Organizational Identity in Practice? -
How Theoretical Concepts of Organizational Identity are Perceived in the
Empirical Setting of Arla Foods

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Abstract: An organization’s internal processes of identity management is argued to influence its communication, which in turn influence the perceived reputation of the organization. The aim of this study is to investigate how the organizational identity is reflected upon and perceived integrated in employees’ daily work. This is done through applying the internal factors of a theoretical model, comprising of identity, culture and image, at an empirical setting. Literature on organizational identity in relation to organizational culture and organizational image is reviewed followed by conducting 12 semi structured interviews with managers from the marketing and human resource departments at Arla Foods in Sweden. The findings suggest that although employees reflect on the identity, there is a gap between reflection and action, meaning that the identity is not necessarily integrated in practice in the daily work due to different understandings of the organizational culture. In relation to the model, it is suggested that culture may not be so clearly connected to identity, whereas image and identity are very closely related. Also, the context in which the employees conduct their work is shown through the empirical setting, to be important for how employees reflect upon the identity.

Keywords: Organisational Identity - Perceptions - Employees - Integration - Empirical Setting - Theoretical Model - Organizational Culture - Organizational Image - Mirroring - Reflecting
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1. Introduction

Do you ever reflect on your identity? Who are you? Who do others see you as? The answer is probably yes, even though the questions are quite existential in nature. Throughout history different academic fields have tried to find answers to who we are, as well as reasons for why knowing who we are is so important to us. Now consider an organization, which is made up of all kinds of people. Can it be considered to have an identity? Can it have its own identity, or will it only consist of the myriad of individual identities held by its members? Some would argue that identity is an inherently human phenomenon and does not apply to inhumane constructs (Hatch and Schultz, 2004, p.3). But there are many who would disagree. Just consider your favourite organization. Have you not at some point considered it to have an identity, probably shaped from the continuous messages and marketing done, using statements and logos to promote a unified picture. Or consider the organization you work for. Have you not felt a connection to it, what it stands for and work towards in a kind of “we-ness”? But what does the identity actually mean to the members of the organization? According to George Herbert Mead (1934, p.30-34), a famous identity scholar and sociologist, the processes by which identity is formed does not vary between individuals and organizations, but the process and the levels of construction within an organization are much more complex than for the individual identity, due to more people being involved. So organizational identity is in essence just a more complex version of individual identity. However this complexity is what makes it such an interesting area of research.

The aim of this particular research, is to look internally at how employees reflect on organizational identity and if they further believe that they integrate organizational identity in their daily work. Much research, especially in the marketing field, support the idea that identity should be managed (Abratt, 1989; Balmer and van Riel, 1997; Balmer, 1998; Bick et al. 2003) through corporate identity management programs with communications, statements and logos. This they argue will influence reputation and therefore performance of the company. The marketing literature says that it is important to manage identity and considering the amount of money spent by companies to promote a unified image, with logos and corporate statements, most companies seem to consider it important as well. This raises the thought that organizations reputation, as perceived by external actors, is influenced by the internal processes within the organization that influence the message being communicated. So if a well-managed identity internally, influence the perceived reputation, employee reflections upon what the
organization’s identity is, is of importance in order for the company to be perceived in a desired manner.

By that, we wonder how employees perceive the identity and whether they, with conscious thought, integrate the identity in their daily work. The literature on organizational identity presents different strands and aspects that could explain this, however our research will take a constructivist approach, looking at identity linked to image and culture, internally in the organization and how this affects employee perceptions. What makes it different from previous research on organizational research is that it will look at how identity is perceived not in times of change, or identity formation in a newly established organization, but rather how employees at an established organization perceive and integrate identity in their daily work, if they do this at all.

The setting for the study is the Swedish unit of the fast moving consumer goods company; Arla Foods, which is a dairy producing company, with sales mainly to end consumers. It is furthermore an organization that claims, at least outwardly, to work a lot with identity and position themselves as having strong values anchored in the company. This extensive identity management work is reflected in their communication, corporate statements and logos. Moreover, Arla Foods has 80% recognition rate amongst end consumers in Sweden making it one of the most well-known brands in the country (RepTrack, 2013, p.4). However Arla has seen a drop in reputation between 2012-2013, especially in areas like “open and transparent”, and “environmentally responsible” according to a consumer survey (RepTrack, 2013, p.5). This goes directly against the expressed identity that Arla communicates which promotes exactly those aspects as key to their corporate identity. In relation to our reasoning of the relationship between external actors’ perception of an organization's’ reputation and internal processes, something could be argued is going awry in order for the consumer to lose understanding of what Arla is about i.e. their identity. Concerning the fact that the communication and expressions of what an organization is about to a large extent is created internally, with the purpose of reaching the external audience, we wonder what the employees consider Arla to be about, and how they integrate the identity in their work, e.g. messages being sent out from the organization. Because if the employees do not know or are confused about the identity, the consumer is bound to be as well, making Arla an interesting setting for this study.
This paper contributes to the understanding of how employees’ at the marketing and HR departments of Arla perceive and work with organizational identity. This will be done by exploring how the relationship between identity, culture and image (Hatch & Schultz, 2002), is perceived to be integrated in the daily work by members of the organization. Hatch and Schultz mean that these concepts are theoretically connected. This study aims at finding out if that is also the case empirically. The two targeted departments are expected to be consciously working with the identity of the organization; the HR department through managing staff in a way that is aligned with organizational culture and the marketing department through formulating communication messages that reflects the desired image of the organization, internally and externally. Therefore, we argue that their reflections upon the organizational identity is relevant in relation to understand how the model of the relationship between identity, image and culture can be manifested in an empirical setting through perceptions upon and working with internal processes and work tasks.

By doing this we will show how such theoretical relationships are manifested within an organization daily operations through give empirical meaning to the theoretical concepts. We argue that the internal processes of culture and what the organizations in terms of this stands for, should be consequently and coherently reflected in the external messages from the organization, creating a cohesively understood identity.

Therefore if we can understand how employees perceive the identity and how they work with it, then perhaps organizations can establish better ways to strategically utilize this in order to promote employee involvement and commitment. This would be expected to lead to better alignment between the organizational identity, the image projected and the culture. Therefore the questions that this study intends to answer is:

RQ1: How do employees in the marketing and human resource departments at Arla reflect on the identity of their organization?

RQ2: Do these employees believe that features of the identity is integrated in their daily work?

The following section will present the literature review which account for the development of organizational identity as well as its relation to the connected concepts of image and culture. This will result in the presentation of the theoretical model by Hatch and Schultz (2002), which
link organizational identity, culture and image through the concepts of Mirroring and Reflecting. Through this theoretical model we aim to answer our research questions and see to what extent employees reflect on and integrate the identity of Arla in their daily work and by that if the theoretical model can be applied in understanding an empirical setting, internally in an organization. In the third section we describe our method. Since we aim to determine whether the model by Hatch and Schultz (2002) is applicable empirically, we constructed an interview guide on basis of previous literature on the concepts which composes the model, organizational identity, image and culture as well as the linkages in between these; mirroring and reflecting. In the fourth section we present the results of the twelve interviews conducted, and in the fifth section the findings are discussed in relation to the literature. Our findings suggest that although employees at Arla reflect on the identity they do not to a great extent integrate it in their daily work. This indicates that although organizational identity, culture and image are interlinked, identity and image are observed to be more closely related than culture and identity. There are pronounced clashes in the culture at Arla that are not reconciled with identity, which point to reflecting as a concept being more empirically complicated and abstract than presented theoretically. The final section of this paper will conclude the paper, summarizing the findings and make suggestions for further research.
2. Literature Review

The literature review discusses different perspectives upon organizational identity and concludes with the model, derived from Hatch and Schultz (2002), showing the theoretical relationship between organizational identity, image and culture that we aim at explore empirically in an organizational setting.

According to Balmer “every organisation has an identity. It articulates the corporate ethos, aims and values and presents a sense of individuality that can help to differentiate the organisation within its competitive environment.” (1998 p.985), and as the quote suggests identity is the embodiment of the organization and can be something that sets the organization apart from competitors. Mead (1934, p.30-34) reflected upon it in the terms “we” and “us”. “Us” in this sense is the construct that emerges from interactions between stakeholders and the “we” is the response to the “us” coming from the interaction between members of the organization. The “us” is created in relation to the thoughts and feelings organizational members have about the image of the organization as perceived by stakeholders (in Hatch & Schultz, 2004, p. 315). Whereas Balmer can be considered more strategic marketing oriented, Mead, as well as other influential authors like Albert and Whetten (1985), Ashforth and Mael (1989) and Hatch and Schultz (1994), presents organizational identity as a social construct since it is formed through the interactions of members. Thus identity in organizations been seen from various perspectives which will be further presented below.

To start, organizational identity can be viewed from an external and internal perspective. From the external perspective there are competitive pressures and the desire for organizations to be recognized and supported. Reputation is a key consideration since reputation is the overall evaluation of the organization (Dowling & Moran, 2012). It is the “repeated interactions and cumulated experiences” of observers of the organization over time, causing observers to have expectations about the actions of the organization and in turn influence their behaviours towards the organization (Rindova & Fombrun, 1998, p. 64). Reputation therefore can be considered a strategic asset where good reputation will positively influence performance (Dowling & Moran, 2012). The aim therefore will be to build a favourable identity in order to promote good reputation. As such, reputation will be an end result, where the identity is reflected in reputation and expectations held by observers.
From an internal perspective organizational identity can in very broad terms be described as a way for members to understand the organization, and define their role within it. As can be inferred, the research on identity is broad and complex, incorporating varied aspects that are both internal and external, cultural and visual in nature. For our research we shall focus on the aspects of organizational identity that are internal since we are interested in the internal workings, as in the work conducted by employees at the marketing department and the HR department at Arla Foods. The next section will therefore present the literature on organizational identity more thoroughly, as well as organizational culture and image in relation to identity, since these are so closely interlinked to defining organizational identity.

2.1 Organizational Identity

He and Brown (2013) identified four different strands of research in the organizational identity literature, these being functionalist, social constructionist, psychodynamic and postmodern. Firstly the functionalist perspective view identities as being tangible, such as logos and documents and official stories, and is allied with the marketing and strategy literature (e.g. Abratt, 1989, Olins, 1995, van Rekom, 1997, Balmer, 1998, Balmer & Soenen, 1999). This is also the literature, which as mentioned, most proactively push for identity management, arguing that identities can and should be managed in order to create an image that will impress customers and consumers. Secondly the social constructionist perspective see identity as socially constructed, with shared understandings. Here identity is more organically evolved and less seen as under the thumb of executive decision making. Thirdly the psychodynamic perspective considers identity to be something unknowable and that conscious efforts at defining identity, whether collective or individual, will lack certain unconscious process and as such makes definitions of organizational identity illusionary. Finally the postmodern perspective is that of perpetual challenge, and thus regard identity as a myth or illusion, where mainstream organizational identity research is “imaginistic theorization” (He & Brown, 2013, p. 10). In their review of the literature Gioia et al. (2013) also found three additional perspectives in the research which present organizational identity in different lights; social actor-, institutional- and population ecologist-perspective. The social actor view emphasize organizations as entities that make assertions about itself, and its role in society and therefore focuses on the overt claims made in articulating the organization's identity. The institutional view regard organizations as being strongly influenced by institutional forces and as such propose more isomorphic tendencies amongst organizational identities. For example, this view
would endorse organizations in an industry having similar identities due to environmental forces and institutions (such as governments, legal entities and universities) influencing them. The population ecology perspective sees organizational identity as something wholly defined by outsiders. In their view an organization does not have an identity but the identity can only be what for example customers or other stakeholders believe it to be. However Gioia et al. (2013) argue against this view, meaning that it is too simplistic, and that the organizations members’ plays such a key part in identity creation to only be able to attribute it to outsiders. Gioia et al. (2013), like He and Brown (2013), also found the social constructivist perspective as dominant in the research. Our study will not deviate, but try to expand this social constructivist area further by looking at employee perceptions and integration of organizational identity, and thus the literature from this area will be explored more thoroughly below.

2.1.1 Social Constructivist Perspective

The social constructivist perspective on organizational identity has taken different turns over the past three decades during which it has been on the agenda. It can be divided into those that write about organizational identity in relation to change in organizations, and more recently those that write about it in relation to identity formation (Gioia et al. 2013). The literature on identity in relation to change is where most of the research has been done since this is also the area that developed first. The foundational work of Albert and Whetten in 1985 have spurred much of this literature. They defined organizational identity as the question “what kind of organization is this?”, as a sort of self-referential definition held by members, referring to features of the organization that are core, enduring and distinctive (CED) (2004, p. 116), where core refers to elements of the organization's character, distinctive refers to unique aspects of the organization and enduring refers to that these characteristics can stand the test of time. As such the organizational identity is what members believe the organisation to be in terms of these three (Whetten & Godfrey, 1998, p. 33). In terms of change they proposed that there are four life cycle events in the course of identity development; birth, growth, maturity and retrenchment. Over the course of an organization's life, identity shifts by substitution (one identity giving way to another) and addition (one identity joining with another leading to dual or multiple identities). This means that organizations change but slowly, evidenced for example in resistance to change which has often been observed in the workplace, due to the need for stability (Gioia et al. 2013). Their research prompted much interest in the area of organizational identity, spurring a focus on organizational “selves”, and where organizational identity has
been recognized as key in understanding strategic change, decision making, communication and legitimacy (He & Brow, 2013). Their CED definition has become one of the most cited in reference to what organizational identity is, however it is also greatly criticised. There those that have questioned what can actually be defined as central or distinct, since Albert and Whetten gave no criteria for this. Also Gioia et al. (2000) challenge the notion of an organizational identity as enduring, since although an organization can use the same labels to characterize them the interpretations of these labels may change over time in order to adapt to the ever changing environment around them.

According to this perspective organizational identity is about self-referential meaning, in that it is an attempt to define oneself with questions like who we are and who we want to be (He & Brown, 2013). This has not changed with the literature on identity formation, and Albert and Whetten are pivotal for this research as well as their CED definition. The research on identity formation is still relatively new and only a fraction of the organizational identity literature. Previous research here has focused more on investigating particular aspects of identity formation rather than the overall process in how identity is formed (Gioia et al. 2013). Czarniawska and Wolff (1998) as well as Clegg et al (2007) researched how identity could be connected and either facilitate or undermine legitimacy. Gioia et al. (2010) proposed the grounded model of identity formation process, which consisted of recurring themes associated with multiple phases of more or less linear progression and their case provided a description of a multi-year process of identity formation in a single organization. Ultimately what this research show is that identity formation “involve the co-evaluation of claims and understandings that are not only complimentary but mutually constitutive”, where “identity claims ‘give sense’ to audiences about ‘who we are as an organization’”, and “identity understanding develop in conjunction with these claims” (Gioia et al. 2013, p. 160). Or in other words identity it is the reflection or answers members give on the question “who we are” as an organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2004 p. 311), e.g. what we stand for.

2.1.2 Image and Culture in relation to Organizational Identity

Image and identity have been considered to be connected for some time (Abratt, 1989) and covered more extensively in the literature than organizational culture and identity (Hatch & Shultz, 2002). The main contributions to the research on organizational culture and identity is the work done by Hatch and Shultz (2002) who presented a theoretical model that not only
interlinks all three concepts, but also presents the relationship between organizational culture and identity. Their model will be the foundation for the empirical work presented in this paper. Below, image will first be presented, followed by a short passage on culture. Thereafter the model by Hatch and Schultz (2002) will be presented, as well as how it will be adapted for this study.

2.1.2.1 Image
Gioia et al. write that “the identity formation process meld external influences and internal resources in a complex stew” in order to gain legitimacy (2013, p. 182). Thereafter the identity is continually reaffirmed through everyday interactions and practices. This mix of the internal and external, and its consequences for everyday work links identity closely to both image of the organization and its culture. Both image and culture are concepts that are influential in the literature on organizational identity, because they are so interconnected (Hatch & Schultz, 1997). Looking firstly at image in relation to identity, Alvesson (2004. p. 164) defined corporate image as “a holistic and vivid impression held by a particular group towards a corporation, partly as a result of information processing (sense-making) carried out by the group’s members and partly by the aggregated communication of the corporation”. Gioia et al. (2000, p.67) also connect image and identity with the statement; “Image in its multiple guises provides a catalyst for members’ reflexive examination of their organizational self-definition.” What Gioia et al. (2000) mean is that employees are not only part of the social group that is the organization but will be influenced by external groups to which they also are members. Thus employees will be sensitized to outsiders’ views of the organization, which then in turn will influence the employee and his or her view of the organizational identity. An example of this is found in the research by Dutton and Dukerich (1991) who studied the influence of an image crisis on the perceptions of the employees at the Port Authority in New York, and found that negative outside image presentations have negative effects on how employees at the Port Authority identified with the organization. As we can see image can both have positive and negative impact in relation to the identity of the organization due to this external/internal exchange, but what can be concluded is that identity help form image and identity will help influence image and relation to image.

There are also those that have argued for the negative connotations associated with image and image management, and that these negative aspects impact organizational identity negatively. Alvesson, for one, argues that post-industrial society has created conditions that is weakening naturally occurring processes of identity development. This has resulted in managers who must
concoct corporate substitutes for organizational identity through manipulation of corporate image. This sort of manipulation, Alvesson argues, leads to the substance of the organization, defined as culture and identity, receding from view, since management instilled images replace personal experience by employees of the organization (2004, p.87). Cheney and Christensen (2001, p.272) argue along the same lines, however they write that the distinction between identity and image is disappearing because of an overlap in internal and external communication. Although organizations contend that they are communication to outsiders what they really are doing is communication to themselves, so called auto-communication. Auto-communication in turn reaffirms the organizational identity and reproduce internally the images of how managers would like the organization to be perceived, without any actual dialogue with outsiders (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p.272). This will have implications on how employees view an organization's identity; whether they for example perceive it as something forced or organically evolved.

2.1.2.2 Culture
Organizational culture can be defined as “something held in common by group members, various described as some combination of shared meanings, beliefs, assumption, understandings, norms, values and knowledge” (Hatch, 2013, p. 159). Although centred on sharing, organizational culture is something commonly agreed upon but individually interpreted by members (Hatch, 2013, p. 159). According to Robbins and Coulter organizational culture will therefore determine how employees will act, in the sense of “how we do things around here” and the will influence the way employees conceptualize, define, analyse and resolve issues (2005, p.52). Organizational culture and organizational identity is according to Hatch and Schultz (2002) closely connected, where it can be difficult to see where one ends and the other begins. As argued by Hatch and Schultz, (2002) organizational identity when compared to culture is more textual, explicit and instrumental where organizational culture is more contextual, tacit and emergent.

2.2. The Model
Derived from this reasoning, we see that organizational identity, image and culture can be seen as interlinked and share a dynamic relationship. Hatch and Schultz (2002), developed a conceptual model on how identity, image and culture are connected (Figure 2). They argued that organizational identity is neither entirely imagistic nor entirely cultural, but constitutes a
set of processes. Hatch and Schultz (2002) propose four such processes that link identity, culture, and image; mirroring, reflecting, expressing and impressing.

**Mirroring** is when the identity of the organization is mirrored in the image of others. In other words it is what stakeholders see and believe about the organization mirrored back to the organization members, and such outsider views of the organization will influence the employees’ views of the organization. For example it would be what consumers and stakeholders believe about the organization as described and perceived by employees of the organization.

**Reflecting** is identity embedded in cultural understandings, where the images that are mirrored will be interpreted from the view of the existing deeply set cultural meanings and values and start the process where either the identity is reinforced or changed. When reflecting on identity so closely to culture, the identity becomes embedded in the culture by tapping into deeply held assumptions and values held by members which consequently becomes closely associated with the identity and its various manifestations, such as logos and corporate statements. Yet it goes both ways so whenever a member makes an identity claim about the organization in some cultural meaning, the culture in which it is embedded, will be carried with that claim. Thus expressions of the organizational identity will have cultural associations, e.g. that the identity of Arla, being expressed as Closer to Nature, will have underlying meanings, understood by employees, as being linked to the culture of Arla.

**Expressing** concerns such identity claims as mentioned above in the sense that the culture is made known through these identity claims; whenever outsiders sympathise with an organizational identity they involuntarily also sympathise with the organizational culture.

**Impressing** concerns how expressions, such as identity claims as well as images forced upon the organization by outsiders like the media, are interpreted and thus what impression is made on outsiders.

As can be seen, these four processes are interrelated, where one will have consequences for the others, and thus it becomes clearer how linked organizational identity is to culture and image, due to this give and take between internal and external forces.
Mirroring and Reflecting represents internal aspects of this process, since they concern the members within an organization, rather than external actors such as consumers and customers. The focus of this study is on employee reflections on organizational identity, and as such will have an internal perspective. As inferred by the definitions mentioned above, Reflecting can be considered the internal link between culture and identity and Mirroring is the internal link between image and identity. Due to the focus being on understanding employee reflections upon internal processes, this study will only consider Mirroring and Reflecting. Furthermore, by the proposal from the social constructivist perspective, that the answer given by employees, on “who we are as an organization?” is central in identity formation, motivates our aim at looking at how the concepts in the model is perceived in an empirical setting. That is, we want to see if the model can be applied to an empirical setting for explaining the reflections and integration of identity in the work of employees at Arla. This is reflected in the model presented below (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Hatch and Schultz, 2002
Figure 2. Adaptation of Hatch and Schultz theoretical model, highlighting the internal aspects which is the focus of this study and how it leads to employee perceptions and integration empirically.
3. Method

The method presents the setting of the study; the marketing and HR department at Arla Foods in Sweden, in which we aim at understand how the theoretical model on organizational identity can be applied for understanding an organizational identity in an empirical setting. Further on, we account for our choice of data collection tool being semi-structured interviews and how we have gone about operationalized our questions in the interview guide as well as how we have coded the transcriptions.

The aim of this study is to understand how organizational identity, as defined by the relationship between organizational identity, image and culture, is perceived by employees at two different departments, as well as if and how they believe they integrate the identity in their work, that is in internal work processes. The relationship is previously explained theoretically (Figure 2) and this study further aims at understand if the model can also explain how organizational identity is perceived empirically.

In order to achieve this aim we strive for in-depth knowledge of the meaning, empirically, of the concepts of identity, image and culture. As such a qualitative approach is the most appropriate since we intend to understand how these employees interpret experiences and construct their worlds (Merriam, 2009, p. 9). By presenting our view upon organizational identity being created in combination with organizational image and organizational culture, we see organizations as constructed and created through the interaction between members/employees (Hatch, 2013, p. 14, Saunders, 2009 p. 111). By this, we see the knowledge gained through the data collection being based upon how the employees perceive and interpret their social reality.

3.1 Setting of the study: Arla Foods Sweden

Arla Foods is a dairy company, producing a mix of fast moving consumer goods all based on dairy, such as yoghurt, butter and milk. It is a multinational company, and a cooperative as it is owned by farmers in Sweden, Denmark, Great Britain, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, however Sweden is still one of their major markets with 18.7% of revenue by market. They are a large employer in Sweden, employing 3490 people (which represents 20% of the total amount of employees in the Arla global corporation), with offices across the country, however their headquarters (HQ) for the Swedish branch is in Stockholm. At Arla one identity is stated and
externally communicated, called Closer to Nature, which in essence emphasize a concern for human health, nature and sustainable use of resources (Arla, Closer to Nature, 2014). This is reflected in their work with sustainability goals such as reducing emissions, producing healthy and natural products without additives as well as streamlining their production (Arla, Our Responsibility, 2012). Arla communicate their identity of Closer to Nature through printed logos on product packages and commercial material such as brochures, signs, transportation cars and TV commercials.

At Arla, consumers are the end consumer buying the product, and customers are the grocery chains and stores that stock Arla’s products.

Arla is chosen as a case study due to them promoting work with identity as well as state their identity in many different channels, creating the sense that communicating the identity is an important concern on the agenda. This is especially believed to be the case for some departments that, on basis of their function within the organization, they are expected to reflect consciously upon organizational identity and to integrate it in their daily work. For this study, we have identified these two to be the department working with creating internal and external communication messages about the organization (marketing department) and the one working with making sure that the employees recruited as well as the managing of staff in internal processes are in line with values that are important and central for the organization (the Human Resource (HR) department).

Although implementation of an identity can be considered a matter for the whole organization. But on basis of their function within the organization, some departments are expected to reflect consciously upon organizational identity and to integrate it in their daily work. We have identified these departments as the Marketing department and the Human Resource (HR) department.

3.1.1 Marketing Department
Managers at the marketing department work with aspects that have an impact on how the organization and what the organization stands for is communicated, both to external and internal actors. In this sense, the marketing department create and express the image of the organization and thus represent the part of image in the model to be applied. On basis of our stance in the relationship between organizational identity, image and culture, it is important
that the identity of the organization is clear to the marketing department as they are key in making it understandable for internal and external actors in the intended manor. Therefore, in understanding how the identity is integrated, formed and understood in the daily work, it is relevant to explore how the marketing department perceive and work with Arla’s identity. The marketing department is thus expected to have deeper understanding of the identity and image of the organization and through the image we may gain better understanding of the organizational identity.

3.1.2 Human Resource Department
In order for internal processes to be most effective so that the right message in activities is expressed, with the aim of aligning the identity throughout the organization, the “right people” must be recruited. That is the responsibility of the HR department. Eitan and Farkas (2005) argue that finding the people who incorporate the organizational values within their individual values is essential to make sure that the employees feel identification with the organization in order to stand behind their employer. In other words, since this reflects an alignment, something held in common by group members, it can be seen as the organizational culture being created and enhanced through recruiting the right people and thus the HR department represent the part of culture in the model to be applied. On basis of our stance in the relationship between organizational identity, image and culture, it is important that that the identity of the organization is clear to the HR department in order to employ the right people to the organization as well as being support to staff. The HR department is thus expected to have deeper understanding of the identity and culture of the organization and through the culture we may gain better understanding of the organizational identity.

3.3 Research Design
Through the case study of Arla Foods in Sweden, we want to put the existence of organizational identity in a new light, by understanding, in depth, how employees perceive and integrate organizational identity in the daily work. In other words we aim at understanding the internal perceptions and processes of the identity in an organization that in many ways communicate their identity externally. We further see that this aim is met at two levels, represented in our two research questions, the first research question being “How do employees in the marketing and human resource departments at Arla reflect on the identity of their organization?” With the purpose of finding out if reflections of the identity in fact exists. The second research question for helping to reach the aim is: “Do these employees believe that features of the
identity is integrated in their daily work?”, with the purpose of finding out that if reflections upon the identity indeed exists, are they also practically manifested in the daily work?

By this, research question 2 is of a more practical nature, as it looks on how employees are perceiving how they in fact integrate what they believe the organization identity is. We chose this design since it enables us to explore the perceptions of and integration of identity, image and culture in practical work at two departments, the marketing department and the HR department at an organization.

As Bryman and Bell, (2011, p. 61) put it: “the goal of the case study analysis should, therefore, be to concentrate on the uniqueness of the case and to develop a deep understanding of its complexity”, which is what we aim to do by focusing on a single organization and more thoroughly at two departments.

3.4 Data Collection Tool: Semi-structured Interviews

We want to understand employee perceptions of organizational identity (as defined by the relation between identity, image and culture) in internal processes and in order for gaining in depth knowledge of these concepts and relationships, we need a tool for data collection that enable us to capture variations in answers that reflects individual employee perceptions. At the same time, we aim at understanding how organizational identity (as shown in the relation between identity, image and culture) is integrated in practical daily work. For a combination of these two aims we find qualitative semi structured interviews to be suitable for data collection. Semi-structured interviews allow themes to structure the interviews around but still permits the flexibility that allows us to grasp the individual perceptions of the employees (Bryman, 2011 p. 415-416). This enable us to shape the interview after the specific respondent’s answers, through follow up questions where we ask “how” and “why” questions, making sure that in depth knowledge of perceptions is gained.

3.4.1 Interview Guide and the Creation of Questions

In order for creating questions and structure to the interview that allows us to gain answers in accordance with our view upon organizational identity, the interview guide is comprised of themes sprung from previous literature on the area of organizational identity, organizational image and organizational culture. When conducting the interview guide, we operationalize the theoretical definitions of identity, image and culture, derived from previous literature, into
concepts that better describe these aspects in a commonly used language and to which interviewees can identify. The concept of identity was operationalized through questions around “who we are as an organization” (Hatch & Schultz, 2004 p. 311) and “who we want to be as an organization”, e.g. with questions like; “how would you describe Arla”, “what they perceive Arla to stand for” and “what they perceive Arla’s values to be” “Arla in relation to other actors in society, competition”, “what they think others perceive Arla to stand for “and if these aspects is something that they talk about amongst colleagues in different situations as well as if they believe that colleagues share these perceptions of what Arla stand for. For gaining interviewees’ perceptions of integration in the daily work, we ask questions like; “how these perceptions of what Arla stand for influence how they conduct their work tasks”, “what is important to consider when making a decision”, “what is important to take into account when formulating strategies” and “what goals do you have within your work role”.

For image, being defined as “the impression held by a particular group towards a corporation” (Alvesson, 2004. p. 164) the questions was formulated around different perspectives on communication, such as “how do Arla communicate what they stand for do you believe”, “do you believe that the communication is coherent with your perceptions of what Arla stand for”, “is the internal communication coherent to the external in terms of what Arla stand for” and “does external actors perception of what Arla stand for affect your work”.

In terms of culture, being defined as “something held in common by group members” such as “beliefs, understandings, norms and values” (Hatch, 2013, p. 159), we ask questions like “is your perception of what Arla stand for shared by your colleagues”, “how the work atmosphere is perceived to be”, “if it is a hierarchical or flat organization”, is it easy and common to talk between departments”, “does it take long or short time to make decisions or to have an outcome of a decision”, “is the implementation of processes easy or not”, “when newly employed, what does the first time at Arla look like”.

Although the interview guide (Appendix 2) comprises a structure that present list of the areas and themes of questions that we strive for having discussed and answered, the follow up questions can vary between interviews with the purpose of gaining more knowledge of what comes up as interesting in each interview.
3.4.2 Sample and Conducting the Interviews:

The sampling of the marketing managers is purposive since the interviewees are purposively chosen based on different functions and levels within the marketing department (Bryman, 2011, p. 350). They are different types of marketing managers but with the common purpose of creating aspects of communication in one way or the other. They are chosen based on them working with products under a brand directly under the Arla-logo, tying them closer to the expressed identity of Arla, rather than managers of brands that are only endorsed by Arla (meaning they can be considered as stand-alone brands).

The sample of the marketing department is specified in Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Where the interview are held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Brand Manager</td>
<td>Arla Foods Head HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Brand Manager</td>
<td>Arla Foods Head HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Customer Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Arla Foods Head HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Customer Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Did not participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Product Manager</td>
<td>Arla Foods HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Product Manager</td>
<td>Arla Foods HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 (Specification of interviews at the Marketing Department)

They are contacted via email and are presented to the research area and asked if they want to participate in interviews. They are proposed with a selection of suitable dates in a time frame of three weeks and dates are chosen after what suits the interviewees. One of the asked employees did not want to participate in the study, however, due to wanting to keep the sample criteria of the interviewees working with the same brand, no other employees are asked to participate. In terms of sampling at the marketing department, the access is enabled due to one of the authors having conducted an internship at the marketing department.

Regarding the sampling of the HR department, they are located in different areas in Sweden, giving a difficulty in identifying which interviewees would be suitable. Therefore a snowball
sample seemed appropriate. In order to find a suitable sample we progress as proposed by Saunders et al., (2009 p. 240) and contact two managers at the HR department that one of the authors have had prior contact with. They are contacted via email and the research is explained, followed by the question, if they themselves want to be interviewed and if they know of anybody else that would be suitable for interviewing. They then recommended five more interviewees in different HR positions. They are contacted via email and the research is presented and we ask if they want to participate. The interviewees are proposed with a selection of suitable dates in a time frame of three weeks and dates are chosen after what suited the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Where the interview is held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Responsible for recruitment, competence development and internal information at one of the dairies.</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Responsible for Employer Branding</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>HR Business Partner</td>
<td>Arla Foods HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>HR Business Partner</td>
<td>Arla Foods HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Head of Administration at a dairy, responsible for HR</td>
<td>Arla Foods HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>HR Director</td>
<td>Arla Foods HQ in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Responsible for Employer Branding</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2 (Specification of interviews at the Human Resource Department)*

The fact that sample of HR managers are located at different levels and locations of the organization enable us to get a broader insight into how organizational identity is reflected upon and integrated in daily work.
The interviews last approximately one hour each, majority of which are held at the interviewee’s place of work. However three interviews are conducted via telephone. The face to face interviews are held in separate rooms since we wanted a quiet environment in order for the interviewees being able to better reflect upon their perceptions with limited disturbance.

The reason for having three telephone interviews is due to difference in geographic locations and the difficulty in finding a suitable time. A difference, except for the setting of the interview is that we are not able to see the body language or the mimic when interviewees react to a question or when answering (Bryman, 2011, p. 433) which in face to face interviews can provide additional information and knowledge.

The interviews begins with the ethical conditions of the study explained, such as the interview being anonymous, the data only being used in this study and the interviewee’s right to choose to not answer a specific question or choose to end the interview. Both interviewers are present during the interviews, except on two occasions where only one of the researchers is present.

When asking the questions, one researcher has the main responsibility, and will ask questions and drive the interview forward. The second interviewer function as a support in providing follow up questions and making sure that all themes of questions are covered in the interview.

What we find as an aspect having effect upon the interpretations of the questions asked, in the first interview made, is the presence of the interviewer that conducted the internship at the marketing department at Arla, when that interviewer asked the questions. The effect we believe is due to the interviewee knowing the interviewer and therefore could not respond as freely as otherwise. To handle the problem, continues interviews held at the marketing department are driven by the other interviewer, with the first interviewer asking some follow up questions. We find that a better approach since the focus, by this, is taken away from the interviewer that is familiar to the interviewees.

The interviews are held in Swedish due to the interviewees’ ability to be more expressive and comfortable, and therefore more flexible, in answering the questions since Swedish is their first language.

The interviews are recorded in order for the capturing of information and data to be as accurate as possible and to not miss any information. But it is furthermore important to record in order
to capture the interviewee’s own words and nuances in the voice, i.e. everything that reflect their perception upon the situation and phenomenon. We argue that the interviewees’ perceptions and interpretations are central for what we see as knowledge in our study, in line with social constructivism, which is why it is essential to mirror their perceptions through recordings.

3.5 Data Analysis

After conducting the interviews we transcribe them using the recording of the interview. All transcriptions are in Swedish since we do not wish to lose the original meaning of the answer given by the respondent. Transcriptions are made of the essence in every answer, meaning that we take away unnecessary words and repetitions that do not contribute to any further meaning or deeper understanding. We start transcribing before we have conducted all interviews due to time limitations. We divided the 12 interviews so that the authors transcribed 6 interviews each. Afterwards both authors read through the transcriptions with a following discussion on how the answers are to be coded. This enabled the understanding of how to code the answers to be consequent and cohesive.

When going through the transcriptions we first code the answers in relation to the questions from the interview guide. These questions are in turn related to a concept in the model on the relationship between identity, image and culture, as defined by previous literature. By that, the answers to the questions will be coded as belonging to one of the concepts in the model, identity, image or culture, with the operationalized question as the link in between. This way of coding deductively is in line with our aim at understandings this theoretical model, empirically, in order to gain understanding about employees’ perception of organizational identity. This train of thoughts and how we have operationalized the questions in relation the literature can be seen in Appendix 1.

The thoughts we have concerning Appendix 1 in relation to the interview guide (Appendix 2) is that it displays more detailed questions to each concept from the literature. However, the interview guide presents more broad questions where each of the questions are formulated to reflect several of the questions from Appendix 1. Moreover the interview guide presents the questions in Swedish, as asked at the interview as well as the translation of them in English.
By having the transcriptions in Swedish, we maintain the interviewees own words and leave less room for interpretation until putting quotes in the text. It is not until then that we translate them into English. By doing the translation in this late step in the process, we believe that it will increase validity due to personal injection (happening when incorporating the quote in a certain context in the result) will be done at a later step rather than translate the transcription immediately. We further presents our train of thought concerning the translations of the quotes from Swedish to English in Appendix 3, where they are in order of appearance, displaying the original quote followed by the translated.
4. Results

The results presents how the model on the relationship between identity, image and culture is shown empirically in the perceptions of the employees at the marketing and HR department at Arla Foods in Sweden. Also, if and how they perceive that they integrate aspects of these concepts in their daily work is presented.

4.1 Identity

Identity in the literature concerns the question “who we are” as an organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, p.311), as well as aspects that can be considered central, distinctive and enduring (Albert & Whetten, 1989). As such questions on describing Arla and what the interviewees think Arla stand for are asked.

In terms of describing Arla as a company it was mainly considered as being large, fast expanding and an international dairy company. Arla produces quality products under well-known brands, it is a company with rich history in Sweden, tied to the farmers’ cooperative and being a company grounded in ethical thinking.

When asking about what the interviewees thought Arla stand for, they seem clear about what they believe Arla to stand for and are quick in their answers. Recurring aspects that interviewees perceive Arla to stand for are natural, health, responsible, and cooperative, which were answers to the question of what the interviewees believed to be central to what Arla stands for. As phrased by one interviewee:

"We are present in our consumers’ lives, in a positive, healthy and comfortable way. Then the values of Arla lie in health, natural, the environment, the farmers and the cows; everyone should be alright throughout the chain. Right and properly. No foul short-cuts. Our core values are to be natural, healthy, and responsible."

Natural is talked of in terms of products without unnatural ingredients, which is named the red thread through the company and is something mentioned by nearly all interviewees.
“The core is natural, nothing artificial. And that is in everything, whether it terms of gaining market share, launching a new product or doing something with our own processes at the dairies.”

*Health* is perceived as a central value in terms of healthy products, developed through research and with the help of experts.

“We do a lot of work with healthy products and have experts in health internally as well as taking in experts externally in order for us to learn more. Health is important to us and we believe our products are part of a healthy diet.”

The interviewees mention *Responsible* in terms of both people and planet with continuous growth for the company but that it need to grow in a “good” way i.e. responsibility throughout the entire chain.

“It’s a responsible company, where a lot is happening and it is growing, but it doesn’t grow in just any way. […] Arla takes responsibility throughout the chain.”

*Cooperative* is perceived as being a central value in terms of what Arla stands for and it is seen as being reflected through profits being returned to the farmers and where the farmers have a say in the company. The importance of cooperative for the interviewees centres around responsibility, going together and doing things better and more efficiently, as well as in terms of maintaining the Swedish open landscape, it is seen as connected to local associations of Arla.

These values are also expressed and communicated in the centrally developed identities of Closer to Nature and Good Growth. According to many of the interviewees Good Growth is a very good representation of what Arla stands for, representing more values than the older Closer to Nature campaign. However many interviewees also note that the aspects within Good Growth are already being done in Sweden. By that, this new packaging of already existing values in Sweden, is seen by the Swedish managers to be more intended for the other countries within the global organization of Arla, rather than themselves. As one interviewee said:
“When we received the communication that this [referring to the company growing in responsible ways would be packaged as Good Growth I thought, having been here 15 years, it felt like that this is what we are already doing. They have packaged what we are already doing, communicating it internally which is good both for new people and those which have been here long so you don’t forget. You need a reminder once in a while.” […]

Another interviewee said:

“We have had large international campaigns, for example Closer to Nature, where the point of the campaign is what Arla Sweden already stand for. It’s how Arla in Sweden is already perceived. At least in relation to other countries, where it means more to be able to say that Arla is closer to nature.”

The centrally communicated concept of Lead, Sense and Create, reflecting work ethos, are also recurring when perceiving what Arla stand for. Interviewees perceive this as showing leadership, sensing and understanding other people as well creating opportunities and ideas.

In terms of mentioning values when asked about what Arla stand for, the answer came easier for some respondents than for others. Interviewees being HR managers mention concepts like lead, sense and create to a larger extent than marketing managers. However some respondents did not find it easy to answer due to being influenced by company rhetoric. One respondent for example, in response to the question what you think Arla stand for, said:

"It’s a little difficult since I am so involved that I know exactly what it is".

Another respondent said that it is somewhat difficult to answer the questions:

“Sometimes it feels like I’m answering and sometimes it is the company’s words.”
When asking whether what Arla stands for has changed over time, many interviewees did not think that was the case. As one interviewee put it in answering whether what Arla stands for has changed in recent times said:

“No, we are a cooperative and that is about joining forces because it is more effective to work together. Those things have not changed. The core values are the same. The farmers are still the owners, and it is a democracy. However the market has changed.” [...] 

The statement by this interviewee was echoed by many others; it is the competitive landscape that has changed. Going back Arla was almost considered a monopoly whereas now the market has become more crowded and the boundaries between Arla and competitors is seen as more blurred. This has had implications for how the company is run; more focus now is on being effective with a move towards performance culture where international is valued. As one interviewee phrased it:

“Before, there was less need to be effective in the operational, but that is now a main focus. You could turn a blind eye before but now you really need to think if the money is properly invested.”

However some interviewees mentioned tension between associations of Arla being local at the same time as being an international company. In relation to the question if the interviewee had noticed the local against the global, one interviewee said:

“Sometimes. There is tension. You have to see it as something good and use it and we do that. But sometimes in the daily work it causes frustration.”

This was mainly in relation to the matrix organization, where the interviewee said that there is local responsibility in Sweden for operations but they have to adapt what is jointly and globally decided for all of Arla. This, the interviewee mentions, sometimes goes against what they, at Arla Sweden wants to do.

Further, whether or not Arla should stand for local or global is a perception which is divided in the interviewees’ answers. The importance of standing for locality is perceived to be the case if maintaining legitimacy in the Swedish market. However, many interviewees deemed being
international is the way forward, and that without the fusion and without the international focus Arla may not have survived. One interviewee also talked about the opportunities of being international since it there is a demand for exported milk on the global market.

“If you communicate that the milk is from Denmark no one will buy it (in Sweden). You buy locally produced milk. [...] But internally we know that so is not the case in the rest of the world. In China you don’t want locally produced milk. Internationally it is better to import, especially milk which is a staple good with high quality. [...] You need to adapt to the market but be honest. [...] You have to be open to the international and new solutions [...]”

4.2 Culture

As described in the literature review, culture is defined as “something held in common by group members, various described as some combination of shared meanings, beliefs, assumptions, understandings, norms, values and knowledge” (Hatch, 2013, p. 159).

When asked about whether the interviewees believed that what Arla stands for is shared amongst colleagues, interviewees thought that what they believe Arla to stand for as well as their level of commitment to the organization is shared between them and close colleagues. But at the same time, they perceive the culture and structure of the organization, at large, to be quite confusing and messy. Although interviewees representing top management have clear perceptions of what Arla stand for, they mention that they are not sure that the 3500 other employees have the same clear idea. Interviewees believe that other employees, besides the closest colleagues think that what Arla stands for is not necessarily the same as what they themselves or the closest colleagues think.

“I do not believe that they are so sure about values of Arla and what Arla stand for or why one would be proud to work at Arla”

These differing understandings of the culture of Arla is believed to be due to leadership not being coherent between departments as well as communication about values not flowing through the organization.
“There are not two departments similar to each other, there are different ways to communicate and different styles of leadership within them. Therefore, different departments bears different cultures”

Such cultural differences manifests in a feeling of “we and them” between dairies and the HQ as well as between departments at the HQ.

“The perception after talking to people at Arla is that Arla has a large focus on managers, all the talent programmes and so are for managers. Then you tend to forget the blue collars”

The introduction programmes, when being newly recruited at Arla, differs between the one intended for the managers and the one focusing on the blue collar workers concerning how they communicate what Arla stand for and values central to Arla.

“We had an introduction day, called “closer to Arla” where top management came and talked about CSR and other values. But that is only for managers and afterwards it is their job to carry it out in the organization. The other 700-800 also receives an introduction education but it is not comparable” [...] “It is much more focus on security and the work environment, and other aspects come in second. Values are a part of the education but it is roughly gone through. It is more a focus to get people to the work floor”

This leads to the perception that ideas about Arla’s identity does not reach the dairies, which has the effects that the dairies feel they cannot identify with what HQ decide. By that there is a gap between what employees at the dairies think that Arla stand for and what managers at the HQ believe. To have the communication float through the organization is perceived important in order to meet a unified understanding of values and ideas.

[...] “to communicate the decisions and guidelines about why they have been taken, to those that will implement it, is important. Before when it happened, employees at the dairies did not understand why and they just became angry and frustrated at top management for making such decisions. So that was a communication failure” [...]
4.2.1 Reflecting

The model link identity with culture through reflecting, which is when identity claims become deeply associated with cultural aspects such as norms, understandings and values, so when an identity claim is made, a more implicit cultural claim is also made. In other words, reflecting as such is when the culture is perceived to be shown in the identity (Hatch & Shultz, 2002). As such what the employees actually do and work with in terms of the identity will also have cultural significance, and what happens culturally will also have impact on the perceived identity.

In terms of reflecting the identity at Arla, the answers by HR are more closely related to factors such as lead, sense and create. Those factors are emphasized by HR when making decisions for recruiting, it is important that the candidate show willingness in learning how to live these values. On the other hand, what guides the marketing managers’ decisions are values in relation to the products such as natural and healthy, where the development of products intentionally goes in line with being natural and healthy. A decision about new products will only go through if they correspond to these factors.

However, interviewees from marketing stated more often that they carry aspects of the identity with them unconsciously while managers from HR believed their perceptions of what Arla stand for were more prominent.

[…] “It is there indirect, I cannot say it any more concrete than that, it is a little abstract. It is in the walls rather than in the head” […]

As such integration of identity in the daily work is not considered all the time; employees just continue working in the day to day business. There is neither any dialogue between colleagues about what Arla stand for on a regular basis. When performing a familiar task, integrating identity aspects are second nature rather than explicitly expressed.

When the identity is most consciously present is during focus days aimed at discussion aspects of identity or when working on a particular task that deals with the values of e.g. responsible
more accurately. It is a “one time thing”, limited to those occasions and afterwards they are not really considered.

“We just keep on working. We have our daily challenges and missions so we do not think about the meaning of it consciously, it is rather just there. […] then we have had the guiding words of lead, sense and create and we have had some focus days around those and what they mean to us and how we at our department relate to them and so on. It is at these occasions that we discuss them but in the daily business, I believe we just keep on working. “

Additionally interviewees believe and expect other colleagues to know and to consciously think about integration of identity to a larger extent than what they do themselves. They often said that somebody else could probably answer this better than them and when they were new to the company, they believed that the identity was implemented to a larger extent than was later shown.

[…] “I believed that it was already implemented” […]

[…] “I think that one thinks that it lives in the organization, that it is in the walls” […]

Lead, sense and create are considered more explicitly integrated at Arla since these function as guidelines on how to work, are key in employee evaluation forms and are incorporated in the setting of salary. As such they are regularly measured. Arla also provides leadership programmes for the managers, aiming to learn what these concepts mean at Arla and how one can transfer them to the daily work.

However, the interviewees have difficulty in mentioning any concrete example of how the values are lived and transferred in the daily work.

Moreover, in terms of implementing ideas, interviewees state that suggestions from HQ on how to implement concepts of the identity is not adapted to the how daily business is carried out at the different units, with the effect that those suggestions are not prioritised in the daily work, there are often tasks that demands more attention than implementing concepts of what the organization stands for.
“There are implementation programmes being launched but it is hard to stop the daily business at the dairies meaning that the ideas are not grounded at the dairies and if it is not grounded among the blue collars, it will not live in the organization. The blue collars are 95% of the dairy. It is a challenge that Arla has. Both the marketing department and the HR department make good initiatives [...] but how to implement it? Shall we rent 50 workers that can take over the daily business? When this situation comes, one asks the question; “what is the most important” and then the daily business comes first”

Moreover, the HQ does not explain or give guidelines for how to take lead on something communicated or how to implement it. It is up to the individual to interpret the meaning of the values in relation to the own work and to implement and live it. It is also in the responsibility of the manager for the group to bring it up in further discussions with the group. But due to the lack of guidelines and time scarcity, new initiatives that are being launched from central (HQ), it is met by some scepticism by the rest of the organization. Upon the question how the dairies respond to these initiatives, interviewees state that:

“As mentioned, there is a feeling of we and them, incorporating a certain scepticism. You think “oh, another initiative” and one is not really a part of it. They might come from central and hold a presentation for the managers at the dairy, but then the thing is dropped. And then it is up to the managers of the blue collars to capture and teach all 600-700 blue collars. It is a huge job. But it is not the idea in itself that they bring, it is just that it is “another thing again” “.

The reluctance towards centrally made decisions and guidelines is also sprung from the history of the different regional units, e.g. dairies, at Arla. They used to be more independent and have a history of conducting daily business by “their own rules”, without control from the central organization. This is especially evident with those employees that have worked for a long time and when those newly recruited try to implement central standards, it is practically challenging.

When asked about if the interviewees perceive that the reflections upon the work atmosphere goes in line with what values Arla stands for, values such as honest and caring, are believed to
be shown in regards of how the organization treats employees but also in terms of how Arla acts in society.

However, at the same time, the atmosphere and the internal organizational structure within is in some parts described as quite hierarchical and the internal communication does not flow through the organization.

“There is a long way between the HQ and the dairy, even though (dairy X) is quite (geographically) close”

“There is a gap within Arla. There is surprisingly few managers from the HQ that has been out at the dairy. This is evident in the communication. They believe that one can only use the intranet, but very few workers at the dairy use a computer in their daily work”

Walls are built between departments and work is conducted in “isolated” bubbles/clusters having the effect that it is not perceived common to go between departments in an uneasy way. Moreover, on some levels, you are allowed to do certain things, while on others you are not, believed to contradict Arla trying to be an inclusive brand. The hierarchical effect is furthermore shown in the unlikeliness of having lunch with your boss or asking questions to your boss in a relaxed manner.

“At my previous workplace, the president could come and join us for lunch and then it would be like talking to anybody, here it is more that you go together to lunch in specific clusters of people. “

Moreover, to collaborate in practice within the organization is perceived more or less difficult. It is said to be due to Arla being a matrix organization where there are many different interests and agendas and where more people are involved in the processes than the initial manager the employee usually report to. Besides having to answer to and involve several different people, the difficulties of collaboration between departments are increased by their different agendas of priorities as well as a perceived confusion in terms of areas of responsibility.
“It is unclear as to what is my area of responsibility as well as who is my closest boss” [...]

“There are actions of panic more often than necessary due to the reason that it is not declared who will be in charge of what, so all of a sudden there are three people working on the same thing. It becomes a lot of ad-hoc solutions” [...]

The organizational structure of several people being involved as well as confusion as to who is responsible have the effect that interviewees perceive it to be difficult and tedious to take decisions and moreover to know who’s decisions to listen to and act upon.

“well, we have a board for decisions but I still think that even though you get a decision from there or guidelines for a decision, you get questioned a lot. There are also role descriptions and descriptions of work processes coming in from everywhere” [...]

It is perceived to lead to one thinking that a decision is made and then another decision regarding the same thing come from another unit of the organisation and one does not know who to listen to. By this, decisions are not perceived as consequent, making it unclear of what is the “right” decision.
For this reason, employees wait with acting upon a decision since they otherwise will have to do it all over again. The final decision and action are therefore taken at the latest.

“On and off I can feel that I leave that decision for later, to see how things in fact turn out and now and then you go ahead with the decision based on what you got at the beginning and you feel that this might be something and later on you receive the notification that it in fact was not the way to go after all”.

This results in decisions being on short term rather than long term basis, and it results in short term solutions. By this, actions become more of “panic”-character, ad hoc, with the aim of “putting out the fire”. Some work tasks are therefore demanding more attention and actions than others. This makes employees feel that there is imbalance in the time they put on the different work tasks. Decisions therefore have to be taken more quickly now.
However, this short term decision making is believed to harm what Arla stands for since e.g., communication, integration and promotion of concepts like *honesty* are believed to benefit from being worked on thoroughly. That is perceived would create value and trust both internally and externally. The need for acting quick also brings the perception of a gap between what is expected of the interviewees and what they have mandate and power to actually manage.

“You know that you have two years to finish the task and to receive the effects of it but it takes much longer time than that, making you feel that you do not know how to handle it”

In terms of what Arla stand for, this gap between ability and what is expected of the employees work role make the interviewees feel worried about the quality of output due to the fact that they cannot plan their work to be as efficient as it could be. This is believed to harm the values of Arla and therefore the brands.

“So that one feels that it is possible to plan, to include, to make smart choices in the long run. Although you might know that when acting on short notice, but you may not know where you’ll end up” […]

4.3 Image

*Image is, in the literature, the accumulated impressions held both by external observers, like consumers, and internal members, like employees (Alvesson, 2004, p.164). These impressions will be created both through aggregated communication and sense-making by the individual person, whether s/he be internal or external. As such questions regarding the image concerned how Arla communicates what they stand for and whether the interviewee agreed with the communication.*

When asking how Arla expresses themselves on what Arla stands for, interviewees perceive that Arla does this in an honest way. As one respondent said;

“Arla does what it says on the tin”.
In terms of concepts central in communication, the most frequent are *natural* and *healthy*, communicated through the product and package and in terms of commercials.

Most of the interviewees think that Arla’s communication reflect what they think Arla stand for, except for the strongly perceived value of cooperative, which many interviewees believe Arla does not currently communicate as strongly as they should.

“There are unfortunately not enough people that know that Arla is a farmer’s cooperative and that this means that the farmers are the owners”

“If I could choose one message it would be the farmer's cooperative. [...] I believe the biggest opportunity is to communicate the cooperative, because that sets us apart in a good way.”

“Arla IS a farmers’ cooperative”

4.3.1 Mirroring

According to the model, mirroring is the link between identity and image, where what outsiders, such as consumers, believe about the organization is mirrored back in what the organization members believe, and as such outsiders perceptions will influences organizational members perceptions (Hatch & Schultz, 2002). As such questions regarding mirroring concerned what the interviewee believed that consumers and customers believed that Arla stand for.

Interviewees have the perception that consumers and customers think Arla is an honest company, with good reputation of having healthy, tasty and high quality products that are safe. They further answer that Arla is also seen by customers and consumers as moving the industry forward, in terms of innovation.

However one respondent say that many consumers think they are buying an Arla product when in fact they are not.
“You might think you are buying Arla every time you buy a dairy product. People are quite unaware which products are Arla and which are not.”

Furthermore, in relation to the image of Arla reflected in the media, interviewees think it is unfair, displaying a negative image of Arla.

“You feel the opposition, when they say ‘they dominate’ and ‘they do what is best for them’. It’s egocentric words used for us instead of seeing that we are on the farmer’s side and help the farmers continue to operate.”

“A lot of people hear in the media of the farmers not getting paid enough [for the milk], and then Arla is blamed, without considering who owns Arla.”

“It is the competitors and the media that have created this picture that we are a Danish-dairy-giant, it is not something we want to be viewed as.”

Interviewees further believe that Arla is being portrayed in an unfair way when it comes to competitors describing Arla with words such as being a dairy giant, Danish and not local at all.

The higher up the organizational hierarchy, the more effect consumers’ and customers’ perceptions of Arla have on the work of managers. It influences central guidelines and strategies on how to lead the organization. It is discussed and handled in one way or another at every meeting at top management. What consumers and customers think about Arla is more important in terms of shaping strategies and actions than what employees think of Arla. However internal interest and consumer interest are not always aligned. The global perspective is important for Arla employer branding since they want future recruits to engage in an international career. For consumers on the other hand, it might be more important to hear values like Arla being local.

“Arla wants to be an international company […] At the same time the consumers are currently asking for local products and that does not really work together. The more we work in line with what Arla wants the more we move away from the local, that the consumers are asking for.”
5. Analysis

Now we come to the analysis, discussing our findings in relation to the literature on organizational identity, image and culture and the relationship in between these; reflecting and mirroring. In line with our aim to see if this theoretical model can be applied for understanding how organizational identity is reflected upon and perceived to be integrated in the daily work, in an empirical setting, this section is presented in parts in line with the model.

5.1 Identity

As Mead suggested organisations can develop a “we” feeling amongst its employees and that can be considered the case at Arla, especially when reflecting upon what Arla Sweden stands for in comparison to Arla in other countries. Interviewees believe that what the global organization of Arla talk of as new in terms of values, have been reflected in the identity in Arla Sweden for a long time. The “us” in relation to outsiders is also observed, especially in the sense that the interviewees felt the need to defend Arla against outsiders’ negative views, especially from the media.

Both these aspects show the influence of an external part on the own perceptions of the identity with the effect that it is being reinforced. In terms of we, the identity of Arla Sweden is confirmed against the external actor of the other countries in the global organization of Arla and therefore reinforced. In terms of us, the identity of Arla Sweden is under criticism and threat from an external actor, creating motives for defending the identity which reinforces it. By this, it could be stated that in relation to external factors putting pressure on the organizational identity, the identity and “we-ness” becomes more focused and strong for the members of the organization.

There does seem to be central concepts that most interviewees believe characterizes the identity of Arla, such as natural, healthy, responsible and cooperative. However, we have also seen other aspects of the identity, which can either be considered extensions of the identity or multiple identities. For example the work ethos of Lead, Sense, Create are aspects of an identity living at Arla and mentioned as important in how interviewees think around what Arla stands for. The same can be said in regards to local versus international, where some interviewees believed Arla to be more local as core of its identity whereas others saw it as international. Also, some interviewees perceived values of Arla to be mainly manifested in the products, while others considered the identity being sprung from Arla’s wholeness, including activities and sponsorships. These different perceptions indicate a split in the focus of where central
values are believed to be anchored. This can be seen as different understandings upon what the identity of Arla in fact is at core, a difference sprung from whether the interviewees are managers within HR or marketing. HR more often mention lead, sense and create in relation to questions of managing staff while marketing mention aspects such as natural, healthy and responsible mostly in relation to products. Moreover, the marketing managers perceive the identity in unconsciously, describing the identity as “just there”. These perceptions is in line with the definition of multiple identities put forward by Pratt and Foreman (2000) where they mean that multiple identities live within the whole organization and involve multiple conceptualizations of the organization. This is where different concepts of the identity may be in competition with each other, however, this is not always necessarily the case. At Arla, we see this in the perceptions of the identity traits of health and cooperative not inherently matching, however, they do not conflict. Rather what can be observed in this case is what Pratt and Foreman put forwards as different sub-groups having different ideas about the identity and that members of the organization may not be aware of all identity traits, which would be indicated by the differing concepts mentioned in relation to what Arla stand for. What could be argued by this, is that identity as a perception amongst employees is not a constant or definite phenomenon but rather something floating internally and is only concretely shaped when introduced in particular contexts. In regards to this, Gioia et al. (2013) wrote that multiple identities imply that neither identity nor image change in a uniform or unified fashion but that identity is inherently a dynamic concept in which many aspects evolve, are replaced and compete.

5.2 Culture and Reflected Identity
In terms the organizational culture, interviewees state that they share perceptions of what Arla stand for with their closest colleagues, in terms of concepts of what the identity might be. However, when asked how these concepts are integrated in internal processes such as how the daily work is conducted as well as how the identity is shown in the interaction between colleagues and departments, that a gap becomes evident. In relation to the model displaying how the identity is linked to culture, this gap shows that since the identity is not aligned with the internal processes, it is not aligned with the organizational culture. As such it may not be so easy to align identity and culture empirically, as presented in the theory.
In relation to organizational identity, organizational culture is more contextual and tacit (Hatch & Schultz, 2002) which can explain the spread of perceptions of the culture at Arla; depending on where in the organization the employee is (unit or level), they may experience different contexts which can make them perceive cultural aspects differently.

In relation to *reflecting*, this different understanding of the organizational culture will have an impact on the identity since this perspective presents identity as embedded in organizational culture and where this linkage either makes the identity stronger or changes it (Hatch & Schultz, 2002). So when employees at Arla perceive the culture differently, it will have an effect on their perception of the identity. This relates back to the differing views interviewees have of what the identity actually is and where it is anchored, indicating that gaps in the culture are related to the differing understandings of the identity. In relation to the model, this finding suggest that aspects of confusion in either of identity or culture will give confusion in the other, indicating that culture and identity are linked empirically in terms of the identity not being reflected in the culture.

This is illustrated in the case of Arla through the perception of the organizational identity being *including* but where their experience of the organizational culture is that it is *hierarchical*, bearing difficulties in communicating between departments or levels of positions. The communication is believed to not reach the entire organization, or to be adapted in a way that allows different units to utilize it. This leads to a sense of we and them between e.g. the different departments at HQ as well as between the HQ in Stockholm and the dairies. The sense of we and them fuels a feeling of not being understood by other units in the organization and in relation to culture being shared understandings of values and norms, these different perceptions could be argued to show dissonance in how the culture is being understood. In relation to *reflecting*, this different understandings of norms and values makes it difficult for the identity to thoroughly be understood within the organization. According to the definition of reflecting, the identity is clarified when values and norms of the organization are in line with what the organization claims to stand for, since what happens culturally will have impact on the perceived identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).
If the identity is not perceived by employees in a way that matches the intended identity of the organization, employees are less willing to achieve organizational goals or see incitements in achieving them (Kiriakidou & Millward, 2000). In the case of Arla, this is shown through the perception of not being understood and consequently not prioritising initiatives from top management on integration of identity in the daily work. Gioia et al. (2013, p. 182) mean that an identity can be reaffirmed through everyday practices and interactions showing the importance of integrating the identity in the daily work. However, what is indicated at Arla is that the talk about integration of identity in the daily work seems to be more on a theoretical level rarely leading to integration in work tasks. This imply that the identity at Arla does not function as presented by van Rekom (uy, p. 91), where it can be used as a managerial tool in guiding actions and decision making. By this, it is implied that if the identity is clearly understood by employees, it function as a guideline in the daily work. The problem at Arla, being illustrated by the confusion in whose mandate to listen to in decision making or who is responsible for what, could be argued reflects back on employees’ different understandings of what the identity in fact is. At the same time, they express that they are unsure of whether they are doing the right thing or not, especially in the long run and that they do not reflect upon, how the outcome of a task can be more in line with the central values of what the organization is about. Individual employees are encouraged to take own initiative of how they can integrate aspects of the identity in their daily work, but they themselves state that they do not know how. In relation to the model, as well as the argument by van Rekom, that identity should function as a guideline for decisions, this suggest that a unified and aligned understanding of the identity and culture, can give employees the ability to take decisions that are long lasting because they are in line with what the organization stands for. If this could be achieved it is possible that the identity would be lived more thoroughly and actively in the whole organization as well as be more prominent on daily basis rather than isolated to special occasions.

5.3 Image and Mirrored Identity

In terms of image, most of the interviewees perceive that the communicated image and what Arla want to stand for correlates with their beliefs about the identity of Arla, indicating the close relation between identity and image as proposed by previous literature (Abratt, 1989; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Hatch & Schultz, 2002;). However what should be noted is that even though the identity are perceived as being aligned with the image, employees believe that aspects of the identity could be more prominent in the communication, especially the
ownership structure of Arla, being a farmers’ cooperative. This indicate a form of auto-communication, as suggested by Cheney and Christensen, (2001 p. 272), where top-management decide to communicate aspects of Arla’s identity that they believe are important for customers and consumers, in this case **honest** and **natural** but where are members perceptions are less considered.

This influence by the thoughts and actions of consumers can be seen as due to Arla actually selling to consumers, which is why their perceptions is prioritised. This way of conducting business indicates the prominence of the influence of mirroring, through which identity can be argued to be integrated in the daily work of image creation. However, as the findings suggest, in practice there might conflicts between individual’s perceptions of the identity core, creating

In terms of mirroring the findings suggest that dependent on the image being mirrored back to the interviewees, from the external sender, it makes the interviewees react in different ways. If the image is hostile and negative, the response is to defend Arla, as mentioned previously, and if the image is positive, it usually correlates with what the interviewees believed Arla to stand for. On basis of this, we can argue that positive images being mirrored is perceived by members of the organization to more often be in line with their own perceptions of what the true image of the organization is, that is their own image. On the other hand, negative images being mirrored are more often believe to contradict with what they see as the truth. In this sense, and as findings in this study show, outsiders’ positive perception about the organization enhances the members feeling of having an identity through the increasing of “we-ness”. When outsiders’ perceptions are negative, the “we-ness” is threatened and then employees feel the need to defend it. This need to take action in order to create an alignment between image and identity suggest the importance of this for organizational members in order to negate any dissonance caused by negative perceptions by outsiders, which is supported by Dutton and Dukerich (1991) in their findings of how members of the New York Port Authority reacted to negative perceptions in the media.

By this, identity and image are closely related and sometimes difficult to separate, perhaps more so than that of identity and culture as suggested by Hatch and Schultz (2002). What the findings further suggest is that the empirical setting in which we have tried to understand how organizational identity is perceived through the theoretical model, provides a context which
have important influence upon this perception. This importance of context is not accounted for in the same sense theoretically. This is illustrated by the fact that manager from HR reflect upon the identity differently than those from marketing, due to them working within different contexts. These different context as well as the fact that image and identity is perceived closer to each other could be seen as part of the explanation to why marketing managers sometimes find it difficult to express clear identity claims since they more actively work with conducting communication messages related to image. By this, the identity and image perhaps becomes more “the same” to them and they therefore have difficulty in separating them and thus make clear identity claims.

Values, norms and understandings are, in our findings, are understood differently by employees, indicating that culture in many ways are separate from identity. Due to HR managers, to a larger extent, manage these concepts through interaction with staff, we see that they express identity claims easier than marketing managers. This confirms that context, in terms of the context around the specific employee, is important for how organizational identity is reflected upon by that member of the organization.
6. Conclusion

An organization's reputation reflects what the organization is believed to stand for, linking the reputation to the identity of the organization which is to a large extent managed through internal processes within the organization. In terms of this, this study aimed at shedding light upon how the organizational identity is reflected upon and perceived to be integrated in the daily work by employees. That is, to understand how organizational identity can be understood in an empirical setting, internally, within an organization that claims to work with identity but that have experienced setbacks in how the reputation is perceived.

In order to meet this aim, we used the theoretical model by Hatch and Schultz (2002) which suggest that organizational identity, image and culture relate to each other through the concepts of Mirroring, which is image related to identity, and Reflecting, which is culture related to identity. This constitutes the internal aspect of this model, considering only how employees reflect on identity, culture and image.

The findings of the study suggest that the theoretical model by Hatch and Schultz partially can explain how organizational identity is understood and reflected upon in an empirical setting. In relation to and answering our first research question of “how do employees in the marketing and human resource departments at Arla reflect on the identity of their organization”, the findings suggest that the identity is more or less consciously considered and reflected upon by employees, however, the perceptions of what that identity is, is not coherent or shared across the organization.

Furthermore, identity and image are perceived close through the linkage of mirroring. It is shown in the sense that how others view the organization is strongly influencing how employees perceive the identity and how they act in terms of maintaining a positive image. However the organizational culture and in relation to that, the reflected identity, bears fragmentation indicating that identity could be considered less connected to culture. Still, one may ask whether or not the culture and identity would fare better if they are more aligned since that would function as guidelines in how to conduct certain work tasks that are currently viewed as unclear and confusing.

What can also be seen is that the literature on organizational identity and the social constructivist perspective concerns mainly the psychology behind identity perceptions, not
necessarily how this is shown in organizational work life. As such, our findings show that the identity is reflected upon and talked about. However the identity is not integrated throughout the whole chain nor consciously considered in all work tasks of the individual employee. As such answering our research question of “do these employees believe that features of the identity is integrated in their daily work”, this study show that identity is talked of but not actually lived in practice. In relation to the claim that management of identity influences how the reputation is perceived, what the findings of this study indicate is that misalignment between concepts of identity will have an effect upon the image being communicated from the organization, which in turn influence the reputation being perceived. As written by van Rekom “identity influences action and action also influences identity” (2002, p. 93), which is the ideal situation in any organization.

6.1 Avenues of Further Research and Managerial Implications
This study managed to shed some light on how employees reflect on the identity of their organisation, and found that although employees reflect on the identity there is a gap between what they reflect and how their actively integrate the identity in their daily work. However due to the limitations of this study, such as time scarcity and only investigating at one setting, we propose that the next step should be to research why there is such a gap and what organizations are doing more practically in order to manage identities. For example doing a longitudinal study of the implementation process of a new identity, observing how the identity is implemented and whether it becomes integrated in the daily work over a long period. Alternatively mapping identity and how it is integrated at more than one organization could provide more robust findings that can be generalized to more than one setting, and provide insights as to how different organizations deal with identity. Further, we propose a study that in more depth aim at investigating the importance of organizational culture and identity to be fully aligned.

For managers this research suggests that although employees understand and reflect on the identity in a way that is aligned with what is communicated: they identity with the organization, they do not necessarily consciously implement the identity in their daily work due to not prioritizing this in favour of other goals, not receiving enough guidelines and there not being structured follow-ups after an initiative is introduced.
7. References


Kiriakidou, O. & Millward, L, J. 2000. Corporate Identity; External reality or internal fit? *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. vol. 5 no. 1 pp. 49-58


Pratt, M. G. & Foreman, P.O. “Classifying Managerial Responses to Multiple Organizational Identities” Academy of Management vol. 25 no.1 pp.18-42


8. Tables and Figures

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Figure 2: Adaptation of Hatch and Schultz theoretical model, highlighting the internal aspects which is the focus of this study and how it leads to employee perceptions and integration empirically p. 16
9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1 Operationalization from Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions asked in interviews</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational identity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Functionalist perspective</strong></td>
<td>tangible: logos, official stories, documents: what is expressed, e.g. the communication messages, what is printed, expressed (corporate) identities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social constructionist</strong></td>
<td>identity is shared understandings: (this is somewhat also culture)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you believe that you colleagues share your perception of what Arla stands for/could be described as?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do you believe that what Arla communicates and expresses that they stand for matches your perception?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Postmodern perspective</strong></td>
<td>identity is a myth or illusion, the identity does not really exist</td>
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<td>when they perhaps hesitate in their answers or find it hard to know what to answer, searching for the words</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social Actor Perspective</strong></td>
<td>organizations make assertions about itself and its role in society, expressed in claims and articulation about the identity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>what the respondents express concerning what Arla is in society, e.g. used to be monopoly, now something else</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>what Arla is in relation to its competitors, it defines somewhat Arla's role in society as well</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional view</strong></td>
<td>arguments about the farming cooperative since they mean that it is important for the Swedish agriculture and Swedish farmers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>organizations in an industry, in this cased dairy, have similar identities since they are under influence of environmental forces and therefore have developed isomorphic tendencies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arla in relation to its competitors</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Population Ecology</strong></th>
<th>have this relation and role been the same or has it changed throughout the years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>customers and consumers perception of Arla and how this effect how managers (the interviewed) work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how does Arla express what they stand for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the organizational identity is defined by external actors</td>
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<td><strong>CED</strong></td>
<td>what consumers and customers perceive what Arla is and stands for, behaves</td>
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<td></td>
<td>has this been the same or changed throughout the years</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how does this affect the internal work conducted in Arla</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Core features of the organization's character</td>
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<td></td>
<td>what characteristics and attributes are mentioned as describing Arla and what do the interviews perceive Arla to stand for</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive: unique aspects of the organization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arla in relation to its competitors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enduring: that the characteristics can stand the test of time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How the identity make understandable strategies, decision making and legitimacy</strong></td>
<td>Have what the respondents describe Arla and perceive that Arla stands for changed or been the same throughout the latest years</td>
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<td>Changes perhaps in: competition / Within the business / Society</td>
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<td>how have these changes (e.g. global/local) influenced what Arla stands for - in what way has it changed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>what determines if a strategy, decision, activity or recruitment is successful or not</td>
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<td>what is important to take into account and consider when formulating these activities etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how does what you perceive Arla to stand influence how you go about doing your work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how does what external actors (customers and consumers) perceive Arla to stand for how you go about doing your work</td>
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</table>
| Who we are | what goals do you have in your work  
are those goals/purposes with your work dictated for you or are made by yourself |
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<td>do you symphonize with the goals, do you agree</td>
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<td>how to you conduct your work concretely, strategies, projects, plans etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how would you describe Arla as a company/organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who we are</td>
<td>what do you perceive Arla to stand for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arla in relation to its competitors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how does Arla express/communicate what they stand for and is this a fair image</td>
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<td>what do you think your colleagues perceive Arla to stand for</td>
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<td>what is central in the attributes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>does these values show in any other format than products</td>
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<td>Who we want to be</td>
<td>what do you think Arla wants to stand for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>is this coherent to what you perceive Arla to stand for</td>
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</table>
|           | what the respondents express in terms of what consumers and customers hopefully perceive and think Arla stands for  
(that gives an idea to what Arla would like to stand for)  
Organizational image and culture in relation to identity |
| Legitimacy is gained through melting external influences and internal resources |
| Mix of internal and external and how it influences everyday work |
| **Identity is reaffirmed in everyday interactions and practices** |
| do you talk amongst colleagues about what Arla stands for |
| is what Arla stands for present values in your work tasks |

**IMAGE**

"the impression held by a particular group towards a corporation"

(partly carried out by the aggregated communication of the corporation)

how does Arla communicate and express what they are about and stand for

what does external actors perceive Arla to stand for and be about, do you think

does it affect how you go about going your work

does it affect how you see Arla and what it stands for

does your work role influence how Arla is perceived by others

**Image created by managers in relation to employees**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>perceptions and experiences of the organization</strong></th>
<th><strong>is your perceptions of what Arla stands for coherent to what is communicated and expressed by Arla</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>is it a fair image of Arla (that is; do you agree with the image that is being expressed) and is it matching with what you would like to be communicated</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>is the internal perception of Arla the same as the external</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>is the internal communication coherent to the external</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CULTURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>is it also coherent to how you would Arla to be perceived</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Something held in common by group members...&quot;</td>
<td>(forced vs. organically evolved)</td>
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<td><strong>is your perception of what Arla stands for coherent to external actors’ perceptions of the same, you believe</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>shared meanings, beliefs, assumptions,</td>
<td><strong>is your perception of what Arla stands for coherent to your colleagues perceptions of the same, you believe</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>understandings,&quot;</td>
<td><strong>do you talk about how you work with and perceive values and attributes of what Arla stands for in your daily work</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>how would you describe the work atmosphere at Arla</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>is Arla a hierarchic or flat organization</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>is it common to talk between departments</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>is it easy to talk between departments</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>what do you perceive Arla’s organizational culture to be</strong></td>
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<td><strong>does it take long or short amount of time to make decisions or to have an outcome of a decision</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>formal/informal language</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>how do you eat lunch</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>do you easily move between offices / departments</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>everyone knows everyone</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>individual or team work mostly</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>what is important for a recruitment candidate to obtain or have in terms of values or behaviours</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>when being newly employed, what does the first time at Arla look like</strong></td>
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<td><strong>implementation of processes, easy or not</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>internal communication of what Arla stands for, values and desired behaviours, easy or not</td>
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<tr>
<td>is the perception you have of what Arla stands for coherent to the perception of external actors you think</td>
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<tr>
<td>is the perception you have of what Arla stands for coherent to the perception of your colleagues you think</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>how does that influence your work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>how does that influence your perceptions of what Arla stands for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how are values (mutual), manifested in corporate statements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what are your perceptions, thoughts of how Arla is displayed in media</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>is it a fair image</td>
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9.2 Appendix 2 Interview guide

The interview guide is provided in Swedish, since it was the language the interviews were conducted in.

**Bakgrundsfrågor (Background questions):**

1. Vad är din position på arbetet?  
*What is your position at work?*

2. Vad innefattar din roll för syfte och arbetsuppgifter?  
*What is the purpose with your work role and what tasks does it entail?*

3. Hur arbetar du konkret med dessa? (strategier, projekt, planer, arbetsmarknadsmässor, arbetstagarinformation å broschyrer etc?)  
*How do you work with these concretely?; strategies, projects, plans, work fairs, brochures etc?*

**TEMA:**

Vad är Arlas organisationsidentitet för dig + vad den står för?  
*How do you perceive the organizational identity of Arla to be and what does it stand for?*

4. Beskriv Arla som företag?  
*Describe Arla as an organization?*

5. Vad tycker du att Arla står för? ex nämnn tre huvudsaker  
*(konkret eller abstrakt?)*

*What do you perceive Arla to stand for?*

6. Hur upplever du Arla som företag i relation till konkurrenter anser du att vad Arla står för är unikt?  
*(How do you perceive Arla in relation to its competitors? Do you believe that what Arla stand for is unique?)*

7. Tycker du att vad Arla står för har varit detsamma eller har det förändrats under senaste tiden?  
*(vad tror du att det beror på om det ändrats - externa eller interna faktorer)*

8. Vad tror du att Arla vill stå för?  
*(what do you think that Arla wants to stand for?)*

(Ar)et det detsamma som du upplever eller är det ngt annat?, i samhället/ jmf med andra/ jmf med branschen/ för medarbetetare..?)  
*(is it aligned with what you perceive Arla to stand for?)

**Arlas image jmf/ tillsammans med identiteten?**
(the image of Arla compared to/in relation with the identity)

9. Hur kommunicerar / uttrycker Arla vad man står för?
(How does Arla communicate/express what they stand for?)

10. Är det en rättvis/ riktig bild?
(is it a fair image being displayed?)

11. Tycker du att den bild som kommuniceras av Arla hör ihop med vad du tycker Arla står för?
(Do you believe that the image being communicated of Arla is coherent with your perceptions of what Arla stand for?)

Arlas kultur jmf/ tillsammans med identiteten?
(The culture of Arla compared to/in relation with the identity)

12. Vad tycker du att Arla har för organisationskultur?
(How do you perceive the organizational culture of Arla?)

13. Kan du beskriver arbetsatmosfären på Arla?
(Can you describe the work atmosphere at Arla?)

14. Hur arbetar ni?
(How do you work – work processes)

   Hur kommunicerar ni med varandra under en arbetsdag?
   (How do you communicate during a work day?)

   Är det en hierarkisk eller en platt organisation?
   (Would you say that it is a hierarchical or flat organization?)

   Hur ser processen ut kring beslutsfattande?
   (How does the process around decision making look like?)

   Är det lätt att kommunicera mellan olika avdelningar?
   (Is it easy to communicate between departments?)

15. Delar dina kollegor din uppfattning om vad Arla står för (de aspekter som du nämnde i början)?
(Does your colleagues share your perception of what Arla stand for?)

16. Tycker du att kulturen går ihop med vad Arla står för?
(The organizational culture you described, do you think that that is aligned with what Arla stand for?)

17. Tycker du att kulturen går ihop med det som kommuniceras av Arla?
(The organizational culture you described, do you think it is aligned with what is communicated by Arla?)

18. Vad är viktigt för en arbetssökande att uppnå – vilka värderingar, beteenden?
(Är detta i linje för vad du upplever att Arla står för?)
(When recruiting, what are important characters for the potential employee to possess? And do you believe that to be aligned with what Arla stand for?)

19. När man är nyanställd, hur ser den första tiden på Arla ut?
(When being new at Arla, how does the first time of employment look like?)

Integrerar du identiteten i ditt arbete?

(do you integrate the identity in your daily work?)

(Baserat på vad du tycker att Arla står för och vilken bild som ska visas)

(On basis of what you perceive Arla to stand for and the image to be expressed)

20. Har din roll på Arla betydelse för hur Arla uppfattas av andra? på vilket sätt?
(Does your work role have any influence on how Arla is perceived by others? In what way?)

(What is important to take into account when making decisions in the daily work, eg. In strategies, communication messages, potential candidates for recruitment, presentations)

22. Vad bestämmer om ett utfall av ngt, ex en kampanj eller en rekrytering är framgångsrikt eller ej? - vilka kriterier?
(What criteria determine if the result of a campaign or recruitment is successful or not?)

23. Vad finns det för mål med ditt arbete?

24. Är de mål du föreställer dig själv att du har med ditt arbete/vill ha med ditt arbete överensstämmande med mål som ”dikteras” för dig?

Andras (externa aktörers) upplevelse av Arlas organisationsidentitet

(External actors perception of the organizational identity at Arla)

25. Vad tror du att ex konsumenter och kunder tänker att Arla står för?
(What do you think that consumers and customers believe that Arla stand for?)

26. Är den uppfattningen något som påverkar hur du gör ditt arbete? (utformning, val, prioriteringar?)
(Does that perception influence how you conduct your work tasks?)

27. Upplever du att deras uppfattning vad Arla står för har ändrats eller varit densamma ett tag?
(Do you believe that their perceptions have changed or been the same during the latest years?)
9.3 Appendix 3 Quotes in Results – Original and Translated

Quotes in result about identity:

Original quote:
“Vi är närvarande i våra konsumenters liv, på ett positivt, hälsosamt och bekvämt sätt. Sedan är de dessa värderingar som Arla har som ligger i hälsa, naturligt, miljö, bönderna och korna; alla ska må bra i hela ledet. Det är tydligt uttalat att det ska vara schyst. Rätt och riktigt. Inga fula genvägar. Utan vi har grundvärderingar där vi ska vara naturliga, hälsosamma, och vi ska vara ansvarsfulla”

Translated Quote:
"We are present in our consumers’ lives, in a positive, healthy and comfortable way. Then the values of Arla lie in health, natural, the environment, the farmers and the cows; everyone should be alright throughout the chain. Right and properly. No foul short-cuts. Our core values are to be natural, healthy, and responsible”

Original quote:
"Naturligt i grunden, inget konstlat. Och det är oavsett om vi ska vinna ny mark, lansera en ny produkt eller om vi ska gör om något i våra egna processer eller på mejerierna”

Translated quote:
“The core is natural, nothing artificial. And that is in everything, whether it terms of gaining market share, launching a new product or doing something with our own processes at the dairies”

Original quote:
"Vi jobbar mycket med hälsosamma produkter och har experter på hälsa internt och tar in expertis externt ifrån för att lära sig mer. Hälsa är viktigt för oss, och vi tycker att våra produkter ingår i en hälsosam kost”

Translated quote:
“We do a lot of work with healthy products and have experts in health internally as well as taking in experts externally in order for us to learn more. Health is important to us and we believe our products are part of a healthy diet”

Original quote:
“Det är ett ansvarsfullt bolag, det händer mycket och det växer men det växer inte på vilket sätt som helst ”[…]”Arla tar ansvar genom hela kedjan”

Translated quote:
“It’s a responsible company, where a lot is happening and it is growing, but it doesn't grow in just any way”[...] “Arla takes responsibility throughout the chain”

Original quote:
“När vi fick den här kommunikationen internet att det [att företaget ska växa på ansvarsfulla sätt] skulle förpackas som Good Growth så tyckte jag som varit här i 15 år så kändes det som att det är detta vi gör så det kändes naturligt. De har förpackat det vi gör sedan länge och kommunicerar det internt och det är bra både för nya och de som varit här länge så man inte blir hemma blind. Man behöver påminnelse då och då”

Translated quote:
“When we received the communication that this [referring to the company growing in responsible ways] would be packaged as Good Growth I thought, having been here 15 years, it felt like that this is what we are already doing. They have packaged what we are already doing, communicating it internally which is good both for new people and those which have been here long so you don’t forget. You need a reminder once in a while”

Original quote:
"Sedan har vi haft stora internationella kampanjer, typ ”closer to nature”, där det man velat få fram i kampanjen har Sverige redan stått för, det är så man uppfattas i Sverige så då har man ju inte riktigt gjort samma arbete i Sverige, när man redan var i mål. Jämfört med vad man gjort i andra länder där det har betytt mer att man har kunnat säga att det ska vara nära naturen osv”

Translated quote:
“We have had large international campaigns, for example Closer to Nature, where the point of the campaign is what Arla Sweden already stand for. It’s how Arla in Sweden is already perceived. At least in relation to other countries, where it means more to be able to say that Arla is closer to nature”

Original quote:
"Det är ju lite svårt eftersom jag är så initierad och jag vet exakt vad det är"

Translated quote:
"It’s a little difficult since I am so involved that I know exactly what it is"

Original quote:
“Ibland känner jag att det är jag som svarar och ibland är det företagets ord och så”

Translated quote:
“Sometimes it feels like I’m answering and sometimes it is the company’s words”
Original quote:
"Nej, vi är ett kooperativ och det handlar om att man har gått ihop för att det är effektivare i att arbeta tillsammans. De delarna har inte förändrats. Grundvärderingarna är samma. Fortfarande mjölkbönder som äger, demokrati. Men marknaden har förändrats"

Translated quote:
“No, we are a cooperative and that is about joining forces because it is more effective to work together. Those things have not changed. The core values are the same. The farmers are still the owners, and it is a democracy. However the market has changed”

Original quote:
"Tidigare har man inte behövt vara så effektiva i det operativa, vilket nu är ett stort fokus. Förut kunde man se lite mer mellan fingrarna men nu måste man verklig tänka om det är rätt investerade kronor"

Translated quote:
“Before, there was less need to be effective in the operational, but that is now main focus. You could turn a blind eye but now you really need to think if money is properly invested”


Translated quote:
“Sometimes. There is tension. You have to see it as something good and use it and we do that. But sometimes in the daily work it causes frustration”

Original quote: ”Om man kommunicerar att mjölen kommer från Danmark kommer ingen köpa den. Man köper lokalproducerad mjölk” [...] ”Men internt så vet dom att de inte är så i resten av världen. I Kina vill man inte ha lokal producerade produkter. Internationellt är det bra att importera, speciellt mjölk som är en basvara med hög kvalitet” [...] ”Man måste anpassa sig efter marknaden men vara ärlig”

Translated quote:
“If you communicate that the milk is from Denmark no one will buy it (in Sweden). You buy locally produced milk. [...] But internally we know that so is not the case in the rest of the world. In China you don’t want locally produced milk. Internationally it is better to import, especially milk which is a staple good with high quality. [...] You need to adapt to the market but be honest”
Original quote:
"Man måste vara öppen för det internationella och nya lösningar"

Translated quote:
"You have to be open to the international and new solutions."

Quotes in result about culture:

Original quote:
"Jag tror inte alls att de är särkilt säkra på dessa värderingar och vad Arla står för och varför är man stolt att jobba på Arla och vad har jag för anledning att vara stolt på Arla"

Translated quote:
"I do not believe that they are so sure about values of Arla and what Arla stand for or why one would be proud to work at Arla"

Original quote:
"Men sen finns det ju inte två avdelningar som ser likadan ut utan det är olika sätt att kommunicera och olika ledningsstil till exempel. Så olika avdelningar ger olika kulturer"

Translated quote:
"There are not two departments similar to each other, there are different ways to communicate and different styles of leadership within them. Therefore, different departements bears different cultures"

Original quote:
"Uppfattning man fått av att prata med folk på HQ. Arla har ett extremt fokus på tjänstemän. Alla talangprogram och så, det är tjänstemän. Då glömmer man alla kollektivare"

Translated quote:
"The perception after talking to people at Arla is that Arla has a large focus on managers, all the talent programmes and so are for managers. Then you tend to forget the blue collars"

Original quote:

Translated quote:
"We had an introduction day, called “closer to Arla” where top management came and talked about CSR and other values. But that is only for managers and afterwards it is their
job to carry it out in the organization. The other 700-800 also receives an introduction education but it is not comparable” […] “It is much more focus on security and the work environment, and other aspects come in second. Values are a part of the education but it is roughly gone through. It is more a focus to get people to the work floor”

Original quote:
[...] “att förmedla vissa beslut och varför man gör saker till de som faktiskt ska utföra det för nu var de liksom bara frustrerade och sura ute på mejerierna och tyckte att ledningen måste ha ett hål i huvudet som tar ett sådant här beslut. Så det var ju liksom en kommunikationsmiss”[…] 

Translated quote:
[...] “to communicate the decisions and guidelines about why they have been taken, to those that will implement it, is important. Before when it happened, employees at the dairies did not understand why and they just became angry and frustrated at top management for making such decisions. So that was a communication failure”[…]

Quotes in result about reflecting:

Original quote:
[...] “Det finns med där indirekt, jag kan inte säga mer konkret än så, det är lite fluffigt. Det sitter i väggarna mer än vad det sitter i huvudet” […] 

Translated quote:
[...]”It is there indirect, I cannot say it any more concrete than that, it is a little abstract. It is in the walls rather than in the head“[…]

Original quote:
”Nej, jag tycker nog att vi jobbar på. Vi har så mycket dagliga utmaningar och uppdrag och så det tror jag inte att vi gör egentligen. Det bara finns där. Så skulle jag vilja säga” […] “Sedan har vi haft sådana här ledord; lead, sense och create och så vidare och där kan vi ha lite fokusdagar där man pratar om vad det innebär och hur man förhåller sig till det på vår avdelning och så. Det blir förankring och diskussion och så vid sådana tillfällen men i vardagen tycker jag mest att man jobbar på”

Translated quote:
“We just keep on working. We have our daily challenges and missions so we do not think about the meaning of it consciously, it is rather just there. “ […] “then we have had the leading words of lead, sense and create and then we have had some focus days around those and what they mean to us and how we at our department relate to them and so on. It is at these occasions that we discuss them but in the daily business, I believe we just keep on working”

Original quote:
[…]”Jag levde i tron att det var implementerat” […] 
 […]”Jag tror att man tror att det levs, att det sitter i väggarna”[…]


There are implementation programmes being launched but it is hard to stop the daily business at the dairies meaning that the ideas are not grounded at the dairies and if it is not grounded among the blue collars, it will not live in the organization. The blue collars are 95% of the dairy. It is a challenge that Arla has. Both the marketing department and the HR department make good initiatives” […]”but how to implement it? Shall we rent 50 workers that can take over the daily business. When this situation comes, one asks the question; “what is the most important” and then the daily business comes first”
Original quote:
"Det är ett gap inom Arla. Förvånansvärt få tjänstemän som varit ute på mejerierna. Märks i kommunikationen. Tror att man bara kan använda intranätet, men väldigt få på mejerierna som jobbar mot en dator på daglig basis"

Translated quote:
“There is a gap within Arla. There is surprisingly few managers from the HQ that has been out at the dairy. This is evident in the communication. They believe that one can only use the intranet, but very workers at the dairy use a computer in their daily work”

Original quote:
"På min tidigare arbetsplats kunde VD:n komma och sätta sig och luncha ihop och då var det som att man pratad med vem som helst – här är det lite mer att man går i kluster"

Translated quote:
“At my previous workplace, the president could come and join us for lunch and then it would be like talking to anybody, here it is more that you go together to lunch in specific clusters of people “

Original quote:
[...]”Det är otydligt att veta vad som är ens ansvarsområde”[...]

Translated quote:
[...]”It is unclear as to what is my area of responsibility.. as well as who is my closest boss”[...]

Original quote:
[...]”Det blir panikutryckningar lite mer än nödvändigt av den anledningen att man inte deklarerat vem som ska ansvara för det så helt plötsligt är det 3 som är på den där pucken. Och det är mycket ad hoc lösningar” [...] 

Translated quote:
[...]”There are actions of panic more often than necessary due to the reason that it is not declared who will be in charge of what, so all of a sudden there are three people working on the same thing. It becomes a lot of ad-hoc solutions”[...]

Original quote:
[...]”Ja, vi har ju ett beslutsforum men jag tycker ändå att det är så att om man fått ett beslut där så ifrågasätts man jättemycket efteråt i alla fall. Och det kommer arbetsprocesser och rollbeskrivningar från lite olika håll och kanter” [...]

Translated quote:
[...]”Well, we have a board for decisions but I still think that even though you get a decision from there or guidelines for a decision, you get questioned a lot. There are also role descriptions and descriptions of work processes coming in from everywhere” [...]


Original quote:
"Av och till kan det bli så att jag känner, att det där låter jag ligga ett tag, för att se hur det blir och av och till så kör man på det man fick och känner att det här var nog något sedan så får man besked om att det där var ju inte alls något bra”

Translated quote:
“On and of I can feel that I leave that decision for later, to see how things in fact turn out and now and then you go ahead with the decision based on what you got at the beginning and you feel that this might be something and later on you receive the notification that it in fact was not the way to go after all”

Original quote:
"För man vet att man får två år på sig att sätta det i sjön och påverka men det tar mycket längre tid att göra något sådant, så då känner att man inte vet hur man ska klara av att få till det”

Translated quote:
“You know that you have two years to finish the task and to receive the effects of it but it takes much longer time than that, making you feel that you do not know how to handle it”

Original quote:
”Att man känner att man kan planera, att man kan lägga in, att man kan vara smart på lite sikt, det vet man ju också sista minuten iofs men då vet man aldrig var man hamnar” […]

Translated quote:
“So that one feels that it is possible to plan, to include, to make smart choices in the long run, although you might know that when acting on short term basis, but then may not know where you’ll end up ”[…]

Quotes in result about image:

Original Quote:
“Arla gör som man säger på förpackningen”

Translated quote:
“Arla does what it says on the tin”

Original quote:
“Det är tyvärr inte tillräckligt många som vet att Arla är ett bonde-kooperativ och att det betyder att det är bönderna som äger Arla”

Translated quote:
“There are unfortunately not enough people that know that Arla is a farmer’s cooperative and that this means that the farmers are the owners”
Original quote:
“Om jag kunde välja ett budskap att kommunicera så skulle det vara bonde-kooperativet ”
[...] ”Jag tror at den största möjligheten nu är att gå ut med bonde-kooperativet, för det är där vi verkligen sticker ut på ett bra sätt”

Translated quote:
“If I could choose one message it would be the farmer's cooperative” [...] “I believe the biggest opportunity is to communicate the cooperative, because that sets us apart in a good way”

Original quote:
"Arla ÄR ett bonde-kooperativ”

Translated quote:
“Arla IS a farmers’ cooperative”

Quotes in result about mirroring:

Original quote:
“Man kanske tror att man köper Arla varje gång man köper en mejeriprodukt. Människor är ganska omedvetna om vilka produkter som är Arla och vilka som inte är det”

Translated quote:
“You might think you are buying Arla every time you buy a dairy product. People are quite unaware which products are Arla and which are not”

Original quote:
“Man känner ju motströmmarna, ex ”de ska dominera”, ”de gör det som är bäst för dem” ä det är egoistiska drag i de ord som välls omkring oss istället för att man ser att vi står på böndernas sida och kan ge villkor för att bönderna ska kunna fortsätta verka”

Translated quote:
“You feel the opposition, when they say ‘they dominate’ and ‘they do what is best for them’. It’s egocentric words used for us instead of seeing that we are on the farmer’s side and help the farmers continue to operate”

Original quote:
”Många hör i media att bönderna inte får tillräckligt betalt [för mjölken], och skyller på Arla utan att tänka på vilka som äger Arla”

Translated quote:
“A lot of people hear in the media of the farmers not getting paid enough [for the milk], and then Arla is blamed, without considering who owns Arla”
Original quote:
“Det är ju kanske våra konkurrenter och media som jobbat in den här bilden att vi är en dansk mejerijätte, det är inte vi själva som velat framstå så”

Translated quote:
“It is the competitors and the media that have created this picture that we are a Danish-dairy-giant, it is not something we want to be viewed as”

Original quote:
"Arla vill ju själva att vi ska vara det här internationella företaget” [...]"Samtidigt så är ju konsumenternas efterfrågan nu är ju på lokalt och de två sakerna går ju inte riktigt ihop. Så ju mer vi jobbar i linje med det som Arla vill att vi jobbar efter, desto längre ifrån det lokala som konsumenterna efterfrågar kommer vi”

Translated quote:
“Arla wants to be an international company” [...] “At the same time the consumers are currently asking for local products and that does not really work together. The more we work in line with what Arla wants the more we move away from the local, that the consumers are asking for”