important. It was stated that there are cultural difference in how outspoken people are which can affect the trust. It was also stated by an employee in Örebro that the culture has an effect on the trust;

“Think that we who are sitting in Sweden have gotten a great trust from the managers compared to other countries, greater authority to take responsibility in some situations” (F)

Employees both in Örebro and abroad think that trust is very important. When it comes to the employees abroad all of them feel that they have a trusting relationship with their manager. Some mean that trust is especially important when they cannot physically meet their manager. The employees abroad think that trust is shown by the manager in different ways, for example by not always controlling what they are doing and that the manager tells them directly that they trust them. In general, the employees in Örebro feel that the managers show them that they have trust in them by delegating. Most employees feel that the managers trust them, but trust could in one case be improved.

"Trust is not something you get for free, but something you have to work for” (G)

4.5 Relationship
The managers characterize their relationship with their employees in quite different ways, for example as a collegial relationship, more discussions than orders and personal but not private. One manager stated that the relationship was good but wished that there was more time for the employees. The challenge is to find the time for the employees because of all the meetings;

"You should be present in everything, it is easy that the human being in the company are forgotten, or is put aside so the relationship building are put aside” (H)

It was also stated by one manager that people have different styles and you should treat people the same way that you would like to be treated, in this case the focus was more on the leadership than on the relationship.

Most managers mean that the relationship are not the same with employees is Örebro and abroad. The differences in the relationships, were for example seen as to be caused by cultural differences. Some cultures are more hierarchical which affects the relationships and people are more outspoken in some cultures than others, which also have an effect. Also, the language differences made it more difficult to develop relationships with employees abroad.
The fact that the managers could not meet the employees abroad on a daily basis was seen to have a significant effect on the relationship. The relationships with the employees in other countries were seen as more working relationships, not as personal as with the employees in Örebro. One manager, when asked the question if he or she had the same relationship with the employees abroad and in Örebro gave this answer:

"No, per definition it does not work because there you have to be much clearer" (C)

The employees abroad feel in general that they have good working relationships with their managers and some also state that the relationships are like friendships. The relationships were for example described as; “very good and very open”, “trust and respect based friendship” and "good". Some of the employees have worked with their manager before they became manager, which was positive for the relationship, although they at that time were located in different places. When it comes to the employees in Örebro, they in general describe the relationships with their managers in a positive manner. An example is;

"The relationship I have with my manager today is one of the best working relationships I had under my working time” (F)

4.5.1 How the managers create and maintain the relationships with the employees

Communication is a way for the managers to create and maintain the relationship and to encourage and support the employees. Most managers’ work on their relationships with the employees through socialization. Meeting the employees face-to-face was seen as very important and when the question was asked if the manager create and maintain the relationship with employees abroad and in Örebro in the same way the answer from two managers was;

"In the same way, except that we cannot meet each other as much, I cannot read them, it is harder on the phone” (H)

“The physical meeting is very important for building relationship; it is very hard do to it over the phone” (E)

Most managers have the same way of creating and maintaining the relationship with the employees abroad but they know that they cannot meet the employees abroad a lot and it is a difference. The telephone meetings with the employees abroad are more formal. It was also mentioned by one manager that there are different ways of creating a relationship depending on the personality of the employee. Some people are more open to creating a transparent working relationship. It was also important to take into account that people from different cultures are different.

Most of the employees abroad think that the mangers work with their relationship by being open, willing to share knowledge, experience and interesting things with their employees. Some employees also feel that the manager sometimes is talking to them in a more friendship like way and about things that are not work related. The employees abroad also mentioned that the managers for creating and maintaining the relationship used the individual meetings.
Some of the employees in Örebro talked about the individual meetings too and that the managers work to maintain the relationship by allowing them to talk about work related and private issues during those meetings. Otherwise the employees in Örebro feel that their managers work to create and maintain the relationship with them by communicating often, in some cases have daily contact and also have a social relationship with them outside the office.

If the managers have the opportunity to work on the relationship with employees, they will do it in different ways. For example do some more coaching so that some people become more outspoken, because, some are less outspoken due to cultural background. Have more time for the employees, be more involved, have more chitchat and give more feedback were also mentioned. One manager wanted better videoconference equipment, so it is possible to sit together in big groups with the people abroad and in Örebro. Most managers also stated that they want to meet the employees abroad more often, not only for work but do other activities as well, the travel restriction were seen as negative in this aspect.

4.6 Communication

Most managers have individual and group meetings, telephone conference, once a week with all the employees no matter where they are located. Otherwise, there are some differences with the communication to the employees in Örebro and abroad. Most managers communicate to those in Örebro daily and normally face-to-face or e-mail, but it can also be telephone calls. The communication tools that are used with the employees abroad are mostly e-mail and telephone but it can also be by Sametime, Skype and SMS. The communication is in general not that frequent to the employees abroad but there are some cases when the managers have daily communication with them as well. The communication can sometimes be less to all the employees because the managers have a lot of other meetings or travel a lot.

There are also some differences in which communication tools used and preferred by the managers. Most managers prefer using telephone to the employees abroad because it was seen as a richer communication tool, but others prefer Skype, Sametime or e-mail. Even though most managers prefer telephone, a lot of e-mails were used because it was easier, considering the time difference for example. In one case, e-mail was prefer, because it was seen easier and reduce misunderstandings that can happen due to language differences. If possible, all managers prefer to use face-to-face communication and thought it was the best way to communicate. For the employees abroad the face-to-face communication was also seen as the best way;

“Face-to-Face is the most effective ways to communicate but it so pity that we cannot meet very often, it is very costly” (I)

The manager usually try to travel and meet their employees abroad at least twice a year ,two meetings with the whole marketing department, but with the current world financial problems Atlas Copco have travel restrictions for the managers and employees which have lessen these meetings. One manager state that these meetings are really important to feel the connection to each other and the manager is a little bit worried when there is a current travel restriction.
Some of the employees abroad have noticed the cultural differences when they communicate with their groups. The employees are from different cultures and no one have English as the native language; this makes it harder to understand each other when they not physically meet and that is a challenge when working at distance. An employee also states that the way you communicate with others reflects your personality.

4.6.1 Does the communication affect the relationship
Most managers think that communication with the employees can affect the relationship, especially if there is a lack of face-to-face communication. It was seen as easier to have a closer relationship with the employees the managers met daily. Even though the managers travel to meet the employees abroad and do other things with them that are not work related, it is a more formal manager-employee relationship. It was not seen as easy to meet once a year and just have an informal talk. One manager also described how you cannot call and ask an employee abroad what he/she is doing, because it would create confusion if the conversation is about the employees' private life;

“To do that you have to meet often and maybe face-to-face, otherwise it will be foolish trying to believe that you are friends at distance” (C)

Some of the managers state that it is the employees' personalities and the cultural differences that affect the relationship more than the communication and geographical distance.

The employees located abroad think the way of communication has some effect on their relationship with the managers. In general they feel that the communication is important and a good way to keep a good relationship. However, some employees abroad feel that it is not always easy to communicate with the time difference and when the manager is very busy. The employees in Örebro also feel that the way they communicate with their managers has an effect on the relationship because they get to know each other better when they communicate. They felt that if they were to communicate less with their managers it would have a negative effect on the relationship. The employees state that there is not enough to communicate by phone or e-mail; they need to actually meet their manager as well.

4.7 Working at a distance
Overall, the situation with working at a distance was experienced as good by the employees abroad but some feel that the distance sometime is a problem. The problem is that they are not able to meet their colleagues and managers and there can easily be misunderstandings. The time difference was another challenge that all employees mentioned. For some working at a distance, isolation also can be a problem;

"It is huge difference, you feel very cut off" (B)

The culture were seen to have an influence too when people are working at a distance. Some cultures are more hierarchical and people in some cultures want more support and control. It was seen by some managers as challenging to work globally with the cultural differences, it was not always the distance that was most challenging even though the distance also was seen as having some impact on the work.
4.8 Summary result

There are some routines and guidelines how the manager should work at Atlas Copco but no specific routines or guidelines when it comes to how the managers should work on the relationship with their employees.

When it comes to expectations, there were some differences between what expectations the managers have on their employees located in Örebro and abroad. The expectations, was in some cases lower on the employees abroad because they need more guidance due to their culture. However, in some cases there are higher expectations on employees abroad because of the fact that the managers are not able to see what they do. There are also differences in how the employees abroad and in Örebro receive their expectations. The expectations, were communicated differently due to the geographical distance, the manager’s characteristics and because of cultural variations.

The managers give feedback in different ways and more or less. The feedback to employees in Örebro is more frequent and in a face-to-face manner. The distance and the time difference affected the communication to employees abroad because it made it harder for managers to provide feedback. It also differs between how people from different cultures respond to feedback. When it comes to appreciation, it was something that the managers did not find equally important. The managers do provide appreciation differently and some felt that is harder to give appreciation to employees located abroad. The difference in geographical location and manager’s personality was not the only aspects affecting the amount of appreciation, but also personality of the employee and language differences is contributed factors. When it comes to rewards based on performances there are some differences in salary systems between employees abroad and in Örebro. It is harder for the managers to see performances when the employees are located abroad which can lead to that, they misevaluate the employee performances.

The vision is communicated differently by the managers. There are also differences in how much the vision and mission needs to be communicated, because it is more important for the employees abroad because the managers cannot meet them every day. However, the employees in Örebro get more exposure of the vision at meetings. There are also differences in how the managers encourage the employees to accept the group goals and how much the employees are seen to need it. There were not any greater differences in how much encouragement was given to the employees in Örebro and abroad. The managers also have some different ways in how they inspire and motivate their employees. The motivation and inspiration for employees in Örebro is more face-to-face than for those abroad. Personality and culture were also seen to affect how much and what type of inspiration and motivation the employee need.

Trust is something that every person interviewed felt was important for the relationship between managers and employees. There are some differences in how the managers show trust. These differences can be caused by the geographical distance and different cultures. When It comes to the relationships the managers characterizes their relationships with their employees differently and believe that their relationships are not the same with employees is
Örebro and abroad. These differences can be caused by cultural differences and distance, but in general, the employees feel that they have good relationships with their managers. Most of the managers work on their relationships with the employees through socialization, and meeting the employee face-to-face were seen as very important. The manager does have the same way of creating relationships with their employees, regardless of their location. However, the managers feel that there is a difference when they are not able to meet some employees. It was also differences in how the relationships were worked on because the employee’s personalities.

The managers communicate to employees in Örebro and abroad differently. In Örebro there are more face-to-face and frequent communication. There are also differences in what communication tools are used and preferred by the managers, depending on their personal preferences. Some differences in communication was noticed due to culture and language variations as well. Both managers and employees feel that the way they communicate affect the relationships, mostly the distance was seen to have an effect because of the lack of face-to-face interactions.
5 Analysis
There are some routines and guidelines at Atlas Copco, that describe how the managers should work but they do not have clear routines or guidelines for how the managers can work on the relationship. In the leadership, the relationships have become more in focus (Drath, 2001 in Uhl-Bien, 2006) and this is something that Atlas Copco should be aware of. The problem with having no guidelines for the relationship is that other things can be seen as more important and the focus will not be on the relationship. This is something that is important to take into consideration, because, a high quality relationship contribute to better work performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment for the people in the organization (Golden & Veiga, 2008). If focus is more on the relationship, it can improve the organizational functioning (Dulebohn et al. 2012). The relationship not is included in Atlas Copco’s leadership model and this might also have some effect on how much focus there is on the relationship. When the relationship is not included, there is a risk that focus is elsewhere.

5.1 Manager's expectations on employee's success
The expectations on the employees depend in general on the roles they have in the company. Because the manager’s expectations of employee's success have a significant influence on LMX relationship (Dulebohn et al. 2012) this can mean that the relationships are different from each other because of the different roles. What could be seen in this study was that some managers have different expectations on the employees located in Örebro and abroad. There were some lower expectations on the employees abroad because they were seen to need or want more guidance and this was linked to cultures differences in how much initiatives people from different cultures take. Higher expectations contributes to a better LMX relationship because it influence the quality of interaction between the manager and the employee (Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993) and the result therefore mean that lower expectations due to cultural differences can influence the relationship between managers and employees abroad in a negative way. The culture, has been seen to have some effect on the LMX in previous research as well (Dulebohn et al. 2012). However, there were some higher expectations on the employees abroad because the managers cannot see the employee work, which indicates that it differences due to geographical distance. The higher expectations on the employees abroad may have a positive influence on the quality of their LMX relationship. However, this study could not show that the manager’s expectations on employees abroad and in Örebro are very different from each other and can therefore not draw to the conclusion that the geographical distance has a large influence on what expectations the managers have on the employee.

It looks like the managers communicate the expectations in a good way to the employees because all of them knew what expectations the managers had on them. Researchers have found that respect, trust and mutual obligation is hard to maintain if the managers do not explain the expectations he or she has on the employees, but if the manager does, it can contribute to that employees experience a higher quality of LMX relationship with their managers (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). This result indicates that the communication of expectations had some effect on the LMX relationship.
and that it is positive to communicate them in a good way. So because all employees in this study were aware of the expectations the LMX should the affected in a good way. There were differences, in how they are communicated depending on the geographical distance. To employees abroad it is more in writings through the vision/mission and in Örebro the communication of expectations is more spontaneous and in a face-to-face fashion. This indicated that the LMX might be affected differently, due to the geographical distance. It has been shown in research that managers and employees are also more likely to have a high quality LMX if the expectations are high from both sides in the beginning of the relationship (Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993). This can indicate that it is important to communicate high expectations to the employees in the beginning of the relationship. The distance can also have an effect on the quality of the LMX relationship because the communication in general is less to employees abroad.

The expectations, were also communicated differently due to cultural differences, because some people want more guidance and therefore get their expectations in writing so they can go back and read the mission or vision again. So culture can also have some effect on the LMX, and this is something that previous research also has found (Dulebohn et al. 2012).

How the manager’s expectations of employees in some ways might be affected by the geographical distance and cultural differences are illustrated in figure 4.

Figure 4. The linkage between manager's expectations of employees and LMX.

The managers communicate the expectations differently which can mean that the characteristics of the manager influence LMX too (figure 4) and this have Dulebohn et al. (2012), also seen when they studied previous research on LMX. In one case the expectations was not communicated that much at all, no matter where the employees were located, because the employees were seen to have roles in the company that did not need so much communications about the expectations. This can mean that the employees may not know if the manager has high expectations on them which can indicate that the LMX relationship not are as good as it can be. The manager's expectations of employee's success can improve employee self-efficacy and therefore improve work behaviors (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and it
can therefore be important that the managers at the marketing department have high expectations on all employees and communicate them so that they will get the positive outcomes.

5.2 Contingent reward behavior

5.2.1 Feedback
The marketing department has a manifest that state that feedback to the employees should be given as soon as possible, which can be seen as good from and LMX perspective because feedback, a contingent reward behavior, has been positively linked to a high quality LMX relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). There are though differences how often the employees receive feedback. Most employees located in Örebro receive daily feedback but it is not always that frequent to the employees abroad. The causes were the time difference and that it was harder for the managers to see the employees' daily performances and of course the lack of face-to-face interaction. The result indicates that geographical distance can affect the feedback given and therefore influences the LMX relationship (see figure 5). It can affect the LMX relationship between managers and employees abroad in a negative way because it is more difficult to give employees abroad feedback. Feedback is important because employees who receive feedback are more likely to feel obligated to their managers and then experience a higher quality relationship with them (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). Therefore, the feedback is relevant to work on because it is important to give good feedback to those abroad even if the distance makes it more difficult.

Figure 5. The linkage between feedback and LMX.

What could been seen is that the feedback is given in many ways to the employees and it differs between managers how much and in what way they communicate feedback to their employees. There were also some employees in Örebro that felt that they were not given enough feedback from their manager. This can mean that the way the managers chose to give feedback also affect the LMX relationship and the manager’s characteristics have, as stated earlier, an effect on the LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). It was seen in this study that it differs
how people from different cultures respond to feedback, in western countries people were seen as more “straight forward” and giving feedback was easier. This suggests that the cultural differences affect the feedback given which can have some effect on the manager-employee relationship. This supports other finding saying that cultural dimensions affect LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). That managers characteristics and culture affect the LMX is also illustrated in figure 5.

5.2.2 Appreciation
It was shown in this study that the managers have different ways of giving appreciation to the employees. Some managers do not give as much appreciation as the others because it was not seen as very necessary. Appreciation for accomplishments is a contingent reward behavior (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and is positively linked to a high LMX relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999) which means that it is important to show appreciation to get a good manager-employee relationship. When some managers have the opinion that appreciation is not very necessary it can have a negative effect on the relationship.

One way the managers show appreciation was to tell the employees that the teams they work in have a fantastic role in the company to get the employee to feel that their work contributes to the success of the whole division. This can be seen as an indirect way of showing appreciation. It can be argued that it is better to be more direct and tell the employees if they have done something good. If it is not experienced as appreciation, by the employees, it may affect the LMX relationship in negative way. If they instead feel appreciated they ought to feel more obligated to their manager (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002 in Dulebohn et al. 2012) and this will benefit the company. In some cases when the employees work was independent the managers did not give that much appreciation. It is important for the manager to take this into consideration and give all employees appreciation no matter what job role they have so all relationships are affected in a positive way. Even though the managers have different views on appreciation most of the employees felt that they got appreciation from their managers which can be seen as good from an LMX perspective.

Figure 6. The linkage between appreciation and LMX.
In this study it was found that the geographical distance may have some impact on the appreciation given which can affect LMX (see figure 6). It was seen as more difficult by some managers to give appreciations to those abroad because the managers are not able to meet them face-to-face. This indicate that it is easier to get a high quality LMX with the employees located in Örebro. Also, the language differences and the personalites of the manager and employee affected the amount of appreciation given, which indicate that these factors also have an effect on the LMX relationship. The manager’s characteristics influence, as described earlier, the LMX but also the employee’s characteristics can have an influence on LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012), which can be seen when it comes to appreciation. People need appreciation more or less appreciation and this suggest that the employee characteristics affect LMX. All the factors that influence the appreciation and its relation to LMX can be seen in figure 6.

5.2.3 Rewards
The managers located in Örebro do not decide the salaries for the employees abroad by themselves. This is something that can create difficulties because the salary then may not be connected in a clear way to the employees work performances for the marketing department in Örebro. The managers contingent reward behavior is something that should make it clear for the employee what is expected, and what rewards they will be given if they achieve those expectations (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999). This means that there can be some problems when the salary not always can be connected to the performance in a clear way. This can influence the LMX relationship in a negative way. The salary systems were also different for employees because of where they were located. It was most cultural differences that made it difficult to have the same salary and bonus systems for all the employees at the marketing department. It was clear that the employees had different views on rewards and salary as well. The managers and the company had made adaptation to cultural differences and politics in the countries the employees operate in. So it could be seen that culture influence LMX as Dulebohn et al. (2012) have seen in LMX research.

The managers also stated that the distance made it harder for them to see what employees abroad perform, and this in some cases lead to misevaluation of the employees' performances. Contingent reward behavior means that the managers provide rewards and recognition for accomplishments to the employees (Dulebohn et al. 2012) which in this case are a challenge due to the geographical distance. The managers relationships with employees in Örebro and abroad then becomes different from each other, because of this. The geographical distance and culture was therefore seen in this study to have some influence on the relationship between rewards and LMX and this is illustrated in figure 7.
Also seen in this study was that not all of the employees in Örebro think that their salary is based on accomplishments, which can have a negative effect on the relationship because contingent reward behavior has been positively linked to a high LMX relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999).

### 5.3 Transformational leadership

#### 5.3.1 Communicating the company’s vision

Every manager is responsible for communicating the vision to the employees in the marketing department and this may influence the LMX relationship. To communicate the vision is part of the transformational leadership is linked to the LMX quality (Dulebohn et al. 2012). It should mean that the different ways of communicating the vision might influence the relationships differently. It can in this case be the manager’s characteristics that affect the LMX (see figure 8).
The managers claim that they communicate the vision in the same way to employees in Örebro and abroad. However, some differences were seen. There are more meetings in Örebro than abroad, which increases the communication of the vision and mission. Because transformational leadership have been shown to have a significant association with LMX quality (Dulebohn et al. 2012) the result of this study show that the differences in communication of the vision can make the managers relationships with their employees in Örebro and abroad different from each other. One manager also state that it is difference in how much the vision/mission needs to be communicated, it is more important to inform the employees abroad because of the fact that they cannot meet every day. This indicate that the employees abroad instead get better communication of the vision and it can imply that the LMX relationship is affected in a more positive way compared to those in Örebro. Even if the LMX is affected in a positive or negative way because of the geographical distance it is shown that the distance has an effect on how the vision is communicated, this is illustrated in figure 8.

For some managers, the focus were more on the mission and the financial goals than on the vision, which can have a negative effect on LMX. Transformational leadership is positively linked to high quality LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and therefore focus also needs to be on the vision and it is important for the managers to communicate the vision clearly to the employees. All employees have some knowledge about the vision but the employees in Örebro were not sure how to describe the vision in detail. This can also indicate that more communication is needed about the vision to contribute to a higher quality LMX relationship.

5.3.2 Encouragement to accept the group goals
It was seen in this study that there are not always so much encouragement from the managers to the employees to accept the group goals. This can have and negative effect on the quality of the LMX relationship because encouragement to accept the group’s goal is part of the transformational leadership and is linked to high quality LMX relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Sometimes there were more information and directive about the group goals then encouragement which can be negative for the quality of LMX.

Figure 9. The linkage between encouragement to accept the group goals and LMX.
The information from the employees regarding encouragement to accept the group goals was difficult to interpret but some smaller differences between the employees in Örebro and abroad was noticed. For example, the employees in Örebro were involved in determining the group goals, which can indicate that the distance has some effect on the quality LMX relationship (see figure 9). The personalities of the managers and employees were also something that was found to affect the encouragement given and needed. The characteristics were therefore seen to be linked to LMX (see figure 9) and this have been shown by Dulebohn et al. (2012) as well.

5.3.3 Motivation and inspiration
This study showed that the managers in general inspire and motivate the employees in quite a good way, which should indicate that it contributes to a higher LMX relationship because motivation and inspiration is a part of transformational leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) and connected to LMX quality. Some differences were found in how the managers work to inspire and motivate the employees in Örebro and abroad. The managers cannot in any greater extent inspire and motivate those abroad in a face-to-face fashion. What motivate and inspire the employees in Örebro are in some cases the daily communication they have with their manager. This may indicate that lack of face-to-face interaction influence the inspiration and motivation given to employees abroad. This can have a more negative effect on the LMX relationship with the employees abroad. It can be easier for the managers to motivate and inspire people that they can see and meet almost daily and this means that the geographical distance can have an effect on the quality of the LMX relationship (see figure 10).

It is not only distance that was found to have an effect on how the managers inspire and motivate his or her employees, it is also personal differences. There are differences in how managers inspire and motivate and how the employees perceive it. A number of employees seemed to need more inspiration and motivation by their managers. Some of the employees abroad for example, did not think it was that important to be motivated and inspired by their managers. The characteristics of the manager and the employee can therefore have an effect
on the LMX quality when it comes to inspiration and motivation (see figure 10), this also support previous research saying that characteristics influence LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Cultural differences were also found to have some influence on the inspiration and motivation which can mean that culture also have an effect on the LMX relationship in this area (see figure 10). Culture, has also been found to influence LMX in other researches (Dulebohn et al. 2012) as stated earlier.

Although the employees feel that their managers over all are good with the motivation and inspiration, it occurred in some cases that the manager more point out that a special task is an important responsibility and challenge. This was not seen as fully motivating and inspirational. This indicates that the LMX relationship can be better if the manager work on the motivation and inspiration (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999).

5.4 Manager trust

Every one of the managers and employees feel that trust is something that is very important. Some even claim that trust is even more important when working at a distance. This study showed that some managers do not think it was difficult to show the employees trust even if they were located abroad. The geographical distance though was shown to have some negative effect on the LMX (see figure 11) because it was important for some managers to meet the employees physically. Not being able to meet the employees abroad may affect the trust, which in turn affects LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). The managers state that it is not possible to maintain a good relationship only by phone calls. Trust then becomes more important with the employees abroad because it is harder to build trust and relationship over the phone according to some managers. There were also some other factors that did affect the trust in this study. The cultural differences for example (see figure 11). This indicated how the quality of the LMX relationship might be affected by cultural differences when it comes to trust and that culture is a contextual variable, which in other studies also have been shown to influence LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012).

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Figure 11. The linkage between manager’s trust in employees and LMX.
The people interviewed do have different thoughts about trust and the manager show the employees trust differently; this due to personality differences. This supports other findings showing that managers and employees characteristics affect LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). When it comes to trust and its linkage to LMX, the manager and employee characteristics had some influence as well (see figure 11).

Some manager and employees both felt that the trust between them is something that can be improved. This suggests that the LMX relationship in some cases can be improved if the trust becomes better because trust is something that has high correlation with LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012). If the trust can be enhanced, the employees' job satisfaction also can increase which in turn can make them more dedicated to their jobs and the organization (Gill 2008). Some of the managers used delegation to show the employees that they have trust in them and this can be seen as good because Dulebohn et al. (2012) mean that managers need to trust that their employees are capable to perform their assigned work tasks to be able to build high quality LMX relationships. Delegation can therefore be seen as good and this should have a positive effect on the LMX relationship.

5.5 Manager-employee relationship
What could be seen in this study was that the relationship between managers and employee in general is good but there can be improvements. The employees located abroad state that their relationships with their managers are good but the managers themselves mean that the relationships with those abroad are not as good as compared to those in Örebro even though those relationships are not bad. This suggests that the geographical distance have some effect on the manager-employees relationship and this support other researches that have found that the geographical distance can make it more challenging to build good relationships (Watson, 2007). This study showed that the daily interaction with the employees in Örebro were one factor that had made these relationships better. This study showed that managers create and maintain the relationships with the employees mostly by interacting with them; it was the social aspect and face-to-face interaction which was seen as important. Face-to-face communication is the most effective way for people in teams to interact with each other (DeRosa et al. 2004) and the result of this study support research that have found face-to-face interaction important when building relationships (Mackenzie, 2008). What also could be seen was that cultural differences and personality can have some effect on the relationship.

5.6 Leader-member exchange
The relationship, which evolves between a manager and an employee is a result of the exchange between them according to the LMX theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The result of this study suggests that the manager’s exchange is not the same with the employees in Örebro and abroad. The quality of the relationships between managers and employees in Örebro was found to be somewhat better which can indicate that the exchange between them is better in comparison to the manager-employee relationship abroad.
The geographical distance has an effect on the relationship between antecedent and LMX (see figure 12) because the relationship between managers and employees abroad had somewhat lower quality than the relationship between managers and employees in Örebro. It was found that the relationships are different from each other in some ways by the distance, but also in some ways by cultural and personality differences (see figure 12). LMX indicates that the manager does not have the same relationship with all employees and that the manager adapts and changes his or hers ways of interacting with different employees. The interaction in turn, affects the relationships and makes them different from each other (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). Considering this, it can be the way managers interact with the employees that affect the relationship. The managers may interact differently with the employees due to the geographical distance, cultural and personality difference and this can affect the LMX.

### 5.7 Communication

At the marketing department there are differences in what communication tools are used by the managers for communication with the employees in Örebro and abroad and the frequency also varies. It was clear that face-to-face communication was most preferred, and it can be due to the fact that it have been shown by researchers that face-to-face communication is the most effective way for people to interact with each other (DeRosa et al. 2004) and that was confirmed in this study. More communication took place between managers and employees in Örebro then between managers and employees abroad. Face-to-face communication also makes it possible to observe and convey facial expression and body language according to DeRosa et al. (2004) and the managers and employees at Atlas Copco thought the communication was harder when they could not see each other. This suggests that face-to-face communication is better. The travel restrictions Atlas Copco can also have some negative
affect due to the fact that the face-to-face interaction will be even less, but this was nothing that this study could verify.

A lot of e-mails were used in the communication with the employees abroad because of time difference for example, which also suggest that the communication between managers and employees abroad is not as good as the communication between managers and employees in Örebro. The communication that take place due to geographical distance can considering all this be seen as the factor that have a big effect on the relationship between antecedents and LMX (see figure 13). No one of the employees abroad had English as mother tongue, which made the communication even harder. Cultural differences were also a factor that was seen to have some effect on the effectiveness of the communication.

Figure 13. The influence communication have on the relationship between antecedents and LMX.

In this study it was seen that managers and employees in most cases preferred communication tools most similar to face-to-face interaction when it was not possible to physically meet. This can to some extent be explained by the evolutionary perspective that the form of communication most similar to face-to-face interaction should be more natural for humans (Kock, 2002 in DeRosa et al. 2004). This also explain why face-to-face communication is preferred.

The result from this study suggests that communication have some effect on the relationship between managers and employees, especially the face-to-face communication was seen as important for the relationship. This confirms that an effective communication is important for the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships stated by Zimmermann, Wit and Gill (2008, pp. 331) and that face-to-face communication is important when building relationships (Mackenzie, 2008). Even though all the employees abroad said that they have good relationships with their manager the differences in communication would suggest that there after all is some difference in the qualities of the manager-employees relationship due to the geographical distance. Some of the employees abroad also felt that it is not always easy to communicate with the managers because of the time difference and the fact that the managers
sometimes are very busy. This means that the communication is not as effective as the one between manager and employees located in the same place and this can mean that the relationship between managers and employees abroad may be more difficult to get to a high quality.
6 Conclusion

The purpose for this study was to see if a geographical distance between managers and their employees might influence the LMX relationships at the marketing department at SDE, Atlas Copco. Previous research have found that contextual variables can have an effect on the relationships between antecedents and LMX (Dulebohn et al. 2012) which was seen in this study as well. The geographical distance did affect the relationship more or less between some of the antecedents and LMX (see figure 14).

The relationship between managers and employees abroad were seen to have somewhat lower quality. It was experienced as more difficult with relationships over a geographical distance and this, support earlier findings that state that it can be challenging to build interpersonal relationships because of the distance (Watson, 2007). This study especially indicates that it is more difficult to build relationships when managers and employees are not able to meet face-to-face and the lack of face-to-face communication is a big challenge for virtual teams (DeRosa et al. 2004). A lot of the effect the geographical distance had on the relationship between antecedents and the LMX were caused by the lack of face-to-face interactions. The time difference was also a factor that did hinder the virtual work and can also have some effect on the relationship.

It is important to highlight that this study revealed how other factors such as cultural differences also can have an effect on the LMX relationship, illustrated in figure 14. Watson (2007) mean that cultural dispersion is a challenge in virtual teams because of the cross cultural collaborations, team dynamics and social cohesion, which can lead to misunderstandings and cultural clashes, and this support the result of this study. Language differences were also found in some cases influence the LMX relationship. Language is a factor that can cause problem in virtual groups. When people work at the same location and

![Figure 14. The linkage between antecedents and LMX and the contextual variables influencing the relationship between them.](image-url)

**Antecedents**

- Manager characteristics
  - Manager's expectations of employees
  - Contingent reward behavior
  - Transformational leadership
  - Leader trust

**Employee characteristics**

**Contextual variables**

- Geographical distance
- Cultural dimensions
- Language differences

**Consequences/outcomes**
speak the same language the communication and interactions are easier (Watson, 2007). Manager and employee characteristics was seen to have an effect on the LMX relationships (see figure 14). People characteristics and cultural differences are factors that researchers have found to have an impact on the LMX relationship; it can for example be seen in Dulebohn et al.’s (2012) model for LMX (see figure 1).

It has been acknowledged in earlier findings that managers of virtual teams may face different challenges than those managing traditional teams (DeRosa et al. 2004), and this was also seen in this study. It was experienced as more difficult to get the relationship to a high quality. In recent times the relationship have started to be more associated with the leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The managers should adapt and include the relationship as a part of their leadership because Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) state that the leadership becomes more successful when managers and employees create and maintain high-quality LMX relationships. This is something that Atlas Copco should take into consideration and work on.

6.1 Practical Implications
High quality relationship is a factor that is important for several positive outcomes for the organization, for example employee work performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Golden & Veiga, 2008). Therefore, it is important for organizations to have high quality LMX relationships. Most of the antecedents studied was influenced by the geographical distance which indicates that it is important to take the geographical distance into account when working on the LMX relationship in virtual teams. To have a high quality relationship with all the employees is important, but the managers should be aware of that the distance has a significant influence on the LMX relationship. The relationships with employees abroad may need to be worked on in a different way compared to the relationships with employees in Örebro. High quality LMX relationship has been shown to be important for those employees working virtually too (Golden and Veiga, 2008), so to get these positive outcomes associated with a high quality LMX managers need to find a good way to work on the relationship with their employees also when there are a geographical distance.
7 Discussion

In general the LMX relationships were found to be good at the marketing department but there were some areas that were seen to need some improvements. The relationship can be seen as an important part of the leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006) but it was not included in Atlas Copco’s leadership model and they do not have clear routines or guidelines for how the managers can work on the relationship. The model should include the relationship to make it clear for managers and also the employees that these relationships are important. Some guidelines can also be beneficial because it makes it more apparent that the relationship is important to work on. The LMX relationships is good to work on because it is important for the organizational functioning (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and can improve work performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment for the people in the organization (Golden & Veiga, 2008) and this can be beneficial for Atlas Copco. It is also important that the managers take more responsibility to get the relationship to a high quality because they have more chance to influence the relationship than their employees (Dulebohn et al. 2012)

Some managers had a more financial or task oriented focus instead of relationship focus and this may affect the relationship in a negative way. A problem that can arise in virtual work is that the conversations between managers and employees are more about their assigned tasks and issues instead of relationship building (Watson, 2007), which can be related to this issue. It is understandable that some have a financial or task oriented focus because of the global market is very competitive today (Townsend, DeMarie & Hendrickson, 1998) but the managers will benefit from focusing on the relationship as well due to the fact that is linked to several positive outcomes (Golden & Veiga, 2008).

The geographical distance have some effects on the relationship between antecedent and the quality of the LMX relationship and the managers relationships with the employees in Örebro are better and this suggests that it is more important to work on the relationship with those abroad. Especially face-to-face interaction was a factor in this study that was seen as very important for the relationship, this was also stated by Mackenzie (2008) as well. It is therefore important that the managers physically meet the employees abroad. If they can meet them, the relationship may become better and it can lead to the several positive outcomes. A good LMX relationship is important for those employees working virtually too (Golden & Veiga 2008). It was also seen in this study that culture and a person’s characteristics may affect the LMX relationships, which have been seen in previous research as well (Dulebohn et al. 2012). This is something the managers should keep in mind when working on their relationships.

7.1 Antecedents

When it comes to the antecedents that may influence the LMX relationship, it is essential to make managers aware of the fact that transformational leadership, manager’s expectations of employee’s success, contingent reward behavior and trust are aspects that are important for a high quality LMX relationship (Dulebohn et al. 2012). High expectations if for example good to have on all the employees, no matter where they are located because the manager’s expectations of the employee’s success may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy which can improve employee self-efficacy and therefore improve work behaviors (Dulebohn et al.
The communication of the expectations can also be seen as important, especially in the beginning because managers and employees are also more likely to have a high quality LMX if the expectations are high from both sides in the beginning of the relationship (Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993). The distance can have an effect on the quality of the LMX relationship because that the communication to the employees abroad occurs less than to those in Örebro. In one case the expectations was not communicated that much at all, no matter where the employees were located. This can mean that the employees do not know if the manager has high expectations on them which may indicate that the LMX relationship not are as good as it can be.

Contingent reward behavior have been positively linked to a high LMX relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999) and is therefore an important part for the managers to work on. The manager should give the employees feedback as soon as possible as the Atlas Copco manifest says. If the employees are receiving good and clear feedback, they can become more obligated to their managers and this can lead to a higher quality LMX relationship (Wayne et al. 2002 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). The managers should therefore try to increase the feedback to those abroad because the feedback because it was seen to be lacking sometimes.

More appreciations for some employees can make the relationships better. To highlight that the employee contribute to the divisions success may not always be enough. If the managers give the employees appreciation when they need it and in a good way the employees also becomes more obligated to their manager and this can lead to a higher quality LMX relationship (Wayne et al. 2002 in Dulebohn et al. 2012). It can be positive to give appreciation even though some of the employees have quite independent work roles and people said that they needed appreciation more or less because it has after all been positively linked to high LMX relationship. It also need to be highlight that the rewards for accomplishments have an effect on the relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999) and that the manager should work to give the employees reward that can be connected to the accomplishment when it is possible. That the managers at the marketing department do not directly decide the salary for the employees abroad may have a negative effect on the LMX.

Transformational leadership means for example that the manager communicates an appealing vision (Dulebohn et al. 2012) and it was seen in this study that there are potential for improvements. Some of the employees could not describe the vision fully. The managers need to find a good way of communicating the vision so all employees get good knowledge of the vision. It can also be good to be aware of that there is a difference between mission and vision. It is important to communicate the vision, not only to communicate financial goals. If the vision is communicated in a better way, it may lead to a higher LMX relationship. When it comes to encouragement to accept the group goals this study showed that it was not always so much encouragement. Encouragement, were in some cases not seen as important and this suggest that improvements can be done. If the managers increase the encouragement to accept the group goals it can contribute to higher-quality LMX relationships (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Some employees are involved in determining the group goals and this was seen as encouragement and the managers can take this into consideration. The employees is
encouraged in different ways as seen in this study and it can therefore be good to find out what encouragement the employees prefer to make it more effective.

When it comes to motivation and inspiration, the managers in general inspire and motivate the employees in a good way but some improvements can still be done. The employees sometimes feel that their managers act in a way that has a negative effect on their motivation. For example; more motivation and inspiration can be needed than just saying that a task is a great responsibility. The managers should work on how to understand what each employee need to be motivated and inspired and adapt their manager style thereafter. This is good because motivation and inspiration can influence the employees to work harder on creating high quality LMX relationships with their managers (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001, in Dulebohn et al. 2012). Some differences were also found in how the managers work to inspire and motivate the employees in Örebro and abroad. The managers could not inspire and motivate employees abroad so much in a face-to-face fashion. It can be good to take into consideration that it can be more difficult to inspire and motivate employees abroad. The managers should find other ways to work on motivating and inspiring those abroad because a good LMX relationship can be positive and effective even though the managers and employees are located in different places (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999).

Trust was in general good but it is important for the managers to work on trust because it is something central for the relationship. If the managers trust that their employees are competent and can perform their work tasks this can contribute to a high quality LMX relationship (Dulebohn et al. 2012). Trust was seen to be even more important when there is a geographical distance. The managers need to be aware of that and work on the trust, even more with the employees aboard, especially when they cannot meet them so often. If the managers show the employees, no matter where they are located, that they have trust in them it can enhance the employee’s job satisfaction which in turn can make them more dedicated to their jobs and the organization according to Gill (2008) which will benefit the company. Research has also shown that LMX may be affected negatively by trust violations, even for those relationships that have a high quality LMX (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2008) and this is also important that the managers take into consideration and try to maintain trust even if it is good today.

7.2 Communication

Face-to-face communication is mostly preferred by the respondents and research have found that face-to-face communication is the most effective way for people to interact with each other (DeRosa et al. 2004). It is therefore important for the managers to meet all employees. The effectiveness of information exchange can influence the relationship and because the exchange is less in virtual teams it have been stated that face-to-face meetings should be used in addition to the computer-mediated communication tools (Warkentin, Sayeed & Hightower, 1997). Humans might not be optimized for many of the technological media’s used today, because many of these media suppress the features of face-to-face communication (Kock, 2002 in DeRosa et al. 2004) and this also makes it clear that face-to-face meetings are important. It was seen in this study that the manager would like to meet the employees abroad
more often, which is good. The travel restriction can though have its consequences when the managers and employees cannot meet. If it is not possible to meet face-to-face it should be preferred to use communication tools that are most similar to face-to-face communication because the types of communication that are most similar to face-to-face interaction should be more natural for humans (Kock, 2002 in DeRosa et al. 2004). It is therefore important to have access to communication tools that are similar to face-to-face interaction. It is important the communication tools is good due to the fact that the digital communication can affect the manager-employee relationship (Mackenzie, 2010).
8 Further research

This study has not focused on the cultural differences and its effect on the LMX relationship but it was seen that the cultural differences in some cases were seen as a bigger obstacle than the geographical distance. More research should be done on this subject to see in what way the culture affect the LMX relationship. It can also be of interest to study how different personalities can affect a relationship between a manager and an employee in a virtual context. These two aspects are interesting and relevant to study but it did fall outside the frames of this study. It is recommended that further research should investigate these matters more in dept. We also suggest that further research should be done on the effect virtual work and geographical distance have on the LMX relationship. In this study we only used a limited sample and studied a specific context so the results cannot be generalized. It is therefore relevant to conduct more research on this subject.
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Interview material

Interview- Manager.(2012) Interview with a manager at Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB. Conducted in Örebro, 2012-12-03. Transcribing material is stored with Miriam Löfgren at Studentgatan 24 in Örebro.

Interview - Employee in Örebro.(2012) Interview with an employee at Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB. Conducted in Örebro, 2012-12-03. Transcribing material is stored with Miriam Löfgren at Studentgatan 24 in Örebro.

Interview - Employee abroad .(2012) Interview with an employee at Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB. Conducted over Skype, 2012-12-04. Transcribing material is stored with Miriam Löfgren at Studentgatan 24 in Örebro.

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Interview- Manager.(2012) Interview with a manager at Atlas Copco Rock Drills AB. Conducted in Örebro, 2012-12-12. Transcribing material is stored with Miriam Löfgren at Studentgatan 24 in Örebro.


Appendix 1 – Interview guide for managers in English

Interview guide managers

LMX (leader – member – exchange) theory is about the exchange that occurs between a leader and an employee. LMX describes how leader and a member take on different roles, were one of them are subordinate of the other. The exchange can be material (salary) and non-material (support and social exchange) in the relationship and contributes to the quality of the LMX relationship. LMX indicates that the leader doesn’t have the same relationship with every one of his employees.

Factors affecting LMX

Supervisor’s expectations of followers

1. How do you communicate the expectations you have on your employees to them?
2. What are your expectations of the employees?

Contingent reward behavior

1. In what way do you provide feedback to the employees?
2. How do you show your employees appreciation for their accomplishments?
3. How do you feel about rewards for the employees based on their accomplishments?
4. Are the employee’s salary based on accomplishments? How do you measure accomplishments?

Transformational leadership

1. How do you work to communicate the company’s vision to the employees?
2. How do you work with encouraging the acceptance of the group’s goals?
3. How do you work to inspirer and motivate you employees?

Leader trust

1. Trust is important for the relationship, what are your thoughts about trust?
2. How do you show your employees that you have trust in them?

Relationship

1. How would you characterize (describe) your working relationship with your employees?
2. How do you work to create relationships with the employees?
3. How do you work to maintain the relationships with the employees?
4. If you get an opportunity (more time) to work on your relationship with your employees, how or what would you do? (develop the relationship)
Communication

1. How do you think your way of communicating affects your relationship with the employees?
2. How often do you communicate?
3. What type of communication do you usually use? (For example; face-to-face, E-mail, telephone call, telephone conferences, videoconferences, chat)
4. What type of communication do you prefer?

Other

1. Are there any routines or guidelines how the managers are supposed to work at Atlas Copco?
2. Are there any guidelines how the managers should work on the relationship with their employees?
Appendix 2 – Interview guide for employees in English

Interview guide employee

LMX (leader – member –exchange) theory is about the exchange that occurs between a leader and an employee. LMX describes how the leader and the employee take on different roles, were one of them are subordinate of the other. The exchange can be material (salary) and non-material (support) in the relationship and contributes to the quality of the LMX relationship. LMX indicates that the leader doesn’t have the same relationship with every one of his employees.

Factors affecting LMX

Supervisor’s expectations of followers

1. How does your manager communicate what expectations he/she has on you?
2. What expectations does your manager have on you?

Reward Behavior

1. How do you get feedback from your manager?
2. How does your manager show you appreciation for your performances?
3. How do you feel about reward after accomplishments?
4. Is your salary based on accomplishments?
   4.1 What do you think about that?

Transformational Leadership

1. How does your manager communicate the company's vision to you?
2. How does your manager work to encourage you to accept the group's goals?
3. How does your manager work to inspire and motivate you?

Leader trust

1. What are your thoughts about trust?
2. How does your manager show you that he has trust in you?

Relationship

1. How would you characterize (describe) your working relationship with your manager?
2. How does your manager work to create a relationship with you?
3. How does your manager work to maintain the relationship with you?

Communications

1. How do you think the way you and your manager communicates affect your relationship?
2. How often do you communicate?
3. What type of communication do you usually use? (Face-to-face, e-mail, phone calls, conference call, video conferencing, instant messaging, etc.)
4. What type of communication do you prefer?

**Other**

1. What do you think about working at distance?
Appendix 3 – Interview guide for managers in Swedish

Intervjuguide chef


Faktorer som påverkar LMX

Chefens förväntningar på de anställda

1. Hur kommunicerar du de förväntningar du har på de anställda till dem?
2. Vad har du för förväntningar på dina anställda?

Belöningsbeteende

1. På vilket sätt ger du feedback till de anställda?
2. Hur visar du dem anställdas uppskattning för deras prestationer?
3. Hur ser du på belönning till de anställda utifrån deras prestationer?
4. Är de anställdas lön prestationsbaserad? Hur mäter man prestationer?

Transformativt ledarskap

1. Hur arbetar du med att kommunicera företagets vision till de anställda?
2. Hur arbetar du med att uppmuntra de anställda att acceptera gruppens mål?
3. Hur arbetar du med att inspirera och motivera dina anställda?

Förtroende

1. Hur ser du på förtryckande?
2. Hur visar du de anställda att du har förtryckande för dem?

Relation

1. Hur skulle du karakterisera (känneteckna/beskriva) din arbetsrelation med de anställda?
2. Hur arbetar du med att skapa relationer till de anställda?
3. Hur arbetar du med att upprätthålla relationen till de anställda?
4. Om du har möjlighet (mer tid) att arbeta med relationen, hur eller vad skulle du göra då? (utveckla relationen)
Kommunikation

1. Hur tror du sättet du och de anställda kommunicerar på påverkar er relation?
2. Hur ofta kommunicerar ni?
3. Vilka kommunikationsmedel använder ni? (FTF, mail, telefonsamtal, telefonkonferens, videokonferens, chatt, m.m.)
4. Vilket kommunikationsmedel föredrar du?

Övrigt

1. Finns det några rutiner eller riktlinjer för hur chefer ska arbeta på Atlas Copco?
2. Finns det några riktlinjer för hur chefen ska arbeta med relationen till sina anställda?
Appendix 4 – Interview guide for employees in Swedish

Intervjuguide anställd


Faktorer som påverkar LMX

Chefens förväntningar på de anställda

1. Hur får du veta vilka förväntningar chefen har på dig?
2. Vad har chefen för förväntningar på dig?

Belöningsbeteende

1. På vilket sätt får du feedback från din chef?
2. Hur visar chefen dig uppskattning för dina prestationer?
3. Hur ser du på belöning utifrån prestationer?
4. Är din lön prestationbaserad?
   4.1. Vad anser du om det?

Transformativt ledarskap

1. Hur kommunicerar chefen företagets vision till dig?
2. Hur arbetar chefen med att uppmuntra dig till att acceptera gruppens mål?
3. Hur arbetar chefen med att inspirera och motivera dig?

Förtroende för chefen

1. Hur ser du på förtroende?
2. Visar chefen att han har förtroende för dig?

Relation

1. Hur skulle du karakterisera (känneteckna/beskriva) din arbetsrelation med din chef?
2. Hur arbetar chefen med att skapa en relation till dig?
3. Hur arbetar chefen med att upprätthålla relationen till dig?
Kommunikation

1. Hur tror du sättet du och din chef kommunicerar på påverkar er relation?
2. Hur ofta kommunicerar du med din chef?
3. Vilka kommunikationsmedel använder ni? (Face-to-face, mail, telefonsamtal, telefonkonferens, videokonferens, chatt m.m.)
4. Vilka kommunikationsmedel föredrar du?
Appendix 5 - Quotes in Swedish

"Ta eget ansvar, ta egna initiativ, naturligtvis göra det som förväntas göras, komma med egna idéer och vara kreativ" (B)

"Dom förväntar sig kulturellt att jag ska berätta för dem vad dom ska satsa på" (C)

"Dom som sitter på dom andra fabrikena, det kan nog faktiskt bli att det blir mycket mail, dels för det tidsskillnaden är det. Det är enklare tycker jag kommunicera ut mail där jag har kontroll på och de kan läsa flera gånger än med telefon med språkförbistring och försöka förmedla någonting man antar" (C)

"Men tror också det är mycket beroende på kulturen. Det skulle vara enklare för mig att ha samma men så är det inte. Du föds in i ett system så är det bättre att jag anpassar mig efter dem istället för att jag ska försöka anpassa världen till det som funkar för mig." (E)

"Hoppas att det inspirerar och motiverar, jag känner det och utgår från att andra tänker likadant" (C)

"Anser att vi som sitter i Sverige har fått stort förtroende från cheferna jämfört med andra länder, större befogenhet att ta ansvar i vissa situationer" (F)

"Förtroende är inte något man får gratis utan något man får jobba sig till" (G)

"Man ska närvara i allt, det är lätt att människan i företaget glöms bort, eller sätts åt sidan så relationsbyggandet hamnar åt sidan" (H)

"Nej, per definition funkar det inte för där måste man vara mycket mer tydlig" (C)

"Den relation jag har med min chef idag är en av de bästa arbetsrelationerna jag haft under min arbetstid" (F)

"På samma vis, förutom att vi inte kan träffa varandra lika mycket, jag kan inte läsa av, det är svårare på telefon" (H)

"Det fysiska mötet är jätteviktigt för att bygga relation, det är jättesvärt att göra det på telefon" (E)
"För att göra det måste man träffas ofta och kanske face-to-face annars blir det dumt att försöka tro att man är kompis på distans" (C)

"Det är väldig skillnad, man känner sig väldigt avklippt" (B)