

School of Management

BLEKINGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT BY PRIVATE WORK AGENCIES
– A CASE STUDY ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE OF LEADERSHIP TRAITS

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the leadership recruitment of private work agencies, a sector that has grown significantly in Sweden over the past two decades. Through interviews with leadership recruiters in three firms, desirable and undesirable destructive leadership traits were investigated and the question was addressed of how leadership traits are identified and assessed by recruiters. A distinction was made between desired and undesired leadership traits, both tacit and explicit, and a special focus was given to destructive traits. The results and analysis demonstrated that although there seemed to be a general coherence about the desirability of managerial and intellectual leadership traits, there was no coherence in terms of how to assess undesired destructive leadership traits. Moving beyond the wide categories of managerial and intellectual, an in-depth analysis also showed the existence of an incoherent body of tacit knowledge of desirable leadership traits involved in the recruitment process. The results of the study raised the question whether leadership recruitment could be made more explicit, coherent, and efficient or whether it is inherently difficult and perhaps not relevant to classify leadership traits systematically.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Background of the Problem.....	5
1.2 Statement of the Problem	6
1.3 Research Objective.....	7
<i>1.3.1 General Research Objective</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>1.3.2 Specific Research Objective.....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.4 Research Question.....	7
1.5 Significance of the Study	7
1.6 Key Definitions	7
1.7 Thesis Structure.....	8
2. THEORETICAL FRAMWORK	9
2.1 Desirable Leadership Traits.....	9
2.2 Knowledge Management.....	12
2.3 Destructive Leadership.....	13
3. METHODOLOGY	16
3.1 Research Approach.....	16
3.2 Questionnaire and Measurements.....	17
<i>3.2.1 Desired Leadership Questionnaire</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>3.2.2 Knowledge Management Questionnaire</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>3.2.3 Destructive Leadership Questionnaire</i>	<i>18</i>
3.3 Sampling and Data Collection.....	21
3.4 Unit and Level of Analysis.....	22
3.5 Validity, Reliability and Generalizing ability.....	22
3.6 Data Analysis.....	23
4. RESULTS	23
5. ANALYSIS	33
5.1 Desired Leadership Traits Analysis.....	33
5.2 Knowledge Management Analysis.....	34

5.3 Destructive Leadership Analysis	37
6. CONCLUSION	39
6.1 Summary of Study.....	39
6.2 Recommendations for future studies	41
6.3 Limitations	41
6.4 Concluding comments.....	41
7. REFERENCES.....	43
APPENDIX.....	46

1. INTRODUCTION

Recruitment can be viewed as an expensive investment of a firm. It is therefore a key strategic activity to identify right persons with right formal, interpersonal and social skills. Yet, leadership recruitment is a complex task although many of these recruitments succeed while some fail because of different reasons. Some may end up as weak because of miss-communication, whereas others may find a close match between the hired individual and the desires of the firm buying the recruitment service. Sometimes recruitment also occurs of persons with destructive leadership traits, which would be a mismatch in any organization. Thus, there are successful and less successful processes of recruitment, and the recruitment process is a precarious venture full of potential pitfalls.

With the rise of private work agencies in Sweden, since their legalization in 1994, there has been a boom of firms offering recruitment services of leaders. There are many interesting questions that arise with this increasingly common new way of recruitment. The private work agencies sell their knowledge of management skills on the open market. Yet, the selling of this knowledge involves complex processes of assessment of a candidate's possession of positive leadership traits as well as avoiding recruiting a person with destructive leadership streaks. The careful balance in the recruitment process is a delicate combination of explicit and tacit knowledge of what constitutes a good leader. The creation of this knowledge merits to be investigated to understand about the services offered by the rapidly expanding Swedish leadership recruitment market.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Recruitment is a crucial process for firms in order to find the right persons for the right jobs. Along with sweeping outsourcing trends over the past decades in many areas, a large number of firms have chosen to outsource this crucial process. In Sweden, the number of private work agencies offering recruitment as a service has increased significantly the last decades. Over the last 15 years, the private work agencies have been the fastest growing sector of firms in the Swedish economy (Johnson, 2010). The Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen), which is Sweden's largest employment agency, suddenly found themselves in a new position in the year 1993 when it became legal in Sweden to run an employment agency and make profit (<http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se>). From hiring 5,000 people in 1994, the private work agencies were in 2008 hiring 60,000 people (Johnson, 2010). Private work agencies in Sweden offer three different types of services (<http://www.bemanningsforetagen.se>): - Staffing; Outplacement; and Recruitment.

From a leadership perspective, recruitment of leaders is a key activity of the private work agencies. The knowledge of leadership recruitment sold by these firms is of crucial importance to investigate. Despite the importance of this process of selling "good" leaders, there has been no scientific leadership study made so far to investigate on how the firms actually determine who is

a good leader. The knowledge creation of what constitutes a “good leader” as defined by the recruitment firms’ assessment of leadership traits thus merits to be scientifically investigated.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Being an understudied academic area, yet of great practical importance, it is thus important to investigate firms that offer leadership recruitment as a service and what criteria they use to recruit them as leaders. What these firms are in fact selling is knowledge of personality traits. This knowledge is formally verbalized when recruitment firms publish job ads. These ads usually include a number of positive traits that one should possess but rarely include information of undesired traits. The only studies made in this area so far have been focusing on the existence of positive personality traits without considering the potential pitfalls of leadership recruitment (Sodhi and Son, 2009). These studies have not been specifically done in Sweden but in other countries such as the UK, USA and Canada and are thus not automatically applicable in the Swedish context (Sodhi and Son, 2009). In addition, these articles do not take into account the potential risks and pitfalls in making an assessment of leadership traits. By avoiding to consider these potentially negative recruitments it is hard to assess the complexities involved in the recruitment process, and hence in the professional knowledge of the recruitment firms. Leaders sometimes have the capacity, and motivation, to be destructive, but this particular subject has seldom been described in leadership and management literature. When studying firms selling the service of leadership recruitment, it is interesting to know what traits recruitment firms consider to be destructive.

Even though leadership researchers like DuBrin emphasize the distinction between leadership and management (DuBrin, 2010), this thesis argues that it is by combining these fields that one can make a comprehensive analysis of the leadership recruitment services sold by the private work agencies. By using a knowledge management perspective it is possible to find a way to analyze the services sold by the private work agencies, looking at their professional knowledge and their different ways of categorizing and relating to leadership traits, both desirable as well as undesirable destructive traits. Important to point out is that these firms sell the knowledge of how a leader should be and what traits they should possess, their suitability. The product they sell is knowledge. Therefore, they should have the theoretical knowledge of this field, which justifies and explains why it is interesting to investigate these types of businesses. Using Nonaka's contribution to the field of knowledge management - the distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka, 1994) - a comprehensive approach can be created to analyze the leadership recruitment services offered by the private work agencies. Desirable traits in job advertisement can be defined as explicit knowledge. But in addition to the explicit knowledge of the job ads, there is a lot of tacit knowledge in the recruitment process regarding both desirable and undesirable leadership traits. To understand the services offered in the leadership recruitment process, it becomes important to investigate the relationship between tacit and explicit knowledge of what constitutes a desirable leader. This knowledge includes the positive and negative traits in the form of desirable as well as undesirable destructive leadership qualities. It is also important to find out how recruitment agencies define destructive leadership qualities and what traits they associate with the concept. Even though leaders sometimes have the capacity, and motivation, to be destructive, this field is rarely described in leadership and management literature in general, and not in leadership recruitment literature in particular.

1.3 Research Objective

1.3.1 General Research Objective

The general research objective was:

To investigate the professional knowledge of leadership recruitment processes conducted by private work agencies.

1.3.2 Specific Research Objective

The specific objectives were:

1. To assess both desirable and undesirable destructive leadership traits as assessed by individual recruiters in private work agencies.
2. To identify both tacit and explicit professional knowledge that individual recruiters have in private work agencies.

1.4 Research Question

The research question was:

In leadership recruitment at private work agencies - what are considered to be desirable and undesirable destructive leadership traits, and how is leadership traits identified and assessed?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study entailed important policy implications as it specified the complexities of the leadership recruitment process and pointed out to its potential strengths as well as its pitfalls. Policymakers having the awareness about the complexity of the process will use the knowledge in promoting a realistic understanding of what these firms can sell, and avoid making a hype of what these firms are capable of delivering. Given that Swedish business culture is characterized by consensus (DuBrin, 2010), and it is now en vogue to recruit leaders through private work agencies, it is important to scrutinize and examine this trend and not just let it proliferate uncontrolled. From a user perspective, buyers of the services of recruitment firms can be helped to assess the value of buying the recruitment service and make a more informed decision of whether to make a recruitment in house or to outsource the task. Academically, the study made a contribution too by combining knowledge management and the study of leadership traits in an empirically vital area that has large societal implications. By sharing the complexities from the perspective of both traditional leadership literature as well as studies of destructive leadership, it was possible to form an analytic basis for the study of both the tacit and explicit knowledge of what constitutes good leadership recruitment.

1.6 Key Definitions

The approach to this subject involved the following key concepts:

- Recruitment Firms

- Knowledge management
- Leadership traits
- Destructive leadership

When organizations are looking for new leaders, they can seek help from recruiting firms that are specialized in finding the right leader for the right position in an organization. In this thesis it was investigated how recruitment firms identify personality traits when hunting down for people with the right leadership skills. Do firms only look for positive traits or are they also taking in consideration those good leaders who may also have dark sides of leadership skills? Recruitment is often a part of the business private work agencies are carrying out (<http://www.bemanningsforetagen.se>). Empirical data was searched from private work agencies operating in Sweden, which offer recruitment of leaders as a service. Data that involves lack of previous job experience was not included in this report. Knowledge management stems from the concept of the knowledge worker (Drucker, 1957). Drucker distinguished between manual and knowledge worker in his paper "Knowledge-Worker Productivity" (Drucker, 1999). DuBrin defines knowledge management to be the systematic sharing of information to achieve goals (DuBrin, 2010). The focus in this paper within this field was Nonaka's categorization of knowledge being either tacit or explicit (Nonaka, 1994). A leader is an inspirational figure in contrast to a manager's role in an organization (DuBrin, 2010). Mankind has many times tried to identify the traits of a good leader throughout history (Turner and Müller, 2005). The last century can be divided into six different viewpoints of leadership theory where the trait approach chronology was the first (Turner and Müller, 2005). The last one is the competency approach, which is a form of trait approach, but it takes into account that there are different styles and they can be learned (Turner and Müller, 2005). Einarsen et al. defined destructive leadership as "The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organization's goals, tasks, resources and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates" (Einarsen et al., 2007). It is obvious that one has to take in account the risk and/or evaluate the potential of a leader possessing destructive traits when recruiting a good leader. There has not been much research done in this area, yet it is in the interest of recruitment firms to know how to identify destructive traits and behaviours.

1.7 Thesis Structure

A template for this report was given as part of the course material. The template that was handed out was used and the following parts were chosen to be included in order to achieve the research objectives and to be able to answer the research question. The report starts with an introduction that clarifies the purpose of this thesis and the key concepts behind it. The next section is the theoretical framework for the thesis that stems from the key concepts in the introduction section. This is followed by an in dept methodology declaration, used in order to achieve suitable, analyzable, empirical data. Section 4 presents the results from the empirical data collected and section 5 contains a theoretical analysis of the data using the theory presented in section 2. The conclusion of the thesis consists of section 6, which provides a summary of the study, study limitations, suggestions for further studies, and some concluding remarks.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Desirable Leadership Traits

This section defines the key elements of being a successful leader. The leadership theory that describes the traits of a successful leader has changed over time, but not as much as one might think. The key traits of a good leader were already defined 2,500 years ago and some of the traits considered important then are still highly valued today, namely emotional and managerial traits. In the last seven decades there have been different schools of leadership theory. In the trait school the basic idea was that being an effective leader was something you were born as, whereas today the competency school is dominant, stating that people can become leaders by learning. Today's leadership research is focused on the competence of leaders and the competence they show. Leadership competence includes personal traits, knowledge, and skills (Turner and Müller, 2005).

These ideas stems from a previous research study when identifying all key elements that conclude a successful leader (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004). In the study they identified 15 important competencies and three leadership styles a successful leader needs to possess. The 15 different skills are divided into three different competence types (Turner and Müller, 2005):

- Intellectual (IQ) (27%)
- Managerial skill (MQ) (16%)
- Emotional (EQ) (36%).

The brackets to the right indicate the amount in percent of the total leadership performance. Emotional competence is considered the most important. IQ and MQ are equivalent to DuBrin's cognitive factors and skills of management factors (DuBrin, 2010). EQ includes emotional intelligence, motivation and behavioural skills from DuBrin's classifications (ibid). Below follows a classification of how each trait belongs to one of the IQ/MQ/EQ categories according to (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004).

Intellectual (IQ):

1. Critical analysis and judgment
2. Vision and Imagination
3. Strategic Perspective

Managerial (MQ):

4. Engaging Communication
5. Managing Resources
6. Empowering
7. Developing
8. Achieving

Emotional (EQ):

9. Self-awareness
10. Emotional Resilience
11. Motivation

12. Sensitivity
13. Influence
14. Intuitiveness
15. Conscientiousness

The 15 competences are considered key for a leader to be successful. These leadership traits were used as a model for good leadership in this thesis. For the purpose of the study, the definitions of Dulewicz and Higgs have been used, and those definitions are outlined in the tables below (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004). Together the traits describe the make-up of a successful leader, and by measuring these traits it is possible to assess a leader's potential leadership qualities.

Intellectual Traits	Definition
Critical Analysis & Judgement	A leader that can be critical in analyzing and identifies advantages and disadvantages and discerns the shortcomings of ideas and proposals. He/she makes reasonable judgments and decisions based on reasonable assumptions and factual information, and is aware of the impact of any assumptions made.
Vision & Imagination	A leader that is creative and innovative in all aspects of work and establishes reasonable priorities for future work. He/she has a clear vision of the future direction of the organization to meet business vital goals and foresees the impact of external and internal changes on one's vision that reflect implementation issues and business realities.
Strategic Perspective	A leader that sees the wider issues and broader implications. He/she explores a wide range of relationships, balances short- and long-term considerations, is sensitive to the impact of one's actions, makes decisions across the organization and identifies opportunities and threats. This leader type is also sensitive to stakeholders' needs, to external developments and the implications of external factors on one's decisions and actions.

Table 1. Definition of intellectual traits (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004).

Managerial Traits	Definition
Engaging Communication	A leader that is an enthusiastic communicator who engages others and wins support. He/she clearly communicates instructions and vision to staff. Communications are tailored to the audience's interests and are focused. His/her approach inspires staff and audiences and possesses a communication style that conveys approachability and accessibility.
Managing Resources	A leader that plans for the future, organizes resources, and coordinates them efficiently and effectively. He/she establishes clear objectives and converts long-term goals into action plans. He/she monitors and evaluates staff's work regularly and effectively, and gives them sensitive and honest feedback.
Empowering	A leader that knows others' strengths and weaknesses. He/she gives them autonomy, encourages them to take on personally challenging and demanding tasks. He/she encourages them to solve problems, produce innovative ideas and proposals, and develop their vision for their area and a broader vision for the business. He/she encourages a critical faculty and a broad perspective, and encourages the challenging of existing practices, assumptions, and policies.
Developing	A leader who believes in others' potential to take on even more demanding tasks and roles, and encourages them to do so. He/she ensures direct reports and has adequate support. He/she develops others' competencies, and invests time and effort in coaching them so they can contribute effectively and develop themselves. He/she identifies new tasks and roles that will develop others and believes that critical feedback and challenges are important.
Achieving	A leader that is willing to make decisions involving significant risk to gain a business advantage. Decisions are based on core business issues and their likely impact on success. He/she selects and exploits activities that result in the greatest benefits to the organization and that will increase its performance. This leader type has an unwavering determination to achieve objectives and implement decisions.

Table 2. Definition of managerial traits (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004).

Emotional Traits	Definition
Self-awareness	A leader that has high self-esteem. He/she has control over his or her emotions. This is the most important emotional intelligence trait. The leader knows how his/her moods affect others.
Emotional Resilience	A leader that performs consistently in a range of situations under pressure and adapts behaviour appropriately. He/she balances the needs of the situation and task with the needs and concerns of the individuals involved. He/she retains focus on a course of action or need for results in the face of personal challenge or criticism.
Motivation	A leader that has the drive and energy to achieve clear results and make an impact and, also, to balance short- and long-term goals with a capability to pursue demanding goals in the face of rejection or questioning.
Interpersonal Sensitivity	A leader that is aware of, and takes account of, the needs and perceptions of others in arriving at decisions and proposing solutions to problems and challenges. He/she builds from this awareness and achieves the commitment of others to decisions and action. This leader has a willingness to keep an open mind to possible solutions to problems and to actively listen to, and reflect on, the reactions and inputs from others.
Influencing	A leader that persuades others to change views based on an understanding of their position and who possesses a recognition of the need to listen to this perspective and provide a rationale for change.
Intuitiveness	A leader that makes clear decisions and drives their implementation when presented with incomplete or ambiguous information using both rational and “emotional” or intuitive perceptions of key issues and implications.
Conscientiousness	A leader that displays clear commitment to a course of action in the face of challenge and who encourages others to support the chosen direction. He/she shows personal commitment to pursuing an ethical solution to a difficult business issue or problem.

Table 3. Definition of emotional traits (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004).

2.2 Knowledge Management

The field knowledge management was developed from Peter Ferdinand Drucker’s definition of the concept of knowledge worker in the year 1957 (Drucker, 1957). The concept of knowledge

worker is still highly relevant and Drucker presented guidelines to increase their productivity (Drucker, 1999). Michael Polanyi introduced the concept of tacit knowing (Polanyi, 1959). The part of knowledge management used in this thesis stems mainly from Ikujiro Nonaka's work. Nonaka declared the difference between tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka, 1994). He emphasized on knowledge creation and conversion within an organization and presented four different pattern how tacit and explicit knowledge converse (ibid). This model is called the SECI model:

	Tacit Knowledge	Explicit Knowledge
Tacit Knowledge	Socialization	Externalization
Explicit Knowledge	Internalization	Combination

Table 4. The SECI model (Nonaka, 1994).

The four conversion patterns are different forms of interactions. "Socialization" is the term for how tacit knowledge creates tacit knowledge where the key factor in acquiring tacit knowledge is experience (ibid). "Combination" is the term used when explicit knowledge creates explicit knowledge and involves meetings, conversations, remodeling or re-categorizing (ibid). "Externalization" describes the converse process of tacit knowledge becoming explicit knowledge and can be enabled when speaking in "metaphors" (ibid). When "Internalization" occurs, explicit knowledge converses into tacit knowledge (ibid). "Internalization" can occur when conducting iterative trial and error processes through learning by doing (ibid). Nonaka's modes of knowledge creation will be used in this thesis to identify if there occurs knowledge conversation. One important thing to take in account when using this model is that tacit knowledge can be transferred without language.

2.3 Destructive Leadership

Leaders sometimes have the capacity, and motivation, to be destructive but this particular subject has seldom been described in leadership and management literature. There is not much research in this field or many studies on the outcome of destructive leadership. Some papers describe the destructive types of leaders and what they have in common, traits of their followers/subordinates and environmental circumstances that contribute to a destructive leadership. For this thesis, the focus is on destructive leadership in the corporate world and only briefly touches the destructive leadership of famous, contemporary and historical, destructive leaders in politics, ideologies and religions.

The majority of the research that has been done on destructive leadership is empirical, philosophical and the method of research was mainly by reviewing the literature in striving to find a definition for destructive leadership and/or a model of how it is exercised. Although the general definition assumes that destructive leadership must be exercised consciously, to some extent it could also be unwittingly. How destructive tendencies can be closely related with laissez-faire leadership will be briefly described further on in this chapter. The majority of leadership experts use the word leadership to imply good leadership. Barbara Kellerman, leadership guru, finds this adoption of the term confusing and misleading and argues that it gives

a disadvantage to the concept (<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/bkeller/>). In her book, "Bad Leadership: What it is, how it happens, why it matters", she wrote "To deny bad leadership equivalence in the conversation and curriculum is misguided, tantamount to a medical school that would claim to teach health while ignoring disease" (Kellerman, 2004). She concluded that leaders behave badly for different reasons and in different ways, because of context or enticement from their followers or just because of personal preferences (ibid). Einarsen et al. defined destructive leadership as "The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organization's goals, tasks, resources and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates" (Einarsen et al., 2007).

Destructive leadership can be identified by a variety of traits. Padilla et al. reviewed how destructive leadership has been discussed in the literature and define five factors that drive destructive leadership: charisma, personalized use of power, narcissism, negative life themes and an ideology of hate (Padilla et al., 2007). Jean Lipman-Blumen, professor of organizational behaviour and public policy, lists lack of integrity, amorality, greed and enormous egos as disruptive and dysfunctional behaviours and personal traits of what she refers to as "toxic leaders" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdcMsNokik&feature=related>).

Destructive leadership can be exercised in two separate dimensions. It can be directed towards the organization's goals and effectiveness or towards subordinates. It is not necessarily an either-or phenomenon, destructive and constructive behaviours can be displayed simultaneously. A leader can direct destructiveness towards subordinates but still behave constructively towards the organization's goals and effectiveness (tyrannical leadership) and vice versa. Einarsen et al. presented a descriptive model for destructive leadership and ruled out three types of leadership styles from this: tyrannical leadership (pro-organization and anti-subordinate), derailed leadership (anti-organization and anti-subordinate), and supportive-disloyal leadership (pro-subordinate and anti-organization) (Einarsen et al., 2007). Although this model had never been presented before, the idea of a destructive leader sometimes and in some situations acting constructively, is not new. Lipman-Blumen wrote about how destructive leadership has a broad spectrum of degrees, types, frequencies, and consequences. A leader can exhibit a wide variety and a variable degree of destructive behaviour in similar situations but at different times. The consequences of the destructive behaviours and actions can also cause different kinds and various degrees of damage, a multilevel impact (Lipman-Blumen, 2005b).

Kellerman divided destructive leadership into several groups: incompetent, rigid, intemperate, callous, corrupt, insular, and evil. Incompetent, rigid and intemperate types she described as ineffective destructive leadership whereas callous, corrupt, insular, and evil were described as unethical destructive leadership types (Kellerman, 2004). DuBrin, like the majority of the authors of leadership literature, does not focus on, nor mention destructive leadership (DuBrin, 2010). DuBrin lists seven types of power: positional power, personal power, ownership power, power stemming from dependencies, opportunistic power, power from managing critical problems, and power stemming from being close to power (ibid). Positional power and personal power are the two types of power that a destructive leader can misuse the most in comparison with the other types of power. Position power is divided into legitimate power, coercive power, reward power, and information power. Personal power consists of expert power, referent power,

and prestige power (DuBrin, 2010). The approach in this thesis is to try to rule out in which ways a leader may exercise his/her power in a destructive way. The destructive leader can exercise various types of power to cause a negative outcome for the subordinates or the organization as a whole. Legitimate power derives from the leader's right to make decisions, and the outcome of these decisions is what determines if the leader has a destructive impact on the subordinates or the organization, or perhaps on both. Coercive power, the power to punish for non-compliance, can be used to exercise management by fear. Reward power, the power to give bonuses etc, can be used in an anti-organizational way, what Einarsen et al. described as a supportive-disloyal leadership (Einarsen et al., 2007). Information power stems from the leader's control over the information that is necessary for the subordinates to do their work tasks. A destructive leader can misuse this power to withhold important information from subordinates or choose what information they should take part of. Expert power comes from abilities, knowledge and skills. Destructive leadership can be the result of a leader's lack of expertise or by using his/her expertise for personal interests. Referent power stems from the ability to influence others. A destructive leader can use referent power to manipulate the subordinates. Expert power and referent power contribute to charisma and charisma has been identified as a central trait of destructive leadership. Padilla et al. wrote "Not all charismatic leaders are destructive. Nonetheless, destructive leaders typically, are charismatic" (Padilla et al., 2007). The third subgroup of personal power is prestige power that stems from status and reputation. Misuse of prestige power arises if the leader uses his/her power for self-fulfilling goals rather than what's best objectively for the organization.

There is a great complexity that underlies destructive leadership. Padilla et al. concluded that destructive leadership is dependent not only on destructive leaders but also from susceptible followers (which can be divided into conformers and colluders) and conducive environments (ibid). Some followers share the leader's values while other followers have a somewhat undefined self-image. There are also followers who take an active part in the destructive behaviours of the leader while others are bystanders. Colluders were recognized by Padilla et al. as ambitious, selfish persons who share the destructive leader's values and seek personal gain by associating with him/her (ibid). Conformers, on the other hand, were described as persons with unfulfilled needs, negative self-image, and a psychological immaturity who comply with destructive leaders out of fear. The review by Padilla et al. suggests four environmental factors that are of importance to destructive leadership: instability, perceived threat, cultural values, absence of checks and balance and institutionalization (ibid). Instability can lead to centralization, which is difficult to take back, if the leader takes advantage of the situation. Threatened people are more susceptible to charismatic leaders and this is why Padilla et al. list perceived threat as an important environmental factor (ibid). Padilla et al. discovered that under certain cultural circumstances, followers are more tolerant to e.g. tyranny and despotism (ibid). Instability within the organization facilitates destructive leadership, according to Padilla et al. (ibid). Without checks and balance there is an underlying risk of misuse of power. Lack of institutional constraints can also provide destructive leadership. Padilla et al. call this destructive leadership promoting factors model (destructive leaders, susceptible followers and conducive environments) "The Toxic Triangle" and argue that leaders are only part of the problem of destructive leadership (ibid). As an illustration of the toxic triangle, Padilla et al. present the Cuban regime (ibid). The former Cuban president, Fidel Castro, fits the profile of the five factors that Padilla et al. listed as traits of destructive leaders (ibid). He is charismatic, which is

generally accepted. He has used his power in a personalized way (he enriched his lifestyle compared to his followers). He is also exhibitionistic, grandiose, and admits no mistakes - all features of a narcissist. He experienced negative life themes; he had a tough upbringing with a distant father and grew up in foster care and was bullied in school. He has an ideology of hatred for the United States. Castro's colluders consisted of active, like-minded revolutionaries (the most famous Che Guevara and Castro's brother Raúl) and the conformers were the urban poor and rural presidents. Political dysfunction and economic prosperity were the environmental circumstances that enabled the destructive leadership (Padilla et al., 2007).

Lipman-Blumen means that it is more important to be concerned with followers of toxic leaders than with the toxic leaders themselves. "It's the follower's consent that allows leaders to flower", she says in an interview (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdcMsNokiIk&feature=related>). Followers have different reasons for remaining to their leader even though the leadership is destructive. The leader meets one or many of the follower's internal needs such as psychologically, existentially, financially, or socially. Lipman-Blumen argues that psychological needs and situational fear drive the follower to make rationalizations about his/her own ability, about his/her colleagues' opinion of the leader and the fear of demotion or dismissal (Lipman-Blumen, 2005a).

Destructive leadership is hard to define and the general definition assumes that the destructive leadership must be exercised consciously, although, to some extent it could also be unwittingly. Skogstad et al. studied the passive and indirect forms of destructive leadership and discovered that laissez-faire leadership behaviour is a form of destructive leadership behaviour (Skogstad et al., 2007). Skogstad et al. discovered that laissez-faire leaders create work environments with high levels of interpersonal stress (ibid). A survey of 2,273 Norwegian workers (men/women, 50/50) was made and a positive correlation was found between laissez-faire leadership and role conflicts, role ambiguity and conflicts with co-workers. Skogstad et al. concluded that laissez-faire leadership, which has also been defined as lack of adequate leadership, is counterproductive and thereby a form of passive destructive leadership (ibid). As with any questionnaire research, there is a risk of bias and halo effects in this study (Skogstad et al., 2007).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach

The research approach used in this study was mainly based on Robert Yin's methodology theories (Yin, 2009). Several studies done on job advertisement used qualitative or quantitative approaches (Sodhi and Son, 2009). Choosing a research methodology highly depends on what type of questions that is being asked. This thesis was a case study, which is a preferred methodology when asking "how" and "why" questions. Three different cases were chosen, thereby conducting a multiple-case study design opposed to a single. A case study focuses on contemporary events but does not require the control of behavioural events, which differs from an experiment- or history methodology (Yin, 2009). The traits of a case study are similar to a

survey methodology and parts of the interview questions are survey like. This type of interview is defined as focused, thus the use of both structured and unstructured questions. The strategy used is qualitative (ibid).

The interviews were conducted in English, but the respondents had the choice to answer in the language they were most comfortable with (Swedish or English) to avoid translation mistakes. The aim was to interview two recruiters in each firm. Each person was asked to present the three latest job ads that they had been involved in. The job ads were the second source of evidence (ibid). According to Yin's classification model one can define the research methodology used in this thesis as an embedded multiple case study including focused semi structured computer assisted interviews, and documents in the form of job ads as sources of evidence.

3.2 Questionnaire and Measurements

All questions were directly or indirectly intended to generate data that could give an answer to the main research question. Certain questions were specifically aimed to identify tacit and explicit knowledge and the conversion between these types of knowledge, while some were specifically aimed to clarify the term destructive leadership. Some questions were aimed to identify what types of traits are desirable and undesirable. The measurement strategy was to categorize collected data as much as possible. This strategy enhanced the probability to identify patterns and to give a better overview of the empirical findings.

3.2.1 Desired Leadership Questionnaire

Questions from this subsection were derived from the instruments leadership dimension questionnaire (LDQ) (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004). Dulewicz and Higgs managed to link the 15 dimensions measured by the LDQ described in section 2.1 (ibid). Those dimensions embrace both competencies and personal traits. All questions were related to these 15 dimensions. These are;

- 1. How important are the following leadership traits when recruiting a leader?*
- 2. How often are these leadership traits mentioned in your job ads according to you?*
- 3. Consider each listed trait being of importance for a specific position, when do you usually inform the job applicants about each leadership trait during the recruitment process?*
- 4. Consider the three latest leadership recruitments you were involved in, what leadership qualities were desirable but not mentioned in the job ads?*

Each question had a table showing all the 15 dimensions. The respondents were supposed to mark the appropriate degree of the traits or dimensions.

3.2.2 Knowledge Management Questionnaire

An important work in the field of measuring tacit and explicit knowledge was the contribution of Richard K. Wagner and Robert J. Sternberg (Wagner and Sternberg, 1987). Still, neither the work nor other works in this area address tacit and explicit knowledge in a recruitment process. Williams and Sternberg (1987) have used Wagner and Sternberg's work to create questions measuring tacit knowledge in the area of successful university studies. The rather simple set-up of this study makes it possible to adjust to the measurement of tacit knowledge in the recruitment

process. The question referring to tacit and explicit knowledge in the experiment "Tacit Knowledge in College Students" conducted by Wendy Williams and Robert Sternberg (Puckett and Reese, 1993) was used as a base for measuring tacit knowledge in the questionnaire. In their study they identified tacit knowledge by asking "*What does it take to succeed at Yale that you do not learn from textbooks?*" (Puckett and Reese, 1993).

The question was adjusted to the specific field of this thesis by re-phrasing it as: "*What do you look for in a potential leader, in terms of desirable and undesirable personality traits, that you do not mention formally in the recruitment process?*". In addition, tacit and explicit leadership will be measured by letting the respondents assess classical leadership traits, derived from the literature, and the importance of those traits in the recruitment process. These questions will mainly stem from classical leadership theories (Turner and Müller, 2005).

3.2.3 Destructive Leadership Questionnaire

The theories and measures of leadership, also concerning recruitment, training and development of leaders, are all seriously implicated by the prevalence of destructive leadership. Destructive leadership behaviour involves a mixture of leadership behaviour. As explained in section 2.3, destructive leadership can be performed in several ways. Targeting subordinates, destructive leaders can intimidate, humiliate or expose the subordinates to non-verbal aggression.

Destructive leaders can also cause unwanted consequences for the execution and quality of work and have a negative impact on the relationship with customers and clients. Neglecting or preventing organizational goals or sabotaging subordinate's work or stealing resources are all anti-organizational behaviours.

Einarsen et al. summarize the diversity of these behaviours in the following definition "systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organization's goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates" (Einarsen et al., 2007). When recruiting a leader, leadership traits are very important and the recruitment of a destructive leader can severely damage a firm. The study is intended to address how recruitment firms strive to avoid the recruitment of a destructive leader.

In the questionnaire used in this paper items measuring destructive leadership behaviour were distributed randomly among the items measuring constructive forms of leadership (Aasland et al., 2010). The questions regarding destructive leadership, in the recruitment of a leader, are based upon the model of the four classes of destructive leadership behaviour; tyrannical behaviour, derailed behaviour, supportive-disloyal behaviour and laissez-faire behaviour (Figure 1), and the destructive leadership scale (Einarsen et al., 2002).

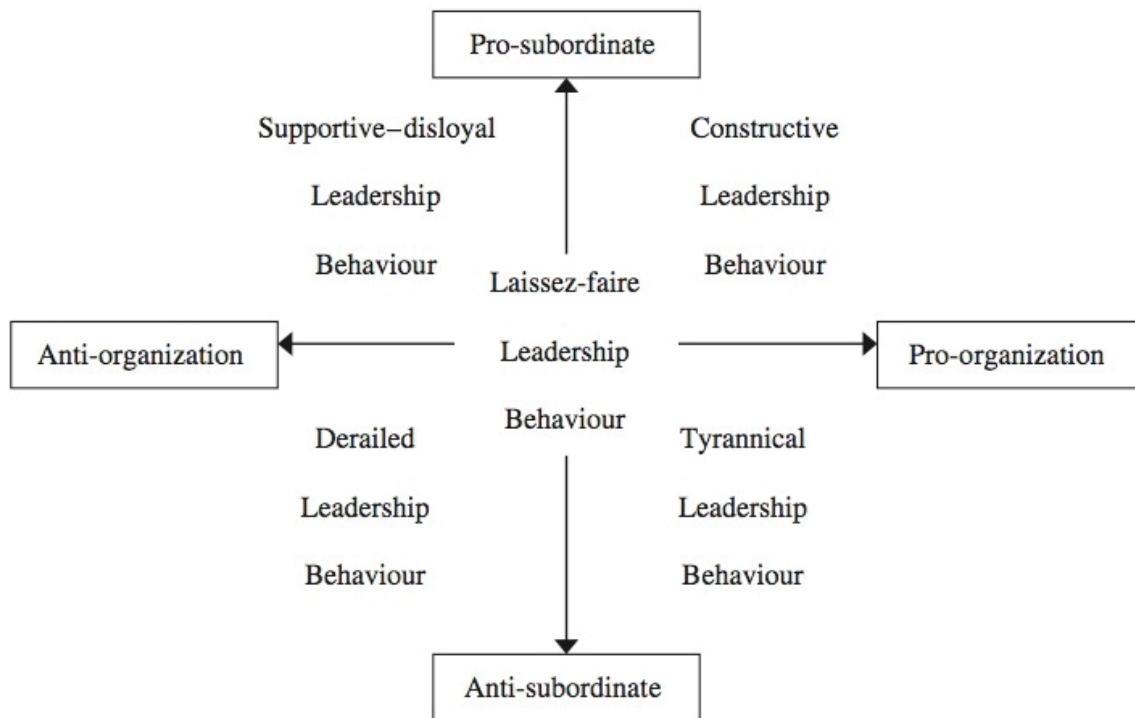


Figure 1. A model of destructive leadership behaviour (Einarsen et al., 2002).

From the original questionnaire by Einarsen et al. leadership behaviour was measured using 22 items concerning leadership styles (Einarsen et al., 2002). This thesis took on another approach and the questions concerning destructive leadership were developed mainly to identify knowledge about destructive leadership in the recruitment industry rather than to identify the actual leadership traits. Below, the questions targeting destructive leadership behaviour are presented.

Questions five, six and fourteen are general questions concerning destructive leadership behaviour developed to investigate the general awareness among recruiters about destructive leadership behaviour. Questions ten to thirteen were specifically targeting destructive leadership traits and awareness among the recruiters of what consequences destructive leadership behaviour can cause. Question fifteen was developed to check if the recruitment firms consider lack of educational background as a risk factor for destructive leadership behaviour. The fifth question in the questionnaire was developed to be an open question;

5. *"How do you identify undesirable leadership traits in the recruitment process?"*

This question aimed to find out what the recruiters consider as undesirable traits. This was also a control question to make sure that the interviewed people have the right competence and experience to be able to answer the questions. This question should also cover if the recruiter is using any tools to find these kinds of traits. The sixth question aimed to rule out if negative leadership traits are graded in a similar way:

6. *“In general, which are the three most common undesirable leadership traits according to you?”*

Researchers in the area of destructive leadership identify and value undesirable leadership traits different. While one lists charisma, personalized use of power, narcissism, negative life themes and an ideology of hate as his top five worse leadership traits (Padilla et al., 2007), another researcher lists lack of integrity, amorality, greed and enormous egos as the most negative traits of a leader (Lipman-Blumen, 2005b). The tenth question, targeted whether the recruiters are more considerate about destructive leadership behaviours when recruiting to certain sectors;

10. *“To what extent do you believe that you consider factors like psychosocial workload and work stress of the industry/company/workplace, in your recruitment of a manager?”*

It has been shown that some sectors are significantly more prone to certain kind of undesirable behaviour than others. Experiencing aggressive behaviour from managers and unpleasant situations with the manager are more common among industrial worker than in financial institutions, for example (Hubert and Van Veldhoven, 2001). Bass and Avolio developed the *“Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire”* (Bass and Avolio, 1990). They pin-pointed laissez-faire leadership behaviour by addressing questions such as; *“Has your manager avoided making decisions?”* (Bass and Avolio, 1990). Other questions in Bass and Avolio's questionnaire were based upon constructive leadership behaviour, such as; *“Does your manager give recognition for good performance?”* and *“Does your manager encourage innovative thinking?”* (ibid).

Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by a neutral, unconcerned behaviour. Managers of this kind do not care about their subordinates' development or about how the subordinates accomplish their work. The eleventh question targeted the recruiters' knowledge about laissez-faire leadership:

11. *“How much is the safety record of the industry/company/workplace taken into account when you recruit a manager?”*

Safety-related attitudes and actions in the workplace are dependent on the influence from organizational leaders. Managers who actively promote safety have better safety records and more positive safety outcomes in comparison with those managers who do not prioritize safety. Passive leadership has a destructive effect on safety climate and safety consciousness (Kelloway et al., 2006). Tyrannical leadership is recognized by a high level of task concern in combination with a destructive conduct towards subordinates such as commanding, ridiculing, lying or humiliating. Questions connected to this leadership, in Einarsen et al.'s questionnaire were; *“Has your manager humiliated you, or other employees, if you/they fail to live up to his/her standards?”* and *“Has your manager spread incorrect information about you or your co-workers, in order to harm your/their position in the firm?”* (Einarsen et al., 2002).

Derailed leaders are disloyal to both their followers and tasks and some of the questions to pinpoint this type of leadership were: *“Has your manager used his/her position in the firm to profit financially/materially at the firm's expense?”* and *“Does your manager regards his/her staff more as competitors than as partners?”*.

A supportive-disloyal leader tries to gain popularity from his/her followers at the expense of fulfilling his/her work. Examples of questions; *“Has your manager behaved in a friendly manner*

by encouraging you/your co-workers to extend your/their lunch break? ”, “Has your manager encouraged you to enjoy extra privileges at the firm's expense? ”. The twelfth question in the questionnaire targeted the recruiters' knowledge about tyrannical leadership behaviour;

12. *"During the recruitment process of a manager, to what extent do you investigate the degree of hostility and the trait negative affectivity that the applicant holds?"*

Hostility and trait negative affectivity are two of the potentially most undesirable traits of a leader. These traits are highly connected to destructive leadership behaviour and to both mental and physical health and can be used to predict leadership aggression (Schaubroeck et al., 2007). The thirteenth question, targeting destructive leadership traits, was;

13. *"To what degree are former interpersonal problems of the applicant investigated in the recruitment process of a leader?"*

Leaders exhibiting high levels of interpersonal problems are predisposed to contribute to a destructive leadership. A study of a Norwegian work force, both leaders and subordinates, showed that as many as one third of the participants (in both groups) may experience interpersonal problems at work. The severity of these problems resembled patients in psychotherapeutic care with corresponding problems. Leaders with interpersonal problems are more likely to get into conflicts with colleagues, both superiors and subordinates (Einarsen et al., 2010). The fourteenth question targeting destructive leadership behaviour was;

14. *"How would you grade your own ability to recognize destructive leadership behaviour in an applicant for a managerial job?"*

This question was intended to cover up if the other questions were hard to interpret, if the recruiters possessed the competence to find destructive leadership traits in their candidates or if they more or less ignore these traits and focus more on desirable traits. Most types of destructive leaders are not throughout destructive and can therefore be hard to identify. Usually, just a few destructive traits can be perceived in these leaders. Since the human is complex, a destructive leader may have positive traits as well and still have a destructive behaviour. In a study of 707 respondents the destructive leaders were identified as extremes by just a few negative traits (Shaw et al., 2011). The fifteenth question, aiming to rule out if lack of educational background is considered a risk factor for destructive leadership behaviour, was;

15. *"In general, when you recruit a manager, to what extent are your recommendation based upon the applicants educational qualifications?"*

A manager preferably should have knowledge of people's differences and behaviour as well as broad educational qualifications. By focusing on these qualities, destructive leadership behaviours could possibly be spotted. Sometimes the lack of formal education encourages aggression and low education has been coupled to leader bullying behaviour (Ferris et al., 2007).

3.3 Sampling and Data Collection

According to Robert Yin there are six sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). This study was based on interviews. Three different recruitment firms in Sweden were interviewed in the study. The choice of firms was based on theoretical and not random sampling (Eisenhardt, 1989). The aim

was to interview two persons in each firm in order to improve construct validity and to attempt to get an organizational opinion, rather than a personal opinion. Each person that was interviewed presented the three latest leadership job ads the person had been involved in. These job ads correspond to Yin's definition of documents (Yin, 2009).

The persons that were interviewed should have at least one year of recruitment experience and should have been working for the firm in question for at least three months. Also, the persons should have been in charge of the leadership recruitment process and should possess professional knowledge about leadership skills. When the data was collected it was categorized and analyzed (Sodhi and Son, 2009). The interviews were coded and made anonymous. The study used non-probability samples given that most recruitment firms in Sweden are located in Stockholm. The sampling method was selected based on the consideration that the chosen respondents would have competence and experience in recruiting leaders. Judgmental sampling is also called purposive sampling and is a non-probability sampling in which selecting the sample is based on specific criteria established by a sample design. "A drawback in non-probability sampling is that such a sample cannot be used to determine the error. Any statistical method cannot be used to draw inference from this sample "(<http://www.scribd.com/doc/47426236/Research-statistics>). The target group was recruitment agencies. Three target groups were used and the aim was to interview two units in each target group. The actual sample size of this study was three different agencies with two interviews conducted in each agency. The sample was small, as this study did not have the capacity to get a bigger sample due to access difficulties and also as the small sample size allowed for a in-depth analysis of the qualitative data. As the sample was small, the study has used its judgment to select representative recruitment agencies in the Stockholm area, by this covering a variety of market segments and firm sizes.

3.4 Unit and Level of Analysis

The theoretical framework presented in chapter two was the base for the analysis. The analysis included embedded unit of analysis within each case, as well as cross sectional analysis (Yin, 2009). The chosen strategy was qualitative (ibid). As outlined in section 3.3 the interviews were coded and together with the job ads they make up the main source of data for the analysis. The encoding was made manually and when possible main categories were used, in order to make the data easier to interpret (Sodhi and Son, 2009). The thesis has a linear analytic structure as a compositional structure and follows the definition of a descriptive study (Yin, 2009). As for analytical technique, the strategy that was used was pattern matching (ibid). The study took in consideration the risk of reaching premature or false conclusions when conducting cross case analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989).

3.5 Validity, Reliability and Generalizing ability

Robert Yin discusses four types of tests when evaluating a quality case study research design (Yin, 2009):

- Construct validity
- Internal validity
- External validity
- Reliability

The study used multiple sources of evidence during the data collection; two interviews in each organizations and job ads in order to perform a convergence of evidence study and thereby address construct validity (Yin, 2009). Internal validity is especially important in explanatory case studies (ibid). To address internal validity, pattern matching was used (ibid). The methodology chosen for this thesis involved conducting two interviews in each firm, which imposed a form of replication and thereby external validity (ibid). This report was a way of documenting the case study step by step and enhanced the reliability and probability that anyone following the methodology used in this paper will reach the same conclusions (ibid).

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is called the share phase in Yin (2009). According to Yin (2009) the share phase is how you report the results of your study. As mentioned in section 3.4 this study was based on a Linear-Analytic Structure (Yin, 2009). The data was collected through a computer assisted qualitative questionnaire. Some questions contained a table where the interviewees marked their answers with a cross. The other questions were answered with written text as well as assessments on scales. The results of the study were presented with appropriate tables and verbal summaries.

4. RESULTS

This data set was gathered by making five in-depth qualitative computer assisted interviews at three recruitment firms of different sizes and working with different market segments. In order not to risk trade secrets, the three firms have been made anonymous, but a short summary of their main traits is presented below. All firms are operating in the Stockholm region and all have leadership recruitment as part of their professional knowledge. At each firm, except for one, two recruiters working specifically with leadership recruitment have been interviewed. In order to find three firms working with leadership recruitment and being willing to participate in this type of study without risking trade secrets, a total of twenty firms were initially contacted and investigated. The initial survey of twenty firms in the sector was then narrowed down to three firms, representative of three different sectors of the market of leadership recruitment. All data was collected focusing solely on leadership recruitment. The reason one firm ended up with only one respondent was that this was a particularly small firm, although working with very high profile leadership recruitment. The one respondent from this firm thus represented a larger proportion of its firms' staff than the other respondents together did of their firm's staff. The three firms are here referred to as firm A, B, and C and the interviewed recruiters are called recruiter A1, A2, B1, B2, and C1.

Characteristics of firm A

General firm description

Firm A was founded in mid 90s and has proven to be one of the fastest growing private work agencies in Sweden and has taken over several smaller firms in order to expand and to offer

clients more types of expertise in different fields. Firm A is the biggest firms in the sample according to total sales. The firm offers the following three different services (A's_homepage):

- Staffing
- Outplacement
- Recruitment

Recruiter A1 background: A1 is male and has been working 5 years in the recruitment business. He has acquired a BA in human resource development and labor relation.

Recruiter A2 background: A2 is male and has been working 14 years in the recruitment business. He has currently studying market economics.

Characteristics of firm B

General firm description

Firm B was founded in mid 00s and has as firm A proven to be one of the fastest growing private work agencies in Sweden. Firm B is the middle size firm in the sample according to total sales. The firm offers the following three different services (B's_homepage):

- Staffing
- Outplacement
- Recruitment

Recruiter B1 background: B1 is female and has been working 9 years in the recruitment business. She has acquired a master of science in business and economy degree.

Recruiter B2 background: B2 is female and has been working 12 years in the recruitment business. She has acquired a BA in sociology.

Characteristics of firm C

General firm description

Firm C was recently founded and is thereby the smallest firm according to total sales in comparison with firm A and B. Since only two senior recruiters are working at the firm only one respondent was considered as a good representative. Firm C is focusing on high profile leadership recruitment solely. The private work agency C offers the following three different services (C's_homepage):

- Staffing
- Outplacement

- Recruitment

Recruiter C1 background: C1 is female and has been working 13 years in the recruitment business. She is a certified marketing specialist.

Data

1. Informal traits in the recruitment process:

Recruiter A1: Positive and negative motivation for the actual position, Motivation for doing a good job (in reference to coworkers, salary, potential career within the firm)

Recruiter A2: Social skills, orderly and ability to read people are according to A2 desired abilities. Undesirable traits are such as of selling people with poor self-awareness and too much prestige.

Recruiter B1: High energy is according to B1 a desired ability and too much bragging is an undesirable trait.

Recruiter B2: B2 thinks it varies much depending on the position in question. She delegates the traits being listed by the firm that gives the hiring assignment but asks to make them limit the amount of traits.

Recruiter C1: It varies depending on the clients' requirement according to C1. Generally desired traits are enthusiastic, empathic, being able to coach and make decisions.

2. Relative importance of leadership traits:

	Low	Medium	High
Critical Analysis & Judgement		A1, C1	A2, B1
Vision & Imagination		A1, A2	B1, C1
Strategic Perspective			A1, A2, B1, C1
Engaging Communication		A2	A1, B1, C1
Managing Resources		A1, A2	B1, C1
Empowering		A2	A1, B1, C1
Developing		A1, A2	B1, C1
Achieving		A2	A1, B1, C1
Self-awareness	A1, A2		B1, C1
Emotional Resilience	A1	A2, C1	B1
Motivation			A1, A2, B1, C1
Interpersonal Sensitivity		A1, A2, B1, C1	
Influencing		A1	A2, B1, C1
Intuitiveness	A1	A2, B1, C1	
Conscientiousness		A1, A2, B1, C1	

Table 5. Answers from A1, A2, B1, C1.

Recruiter B2: B2 thinks it varies much depending on the position in question but is based on competence, work experience and earlier accomplishments and results.

3. Frequency of leadership traits in job ads:

	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
Critical Analysis & Judgement		A1, A2, C1	B1
Vision & Imagination	A1, A2, C1		B1
Strategic Perspective		A1, A2	B1, C1
Engaging Communication		C1	A1, A2, B1
Managing Resources	A2	A1, C1	B1
Empowering	A2	A1, B1, C1	
Developing		A1, A2	B1, C1
Achieving		A2, C1	A1, B1
Self-awareness	A1, A2, B1, C1		
Emotional Resilience	A1, A2, B1, C1		
Motivation		A2, C1	A1, B1
Interpersonal Sensitivity	A1, A2, B1, C1		
Influencing	A1, A2, B1, C1		
Intuitiveness	A1, A2, B1, C1		
Conscientiousness	A1, A2, B1, C1		

Table 6. Answers from A1, A2, B1, C1.

Recruiter B2: B2 thinks it varies much depending on the position in question but she usually picks the three most important desired traits to be in the job ad.

4. When is specific trait informed to the job applicant:

	In the Job Ad	Later in the recruitment process	The job applicants is not explicitly informed
Critical Analysis & Judgement	B1, C1	A1, A2	
Vision & Imagination	B1	A1	A2, C1
Strategic Perspective	B1, C1	A1, A2	
Engaging Communication	A1, A2, B1	C1	
Managing Resources	B1	A1, A2, C1	
Empowering		A1, B1	A2, C1
Developing	B1, C1	A1, A2	
Achieving	A1, B1	A2, C1	
Self-awareness		B1	A1, A2, C1
Emotional Resilience		B1	A1, A2, C1
Motivation	A1, B1	A2, C1	
Interpersonal Sensitivity		B1	A1, A2, C1
Influencing		A2, B1, C1	A1
Intuitiveness			A1, A2, B1, C1
Conscientiousness			A1, A2, B1, C1

Table 7. Answers from A1, A2, B1, C1.

Recruiter B2: B2 preferred to answer by explaining the different steps during the recruitment process and stating that all steps enables the recruiter to get as close as possible to show the true character of the job applicant. She concludes by stating that a successful recruitment in the end still depends on factors as family situation, relations with ones boss and coworkers, and what precondition the firm is giving.

5. Identification of undesirable traits in recruitment process:

Recruiter A1: In-depth interviews and/or personality tests.

Recruiter A2: In-depth interviews, credentials and using his experience as a recruiter.

Recruiter B1: During the interview, start out wide and narrowing the questions down. How, what was the response of, biggest mistakes ever done etc.

Recruiter B2: During one of the steps of the recruitment process:

- Reading CV
- Phone interview
- Interviews and tests
- References follow up

Recruiter C1: During the interview and the reference follow up. Sometimes it shows on the applicant's grades.

6. Most common undesirable leadership traits:

Recruiter A1: Manipulative, not willing to empower, undedicated.

Recruiter A2: Poor self-awareness, overconfidence, poor understanding of people.

Recruiter B1: No self-awareness, no strategic perspective, not empowering.

Recruiter B2: No self-awareness, lack of energy and motivation, no entrepreneurial skills.

Recruiter C1: Unclear communication, inability to involve employees, fear of taking decisions.

7. Informing a job applicant about the undesirable leadership traits for a specific position:

Recruiter A1: It usually becomes obvious during the process. If it is a sensitive personality trait he speak open and frankly about it during the interview.

Recruiter A2: He doesn't, they will not be offered to continue in the recruitment process.

Recruiter B1: She normally doesn't. She tries to find out whether he/she has them or not in other ways.

Recruiter B2: By reading the CV and evaluate the success rate of similar positions in the past.

Recruiter C1: C1 informs the applicant if he/she does not advance in the recruitment process due to certain traits.

8. Desirable leadership qualities not mentioned in the job ads of the latest three recruitments:

	Job Ad 1	Job Ad 2	Job Ad 3
Critical Analysis & Judgement		A2	A2
Vision & Imagination	A1	A1	A1
Strategic Perspective		A2	
Engaging Communication	B2, C1	A2, B2, C1	B2
Managing Resources	A2	A2	A2
Empowering	B1		
Developing	A1		
Achieving			
Self-awareness	B1, B2, C1	B1, B2	B1, B2, C1
Emotional Resilience	B1, B2	B2, C1	B2
Motivation	A2		A2
Interpersonal Sensitivity	B2	B2	B1, B2
Influencing	B2	B2	B2
Intuitiveness	B1, B2	B2	B2
Conscientiousness	B1, B2	B2	B2

Table 8. Answers from A1, A2, B1, B2, C1.

9. Undesirable leadership qualities existing in three latest recruitments and how they were conveyed to the applicant:

Recruiter A1:

- Too straightforward from an organization structure perspective.
- Low participation in discussions regarding the actual position.

Recruiter A2:

- Economic skills, strategic planning experience. Informed after interview.
- Insecure, inexperienced. Informed after interview.
- No self awareness, overconfidence. Applicant not informed.

Recruiter B1: B1 chose not to give requested information.

Recruiter B2:

- Talked too much, she gave direct feedback concerning this.
- There were other applicants with more relevant experience and she did not feel the need to inform the applicant about this.

Recruiter C1

- Inability to empower, inability to enthusiasm. Informed those applicants who possessed one of mention traits.
- Inability to take decisions, fear of conflicts. Informed those applicants who possessed one of mention traits.

10. Importance of psychosocial workload and work stress of the industry/firm/workplace in leadership recruitment process:

Recruiter A1: Medium

Recruiter A2: Medium

Recruiter B1: High

Recruiter B2: High

Recruiter C1: High

11. Importance of safety record of the industry/firm/workplace in the leadership recruitment process:

Recruiter A1: Medium

Recruiter A2: Low

Recruiter B1: Medium

Recruiter B2: Did not answer (Replied: Depends on the position.).

Recruiter C1: Low

12. Investigation of the degree of hostility and the trait negative affectivity that the applicant holds:

Recruiter A1: Did not answer (Replied: Did not understand the question.).

Recruiter A2: High

Recruiter B1: High

Recruiter B2: High

Recruiter C1: High

13. Investigation of former interpersonal problems of the applicant:

Recruiter A1: High

Recruiter A2: High

Recruiter B1: High

Recruiter B2: Medium

Recruiter C1: High

14. Recruiter's self-assessed ability to recognize destructive leadership behaviour in an applicant:

Recruiter A1: Medium

Recruiter A2: Medium

Recruiter B1: High

Recruiter B2: High

Recruiter C1: High

15. Importance of applicants' educational qualifications:

Recruiter A1: Low

Recruiter A2: Medium

Recruiter B1: Medium

Recruiter B2: Medium

Recruiter C1: Medium

5. ANALYSIS

5.1 Desired Leadership Traits Analysis

The investigation to find the recruiters' most valuable leadership traits or competencies when recruiting a leader will be based on theory taken from section 2.1. All theory in this section is based on the categories of Dulewicz and Higgs and it is in reference to this analytical toolbox that this part of the analysis will be made (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004). The recruiters' top selected leadership competencies will be categorized into a specific competence area or type in comparison to Dulewicz and Higgs terms (*ibid*). The analysis will then show for each firm if they value and selects the competencies to be a top performer as a leader according to the theory described in section 2.1. This leadership theory says that the most important competence type is Emotional (EQ) and according to the literature traits from this category are important for top performer leadership traits of the three different competence types (Turner and Müller, 2005). Each firm is presented separately, in alphabetic order. Inter-firm trends are identified, investigated, and discussed.

In terms of the relative importance of leadership traits, the interviewed recruiters at firm A marked high and medium on traits from the intellectual and managerial skill competence type areas. The emotional type area had several traits marked as low and was the only area that was marked low. Recruiters from firm A seem to emphasize the intellectual and managerial skill competence type areas in their job ads, rather than focusing on emotional skills, and it was also intellectual and managerial skills that described by the recruiters as desired but not mentioned traits in the job ads. Firm A thus seems to rank intellectual and managerial skills higher than emotional skills, both in job ads as well as in the interview situation. For firm B, almost all traits were marked high except three traits that were marked as medium. These three traits stemmed from the emotional competence type area. Firm B presents most of the desired traits in their job ads from the intellectual and managerial skill competence type areas in their job ads. According to the recruiters from firm B the desirable leadership traits that were not mentioned in the job ads were from the emotional type area. Firm B thus also seems to focus on intellectual and managerial desired skills rather than emotional skills in their leadership recruitment process. The recruiter from firm C marked high on most of the traits, no traits were marked low. The majority of the medium marks were placed in the emotional competence type area. Most desirable traits included by firm C in their skill assessment were from the intellectual and managerial skill competence type areas in their job ads. Firm C's recruiter finds desirable leadership traits not mentioned in the job ads to be part of the managerial skill and emotional competence type areas. Firm C thus differs somewhat from A and B by also emphasizing the importance of emotional competence, but firm C also agrees with A and B regarding the importance of intellectual and managerial skills in the recruitment process as a whole.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that all recruiter firms valued more intellectual and managerial skill leadership types than emotional. According to Dulewicz and Higgs this is considered to be normal as the literature in this field have ignored cognitive elements for the last few decades, but this approach has changed over time (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004). Going back to the theory section 2.1 in this thesis, the study done by Dulewicz and Higgs states that the most important leadership competence type is emotional (*ibid*). This is contradictory to what the

recruiter firms think. An explanation to this could be that EQ is more diffuse than IQ and MQ, which are types that can be described more easily and are easier to measure than EQ. This can be seen from the results of when the job applicant is informed about a specific trait. Recruiter A1 marked almost all EQ traits as "the job applicant is not explicitly informed". The reason for this could be that emotional leadership traits are hard to identify. MQ and IQ leadership traits were listed in the job ads or later in the recruitments process. This could be due to the fact that MQ and IQ leadership traits are much easier to describe and identify than EQ leadership traits. The conclusion is then that MQ and IQ leadership types are identified in the job ads and later in the recruitment process. The EQ leadership type traits seem to be more difficult for the recruitment firms to identify, and also emotional leadership traits are not very important according to the interviewed recruitment firms. Higgs and Dulewicz state that a specific organizational strategy requires a leader with a specific leadership behaviour (ibid). The last statement could be an explanation of the analysis above, hence that the interviewed recruitment firms are searching for a leader with specific leadership traits to satisfy the client's organization goals. It is still interesting to note the sharp contrast between the emotional traits valued by the literature and the managerial and intellectual leadership traits valued by the interviewed firms.

When looking at all three firms, there thus seems to be a general agreement on the importance of intellectual and managerial traits in the recruitment process, both in the job ads and in the interview situation. When it comes to emotional traits, there seems to be more of a disagreement as to their importance, and none of the firms put emotional traits as a top priority in the recruitment process. As stated above, this is not consistent with the research findings on what desired leadership skills are (Turner and Müller, 2005).

When initially looking only at the desired traits in the recruitment process on a firm level, there seems to be a coherent body of professional knowledge among the recruitment firms focusing in managerial and intellectual skills. This picture is based on an analysis of mostly explicit desirable leadership traits and does not fully take into account the tacit both desired and undesired leadership traits present in the recruitment process. By moving on to examine these more complex levels of the recruitment process, a more complicated picture of the professional knowledge of leadership recruiters at professional work agencies will now be presented.

5.2 Knowledge Management Analysis

Taking not only desired but also undesired leadership traits into account, from a tacit and an explicit perspective, the picture of professional leadership recruitment knowledge becomes more complex. Nonaka distinguished between tacit and explicit knowledge and these classifications are applicable in the context of recruitment (Nonaka, 1994). Initially, the undesirable traits can be classified as tacit knowledge and the most important desired traits as explicit knowledge signaled in the job ads. But this does not reveal the full truth of the professional knowledge creation by the recruiters. Analyzing the job ads referred to by the recruiters, additional conclusions can be drawn. There exist desirable traits that are tacit in reference to the job ads. Comparing the answers of question two and question three clearly show that important and desired traits for a certain position are not always written in the job ad, thereby indicating the existence of both tacit and explicit desirable traits. Question four shows that tacit knowledge is transformed to explicit information at two different occasions; in the job ad and at the interview.

Question four also identifies tacit traits that are both desired and undesired. All recruiters seem to agree that undesired traits are identified during the interview and this process is sometimes complemented with reference follow up and personality tests according to question five. Undesired traits generally seem to not be conveyed to the applicant if he/she is advancing in the recruitment process. If he/she does not advance the recruiter seems to have mixed strategies whether they choose to inform the applicant or not. This clearly can be considered as tacit knowledge and is sometimes transformed to explicit knowledge at a certain point in time, when the applicant does not advance further. There are several steps in the recruitment process which all try to identify what traits, both desired and undesired, the applicant possesses. The applicants CV and their cover letter are initially the most important sources for trait identification and assessment for the recruiter. If the applicant seems to be a good match in reference to the job ad in question, the interview becomes the next important source of information for the recruiter. Since one recruitment process differs from another even within a firm, additional processes such as personality tests and references follow up gives the recruiter enough information to assess a certain applicant.

Nonaka defines how tacit and explicit knowledge can be converted (ibid). For analytical purposes, it is possible to draw a timeline that stems from the recruitment process itself, which creates a situation where certain traits are considered tacit and explicit. This timeline approach was not used by Nonaka and can serve as a complement to his model depending on the setting analyzed (ibid). He only acknowledged time as a factor (ibid). There are two views of the traits, regarding the timeline. Initially the applicant informs the recruiter of certain leadership traits by submitting his/her CV and cover letter and the recruiters signal their desired traits in the job ad. The CV can be said to be a mix between explicit and tacit knowledge as the CV usually describes work and educational experience rather than referring to specific leadership traits. The cover letter however does contain self-described leadership traits submitted by the applicant to the recruiter. Some of the interviewed recruiters also seem to think that they can deduct leadership traits and abilities from looking and interpreting the CV. The leadership traits in the CV, cover letter, and job ad are then exchanged and evaluated during the recruitment process through different types of communication, a highly complex exchange. The traits are also transformed during the process at various points in time. One example of this is when the applicant is informed about the undesirable traits when he/she does not advance in the recruitment process. At this point in time the tacit knowledge becomes explicit. This conversion is considered to be an externalization of tacit knowledge.

	Tacit Knowledge	Explicit Knowledge
Tacit Knowledge	Socialization	Externalization
Explicit Knowledge	Internalization	Combination

Table 9. The SECI model (Nonaka, 1994).

Two certain occasions were identified when these transformations occur from a recruiter perspective, where the sender is the recruiter and the recipient is the applicant. The first was during the interview and the second occasion was when an applicant was denied to continue the recruitment process.

An interesting observation was that the firms mention the same trait as being both desired and undesired. It seems like a certain trait can be considered to be both desired and undesired depending on how it is related to by the applicant. Two traits stood out in this respect; motivation and self-awareness. Taking the trait motivation as an example, which all generally considers a highly desired trait, yet A1 emphasized that negative motivation must be identified as well. Negative motivation can for example be an applicant who is motivated by the “wrong” reasons such as increased salary or using a job as a career stepping-stone. In this case the recruiter consider the applicant as not motivated enough by the job itself. Self-awareness can also be a negative trait if there is a lack of it. But motivation for the job as well as the presence of self-awareness, are both desired traits in an applicant if it shows the applicants dedication to the job and awareness of him/her.

C1 mentioned the ability to make decisions as an important trait. This is an interesting aspect as Sweden is characterized as a country where decisions often are made through consensus. Does the last statement make decision-making more or less important as a trait of a leader working in Sweden? An interesting observation was recruiter B2, who chose to answer the majority of questions in her own way. Her view is that the traits varies depending on the position in question but at the same time B2 gives the client firm, who is behind the recruitment, the biggest responsibility in choosing desired traits. In addition B2 concluded that a successful recruitment in the end still depends on factors as family situation, relations with one’s boss and coworkers, and what precondition the firm is giving. This could be considered a way for B2 to legitimate unsuccessful recruitments, as B2 indicated that the results of recruitments at the end of the day do not depend on the recruiter. In the long run this attitude in a sense questions the very purpose of the recruitment firms, as well as the value of their professional knowledge.

It is still important to keep in mind that what traits a certain recruiter finds important in relation to how often these traits are mentioned in the job ads may not only be the results of the recruiter’s independent decisions. This may be a result, not only of the tacit and explicit traits in the recruiter’s work process, but there may also be a discrepancy between the client firm and the independent work practice of the recruiter. This discrepancy could not be analyzed in-depth by this current data set but should be noted as an additional complexity in the recruitment process, possibly caused by the very fact that the recruitment is outsourced.

Knowledge creation stems from the dialogue between tacit and explicit knowledge according to Nonaka (ibid). This analysis section indicates that Nonaka’s findings are valid in a recruitment process setting for both the recruiter and the applicant. Looking specifically at the desired and undesired leadership traits and focusing on the explicit and tacit nature of their occurrence in the leadership recruitment process, a conclusion can be drawn that not all traits were made explicit by the recruiters. Although most desired traits fall broadly into the intellectual and managerial area of competencies, this broad description did not convey the intricate and rather nontransparent recruitment process that was unearthed when studied more in detail. Moving beyond wide trait categories it became clear that different recruiters value traits differently and that tacit knowledge is given a rather prominent role in the recruitment process. However, the findings in this thesis do not identify if and how individual knowledge creation regarding leadership traits transforms to an organizational knowledge. This is an area that merits further studies.

The next section of the thesis deals with the most tacit part of the process of finding the right candidate for a managerial position, the assessment of destructive leadership traits. This part of the leadership recruitment process diverges quite substantially from the broad categories of the desired leadership traits and further indicates the complexities of leadership recruitment.

5.3 Destructive Leadership Analysis

There is no exact science to identify undesirable leadership traits of an applicant but the general recruiter can use a number of telltale signs to exclude a person with negative leadership traits. Showing up late for an interview, give a sloppy appearance, pretending to be more qualified than the person actually is or acting too casual are all indicators of a candidate that is not suited for a manager role. The fifth question in the survey - "How do you identify undesirable leadership traits in the recruitment process?" - was supposed to let the recruiters tell how they pinpoint these possible negative traits of a candidate.

Since destructive leadership behaviour can have great diversity e.g. undermining or sabotaging the organizations goals/tasks/resources, have negative input on effectiveness and motivation and destroy the well-being or job satisfaction of the employees (Einarsen et al., 2007), the possible negative traits to identify could be as diversified as the different behaviours. In the survey, all recruiters gave very open, non-specific, answers to this question. They revealed no more than that they use in-depth interviews, personality tests and credentials to identify negative traits. These methods are already well known and accepted within the recruitment industry and the responses thus provided no detailed information on how recruiters identify negative traits of an applicant. Recruiter B1 gave a little bit more specific answer by telling that she asks the applicant to tell her about the biggest mistake that he/her ever did but B1 did not reveal more than that about how she evaluates the response from the candidate. It is possible that these unspecific answers depended on how the question was worded. It is possible that a less open, more specific, question could have provided more specific answers. Another probable cause of the answers being so general may be that the recruitment agencies consider their specific way to weed out the perfect candidate for a job as trade secrets and therefore they are reluctant to reveal too much about how they work. This question also served as a control question. Even though the respondents gave vague answers to this question it was obvious that they all have the competence and experience as recruiters to answer the questions in the questionnaire.

The answers to the sixth question - "In general, which are the three most common undesirable leadership traits, according to you?" - gave a bit variable responses. Not even two recruiters at the same firm listed the same undesirable traits. For firm A, the two recruiters gave completely different answers. While A1 listed poor self-awareness, overconfident and poor understanding of people as his top three most common undesirable leadership traits, his colleague listed manipulative, undedicated and not willing to empower. This could suggest that the different recruiters value the negative traits of an applicant in different ways. This could indicate that they will not be looking for the same negative traits during the recruitment process. It is possible that recruitment firms do not have clear guidelines for how the undesirable traits of managerial candidates should be valued.

Researchers in the area of destructive leadership also identify and value undesirable leadership traits different. While one lists charisma, personalized use of power, narcissism, negative life themes and an ideology of hate as his top five worse leadership traits (Padilla et al., 2007),

another researcher lists lack of integrity, amorality, greed and enormous egos as the most negative traits of a leader (Lipman-Blumen, 2005b). Furthermore, one might suspect that recruitment agencies do not place equal emphasis on the detection of negative traits of an applicant as they do to check off the positive traits. Since a similar question for the positive qualities was not included in the survey, i.e. the desirable 36 leadership traits that recruiters are trying to find, a conclusion like that cannot be made. Although, the conclusion can be made that all of the recruiters in the survey, to some extent, are aware of destructive leadership traits.

When answering the question ten, all recruiters responded that they believe that they consider psychosocial workload and work-stress of the industry when they recruit a manager. The recruiters in the same firm gave the same answer to this question. The biggest firm in the survey seemed to care a little bit less than the others about these issues and both recruiters rated themselves as “medium”.

It has been shown that some sectors are significantly more prone to certain kind of undesirable behaviour than others. Experiencing aggressive behaviour from managers and unpleasant situations with the manager are more common among industrial worker than in financial institutions, for example (Hubert and Van Veldhoven, 2001).

Maybe, this question should have needed a following question to give the respondents the opportunity to describe their routine of considering psychosocial workload and work-stress of the industry. None of the recruiters answered that they place great importance on the safety record of the industry in the recruitment process of a manager. Question 11, concerning the safety record of the industry, refers to laissez-faire leadership and from the survey it seems like these recruiters are not aware of the destructive effects that passive leadership has on safety climate and safety consciousness. Safety-related attitudes and actions in the workplace are dependent on the influence from organizational leaders. Managers who actively promote safety have better safety records and more positive safety outcomes in comparison with those managers who do not prioritize safety. Passive leadership has a destructive effect on safety climate and safety consciousness (Kelloway et al., 2006).

All of the recruiters answered that they investigate the applicants' degree of hostility and trait negative affectivity to a high extent, question 12. These traits are highly connected to destructive leadership behaviour in general and this question referred to tyrannical leadership behaviour, more specific. Both mental and physical health and can be used to predict leadership aggression (Schaubroeck et al., 2007). The recruiters seemed to be well aware of the fact that hostility and trait negative affectivity are both strongly associated with destructive leadership. Most of the recruiters investigate former interpersonal problems of the applicant to a high degree. Recruiter B2 was the only one, who gave answer “medium” to this question, question 13. Leaders exhibiting high levels of interpersonal problems are predisposed to contribute to a destructive leadership. Leaders with interpersonal problems are more likely to get into conflicts with colleagues, both superiors and subordinates (Einarsen et al., 2010). Former interpersonal problems is a known risk factor for destructive leadership behaviour and from the answers to this question, the recruiters seems to be aware of that. This question referred to all of the four destructive leadership behaviours.

Firm B and C graded their ability to recognize destructive leadership behaviour as high while firm A graded themselves as medium for this specific question, question 14. Since firm A is the biggest of these firms hence should have more resources, the answer to this question was a bit surprising. Most types of destructive leaders are not throughout destructive and can therefore be hard to identify. Usually, just a few destructive characteristics can be perceived in these leaders. Since the human is complex, a destructive leader may have positive characteristics as well and still have a destructive behaviour. In a study of 707 respondents the destructive leaders were identified as extremes by just a few negative characteristics (Shaw et al., 2011). It is unclear how the recruiters in this survey could differ from the general person in their way to recognize these characteristics. Even though they can pick up on extreme destructive leadership behaviour it is possible that they do not recognize destructive leadership behaviour as well as they might think. The recruiters do not base their recommendations upon the educational qualifications of the applicant to a high extent. Recruiter A2, the one with the longest experience within this survey group, answered that he bases his recommendations upon the educational qualifications of the applicant to a low extent. The rest of the survey group answered “medium” to this question, question 15.

A manager preferably should have knowledge of people's differences and behaviour as well as broad educational qualifications. By focusing on these qualities, destructive leadership behaviours could be spotted, in theory. The recruiters in this survey seemed to have different opinions in this matter and it is possible that they are not aware that lack of formal education sometimes encourages aggression and has been coupled to leader bullying behaviour (Ferris et al., 2007).

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of Study

This paper aimed to investigate the professional knowledge of leadership recruitment processes conducted by private work agencies. This has been done by looking at how the firms assess both desirable and undesirable destructive leadership traits in applicants during the recruitment process. The objective was also to identify both tacit and explicit professional knowledge that individual recruiters hold during recruitment processes in private work agencies. The research question: “In leadership recruitment at private work agencies - what are considered to be desirable and undesirable destructive leadership traits, and how are leadership traits identified and assessed?” was investigated and answered. By looking both at explicit and tacit knowledge of desirable and undesirable traits in general, the research question was responded to. Special attention was given to negative destructive leadership traits and their place in the recruitment process, as these traits are usually a tacit albeit highly relevant part of a successful recruitment. In this conclusion both desired and negative traits are first discussed as separate units and then a more general conclusion is made on tacit and explicit desired and undesired leadership traits.

The first part of the analysis showed that the majority of recruiters in general focused more on intellectual and managerial traits as desirable leadership traits rather than giving attention to emotional traits. Further examination of tacit and explicit knowledge in general as well as focusing on the tacit knowledge of undesirable negative and destructive traits especially, showed that the broad categories of managerial and intellectual desired skills did not cover the entire picture of leadership recruitment. Rather, the fact that the emotional aspects were ranked as low by the recruiters can be said to in some sense be related to the destructive traits unearthed in this paper, and the incoherence and complexity of this part shows the lack of a consistent professional knowledge of recruiters in this area. It is not this simple however, as part of the destructive traits can also fall into the managerial and intellectual area of competencies. From the survey, no detailed information on how recruiters identify negative traits of an applicant was given. It is uncertain whether this depended on how the question in the survey was worded or due to fear of disclosing their business concept.

The recruiters assessed the negative destructive traits of the applicant in different ways. The survey showed that there was no unity between the recruiters in the same firm on this specific point. This could suggest that the recruiters will not be looking for the same undesirable traits during the recruitment process. It is possible that recruitment firms do not have clear guidelines for how the undesirable traits of managerial candidates should be valued. All of the recruiters in the survey were aware of destructive leadership traits, to some extent. However, it seemed like the recruiters in this survey were more aware of aggressive, hostile, destructive leadership behaviour than of passive destructive leadership.

It seems like these recruiters were not aware of the destructive effects that passive leadership has on safety climate and safety consciousness while they investigate the applicants' degree of hostility and trait negative affectivity to a high extent. Most recruiters in the survey investigate former interpersonal problems of the applicant to a high degree and they seemed to be aware that leaders with interpersonal problem history are more likely than others to get in conflicts with colleagues and show off destructive leadership behaviour. From this survey, the conclusion can be drawn that laissez-faire leadership or passive destructive leadership is one type of destructive leadership that the recruiters from the three investigated firms do not place so much emphasis on. Why the situation is like this is hard to know. Maybe it is simply because aggressive destructive leadership behaviour is easier to spot in the recruitment process than passive destructive leadership behaviour. Or maybe too little is known, within the recruitment industry, about the destructiveness of laissez-faire leadership.

With regards to the tacit and explicit aspects of leadership traits in the recruitment process by private work agencies there seems to exist both explicit and tacit desired traits as well as tacit destructive undesired traits. The recruiter usually identifies destructive traits during the interview, as well as in the process of checking the references of the applicant. A trend in the tacit knowledge seems to be that recruiters put a greater emphasis on aggressive destructive traits than on passive destructive traits. Some knowledge of leadership traits, both desired and undesired seems to never be made explicit to the applicant. However, some of the tacit knowledge is made explicit during or after the interview by the recruiter itself, especially if an applicant is not selected to continue in the recruitment process. The recruitment process consists of identifying and evaluating desired and undesired personality traits that can be categorized as tacit or explicit. One has to include time as a dimension when using this way of categorizing the

traits since they vary and transform over time for the applicant. To add to the complexity of the recruiter's assessment, one trait that generally is considered being a desirable trait can be undesirable. Motivation is a good example of this, to have a motivated applicant is considered possessing a desired trait if the motivation is for the job itself but if the motivation is for the salary the motivational trait becomes undesired and considered negative.

6.2 Recommendations for future studies

As this study shows that applicants are highly unaware of many traits sought after by the recruiters, and as the recruiters themselves seem to have an incoherent and often tacit body of professional knowledge of leadership recruitment especially when it comes to destructive leadership traits, it seems critical to further investigate whether these discrepancies and lack of explicit knowledge enhances or impedes a successful leadership recruitment. This should be done considering the different stakeholders involved, including the client firm and the job applicant as well as the recruiter. It is also important to question the value of investigating leadership traits altogether, as this study indicates that these traits, especially the destructive ones, are imprecise concepts that are interpreted differently by the recruiters and that thus in a sense do not form a formal basis of professional knowledge of the recruiters, but rather a vague background to their tacit professional knowledge.

6.3 Limitations

The recruited firms in this study are all located in Stockholm, which may have biased the data. An additional caveat is that it has been very difficult to get access to the type of data presented in this study, as private work agencies guard their professional knowledge in a strict way and are very reluctant to be interviewed. Even though twenty firms were contacted repeatedly to make them participate in the study, only five recruiters in three firms agreed to participate. The fact that these three firms chose to participate in the study, making them different from all other contacted firms, may also bias the sample, as is the case in all studies with a rather low response rate. These three firms do represent different sectors of the market for leadership recruitment done by private work agencies and hopefully this paper can serve as a basis for future larger studies that can validate the findings presented in this thesis, especially the results presented here of the incoherence and largely tacit professional knowledge of recruiters at private work agencies. These studies may be both qualitative and quantitative, but they will somehow have to overcome the difficulty to get access to private work agencies.

6.4 Concluding comments

As a concluding remark, it is worth pointing out that the professional knowledge of leadership recruitment, as it is described by private work agencies, seems to be neither coherent nor explicit, but rather tacit and incoherent, if one takes into account both desired and undesired traits. While only looking at desired traits does paint a coherent picture of professional knowledge of leadership recruitment in private work agencies, this is but one part of the recruitment process and does not cover the complexities of issues involved. Taking into account both desired and undesired traits in a recruitment process may complicate the efficiency of the recruitment process, but by making the traits explicit especially the destructive ones, as well as including the emotional areas in the desired traits it is possible that recruitment processes can be further

enhanced. This can improve the match between the desires of the client firm and the abilities of applicant, enhancing the professional knowledge and the services offered by private work agencies in leadership recruitment. Increasing the amount of explicit traits and commonly understood tacit traits early in the recruitment process should help the applicant and the recruiter to get the most suitable person for a certain position. The question is who does what in this process. According to B2 one of her tasks is to ask the firm seeking new personnel to limit the amount of desired traits. But there should be ways to make those clear in additional ways than the job ads, thereby increasing the efficiency of the recruitment process. This complexity of leadership recruitment is also important knowledge for policy makers and regulators in their choice to facilitate the growth of the market for private work agencies doing leadership recruitment.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Your position in the firm _____

Your working experience in the firm _____

1. What do you look for in a potential leader, in terms of desirable and undesirable personality traits, that you do not mention formally in the recruitment process?

2. In general, how important are the following leadership traits when recruiting a leader?

	Low	Medium	High
Critical Analysis & Judgement			
Vision & Imagination			
Strategic Perspective			
Engaging Communication			
Managing Resources			
Empowering			
Developing			
Achieving			
Self-awareness			
Emotional Resilience			
Motivation			
Interpersonal Sensitivity			
Influencing			
Intuitiveness			
Conscientiousness			

3. In general, how often are these leadership traits mentioned in your job ads according to you?

	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
Critical Analysis & Judgement			
Vision & Imagination			
Strategic Perspective			
Engaging Communication			
Managing Resources			
Empowering			
Developing			
Achieving			
Self-awareness			
Emotional Resilience			
Motivation			
Interpersonal Sensitivity			
Influencing			
Intuitiveness			
Conscientiousness			

4. Consider each listed trait being of importance for a specific position, when do you usually inform the job applicants about each leadership trait during the recruitment process?

	In the Job Ad	Later in the recruitment process	The job applicants is not explicitly informed
Critical Analysis & Judgement			
Vision & Imagination			
Strategic Perspective			
Engaging Communication			
Managing Resources			
Empowering			
Developing			
Achieving			
Self-awareness			
Emotional Resilience			
Motivation			
Interpersonal Sensitivity			
Influencing			
Intuitiveness			
Conscientiousness			

5. How do you identify undesirable leadership traits in the recruitment process?

6. In general, which are the three most common undesirable leadership traits according to you?

7. In general, how do you inform a job applicant about the undesirable leadership traits for a specific position?

8. Consider the three latest leadership recruitments you were involved in, what leadership qualities were desirable but not mentioned in the job ads?

(Leave the field empty if the specific trait was not of importance)

	Job Ad 1	Job Ad 2	Job Ad 3
Critical Analysis & Judgement			
Vision & Imagination			
Strategic Perspective			
Engaging Communication			
Managing Resources			
Empowering			
Developing			
Achieving			
Self-awareness			
Emotional Resilience			
Motivation			
Interpersonal Sensitivity			
Influencing			
Intuitiveness			
Conscientiousness			

9. Consider the three latest leadership recruitments you were involved in, which undesirable leadership qualities existed and how did you inform the job applicant about these traits?

- **Job Ad 1:**
- **Job Ad 2:**
- **Job Ad 3:**

10. To what extent do you believe that you consider factors like psychosocial workload and workstress of the industry/firm/workplace, in your recruitment of a manager?

Low	Medium	High

11. How much is the safety record of the industry/firm/workplace taken into account when you recruit a manager?

Low	Medium	High

12. During the recruitment process of a manager, to what extent do you investigate the degree of hostility and the trait negative affectivity that the applicant holds?

Low	Medium	High

13. To what degree are former interpersonal problems of the applicant investigated in the recruitment process of a leader?

Low	Medium	High

14. How would you grade your own ability to recognize destructive leadership behaviour in an applicant for a managerial job?

Low	Medium	High

15. In general, when you recruit a manager, to what extent is your recommendation based upon the applicants educational qualifications?

Low	Medium	High