

# **Fostering Learning and Leadership – Organizational Change in Haaga Future Leaders Club**

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<p>Haaga Future Leaders Club is an optional addition to student's curriculum in Haaga. Its fundamental purpose is to facilitate the learning of its members. HFLC's main activities are project assignments from the industry, representation in competitions and events as well as supportive functions such as coaching and mentoring.</p> <p>Haaga Future Leaders Club was formed in December 2009 and the first meeting was held on January 15, 2010. First year of operations revealed challenges which were interpreted as deriving from the lack of organizational structures which resulted in poor organizational culture and perceived lowered motivation of the members. Despite the challenges, the pilot was seen successful and interpreted as being in need for further studying.</p> <p>The primary object of the thesis is to organize a workshop to collect material for a Member's guide leaflet. The Member's guide to be used as a facilitator for Haaga Future Leaders Club's operations and to clarify its identity and start building the self-directed organizational structure. The thesis is project-oriented with two interdependent products: 1) Workshop, where the material for the Member's guide is created, and the 2) Member's guide itself. The workshop stands as a starting point for the change process in Haaga Future Leaders Club, which is expected to lead to increased self-direction and subsequently to continuity and the development of the group. The theoretic background is based on a combination of learning and leadership. Two main theories are transformative learning and transformational leadership. The thesis was completed during the spring 2011.</p> <p>The goal of the thesis was reached as the workshop provided material for Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member's guide and started the change process. The outcome of the change process is to be evaluated in future. Did the thesis influence the organizational culture and practices of Haaga Future Leaders Club?</p>	
<p><b>Keywords</b> Haaga Future Leaders Club, transformative learning, transformational leadership, self-direction, organizational culture</p>	

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# 1 Introduction

The first meeting of Haaga Future Leaders Club was held on January 15, 2010. The classroom was full of excitement and high expectations with 17 enthusiastic future leaders of the hospitality and tourism industry sitting and waiting to get started. None of us knew what was ahead of us, but we sure craved to find out! We had all gone through the application process, where our motivation and possible strengths and weaknesses were inspected by interviews and psychological tests. The Programme Director Ari Björkqvist chaired the meeting. Later I was named as the first Club Leader.

During its first year of operations, HFCLC (Haaga Future Leaders Club) took part in two large projects, got 8 new members, organized a wellness day for its members and was present at Gastro Pro fair. 2011, the second year of operations begun with two projects, an introduction of the new Club Leader, and a promise of redesigning the essence and the organization of Haaga Future Leaders Club. That redesign or reorganization was to be actualised within the scope of this thesis.

## 1.1 Objective

The primary objective of the thesis was to create a framework for the operations of Haaga Future Leaders Club. This was done by organizing a workshop where the members of HFCLC co-created the content for an internal document, Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member’s guide. The secondary objective was to help Haaga Future Leaders Club to be introduced to its stakeholders in a greater manner. It was relatively hard to convince the staff and other students about the relevance and meaning of HFCLC. “In an institutional context, it is difficult to act without justifying your actions on the discourse of the institution” (Wenger in Illeris 2009, 216). The thesis commences the discourse and it is advisable that the topic is kept under study.

Haaga Future Leaders Club offers a possibility to learn more through various projects. My initial idea was to produce a handbook, manual or booklet, which would shape HFCLC’s organization and guide members to administrate the club. However, this approach was later discarded as I became to contemplate the theoretical background.

Organizing an event was discovered after discussions, which are presented more in detail in Chapter 5. I realized that I had to include as many members and the closest stakeholders to co-creation the framework for HFCLC. There are two products in this thesis: first organizing of the workshop, and second Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member’s guide, which is what was produced in the workshop. The workshop’s goal was to kick-off the change process towards more self-directed Haaga Future Leaders Club and the Member’s guide aims at facilitating this process.

What are the main questions the thesis aims to answer? How to increase the motivation of the members in order to get a new kick-off for the club? How people learn individually and in groups and what kind of leadership supports the learning process? The main theories to be applied are transformative learning, transformational leadership and their combination in the context of Haaga Future Leaders Club as an independent student organization.

## **1.2 Delimitation**

The theoretical frame of reference is delimited to finding both conceptual and pragmatic pathways from learning theories to leadership style. The aim is to find the best theory –style match to support the workshop for the best possible result for the content of the Members’ guide. The emphasis is on transformative learning theory and transformational leadership. Other theories in the fields of learning and leadership are briefly touched to justify the selection of the aforementioned, and to apply some of the elements which are believed to benefit the outcome of the workshop.

## **1.3 Approach**

This thesis is consciously subjective and experimental. The approach is exploratory as there are two products of the thesis. The decision of presenting the subjectivity was due to the fact that I had various roles the process and it was practically impossible to stay objective: the former Club leader, the author of the thesis, the facilitator of the workshop and the editor and the co-creator of the Member’s guide.

## **2 Haaga Future Leaders Club**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Haaga Future Leaders Club was initially presented by Programme Director Ari Björkqvist. HFCLC started as a group of top Haaga student's, who had a solid academic background with the requirement of 3,5 grade point average and passed the psychological test revealing the possible strengths of the student. The application process included also an interview with Mr. Björkqvist to demonstrate applicant's motivation.

### **2.1 HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences**

HAAGA-HELIA is one of the 27 Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland (Opintoluotsi 2011). HAAGA-HELIA's Haaga campus, where Haaga Future Leaders Club members are mainly studying, offers bachelor's degree programmes in hotel, restaurant and tourism, and experience and wellness management in Finnish and English languages. HAAGA-HELIA's pedagogical strategy consists of three parties: students, teachers and partners. Students are expected to become self-driven and proactive and to develop personally and the community where they are. Teachers are seen as the guides of the learning process, co-learners and facilitators between students and stakeholders. The third party, partners tie the learning process to working life. (HAAGA-HELIA 2011.)

### **2.2 Goal and justification of Haaga Future Leaders Club**

HFCLC seeks to offer its members a possibility to learn more than the curricula offers in order to maximize their success in the work life. It also enables networking with other possibly similarly motivated students from other degree programmes inside the Haaga campus. The process of the thesis introduced a demand to establish more self-directed Haaga Future Leaders Club. It includes that the members are able to run HFCLC independently and assure its continuity.

There have been questions about the justification of Haaga Future Leaders Club. Comparison between the roles of different parties in HAAGA HELIA's pedagogical strategy and Haaga Future Leaders Club indicates that HFLC may be seen as an attempt to fulfill the strategy by moving towards self-directed learning, where the students decide what they value as worth learning. Cranton (1996, 51) states that the emphasis on education in the western world is moving strongly towards self-direction. The key points in such empowerment are that 1) members of the Haaga Future Leaders Club have an impeccable academic record of the credited courses, 2) they are willing to learn more 3) and take responsibility of the learning. Hereby, they are given the freedom of choice and resources to carry out their own learning. Table 1 shows the similarities in HAAGA-HELIA's pedagogical strategy and Haaga Future Leaders Clubs requirements.

Table 1. HAAGA-HELIA's pedagogical strategy and HFLC's expectations for stakeholders

<b>HAAGA HELIA's Pedagogical strategy</b>	<p><b>Students</b> are expected to be or become</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- proactive,</li> <li>- self-driven,</li> <li>- motivated to set learning objectives, and</li> <li>- participate in planning their study processes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teacher's</b> task is to function as a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planner, enabler, advisor, motivator and learner,</li> <li>- professional consultant</li> <li>- intermediary with students, businesses and other stakeholders, and</li> <li>- guide in the learning process</li> </ul>	<p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enrich the learning process</li> <li>- provide motivation and support</li> <li>- participate in the learning community to develop their own competencies and operations.</li> </ul>
<b>Haaga Future Leaders Club</b>	<p><b>Students</b> in HFLC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- self-directed</li> <li>- motivated</li> <li>- initiative</li> <li>- eager to learn</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teacher's</b> role in HFLC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consultant</li> <li>- mediator</li> <li>- co-learner</li> </ul>	<p><b>Partners</b> for HFLC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- clients</li> <li>- co-learners</li> <li>- willing to invest resources</li> </ul>



On top of the degree programme – related competencies, HAAGA-HELIA’s pedagogical strategy targets to make certain, that graduates master various generic skills as presented below. Haaga Future Leaders Club aims at responding to the challenge with the actions presented on the right-hand side of the dash:

- Time management and prioritization skills – Managing excellent result in regular courses as well as in HFCLC projects.
- Independent monitoring of one’s professional growth and a commitment to learning – Members will be in charge of finding, contracting and executing projects with third parties and organize feedback and reflection session to sum up the learning outcome.
- Ethical awareness – HFCLC values ethical leadership.
- National and international communications know-how (understanding of different cultures, broad communication skills, proficiency in one’s mother tongue and other languages) – HFCLC is an international association with English as a working language.
- Business expertise and a solid all-round education – Industry projects provide deeper insight to business expertise.
- Knowledge of organizations (understanding of strategy and vision, ability to function within organizations, teamwork skills, leadership and managerial skills) – HFCLC is run by its members, who are in charge of its goal-setting, envisioning and all administrative tasks. Every project includes teamwork.
- Ability to produce new information ability to function in a community by sharing expertise and knowledge – Projects require co-learning and HFCLC holds a policy that encourages members to teach other members, students or staff.
- Ability to search for and make use of information – Projects require the efficient use of libraries and data banks to apply the theory in practice.
- A commitment to learning – All members must possess a constant urge to develop themselves.
- Ability to take into account the needs and objectives of different players – HFCLC seeks to benefit all stakeholder, members, non-members students, partner, HAAGA-HELIA and its staff.

- Ability to set development goals and follow through on them – HFCLC is in charge of its own goal-setting and follow-up and reports to the resource provider, HAAGA-HELIA’s representative Teacher Tutor.
- Networking expertise – HFCLC aims at improving networking opportunities within the club as well as bringing industry leaders closer.
- Entrepreneurial competencies – HFCLC is self-directed and entrepreneurial skills are a must to run it successfully.

(HAAGA-HELIA 2011.)

Why do we need HFCLC, if it is on the same continuum as where HAAGA-HELIA’s strategy navigates the students anyway? The connection between the universities of applied sciences and local businesses is stated in the mission of Polytechnics Act (Chapter 1, Section 4, Paragraph 1, 2009/351). Alheit (in Illeris 2009, 120) highlights the importance for an educational institute to closely cooperate with other organizations to keep up with the pace of the real-world outside the institute. HAAGA-HELIA is determined to develop professionals together, and with the working life as stated in the vision of its pedagogical strategy (HAAGA-HELIA 2011). Haaga Future Leaders Club goal is to bridge the gap between working life and educational projects and reach for real results.

Another aspect for HFCLC’s justification is to offer a greater challenge for the ones who are ready to face it. Daloz (1986, in Cranton 1994, 159) and Csikszentmihalyi (1975, in Cranton 1994, 169) cite that the balance between support and challenge is crucial for learning. My perception is that most of the current members think that the challenge is often low in regular courses and might feel frustrated. However, there is not any solid data collected to back up this view. In my opinion, there two reasons for the dissatisfaction: there are rarely real results to be expected, even if there are real companies involved in the projects, and it is relatively easy to get good grades. Haaga Future Leaders Club aims at forwarding the cooperation and getting the real, tangible results of the cooperation by providing superior quality solutions for companies. HFCLC fulfils the following statement of providing new ways to activate the students of Haaga.

What looks promising are inventive ways of engaging students in meaningful practices, of providing access to resources that enhance their participation, of opening their horizons so they can put themselves on learning trajectories they can identify with, and of involving them in actions, discussion, and reflections that make a difference to the communities that they value. (Wenger in Illeris 2009, 215.)

There have been hints of dissatisfaction caused by HFLC among other students and staff members. One of the reasons may be the Finnish modesty and the other the Scandinavian welfare state – principle, which stresses equality. Lack of communication from HFLC's side has probably caused it to be marked as some sort of secret society. The product of the thesis offers a framework for the communication, but there are some ethical issues, which are not included in the thesis. Yet, I recommend that they are put under study in the future. Heller, Mönks, Subotnik and Sternberg (2000, 837) have spotted some challenges in their extensive work in studying the giftedness and talent: Who is qualified to join the club and what are the criteria and on which metrics it is based? Therefore HFLC must carefully look into the application process to be sure to measure the right qualities. Until now the selection process had three parts, an open application letter, an interview and Pro Active Finland's Predictive Strength Indicator test. The application processes might lead to undesirable outcomes such as social isolation, the development of ego-centric attitudes and problems in self-concept (Heller 2004). The teacher tutor's authority and expertise are essential for HFLC.

### **2.3 Situation before workshop**

Haaga Future Leaders Club lacks the sense of continuity and organizational structure. Every organizational change needs a source of energy and the most common is the discontent with the current situation (Binney & Williams 1997, 103). Current situation can be described with March and Olsen's garbage can, which is an organization lacking of leadership and culture. Garbage cans are shapeless organizations without a clear direction which lead to lowered motivation and disintegration (1976 in Bass & Riggio 2006, 108-109). To tackle the issue of the garbage can, Haaga Future Leaders Club must learn as an organization and create standard operating procedures (Nystrom & Starbuck in Starkey, Tempest & McKinlay 2004, 100). It must be stated that the goal of creating the organizational structure is not to build a burdensome, sluggish and bu-

reaucratic, but rather organic composition, which fosters de-centralized decision-making, risk-taking and learning (Bass & Riggio 2006, 92-93).

Hitherto HFLC has suffered the following factors that decline the unity: unpleasant group experience with its first project; low group and public image as HFLC's operation have been hitherto unclear to both members and non-members; and vague structure as the organization has been on the developmental stage (Bedeian 1989, in Cranton 1994, 195). These issues require actions to improve cohesion such as defining common goals, creating interdependence by sharing resources and engaging to non-educational activities for team building (Cranton 1994, 195).

Haaga Future Leaders Club's organization consists of member body, club leader, club coordinator and teacher tutor, who is the representative of HAAGA-HELIA in HFLC. Prior to the workshop, the teacher tutor was the single most important person for HFLC and the power structure and the information flow were from above downwards. (Figure 1).

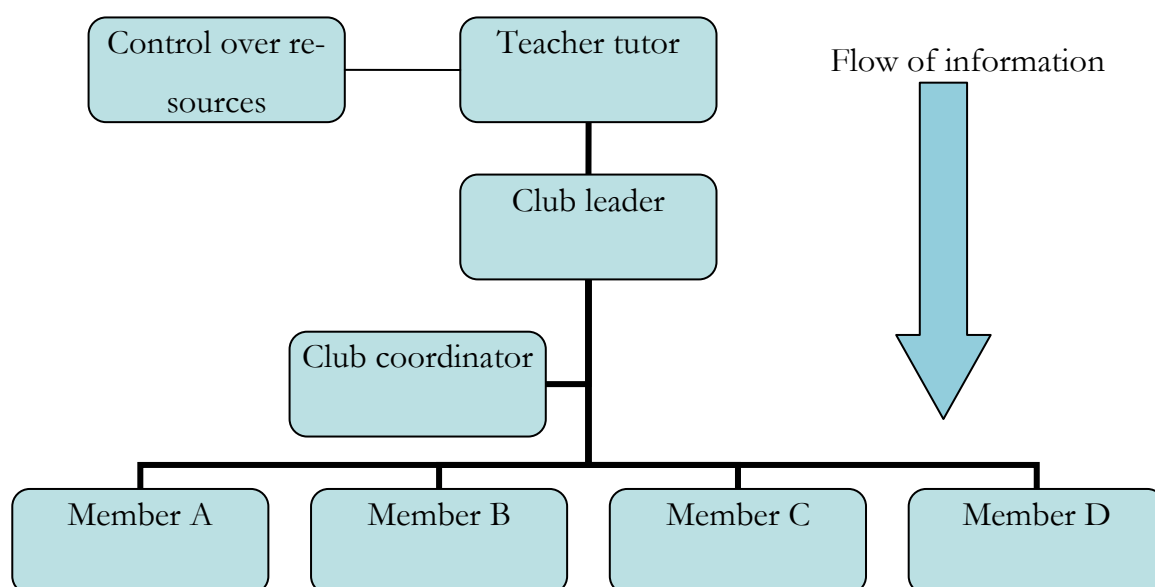


Figure 1. Haaga Future Leaders Club organizational chart before workshop

Mr. Björkqvist stated several times the phrase where he referred to Haaga Future Leaders Club as something that started as his “show” and should become the show of HFLC members. It is a powerful metaphor and it clearly indicates that he is expecting

Haaga Future Leaders Club to operate independently. Hitherto there has been a tendency of waiting for Mr. Björkqvist to come up with the projects and activities. Now there was a clear call for leadership to stand out in HFCL.

What kind of power has teacher tutor possessed and how this power could be redistributed among the members? This is a prominent question to HFCL's organizational efficiency as uncertainty is obviously causing difficulties. Let us have a quick look at how power is perceived from the leadership perspective. Leaders (or educators in this context) possess power to their followers (students), which may be due to their position or personal behaviour. Position power is of three kinds: legitimate, reward and coercive. Legitimate power derives from the authority given by job status, whereas rewarding is granting remuneration and coercing is denying access to remuneration. Personal power originates from leader's likeability which may be categorized as referent power and competence that converts to expert power. (Northouse 2010, 7-8.)

It must be noted that there has not been a clear demand from members that the power should be distributed and thus this is by all means not criticism towards teacher tutor. The power cannot be given to someone who is not ready to take the responsibility of it. Cranton (1994, 147) suggests that process of redistributing power could start with listing and analyzing the sources of power. The teacher tutor's (TT) position power has appeared in legitimate aspect in deciding

- who is eligible to join HFCL – TT is in charge of the application process.
- how, where and when HFCL officially meets – Meetings have predominantly been organized by TT.
- what are the projects HFCL takes part – All but one HFCL's projects have been introduced by TT.
- how HFCL communicates with its stakeholders – TT has administrated HFCL's section on HAAGA-HELIA's extranet.
- who represents HFCL – TT has selected the members to represent HFCL when needed.

Members, on the other hand, were empowered to suggest what kind of special courses should be organized and one of them have already been successfully executed. Howev-

er, if we wish to see self-directed Haaga Future Leaders Club, members must be empowered to gain the ownership of taking most of the aforementioned decisions. This does not mean that teacher tutor is bypassed or found unnecessary. The educator is still trusted to provide stimulants and trustworthy support to learners when needed (Cranton 1994, 141).

To conclude, the power structure between the teacher tutor and HFCLC needed to be reconsidered. The goal is that the relationship is a partnership, where both parties share responsibilities and communicate openly and effectively. Cranton depicts that an educator must thus be able to negotiate critical issues with the group and assume a veto if the decision is perceived to have a high risk. Nevertheless, the aim should always be that the decision-making takes place among HFCLC. (Cranton 1994, 158.)

### **3 Learning**

What is learning? How may we define it? Learning is a lifelong change in person's cognition, emotions and actions derived from experiences in social situations. Understanding the complexity of learning as a phenomenon one must include sociological, psychological and philosophic features in the study (Jarvis in Illeris 2009, 25, 28-29).

Learning in group, such as Haaga Future Leaders Club is a social activity and participation in it contributes to the relationship between a member and organization. An individual must commit to the practices of the community to improve the common procedures. This commitment contributes to organizational learning and helps the organization to gain new members with the intention of harnessing human capital to work effectively. (Wenger in Illeris 2009, 213.)

The major motivator for one to pursue membership in Haaga Future Leaders Club is an urge to personally develop more than the basic curricula offers. Since HFCLC aims at taking full advantage of the activities for its members, it is evident that we need to understand learning at individual and organizational level. The individual learning is the precedent in understanding organizational learning (Kim in Starkey et al. 2006, 29).

Thus it is coherent to start with it and later on look at organizational learning.

#### **3.1 Individual learning**

Illeris (2007, 3) defines learning as “any process that in living organism leads to a permanent capacity change and which is not solely due to biological maturation or aging”. Seeing one as “unfinished” as person and thus accepting the fact that there is more space in human capacity to experiences, and furthermore learning, is essential for personal development (Jarvis in Illeris 2009, 30). Love sees learning no more than as a “process of changing understanding in practice” (in Illeris 2009, 2001). From these views, we may conclude that learning is a process of change in a person and that learning occurs when the person applies the learned information in real life.

Individual learning occurs at four different levels. First and the most basic one is cumulative, which takes place often in early childhood. Later we encounter cumulative learning in occasions with the need to memorize a specific piece of information, such as a password that is irrelevant in any other situation. The most common type of learning in adult context is when the learner recalls what she or he has learned before and applies it to a situation. Furthermore, the learner builds connections between the learned issues to even more recent information. This type of learning is called assimilative and it enables us to link externally different looking situations to our previous knowledge and base our decision-making on that. The next phase of learning is accommodative learning where the learner encounters him- or herself in totally new circumstances and must be able to adapt to them. This may require a strong mental input and is often perceived challenging. The fourth type of learning may be called transformative and it demands not only adaption, but transformation of the learner. (Illeris 2009, 11-14.)

Kegan (in Illeris 2009, 42-44) categorizes learning in informational and transformational, where the former may be described as increasing the “quantity” of knowledge and the latter as an answer to the question of “how we know?”. He highlights that both informational and transformational learning are important and may lead the learner to asking critical questions and finding inconsistencies in subjects under study. What makes the difference is the antecedent, where the learner may have challenged not only the subject, but also his or her own way of thinking. This leads to critical thinking which Cranton argues as “a goal of education” (1994, 139).

### **3.1.1 Changes in traditional education**

Education has conventionally concentrated only on assimilative learning, where the learner integrates new information to existing knowledge. This is not enough in terms of helping learners to develop “much-demanded generic competencies” (Illeris 2009, 14). The traditional institutionalized learning concentrates on individual effort made in classrooms where the attention of the learner is designed to focus on the teacher or predefined exercises and any outside stimulus or co-operation with peers is considered disorder or cheating (Wenger in Illeris 2009, 209).



However, the emphasis has changed from “learners memoriz[ing] content” to “teaching learners how to think” (Cranton 1994, 49). Changes in society with the information overflow and easy access to it via electronic databases set a new standard for learning. These new conditions demand self-managed learning, where the focal point is in organized knowledge management and teaching how to learn to accomplish continuous lifelong learning. (Alheit in Illeris 2009, 119-120.)

### **3.1.2 Transformative Learning**

Transformative learning was first introduced in Jack Mezirow’s article *Perspective Transformation* published in 1978. It is based on constructivism with the assumption which Mezirow (1991, in Cranton 1994, 25) describes as “a conviction that meaning exists within ourselves rather than in external forms[...] and that personal meanings that we attribute to our experience are acquired and validated through human interaction and communication”. Imel (1998) refers to Taylor (1998) articulating that the three key points of Mezirow’s theory are the centrality of experience, critical reflection and rational discourse. Transformative learning is a process of learning through critical self-reflection, which leads to shifting our frames of reference to “more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective and emotionally able to change” (Mezirow in Illeris 2009, 92; Mezirow & Associates 1990, xvi). Transformative learning may also be seen as including, or being closely related to self-directed learning, critical thinking and learner autonomy (Cranton 1994, 121-122).

Frames of references are structures of assumptions which are influenced by culture, environment and language. Individuals automatically filter their experiences through these frames in order to simplify the complexity of the world into understandable chunks of information. Human behavior and cognition work consciously or unintentionally according to the delimitations by the frames or reference. (Mezirow in Illeris 2009, 92-93.)

Cranton calls the frame of reference a meaning perspective and follows Mezirow’s division of the frames of reference (meaning perspectives) in three groups: epistemic,

sociolinguistic and psychological (Cranton 1994, 28; Mezirow 1991 in Cranton 1994, 28). The epistemic frame of reference contains knowledge-related topics. The core of the epistemic discussion is the segregation between knowing and believing. Kitchener's theory of seven stages of epistemic assumptions illustrates how knowledge can be taken from absolute to the "product of rational inquiry, which is fallible" (Kitchener 1983, in Cranton 1994, 31). Acknowledging the subjectivity of knowledge helps us to recognize and straighten possible distortion (misconception that restrains our learning) in the epistemic frames of reference. The sociolinguistic frames of reference are formed under the influence of culture, societal rules and language (Cranton 1994, 34). The third group of frames of reference is psychological and includes feelings and acts relating to person's self-concept. It must be noted that each group of the frame of reference may have distorted views, which may limit our capacity to adopt new information and to adapt to new situations. The scholars do not agree whether all frames of reference may be transformed, but the consciousness of the underlying attitudes can facilitate personal growth and development (Jung 1971, in Cranton 1994, 40).

The frame of reference furthermore splits into two parts. Our point of view is what we communicate to others and expose to judgement. The habit of mind is the underlying assumption, which dictates the point of view and may be difficult to evaluate or even find. Habits of mind are tied to sociolinguistic, moral-ethical, psychological, religious, health and aesthetical perceptions of the world around and of oneself. These codes of behaviour and thinking may therefore be hard to question or transform. (Mezirow in Illeris 2009, 93)

### **3.1.3 Critical thinking**

How may we engage in transformative learning? Critical thinking is the first step towards questioning one's frames of references. According to Mezirow a critical thinker must evaluate the relevance of the received information, the source of information itself and his or her own assumption and subjectivity (Mezirow & Associates 1990, xvii). The process of learning begins with an introduction to new information. A learner has two choices when experiencing something new and controversial towards our frame of reference. The information may be rejected and denied, or the learner exam-

ines the reason for the reaction and integrates the new experience. (Mezirow & Associates 1990, 4; Cranton 1994, 22).

Illeris states that strong negative resistance towards new information offers a great opportunity to learn at accommodative or even transformational level (2009, 16). Therefore the learner should recognize the resistance and its underlying reasons and be able to challenge them. Critical thinking is the preceding stage before critical reflection, which may ultimately lead to transformative learning. According to Brookfield, the result of critical thinking and challenging assumptions might also strengthen the current assumptions and assure the learner that her or his view is correct (1987, in Cranton 1994, 62).

### **3.1.4 Critical Reflection**

Psychologically critical reflection is described as a process of a person moving from slavishly executing according to the habit of mind to owning and assessing it (Kegan in Illeris 2009, 45). This means that the subject becomes an object and the person steps outside of oneself and evaluates the situation as objectively as possible. The process of critical reflection can be divided into three interconnected parts. First learner must recognize the underlying assumptions, then scrutinize the validity of the assumption and compare it with the experiences, and finally transform the assumption to better represent the new form. These assumptions shape and validate all information received from the environment as well as the one produced by ourselves. Awareness of the source of the assumption can help the learner to question its validity, but it is not necessary for critical reflection (Cranton 1994, 84). The process of becoming aware of these assumptions may be extremely challenging as we tend to think of them as part of ourselves. The risk in questioning assumptions is that the learner might end up alienated from his or her life as the dichotomy between the old and new assumptions is too big. (Mezirow & Associates 1990, 177-179.)

Critical reflection can occur in content, process and premise reflections. Reflection of content describes the problem, process reflection tests the approach that was utilized to address the problem, and premise reflection challenges the problem as such. Ques-

tions of what – content, how – process and why – premise are the key tools in reflection. (Cranton 1994, 62, 228.)

One way of consciously aiming at challenging the assumptions is to use critical incidents as cases for critical reflection. Learners are asked to describe an incident in all-encompassing and pedantic manner and then form more universal concepts of the details. The teacher (or leader) must be able to provide examples and be capable of exposing his or her own inconsistencies to create a feeling of trust. The advantage of this approach is that it does not need learners or followers to memorize any scientific theories, but to describe an event that they found important and memorable anyway. If executed in groups, critical incident description also includes some peer learning, as participants try to analyze each others' assumptions. (Mezirow & Associates 1990, 181-184; Kouzes & Posner 2007, 88.)

Brookfield (1987, in Cranton 1994, 169) presents comparable conditions for efficient critical questioning as an informal conversation about specific events towards abstract concepts. Other ways of stimulating critical self-reflection are different approaches of role plays, e.g. changing roles with a person with an opposite view or different job, or writing autobiographies as someone else or participation in a conversation with an antithetical perspective to one's own (Cranton 1994, 175). Learners may also be questioned indirectly to help them to discover the underlying assumptions themselves. So instead of asking frankly "What are your assumptions considering this?", we should ask "Why do you think so?" (Cranton 1994, 185).

### **3.1.5 How Does Transformation Occur?**

Given the complexity of learning in general, it is extremely difficult to assemble an all-inclusive model of transformation of an individual. Nevertheless, the process begins with a trigger event, which somehow shakes person's mindset. The trigger event may be positive or negative. Cranton's list of different phases of transformation is a modification of Taylor's model. The list is not assembled as a sequence, but the learner may skip phases or proceed the list in various orders. (Cranton 1994, 71-71).

- Curiosity – the urge to learn more.

- Confusion – when encountering with new information.
- Testing – how does the new information fit into existing assumptions.
- Withdrawal – when the new information is too exclusive.
- Exploration and reflection – questioning the assumptions.
- Turning to others – seek support in a group.
- Renew interest and excitement – beginning to fit new assumption to new info.
- Reorientation – adjusting the direction according to changed assumption.
- Equilibrium – finding a balance with new assumptions and information.
- Advocacy – support the new information.

(Cranton 1994, 72).

### **3.1.6 Criticism towards transformative learning**

There is an ongoing debate about the ethics of transformative learning in education. Using the techniques of critical self-reflection, there is a possibility of stepping into areas of learner's personality where the educator is not competent enough to navigate or may have a possibility to manipulate (Mezirow & Associates 1990, 38). Taylor (1998, in Imel 1998) discusses findings from studies which indicate that not all learners or teachers are willing to agree with the goal of the transformative learning. Nevertheless, it is clearly important to the education of adults (Imel 1998) and students should be aware of the aforementioned techniques and theories in order to make the decision themselves. In addition it is practically impossible to force anyone to transformation. Initiative must come from the learner (Cranton 1994, 77).

Another debate about transformational learning challenges the level of consciousness in the learning process. It is a fundamental question as it determines whether the learner can be aware of and pursue transformation via transformative learning. Kegan states that change or transformation does not occur unless there is conscious and in depth understanding about the form that transforms (Kegan in Illeris 2009, 41-42). Practically this demands that person perceives the change in frame of reference. Mezirow suggests that "intuition substitutes for critical self-reflection" in the cases of subconscious transformative processes (in Illeris 2009, 95). According to Illeris, transformative learning is

more of an exception and subconscious process and includes changes in the identity of the person (Illeris 2009, 14). These three views spread the role of consciousness from Kegan's 100% understanding to Mezirow's 50/50 approach to Illeris 100% subconsciousness.

There are obviously risks in transformative learning and its goal as changing a person's innermost self is unlikely to be appropriate for everyone at all times. At the same time, transformative learning is the highest form of learning and even its pursuit will help members of Haaga Future Leaders Club to discover tools that are major advantages en route of life-long learning, constant personal development and finding their true passion. Critical thinking offers the access to study one's underlying assumptions, questioning the assumption by critical reflection proposes us to truly internalize and merge the new information, and finally transform and expand our capacity. Critical thinking helps us to become more receptive learners, leaders and people.

### **3.2 Organizational learning**

Individual and organizational learning are closely related and almost synonyms in the early stages of organization. According to Senge (1990, in Stacey 2003, 103) "an organization excels when it is able to tap the commitment and capacity of its members to learn". When an organization grows, it searches for practices to capture the individual knowledge. One of the most common ways to do this is to set standard operating procedures, which shape individual behavior and accumulate organization's knowledge. Paradoxically, the same standard operating procedures may prevent the learning as they tend to become cast iron and untouchable even the situation changes and requires a different approach. (Kim, in Starkey et al. 2004, 35-36.)

What is required from a group of individuals to develop to become an effective learning group? According to Argyris (1957, in Stacey 2003, 120) there is a fundamental paradox in adjusting individual's needs in comparison to group's goals. Stacey (2003, 120) emphasizes the importance of meaningful dialogue between group members, who are genuine and able to trust each other. Johnson & Johnson (1982) state that learning group must be cohesive, the members identify with common goals, agree with rules

and policies, accept responsibility and others' opinions, disposed of other members' influence, and tolerate adversities for common sake (in Cranton 1994, 194-195).

Despite the improved cohesion through organizational change, HFCLC, as any group, will eventually find itself facing clashes between members. Knowing each other and acknowledging individual differences and different assumptions and values in addition to sharing common values and goals will help the group to decrease the number of clashes and to handle them (Cranton 1994, 200). Bass and Riggio (2006, 69) state that in the context of leadership, it is important that the leader seeks to clarify the essence of the conflict away from person to matters, and that different options to solve the conflict are presented.

As a group starts to form its own theories of what is favorable behavior and for what reason, it has to be able to recognize the groupthink. This is a situation where critical comments are sacrificed in order to maintain the status quo (Mezirow & Associates 1990, 185). Stacey suggests that different personality types lead to effective learning (2003, 120). Pro Active Finland, who has carried out the psychological testing for Haa-ga Future Leaders Club, suggested working pairs, where members had different characteristics. Unfortunately, these working pairs have not been consciously tested in any project or activity. Janis (1982, in Bass and Riggio 2006, 75) suggests that "quick and easy decision making can be avoided by forming a decision-making group with members who differ in background and opinion".

To avoid ending up in an impasse situation, an organization must be able to unlearn and change individual cognitive structures (Nystrom & Starbuck, in Starkey et al. 2004, 102-103; Binney & Williams 1997, 86-87). In other words, the organization must engage in transformative learning. Stacey uses single- and double-loop learning (Figure 2) to describe how learning may become transformative in an organizational setting. Single-loop learning is a process where learning occurs when the consequences of previous action are included in the next round of decision-making, but the assumptions are not questioned. Double-loop learning includes the second loop where old mental models or assumptions are evaluated, destroyed and the new model is created. In prac-

tice this means that the organization also abandons some procedures to make room for the new ones. Double-loop learning is essential for innovation. (Stacey 2003, 111-113.)

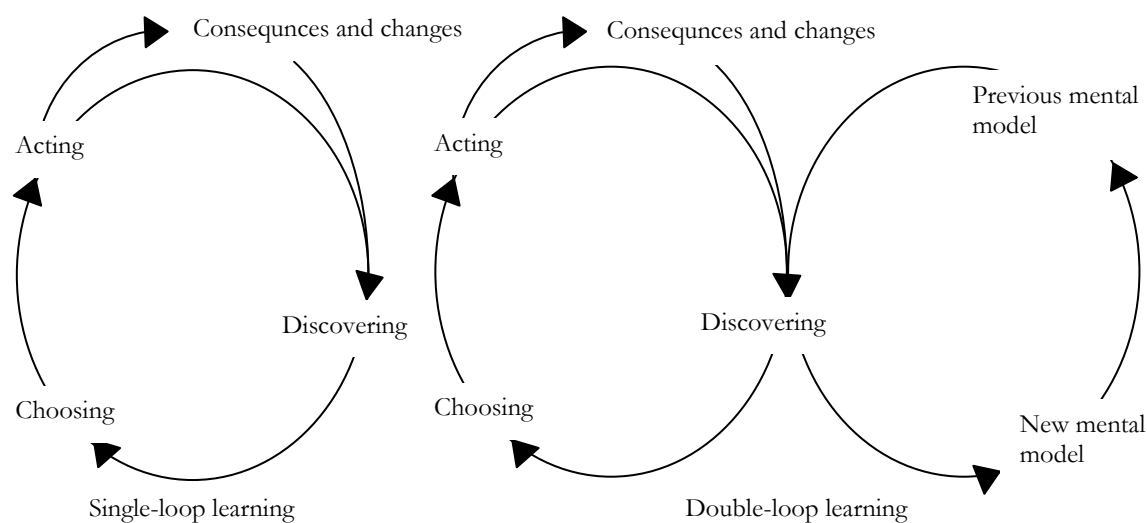


Figure 2. Single- and double-loop learning (Stacey 2003, 111-112)

Nevertheless, the organizational learning takes place in the members of the organization. Thus, the individual must be placed at the focal point of transformation in order to create organizational learning, or what Cranton calls social change. The term “social” means that there is more than one person involved. Hence the change may refer to influencing others in workplace, educational institute, community or society. Social and individual’s change are bidirectional and interdependent, which means that social change may act as a catalyst to individual change and vice versa. The educator who practices and engages in transformative learning is likely to become a social change agent. (Cranton 1996, 142; Cranton 1994, 81, 206.)

### 3.3 Conceptual model of learning for HFLC

To conclude the significance of learning as a phenomenon, I chose the essential aspects to be applied in the thesis process (Figure 3). Even if the transformative learning is one of the main topics of the thesis; it is not the goal of the workshop. There are several reasons for this, one being the fact that it may be a shocking experience as described before and it is rare to happen in such a short time (Cranton 1996, 36). How-



ever, I decided to include the techniques and principles of critical thinking and challenging assumptions to encourage HFLC members to try critical reflection.

Organizational learning must foster the development of the individual as well as of the organization as such (Cartwright 1999,61). The learner must be able to seek support from others in the learning organization (Cranton 1994, 86). Forming organizational procedures helps to collect collective knowledge, but it must be noted that there must also exist preparedness to break down the old and reform as new members come along and older ones learn and change (Binney & Williams 1997, 121).

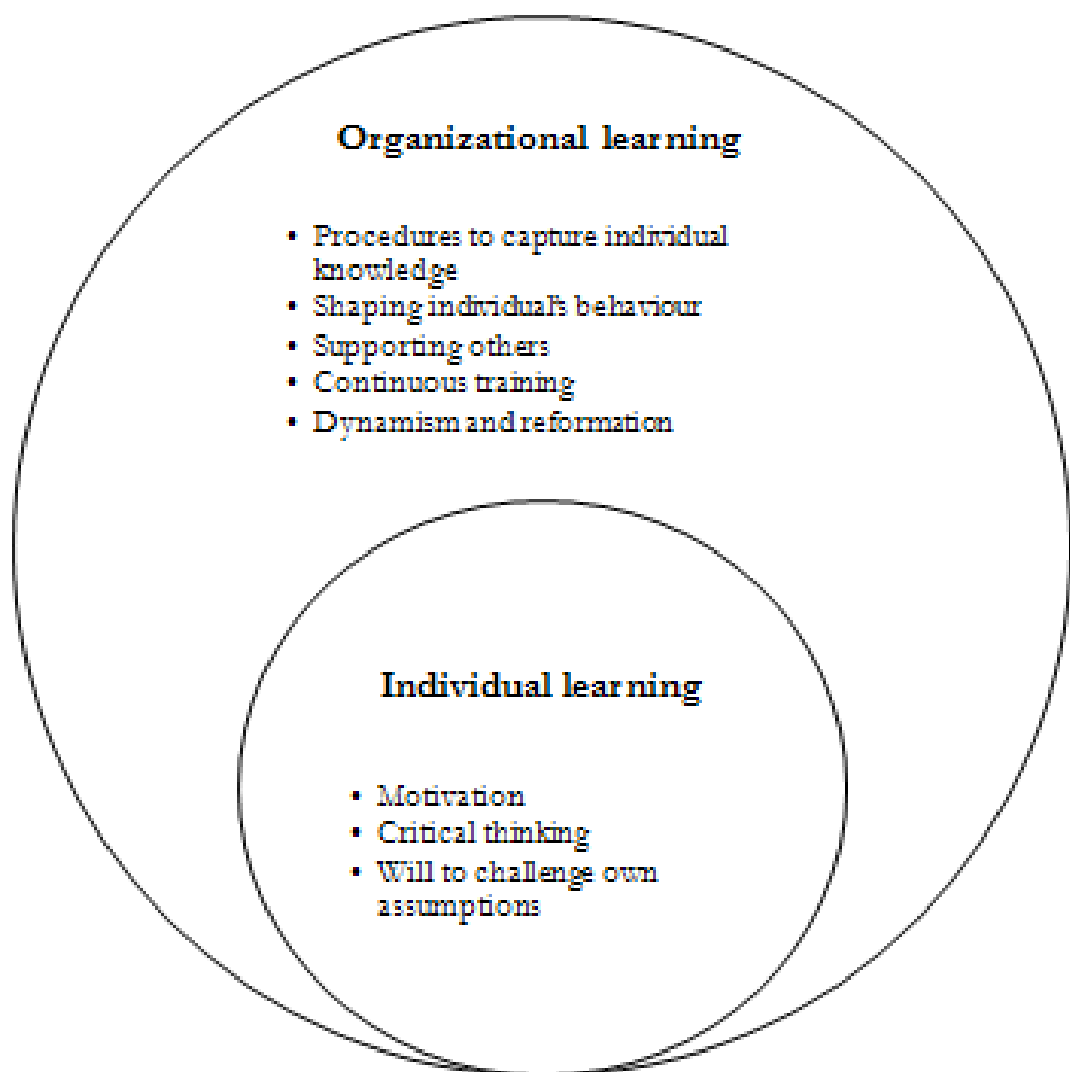


Figure 3. Conceptual model of learning for Haaga Future Leaders Club

## 4 Leadership

My primary goal with leadership was to study how it could support learning and how these two concepts could be linked. However, after exploring leadership literature and reflecting it on my own experiences, I realized that leadership should have the same value as learning as it has similar potential for HFLLC collectively as learning for members as individuals. By its name, Haaga Future Leaders Club is an organization that distinguishes leadership. As the future leaders and managers of various organizations, the members should have an attitude to ethically lead their subordinates mentally by inspiration and by example.

As in learning, the change is essential in leadership. The leader is always a social change agent as leadership only exists in groups. The leader works towards changing threats to opportunities and future visions to accomplishments. When stability is reached, the leader must create change by bringing forth pending emergencies and challenge the status quo. There will not be development without change and challenge. Yet, improvement (and not the change as such) should be the intrinsic value of the change. Leadership itself has undergone a change from autocratic to empowering, developing, supporting and caring. This is due to the fact that leader's followers have become more educated, emancipated and ambitious and are not willing to put up with despots. (Bass and Riggio 2006, 202, 225; Kouzes & Posner 2007, 18, 164.)

What is the modern manifestation of leadership, and what do we see in a leader? Kjelin (2009) divides leadership theories into four categories:

- searches for universal leadership qualities,
- situational and contingency approaches,
- heterogeneous group of emergent leadership, and
- transformational approaches.

Searches for the universal qualities of leadership focus on finding traits and behaviours typical of a good leader, situational and contingency approaches concentrate on the leader reacting as ably as possible to changing situation and emergent leadership inter-

pret leadership as the series of singular relationships in particular moments (Kjelin 2009). I chose transformational leadership as the leadership approach for the thesis as it encompasses leaders as learners (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 203), leader's ethicalness (Northouse 2010, 394), and followers' development and their role as future leaders (Avolio 1999, 4).

Leadership has been depicted all the way to the ancient Greece and Aristotle whereas management was first recognized in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These two phenomena have common characteristics but can also be seen differing in many aspects. Management is mainly planning organizing, staffing and controlling, while leadership concentrates in finding a direction and influencing the organization to move towards the defined goal. (Northouse 2010, 9-11, 13.)

Kouzes and Posner (2007, 340) compare leadership and management by highlighting the fact that nobody ever questions whether management can be learned, or if management is a trait or not, as it is taught in countless universities around the world. Leadership is an attitude just as much as it is competence. Status of leader is earned among followers, whereas managers are mostly appointed by the higher-ranked managers or boards of directors. Leader's own contribution cannot be solely delegating and administrating. A great leader is a doer and proactively changing the status quo (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 168). By doing and executing themselves leaders are also able to ask more from the followers and elevate the level of expectations gradually without causing too much stress and keeping the followers challenged (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 172). Cambridge Dictionaries Online (2011) defines the verb 'lead' as 'be first'. The leader is the first to break new ground and leads the followers towards goals.

Taken that leadership is about behaviour, and not a personality trait (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 15), it is interesting to look briefly into personality types in order to find out why some individuals might appear more talented in leadership than others. Leadership may be openly addressed to a person based on various requirements. However, if a group does not appoint a leader, "more dominant, more intelligent, and more confident" (Northouse 2010, 6) individuals may be perceived as emergent leaders of the group.

Bass and Riggio (2006, 168-177) present various studies with partly similar results as extraverted, dominant and self-confident individuals were found to assume leadership positions. This may be perceived as the share of the genetics, which may be said to be approximately half (Avolio 1999, 65). Intelligence's role fluctuates as some studies indicate that its relevance is rather small. Transformational leaders might not be cognitively remarkable intelligent, but are probably socially and emotionally smart. The emotional intelligence finds its manifestation in communication.

#### **4.1 Why do we need leadership**

Let us take a quick time-out and travel back to Chapter 1 and to the very first meeting of Haaga Future Leaders Club January 15 2010. Mr. Ari Björkqvist presented that HFLC should have a chairman or a president and a secretary. The public opinion among members was skeptical whether these two positions of trust were needed altogether, and the terms "president" and "secretary" did not seem to resonate. As mentioned also in Chapter 1, I was appointed the chairman's position, which was later on changed to club leader as we thought that less conservative name would have more support from members. For the same reason, the secretary was replaced with the coordinator, which later on also got the prefix "Club" to distinguish it from the project coordinator.

Why do we need these positions of trust in Haaga Future Leaders Club? As stated in Chapter 2.3, HFLC could be seen as a garbage can or a shapeless organization. In the context of leadership, it means *Laissez-faire*, where leaders are reluctant to give the group impulses to perform effectively and move towards the goal (Avolio 1999, 39). I need to be held at least partly accountable for the lack of leadership in HFLC. Before studying the leadership for the thesis, I made mistakes in assuming that members were all equally motivated, used often uninspiring language and did not do enough to share responsibilities and react when the first project sidetracked.

Leadership as its best helps groups of people to find a common purpose and direction (Kouzes & Posner 2007, xvi). Bass & Riggio state that leadership is an important factor in building commitment and loyalty towards any organization (2006, 32). By establish-

ing leadership and governance policy Haaga Future Leaders Club moves away from passive leadership, which causes lowered motivation and is the least effective level of leadership (Bass & Riggio 2006, xi). Transformational leadership seems to be close to a perfect match for Haaga Future Leaders Club, as it concentrates on developing followers' skills:

Transformational leaders motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible. They set more challenging expectations and typically achieve higher performances. Transformational leaders also tend to have more committed and satisfied followers. Moreover, transformational leaders empower followers and pay attention to their individual needs and personal development, helping followers to develop their own leadership potential. (Bass & Riggio 2006, 4.)

If we agree that leadership may actually be beneficial and needed, we must make certain that the leadership practices are executed according to the requirements of HFLLC. This means that we wish to learn more, enhance group cohesion and motivation, increase trust among members, and find a common direction with goals and aspirations.

## **4.2 Transformational leadership**

There is considerable amount of research about transformational leadership and it has proven to improve efficiency and performance, and result in higher satisfaction among followers (Bass & Riggio 2006, 27, 41, 50). It has several strengths compared with other leadership approaches. Transformational leaders are able to cause a change for better in other individuals by putting an emphasis on taking into account followers' needs.

By engaging in transformational leadership, leaders commit to "give a meaning to organizational life" (Northouse 2010, 200). Bass and Riggio (2006, xi) similarly state that today's workers are not satisfied with solely charismatic leaders to show them a way but seek to grow through empowerment and thus being intrinsically motivated. Transformational leadership scholars define leadership as an observable process, where an individual influences a group of others for a common good (Northouse 2010, 3; Kouzes & Posner 2007, xi). Besides being a process, leadership is also a relationship and cannot take place unless there are more than one individual involved (Kouzes &

Ponser 2007, 24). The relationship between a leader and a follower is in its best grows to a relationship which transforms both parties' self-interests to achieve a shared goal (Northouse 2010, 153). The term "follower" derives from the fact, that leadership cannot take place if there is not anybody willing to walk after the leader.

There are three major tides in transformational leadership (Northouse 2010, 175-185). Bernard M. Bass, along with many scholars, further developed Burns' concept of transforming leadership. Bass has established his theory on four Is (4Is): 1) idealized influence, 2) inspirational motivation, 3) intellectual stimulation and 4) individualized consideration. Bennis and Nanus (1985 in Northouse 2010, 182-183) identify similarly four aspects of transformational leadership. They see the transformational leader as 1) having a clear vision, 2) being a social architect, 3) able to create trust, and 4) aware of one's own self-identity. Third conceptually presented model of transformational leadership combines five practices with the promise of getting extraordinary results: 1) model the way, 2) inspire a shared vision, 3) challenge the process, 4) enable other to act, and 5) encourage the heart (Kouzes and Ponser 2007, 26).

Leadership can be divided into three main categories: 1) laissez-faire, where leadership is almost non-existing, 2) transactional, which focuses on exchange between the leader and follower; and 3) transformational, which emphasizes the process of followers growing to become leaders themselves. Leadership styles may be put on a continuum where the axes represent the activeness and effectiveness of the applied leadership style. This is called the model of the full range of leadership (FRL) (Figure 4). (Avolio 1999, 41-50.)

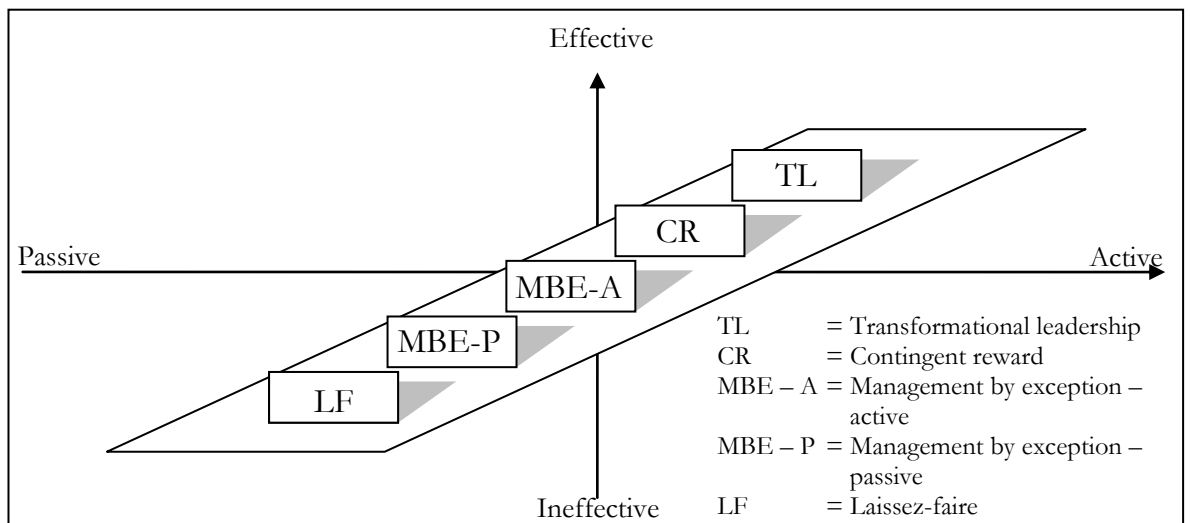


Figure 4. The model of the Full Range of Leadership: Optimal profile (Bass & Riggio 2006, 9)

The least active and effective form of leadership is called laissez-faire and it refers to total lack of leadership, where leaders avoid taking responsibility. The next phase, management by exception, may be either passive or active and concentrates on deviations in rules and policies. A leader practising active management by exception is ceaselessly looking for mistakes whereas passive leader would be waiting for mistakes to happen and then take corrective actions. Contingent reward may in some cases be part of transformational leadership. However, in most of the cases it is simply adding a motivator in the form of recompense if a certain pre-defined goal is reached or surpassed. The Bass' model of 4Is is the content transformational leadership of FRL model. (Avolio 1999, 41, 49-50.)

All leaders show the signs of each leadership style to some extent. An organization may succeed without practising transformational leadership. However, adding transformational aspects to well-operated transactional leadership practices results in higher efficiency and job satisfaction. (Bass & Riggio 2006, 9-11; Avolio 1999, 61.)

### 4.3 Envisioning future

Vision is often found in organizations with transformational leadership behaviour. Vision is a dream or a desire for a better future. Leaders are usually the ones articulating the vision, but it must correspond to the values of the organization as a whole. Every member must be able to gain the ownership of the vision. Otherwise they will not be truly committed to it. Leader's duty is to communicate the shared vision in an inspiring manner and make it visible and worth pursuing. (Northouse 2010, 183, 186; Kouzes & Posner 2007, 17, 33.)

Vision has been a buzzword in companies and organizations for quite some time, but its meaning and significance is often unclear (Collins & Porras 1999, 219; Raynor 1998). Organization's vision at its best should represent its values and aspirations both realistically and boldly and set a reachable goal within a given timeframe. (Kirkpatrick, S. A, Wofford, J.C & Baum, J. R. 2002; Collins & Porras 1999, 219). Visions should be constantly assessed as they quickly lose their exuberance when reached (Collins & Porras 1999, 238). Also, changes in operational environment can make the original vision sound plain silly. However, if the vision is changed twice a month, it will be hard to mobilize followers to help the organization move towards it.

Raynor (1998) attempts to clarify how vision should be formed. He sees vision as deriving from the market forces and mission statement, of which latter derives from values and core competencies (Figure 5).

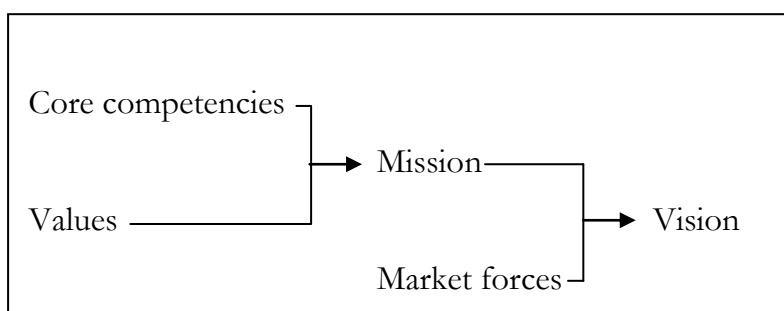


Figure 5. Creating the mission and vision (Raynor 1998)



Values are organizations code of conduct, the glue that holds it together. Kouzes and Posner found out in their studies that shared values in an organization have the following effects (2007, 62):

- fostering strong feeling of personal effectiveness,
- promoting high levels of loyalty,
- facilitating consensus about key organizational goals and stakeholders,
- encouraging ethical behaviour,
- promoting strong norms about working hard and caring,
- reducing levels of job stress and tension,
- fostering pride in the company,
- facilitating understanding about job expectations, and
- fostering teamwork and esprit de corps.

A leader in the first place must be able to identify his or her values and find a match when comparing them with the organization's value set (Kouzes and Posner 2007, 15). This enables the leader to be passionate and stand out for the cause. Kouzes and Posner talk about finding your voice as a leader which is becoming aware of your true passion, a cause that you are willing to fight for (2007, 49-50). Techniques from transformative learning may help the leader to come clear about underlying, hard-to-detect values.

Nevertheless, it is not about the leader's values only. Every member of the organization has personal values. The combination of different persons' values forms shared value set, which guides organization's actions. Leaders' values are obviously significant, but they must represent the organization as such (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 15). Simons (1999 in Bass & Riggio 2006, 36) state that values must be spotted in leaders' actions. Leading by example breathes life to the values. This is required for the followers to identify with the shared values. If followers personally identify with the shared values, they are most probably committed and intrinsically motivated to make an effort to reach the vision (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 56).

I decided not to include a comprehensive study of HFLC's core competencies in this thesis as it would have been a massive topic as such. However, they are obviously rele-

vant to the discussion about vision and organizational strategy. Raynor (1998) defines core competencies as the distinctive factor of organizations skills in their operational environment. Competency in general is more than just the skill or knowledge. It includes the ability to activate psychological resources, such as skills and attitudes in a particular context (OECD 2005). Core competencies may be viewed as “the collective learning in the organization” (Prahalad & Hamel 1990, in Starkey et al. 2004, 92). This view takes a step towards a learning organization from the resource base to the knowledge base, where the organization specializes in adapting quickly to changes and is willing to learn new competencies to respond to the demand in the marketplace (Starkey et al. 2004, 91-93). As a dynamic and learning-focused organization, HFLLC fits the knowledge base – view.

The mission statement’s benefit for the organization may be minuscule without a mutual and unambiguous perceptive of its meaning (Raynor 1998). Otherwise there is a danger that the mission is just another gimmick of management that confuses employees instead of giving them meaning. Nicolae (2010) sees the mission statement as a tool of upper management for improving employees’ commitment with the values of the organization. Raynor (1998) ends up with a following definition: “A mission statement that is simple in its content (defining the arena of competition) yet demanding in its construction (understanding a company's core competencies and values) describes a company's current competitive positioning”. I will return to the mission statement in Chapter 5.

The relevance of the market forces for profit-driven companies is obvious as consumers ultimately decide if they see the value in whatever the organization is trying to achieve. It is important to look ahead so that there will market for the product or service in future. Defining Haaga Future Leaders Club’s market is still in its initial phase. Who are we competing against? Are other universities our competitors or consulting agencies or do we actually have any competitors at the moment? (Raynor 1998.)

Leaders are often the ones formulating the vision. However, followers must be included in the process of the formulation since “you can’t mobilize people to willingly

travel to places they don't want to go" (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 118). Shared vision and values are even more important for the group identity of Haaga Future Leaders Club as a voluntary-based organization (Bass & Riggio 2006, 39). The Finnish people tend to believe that an employee should leave emotions and personal life home and put a working face when at work. However, animating the vision should include an attempt to emotionally touch the followers in order to inspire them to commit to it and finding the occasion memorable (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 140-141, 149).

#### **4.4 Goal-setting**

Great results are not likely to be accomplished by setting the bar low. Hence, the leader must know follower's skill level and believe he or she can help the follower to develop and exceed the expectations. Goals energize the organization as they are concrete measurements of actions and results. Action without the goal is walking in circles to appear to be going somewhere. In order to reach its goals and visions, an organization must be able to set smaller objectives and then communicate them effectively to create small victories and successes. This helps the organization to create a winning culture and to show the members that improvements are taking place. (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 193-194, 198.)

Good Leadership stipulates a positive attitude even in critical situations and seeing challenges instead of crisis (Bass & Riggio 2006, 78-79; Kouzes & Posner 2007, 151). Who would want to follow a leader that is not promising a better future for the ones who decide to join? There is also some empirical evidence of leader's positive attitude converting to positive effect on group's performance (McColl-Kennedy & Anderson 2002, in Bass & Riggio 2006, 52).

After the goal-setting, an organization must decide how to measure whether the goals are reached. "What you measure is what you get". Leaders are of major importance starting and influencing the discussion about measurements. Later on the leader sets the example of what is important by allocating his or her time. For instance, if customer satisfaction is valued in a company, the leader should be seen on spending time to

improve it. If HFLC values learning, it should define the measurements for learning and strive to support it thoroughly. (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 92-94.)

#### **4.5 Criticism towards transformational leadership**

Critics of transformational leadership cite that it lacks theoretical precision. Moreover, they question the validity of the multifactor leadership questionnaire, which is used for measuring transformational leadership. Other critics concentrate on pointing out that transformative leadership may be misused as followers are often willing to follow leaders with transformative behaviour. How is it assured that the change is for better? (Northouse 2010, 188-190.)

Similar concerns are stated by Bass and Riggio (2006, 5). They cite that autocratic despots often represent especially the charismatic aspects of transformational leadership. Charisma as such is an issue for transformational leadership. Misuse of it may cause horrific results of oppression and coercion (Bass & Riggio 2006, vii). Heller et al. (2000, 836) bring out the fact that charismatic leaders often see intellectual and gifted individuals as threats to question their superiority and attack them. However, transformational leadership is among few leadership theories which include ethics as an aspect of the leadership process (Northouse 2010, 394).

#### **4.6 Conceptual model of leadership for HFLC**

Leadership has been underrated in HFLC. This is due to the lack of conversation and a common view of how Haaga Future Leaders Club should be led. The conceptual model of leadership aims at highlighting the crucial issues for HFLC (Figure 6). Shared values give a base for the organization to flourish (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 60) and the achieving goals encourages followers to give their best for a common good (Bass & Riggio 2006, 39). Leadership influences commitment and organizations with transformational leadership behaviour increases followers' loyalty (Bass & Riggio 2006, 34). The most important aspect of the leadership for HFLC is that its practice improves the leadership development of every follower (Bass & Riggio 2006, 4).

A leader, just like a learner, must be willing to accept the change as a part of the process of leadership and “search for opportunities to innovate, grow, and improve” (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 18). This includes challenging the status quo and constantly asking whether procedures and policies are appropriate and relevant (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 185). Inspiration is about connecting with own and followers’ aspirations even if there is a risk of failure imbedded in reaching for the goals (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 174). Leading by example is the touchstone for every leader. The followers judge their leaders 10 per cent by what they say and 90 per cent by what they do (Binney & Williams 1997, 59).



Figure 6. Conceptual model of leadership for Haaga Future Leaders Club

## 5 Organizational culture – combining learning and leadership

This chapter aims at continuing the conceptual framework by combining learning and leadership and how they impact organizational culture. Change is an essential element in both learning and leadership. Transformational leadership as it is a process that changes the individuals by taking into consideration their personal differences (Northouse 2010, 171), where transformative learning is a process of change through critical self-reflection (Mezirow in Illeris 2009, 92). Just as learning and leadership, culture is constantly changing and shaped by individuals (Cartwright 1999, 30).

Culture as such is an enormous word and it can be defined in various ways. It is a holistic set of learned behaviours, values and knowledge that help a certain group of individuals to survive and flourish in specific environment. Any organization must possess both traditions, which are passed from one generation of members to the next one, and ability to adapt and renew from time to time. Traditions are important stages for representing and reinforcing the shared values. If the culture is to be managed, its definition should include measurable aspects. (Cartwright 1999, 10.)

Given that HFCLC members value learning, the organizational culture should encourage learning at both individual and organizational level. Most of the institutions that we, as individuals pass during our lifetime attempt to control us, and plant an idea that deviation of standard behaviour is bad. This kind of approach hinders innovation. Why do we create these barriers to learning? Wenger claims organizations to pay more attention to their conceptions of learning to be able to encourage, nurture or “simply stop getting in the way of it” (in Illeris 2009, 214). The role of the leader in creating a learning organization is crucial. Helping others to learn is not, once again a task for a charismatic hero, but learning requires that leader is inspiring and challenges the current assumptions. (Senge in Starkey et al. 2004, 462.)

Learning is change. Thus the barriers we need to move are the old ways that maintain the status quo. Changes in organizational environment, demand, or in the organization

itself demand for leadership to join the forces inside the organization to capitalize the new opportunities instead of holding on to the old procedures (Bass & Riggio 2006, 99-102). Change-resistance derives from organization's management: whether it is impervious or flexible, dogmatic or open-minded, pessimistic or optimistic etc. (Cartwright 1999, 18). Thus being open to new ideas and the will to test and implement must be embedded in organizations values. This requires also that failure is seen as a learning opportunity and "[t]here must be a right to fail" (Bass & Riggio 2006, 136).

## **5.1 Empowerment**

Empowerment happens when someone in a higher hierarchical position gives up power and freedom for subordinates to make decision and take on the consequences of those decisions. "Individuals who do not wish to or who are not permitted to make decisions about their own learning can scarcely be called empowered or be expected to engage in critical self-reflection" (Cranton 1994, 155). Thus, empowerment is clearly important for learning and it demands that the learner is willing and able to take the ownership of his or her own learning. Kegan calls attention to Mezirow's ideas of transformational learning as the empowerment of the learner as the learner becomes more aware of the underlying reasons for cultural and moral restrictions (in Illeris 2009, 50).

To understand empowerment we must understand power and how it affects organizations. Power exists in control over resources, environment, rewards, punishment and information. Authority must be aware of the power entitled to the position to redistribute it. This begins with listing and analyzing the power, as presented in Chapter 2.3. The next phase of empowerment is abandoning the power which enables others to take over that power and become equally capable of making decisions and attend discussions about learning. Empowerment ultimately encourages critical self-reflection and self-direction. Successful empowerment leads to followers becoming self-directed leaders (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 269). However, self-direction as the following step from empowerment cannot be plainly handed to learners or followers. The educator or leader must still provide stimulants and trustworthy support when needed. (Cranton 1994, 147, 151.)

What is needed for empowerment? Mutual trust is crucial for empowerment. Unsure situations require more partnerships and networks where the risk and possible gains are shared (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 224). Leader must be honest in order to create an atmosphere of trust where integrity and ethics are valued and present in every action (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 32-33). Magretta (2002, 203) refers to Adam Smith's (the initiator of modern economics) studies of ethics and moral philosophy and states that trusting others is a base for fulfilling one's self-interests as all trade would be prevented if none trusted each other. The same thing applies in organizations as organisms. Working together requires that people are able to count on each other and that the final output is larger than the sum of each individual input.

Empowerment in Bass and Riggio's model means providing autonomy via intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (2006, 193). Kouzes and Posner talk about enabling other to act by fostering collaboration and trust and strengthening others (2007, 248-249). What is important to understand, is that the leader must be able to fit the requirements of the task or a position to match follower's capacity. To succeed in this the leader must know the skill level, competencies and capabilities of every follower, but also aspirations and personal goals. Once in a challenging position, the follower must think that she or he is empowered to make decisions, but also that leader is providing enough support and resources. The leader must also tolerate failure to the extent that the follower is encouraged to reach and surpass goals. High expectations cannot be met without investments. It is important to note that projects may fail, but not the individuals working on it. (Bass & Riggio 2006, 200-201; Kouzes & Posner 2007, 201, 260.)

Knowing each of your follower's competencies and aspiration is obviously a great challenge for any leader or even practically impossible in large organizations. Yet, the leader should know at least everyone who reports directly to her or him, as presented below:

In addition to understanding cultural issues, the team leader must know the capabilities of each team member. Intellectually stimulating leaders take advantage of diverse backgrounds and ex-



periences of their team members, using this understanding to promote greater creativity. Because no team leader can be an expert in all areas represented by the members of the team, the intellectually stimulating leader should serve as a catalyst for creative activity. The leader should move the members to unearth their diverse assumptions and to problem solve in orderly stages. (Bass & Riggio 2006, 139.)

How to get to know your followers? This takes us back to trust. People would never trust you solely by asking them to do it. It requires authenticity and encountering the follower as a person. Creating a climate for trust has already been mentioned in creating an atmosphere for learning. Leadership without trust is not leadership at all, but a fake structure based on coercion or greed in the form of punishment or rewards, also known as the traditional carrot-and-stick – management. Credibility is the base of leadership as followers will not sign in for someone who is not consistent and trustworthy (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 27-28). Empowerment requires mutual trust. The starting point for creating trust is to have it as a standard. In other words, people are trustworthy until proven untrustworthy. There is a risk in this paradigm but leadership is also risk-taking. A leader must first be open to others and trust and in this way win the trust of others. (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 224-230.)

## **5.2 Learning to lead**

Leadership is not an action limited to managers or executives in companies and organizations. Leadership occasions occur all the time and everyone will face a situation where responsibility is offered to them (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 9). Leadership does not have to be imposing and revolutionary; on the contrary great leadership is about persistently looking for improvement in everyday procedures (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 348-349). In Haaga Future Leaders Club every member is considered a leader based already on the name of the club.

It has been proposed that all levels of an organization are educated about transformational leadership. Together with empowerment and creativity, followers' efficacy and commitment will increase (Riggio & Bass 2006, 44-45). This furthermore leads to improved general performance through enhanced group dynamics, decision-making, processes of change and various human resource management issues. However, the top

management must be in favour of this and show transformational leadership in their actions in order to cause the cascade effect, where lower levels of organization imitate the behaviour seen in their own managers and apply it in their own work. (Bass & Avolio 1990, 1994 in Northouse 2010, 190; Bass & Riggio 2006, 127-128, 133.)

The cascade effect is based on the assumption that leaders are organization's role models. Followers cannot be expected to act according to rules if they constantly see their leaders deviating from them. "Titles are granted but it is your behavior that wins you respect" (Kouzes and Posner 2007, 15). Especially new members of will look at leaders as role models when incorporated. Thus leader must effectively communicate statements representing the organizational culture in an inspiring manner. Such statements are visions, missions, goals and codes of conduct. (Bass & Riggio 2006, 104.)

Given that a prospect HFLC members' most important motivation to join is a will to develop and learn. Bass and Riggio (2006, 95) refer to two studies showing positive correlation between the transformational leadership and satisfaction of employees with an urge to assume more responsibility and learn more in their jobs. Similarly, Kouzes and Posner examined the relationship between leadership and learning and found out that leaders who were engaged in learning were more successful (2007, 203). One of the most remarkable dilemmas of learning and teaching leadership is leader's authenticity. False or inauthentic leadership tricks are easily spotted by followers and will probably lead to lack of trust as the leader may be perceived to fish follower's admiration and attention (Bass & Riggio 2006, 233-234).

There is some evidence of preceding factors that that may shape the future leadership style of a person. The personal background investigation of leaders with transformational qualities revealed that they were actively taking responsibilities at early ages in school and hobbies, such as boards and sporting activities (Bass & Riggio 2006, 147). Another precursor to transformational leadership behaviour is learned from parents (Bass & Riggio 2006, 232). Even early life experiences seem to affect leadership development. Paying a quick visit to the beginning of Chapter 4 and to the trait approach we may also ask how much of the leadership can be learned? Avolio (1999, 65) states that

based on the evidence acquired from running personality tests on twins indicate that roughly half of our character is genetics and the other half may be developed at will. If we continue the journey back to transformative learning, it could offer us a tool to at least test the supposedly permanent “genetic” half and see how much of it is untouchable. To conclude, we should have at least 50% of our capacity to work with and to become better leaders.

Talented leaders may be seen charismatic. The charisma is “personality trait rather than a set of skills” (Cranton 1994, 132). Charismatic leaders are often able to make followers identify themselves with their positive behaviour and enhance these actions in followers work and help followers relate to the organization (Northouse 2010, 175). Bass and Riggio call leadership as conceptually charismatic, where followers try to find a leader for whom they are able to relate to and look for an example of acceptable behaviour (2006, 5). This view is challenged by Collins and Porras (1998, 32-34), who found in their study of visionary companies that many successful CEOs and company owners were not charismatic, but rather inconspicuous or either dull. Consequently we may say that charisma is a useful tool for a leader but its relevance to performance must be questioned. Charisma is not a requirement for effective leadership.

### **5.3 Feedback**

Any kind of learning requires feedback. The collection of feedback should include both discussion with peers and comments from the educator (Cranton 1994, 89). Communication, feedback and reflecting one’s experiences with others are important for various reasons. Wildemeersch and Stroobants argue that transitional learning (their theory about learning which has similarities to transformative learning) may be catalyzed by discussions which furthermore create meaningful connections and new opportunities to link the experience to the needs of the society (in Illeris 2009, 231). Cranton similarly suggests that “For many people, discussion is likely to provoke critical self-reflection” (1994, 82). Mirroring one’s views with a trusted peer or supervisor can help the learner to overcome adversities. “Even failing to learn what is expected in a given situation usually involves learning something else instead” (Wenger in Illeris 2009, 214).

An experience as such will not provide transformative learning, but the subsequent critical analysis of the experience (e.g. discussion sessions, journal writing, critical questioning and developing hypothesis) may lead to it (Kolb 1984 in Cranton 1994, 183). Mezirow presents the working methods of Management Institute, Lund, Sweden (MiL). He underlines the relation between executing projects and then reflecting on the encountered real-life problems in seminars. In his example, participants are able to propose issues to be put under study. The real benefit is to be able to discuss the challenges openly with peers, competitors, subordinates and superiors. (Mezirow & Associates 1990, 25-26, 29.)

It is important for a developing leader to receive feedback. Feedback should be collected from followers, peers, supervisors as well as conducting self-evaluation. It must be noted that feedback must be in line with goals and expectations as it is a waste of time to compare the outcome with non-existent expectations (Stacey 2003, 35).

In an organization, the feedback marks the cruising speed towards goals, meaning that we are able to accelerate with the adjustments made after receiving feedback and show that one's contribution is noticed and it has relevance in the organization (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 288-291). Even more important than receiving feedback is to take actions towards change according to the information acquired from the feedback. The leader must lead by example and be willing to change his or her behaviour if it is perceived poor. A personalized development plan with emphasis on aspects that need upgrading may be introduced and the leader can be coached, take part in workshops or receive other kind of leadership training. Leadership development should be seen as a life-long activity just as any learning process. (Bass & Riggio 2006, 150, 153; Kouzes & Posner 2007, 87.)

#### **5.4 Self-direction**

By definition, a self-directed learner is not only a product of the culture, but also a contributor and catalyst for change in environment and people (Grow 1991, in Kegan, in Illeris 2009, 50). Self-direction in the context of an individual learning is different from

the autonomy of Haaga Future Leaders Club as an organization. Autonomy, self-management, learner-control and autodidaxy are terms that are often connected with individual's self-direction. Personal autonomy is a personal attribute, self-management is the competence of taking responsibility of one's own education, learner-control is a way to organize one's workload in traditional education, and autodidaxy is when learning takes place outside of educational institute. Out of these terms, HFLC members are expected to stand for self-management and autodidaxy. Personal attribute could be accomplished through transformative learning. Learner-control can be seen to depend on teachers in compulsory courses. (Candy 1991, in Cranton 1994, 58.)

Self-direction from an organizational point of view means that Haaga Future Leaders Club is able to decide its own actions and projects to take part and decide on the special courses to be organized. This is partially already happening. The most important questions concerning self-direction are how much responsibility the members are willing to take, what are the resources from HAAGA-HELIA, and finally how much authority is addressed to the teacher tutor? Anyhow, Haaga Future Leaders Club and the teacher tutor must form a coalition to work towards common objective (Cranton 1994, 133). This is due to the fact that HFLC needs resources from HAAGA-HELIA and in return actively represents HAAGA-HELIA's education.

To summarize the theoretical background of this thesis we must combine the organizational culture with learning and leadership (Figure 7). The goal of transformative learning is a self-directed learner, who is competent to lead a social change (Imel 1998). Transformational leadership in the other hand seeks to develop the overall leadership behavior and nurture learning in the organization (Binney & Williams 1997, 52). Self-direction may be achieved through empowerment and the teacher tutor is the key person in empowering Haaga Future Leaders Club. HFLC must "integrate doing and learning" (Binney & Williams 1997, 139); in other words HFLC is pragmatic and the learning occurs by facing challenging situations and applying the learnt material. The action is also required for the teacher tutor's authorization. Otherwise there would not be anything to authorize. The action must be evaluated in a feedback session between the HFLC members, the teacher tutor and possible clients of the projects. Feedback

and support from others are vital and the trust is the starting point for the feedback discussion (Cranton 1994, 89-90).

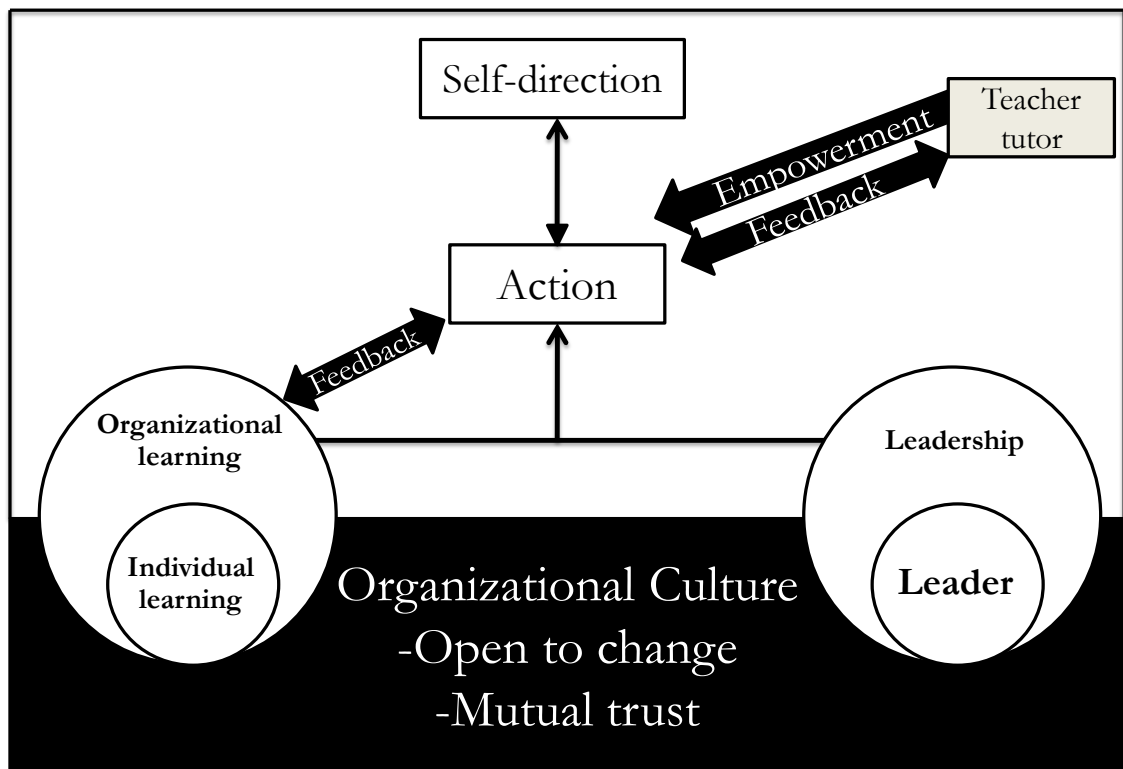


Figure 7. Conceptual framework of theoretical background

## 6 Process description

It was clear from the beginning of the thesis process that I wanted to create something tangible for the Haaga Future Leaders Club members. The first intention was to write a handbook but it soon started to look excessive as a form of passing information. After all, Haaga Future Leaders Club creates more work for the members on top of the already demanding studies. Hence the image of reading another book did not seem inviting.

### 6.1 Initial stages

As mentioned before, my primary intention was to write a handbook for HFCLC. The aim was to answer questions like how Haaga Future Leaders Club organization should be designed and how to run projects etcetera. It was to become a comprehensive manual of how HFCLC operates. The first meeting with my supervisor was on January 20, 2010, where I briefly presented my idea for Mr. Ari Björkqvist, now in the role of the supervisor of the thesis.

I spent more time thinking about HFCLC and what it meant to me. I ended up scrutinizing the name Haaga Future Leaders Club. I realized that we are already called future leaders, but hadn't considered thought for it together. What does it mean to be a leader in Haaga Future Leaders Club? I decided to find the connection between these two disciplines, learning and leadership. I managed to get an opportunity to test my ideas with senior lecturer Eija Kjelin on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, two weeks after the first meeting with Mr. Björkqvist. At that time, the product or the outcome of the thesis was still a handbook with the following topics:

- HFCLC's activities,
- requirements for application
- organizational structure,
- positions of trust with task description,
- goals,

- values, vision & mission statements and
- possible topics for future developments

By addressing the aforementioned topics, I wished to give Haaga Future Leaders Club the framework to facilitate the participation and provide HFCLC continuity. A reader should understand HFCLC thoroughly after reading the handbook. The theoretical background was at that time transformative learning and how this process could be facilitated by leadership styles, transformational leadership in particular. Mrs. Kjelin's message was to pay attention to the end user of the handbook. How to motivate a HFCLC member to read the handbook?

The second meeting with Mrs. Kjelin took place after 12 days on February 15<sup>th</sup>. I prepared by studying the primary sources: Illeris' Contemporary Theories of Learning and Northouse's Leadership. Studying transformative learning and transformational leadership started to test my assumption of the usability of the book. How would a handbook that I wrote make any difference for the operations of Haaga Future Leaders Club? Immersing myself in the principles of empowerment, feedback, enabling others to act, inspiration, visionary leaders etc. did not seem to communicate with what initially I wanted to do. After discussing these uncertainties with Mrs. Kjelin, she gave me a firm push to look for ways to activate other members into the process. Organizing a workshop to co-create the material for Member's guide seemed like the most suitable solution.

## **6.2 Project planning**

I finished the thesis action plan February 27<sup>th</sup>. The action plan was approved by Mr. Björkqvist February 28<sup>th</sup>. The working title of the thesis was Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member's guide and the action plan had seven pages. It introduced the workshop where HFCLC members would create the content for Member's guide together. I also considered the evaluation of the thesis as project-type and product-oriented and that the evaluation should be based on both the workshop and the edited outcome of the workshop, in other words, the co-created Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member's guide. The significance of the thesis is ultimately defined by HFCLC members. Are they



able to find meaning in the Member's guide and include it in HFLC culture? To conclude, will Haaga Future Leaders Club find my work useful and apply it?

The next step was to announce the workshop and its goals to Haaga Future Leaders Club Members during a meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup>. This was a first step from individual change to social change. Kouzes and Posner highlight the importance of leaders' wording in communications (2007, 20, 82). I took this into account and tried to use inspirational language and concentrate on personal pronoun "we" instead of "I". I presented the following questions as a reason to organize the workshop. If we were able to answer these questions, we would probably know what to do with HFLC:

- Who we are?
- Why do we exist?
- What is our goal?
- How do you get in HFLC?
- What is expected?
- What do we do?
- How do we work?

I also asked 11 participants to help me to find the shared values of HFLC. The group cohesion was poor and we needed to find out a way to improve it. Finding shared values would increase unity if members were engaged in a process of finding them (Kouzes & Posner, 65). The actual collection of members' values was executed by sending an email (attachment 2) on March 16<sup>th</sup> to all 24 members with the petition of answering the following questions:

- What are the four values you perceive the most important for HFLC?
- What are the four most important attributes of a good leader?

I encouraged members to include in the same mail whatever ideas they might have for Haaga Future Leaders Club. Out of 24 possible, I received 16 (+1, my own) answers. HFLC members found 31 different values and 41 different attributes for a leader. According to Kouzes and Posner individuals are willing to follow a leader who is honest, forward-looking, inspiring and competent (2007, 29). HFLC's top three attributes were fair (fair people are honest), vision (visionary is closely related to forward-looking) and

organized. We may state that HFCLC's attributes are well in line with Kouzes and Ponsler's findings.

The following phase for the workshop was to set up the date and prepare. Since I gave up the chair of Haaga Future Leaders Club to Mrs. Evon Söderlund on March 15<sup>th</sup>, I wished to include her in the process. I was not going to lead HFCLC through the change, but she was. My role was to give fuel for the change process and Mrs. Söderlund's role was to make sure it continues. Therefore it was important that she could relate to the process. The date for the workshop was decided to be April 15<sup>th</sup>. The invitation (attachment 3) was sent to all members on March 31<sup>st</sup> and it was signed by Mrs. Söderlund and myself. I attempted to communicate my own personal inspiration in the invitation. I also mentioned every member by name in order to capture their attention to read the invitation. Once again, I emphasized the pronoun "we" and avoided "I", and tried to create a sense of urgency and that it is for our common cause to participate.

The invitation included a short version of the history of HFCLC. Furthermore, I asked more question about the future and stated that we have the answers to these questions together. The aim was that the Email would remind the members about the positive experiences and touch the recipients' heart by using storytelling, which is a powerful tool for building organizational culture. Especially stories about critical incidents are an easy way to give faces and places to the shared values. That is to say words give an example of what is great behaviour. People remember the story better if they relate to it and have a familiar character in it. (Kouzes & Ponsler 2007, 89-91, 97.)

### **6.2.1 Workshop**

Why did I decide to organize a workshop? It seemed like the most effective way to kick off the process as it is practically impossible to create change and trust without face-to-face meetings (Kouzes & Ponsler 2007, 240-241). The workshop can be seen as a process of co-optation, which according to Cranton (1994, 133), incorporates members "to participate in decision making and thus become committed to the outcome of the decision when otherwise they might have not have been committed to it". The core

meaning of the workshop is to make a change in members' attitude and actions by introducing topics that are relevant to every member and by letting them to decide how these topics should be addressed.

My role in the workshop was similar to a teacher to some extent. Critical thinking and learners' self-direction requires more than before: "Discussions of effective teaching techniques have become politically incorrect – we must aim to be social change agents with critical theory of practice" (Cranton 1994, 123). This means that teacher's role is not to give omniscient lectures but to present techniques that help learner find the information and then question its relevance and validity for themselves. The teacher must also reveal his or her own values and put them under critical discourse (Cranton 1994, 201). I did this by revealing the mental process of starting my thesis with the idea of writing a handbook and ended up organizing a workshop.

The impact of a short term workshop may lead to quickly diluting enthusiasm and participants return to old routines (Cranton 1996, 37) as group's culture has more dominant role than written policies and is thus more powerful (Bass & Riggio 2006, 90). This was the reason to emphasize the role of Mrs. Söderlund. She carries the main responsibility of enhancing and further developing the outcome of the workshop.

### **6.2.2 Preparation**

Once members were invited, I concentrated on preparation. I wanted to get an outsider view of what the current situation of the Haaga Future Leaders Club was and what was the direction it should be steered towards. I decided to contact Mr. Dale Lockett, whom I had met him before in another project and his vast experience as a consultant convinced me. I contacted Mr. Lockett for two sessions: one about cramming Mrs. Söderlund and myself for the workshop and the other to provide an ice-breaker exercise and to help with unexpected difficulties in the actual workshop.

The cramming for the workshop was carried out on April 8<sup>th</sup>. The aim of the cramming was to find a common goal among the ideas derived from the thesis process and Mrs. Söderlunds vision and expectations as the new club leader before stepping in

front of other members. The most significant outcome of the meeting was that the empowerment and self-direction prominently occupied the main role in the workshop and in all operations of HFCLC in future. The discussion was predominantly about the statements that communicate the essence of Haaga Future Leaders Club as its best.

First we looked into discovering the shared values from collection of values from members. The question asked from HFCLC members was: What are the four values you perceive the most important for HFCLC? The members considered the personal development as the most important value for HFCLC. Networking was the second most common followed by (facing) challenges, trust and openness. It is impossible to please everyone as there were 17 different respondents. The leader's duty is to find a common ground for agreement (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 60). It must be noted that leadership was recognized as a value for HFCLC by only two respondents, Mrs. Söderlund and myself. We wrote the proposition on the blackboard (Figure 8) and discussed what are the values communicating and which form the shared values should be presented. The value statement proposal for HFCLC was:

*We value development through challenges, leadership, and openness and trust.*

Development and challenges were combined to emphasize that the learning takes place via hard work. Openness was included as HFCLC was held away public discourse during its first year of operation. It also matched with the secondary objective of the thesis as it was to help HFCLC to be introduced to its stakeholders better. Networking was abandoned due to the fact that is a consequence of the membership in HFCLC rather than a value. The decision of including leadership as a shared value of Haaga Future Leaders Club was endorsed because we thought that the current situation needed leadership attitudes to change the current situation of insecurity to triumph. I also presented the process of discovering the shared values in the workshop and the consensus was that the importance of the leadership should be emphasized. Trust, as presented before in this thesis is a requirement for both learning (or development through challenges in this case) and effective leadership.

It must be noticed that the values should also be challenged systematically to see whether they are still up-to-date (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 68). This process should be repeated to keep HFCL as dynamic as possible. New members may value different things and HFCL should change accordingly. Still, change should be justified in a rational discourse and the process must be transparent.

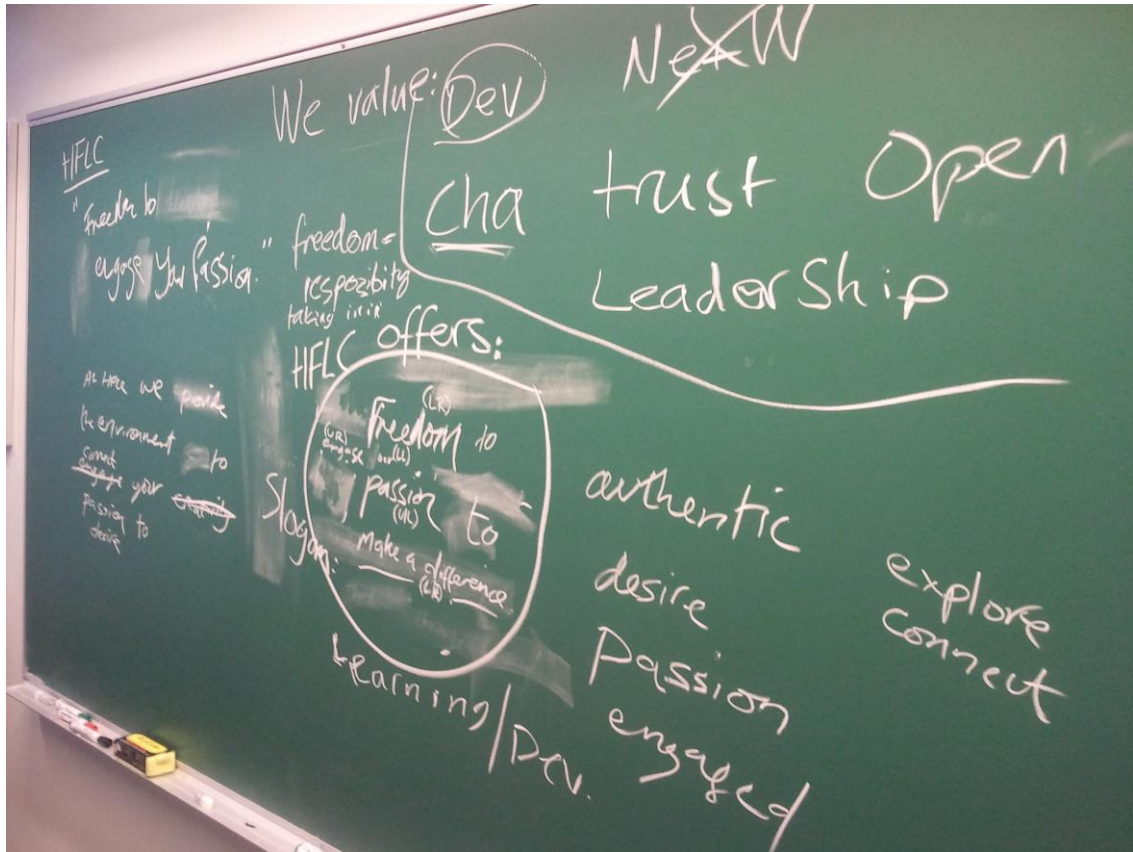


Figure 8. Working methods in cramming session (circled in the middle: HFCL slogan)

After the value statement, we looked at what other statements we need. Vision and mission were discussed as well as the slogan. Mr. Lockett emphasized the importance of capturing the essence and how more is less. We decided to go for a slogan, which should be inspiring, touching every member and including the dynamism or change. The breakthrough was accomplished as Mrs. Söderlund stated that she wanted HFCL to offer her a possibility to do what she really desires, which is to organize events. That led us to freedom to find and choose the projects to engage in instead of waiting to receive them from the teacher tutor. The freedom correlated with empowerment and furthermore self-direction. Mrs. Söderlund was genuinely passionate when she made her statement. Hence, we wanted to capture that passion and place it in the slogan as

the passion is what makes people intrinsically motivated. Making the difference symbolizes the urge to improve, develop and innovate. The slogan ended up as follows:

*Haaga Future Leaders Club offers freedom to engage our passion to make difference.*

We finalized our two hour session by going through the structure of the workshop. Mrs. Söderlund and I decided to come up with other two statements as well, vision and mission. The dilemma was whether the slogan was powerful enough or did we need vision and mission statements to explain HFLLC more in detail especially to possible partners? We chose to come up with suggestions, which could be re-evaluated in the workshop.

The preparation was almost ready and the only thing missing was Mr. Björkqvist's authorization to proceed with HFLLC as self-directed organization. Mrs. Söderlund and I presented the values statement, slogan and schedule of the workshop for the teacher tutor Mr. Björkqvist on April 11<sup>th</sup>. The authorization was given and we were empowered to take Haaga Future Leaders Club to the next level. Our challenge was to inspire others to join us and redistribute that power.

### **6.3 Execution**

The workshop was organized on April 15<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 5pm. 20 out of 25 members were in Finland and 13 (+1 myself) members announced to participate in the workshop. The rate was 70%, which was as expected. I prepared the classroom with Mrs. Violeta Salonen the day before. We created isles instead of the common classroom seating. We also tried to improve the coziness by bringing plant, lights, rugs, pillows and stools from another classroom. We also set up the coffee machine sponsored by Nespresso and set up the table for breakfast buffet sponsored by Mr. Björkqvist and prepared by Mrs. Söderlund (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Isles, relaxation area and breakfast buffet

There were three cancellations due to illness etc. so that there were 11 members present as well as Mr. Björkqvist, Mr. Lockett and Programme Director Mrs Pirkko Salo, who has also participated in HFCLC’s development. The timetable (table 2 & attachment 4) started with breakfast and few opening words from Mrs. Söderlund. Mr. Björkqvist continued with the authorization of HFCLC to become a self-directed organization.

Table 2. Workshop timetable

9.00 - 9.10	Opening & Breakfast	Evon & Jaakko
9.10 - 9.20	Word from Ari	Ari
9.20 - 9.30	History	Jaakko
9.30 - 10.30	Exercise	Dale
10.30 - 10.40	Break	
10.40 - 11.30	Values, slogan, mission	Jaakko
11.30 - 12.00	Learning	Jaakko
12.00 - 12.30	Lunch	
12.30 - 13.15	Leadership & Vision	Jaakko & Evon
13.15 - 13.30	Break	
13.30 -             16.30	WORKSHOP Task allocation Description Reflection	
16.30 - 17.00	Recap & Closing	Evon & Jaakko

### 6.3.1 Lectures and exercises

I presented the history of HFCL for the same reason as in the invitation Email: to tell stories about HFCL and to highlight victories to remind members of why they enrolled in the first place and what was the feeling in the first meeting. The history section made us to look back and we decided with Mr. Lockett that his exercise was about looking into the future. The ice-breaker exercise helped up to find the true meaning of what we were personally looking for to accomplish with Haaga Future Leaders Club. The exercise aimed at removing our consciousness away by concentrating on counting backwards while answering Mr. Lockett's questions. I personally felt relieved after the exercise even if it was mentally tiring. I also figured out that I needed to concentrate on working with people who came to contribute instead of moaning after the ones who did not show up.

After the break, I presented the process and the findings of the cramming session and explained why we ended up with the value statement: Development is learning and change, challenge is the motivation of facing something new; leadership is responsibility, inspiring others to reach high results and develop, and constantly looking for making things better; trust and openness are needed for all the aforementioned. I presented how values are empowering and guiding our actions. Thus every decision taken must be run through the shared value set and members of the group are able to end up with a similar result alone or with other members (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 52-53, 61).

The value statement was followed by the slogan. I explained how freedom to express passion through self-direction from taking responsibility of learning and leadership empowers us to decide the topics where we want to make a difference. Haaga Future Leaders Club would start to find, negotiate and contract its projects. Until now, the projects have been addressed to HFCL by the teacher tutor. The new ideology of self-direction gives members freedom and responsibility to find leads, contact and negotiate project work. This offers a great opportunity to find cases that represent members' specific interests, like Mrs. Söderlund's case of organizing events. She may strive to get a project of that kind and get some resources from HAAGA-HELIA. Every member should also bear in mind that the freedom includes a will to take responsibility and re-



porting about the project (Kouzes & Posner 2007, 257). Members seemed enthusiastic about the presented ideas and it appeared to me that we accomplished to regain some of the momentum from the first ever HFLC meeting.

Next we looked at the mission statement. We were never able to breathe life into the mission statement in the cramming session like we managed to do with the slogan. Therefore my presentation was perceived lacking spirit. Yet, it opened the debate among the participants about the statements in general and what kind of things we wanted to communicate with them. The consensus turned to keeping just the slogan and communicating mission statement with wording “What we do?” and vision as “What are we aiming at?”.

After the discussion about the statements, I explained how the HFLC slogans relate to learning and what it means that we take responsibility of our own learning. I modeled a process of transformative learning by presenting how I found my own values as a leader. This process took me from writing a handbook to organizing the workshop. The decision of presenting this process in the workshop and go all-out was to show that I was personally genuinely involved in improving the HFLC. Kouzes and Posner support speaking out and showing real emotions and exposing your own values to others to become credible and unique (2007, 57). I highlighted the individual learning as a key issue towards organizational learning which would help Haaga Future Leaders Club to become self-directed. I presented how to form knowledge from experiences and how knowledge is not absolute, but a product of a cognitive process. We discussed critical thinking and how it means withholding judgment and evaluating sources, and furthermore critical reflection. My own learning and personal development process was as follows:

- Critical incident: Not writing my thesis for my previous workplace, finding out that I want to improve HFLC.
- Rational discourse: How to best help HFLC? Writing a handbook.
- Challenging my assumptions: Studying more about learning and leadership.
- Feedback and discussion: Mrs. Kjelin’s and Mr. Björkqvist’s views of the usability and significance of the handbook.

- Critical reflection: Why I should do it all by myself? Is that good leadership? How does that promote learning in Haaga Future Leaders Club?
- Changing the frame of reference: Realizing I needed to include other members in the process.
- Seeking support and approval from others: Presenting the process to HFCLC and including others to change individually and socially. We make the difference.

Mrs. Söderlund had prepared to present our suggestion for the vision which was the next topic on the timetable. However, our proposal for vision suffered from the same weaknesses as the mission and it was a relief to some extent that participants felt so passionate about the slogan, that we could cut out the statements that we did not find touching our heart. Mrs. Söderlund however held a short presentation about visions in general. This was meant to put emphasis on her role as the new club leader. Discussion about the vision and the subsequent forming of HFCLC's "What are we aiming at?" – statement provided us with a transition to leadership. I chose to go through Kouzes and Posner's five practices of leadership and asked every participant to come up with a short description of a particular moment. This moment was when they witnessed great leadership as a leader or follower. Every participant shared their experience and we compared these experiences simultaneously with Kouzes and Posner's model and classified them. Some experiences were modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act or encouraging the heart. I also wanted to highlight the importance of the positive attitude in HFCLC as everyone is a leader and should practice leadership. This conveyed us to the introduction of Everyone Leads – principle, which means that every member is expected to carry out a minimum one leadership execution per academic year (Attachments 1 and 6).

### **6.3.2 Working method**

The working method of the co-creation for the content of the Member's guide was that the participants were divided into subgroups. Every subgroup had a poster with a different topic: Club leader, Club coordinator, Teacher tutor, Project or Member. Tasks for different topics were written on large post-it notes (Figure 8). The division

was planned so that participants could contribute according to their experience in HFLC. For instance Mrs. Söderlund worked with Ms. Thuy Tran (the former Club coordinator) about the responsibilities of Club Leaders and Club coordinator and Mr. Björkqvist and Mrs. Salo looked at the role and tasks of the teacher tutor.

The tasks were allocated to different subgroups under different topics and they were given a half an hour to discuss and come up with task descriptions, policies, goal-settings, plans for development projects etcetera. After the half an hour, we had a quick round of recap where groups presented their findings. I assumed the position of asking difficult questions and deadlines as I felt it was necessary to remind participants about the goal-setting and that we are expected to get some results in the workshop. After these short presentations, we repeated the process of task allocation and tackled more tasks. We finalized the workshop at 5pm, had a short recap and collected the posters with the descriptions of various topics. I promised to come up with the Member's guide first version for the next meeting, which was held on next Tuesday, April 19th.



Figure 8. Workshop working methods: Tasks on post-it notes, poster

### 6.3.3 Working topics and tasks

The topics and tasks for the workshop were gathered from various sources. I trawled through all Haaga Future Leaders Club documents from meeting memos to HFLC's section on HAAGA-HELIA Extranet. Some of the suggestions were collected from the members and others were issues that I personally found important for HFLC to look into. The topics were:

- Club Leader – what are the tasks and responsibilities?
- Coordinator – what are the tasks and responsibilities?
- Teacher Tutor – what are the tasks and responsibilities and which tasks may be given away?
- Member – what are the requirements for a membership?
- Project – how does HFLC find projects in the future and what are the tasks and responsibilities of project organization?

Each task was to be placed under a topic with an action plan and a deadline of its completion or the next round of revision, if the deadline could not be set for some reason. The tasks were:

- HFLC member contract
- HFLC – Leadership, Everybody leads – principle
- Projects (HFLC seeks, negotiates, executes and leads, and organizes feedback and reflection session for and of its projects; requirements for admitting a project, project planning, project approval and project organization: Project leader & Project coordinator)
- Representations
- Career planning (mentoring & coaching)
- Special courses
- Meetings – how often and who is responsible?
- Wellness & team building activities
- HFLC Event (Conference, Seminar, Competition, Networking event, Alumni Event)

- Sponsorships
- Field trips
- Expanding the HFLC network – among other educational institutes and companies
- Creating HFLC Customer database and alumni list
- Improving Haaga’s education and curricula
- How to collect feedback from members, teacher tutor and companies?
- Reporting - how control annual goal setting
- What resources are needed to support self-direction? (HFLC room, more authorization in moodle, HFLC website and mailbox)
- Communication (Stakeholders: Members, teachers tutor, other Haaga Students, Programme Directors, teachers, HAAGA-HELIA, companies & alumni)
- HFLC promotion and recruitment – the revision of the application process
- Disciplinary actions – how to handle inactive members?
- Graduation – alumni events and HFLC Certificate

#### **6.4 Edition of the material**

The edition of the co-created material of the workshop took place on next Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. My intention was to transfer the content of the posters to one document, Member’s guide (attachment 1), so that it would include the contribution and authorization of every participant of the workshop. The material was put under the following topics:

- Who are we?
- What do we do?
- Projects
- Project Leader
- Project Coordinator
- Representation
- Events
- Career planning

- Special courses
- Wellness
- What are we aiming at?
- Organization
- Member
- Club Leader
- Club Coordinator
- Teacher Tutor
- Application
- Communication
- Graduation
- Topics to look at in Jan 2012

There are altogether eight pages. The workshop managed to handle the most important topics. Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member’s guide is first and foremost an internal document. It clarifies how HFCLC operates and what are actions it may take in the near future. It is also a framework for HFCLC’s external communication, for instance for website design regards to content. The content of Member’s guide should be revised annually. The thesis aimed only at creating the content and the physical appearance may be changed to make it more alluring.

## **6.5 Outcome of the workshop**

I presented the Member’s guide in the meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>. This meeting functioned also as a forum for comments, suggestions and modifications. There were a few comments and correctives presented, which were later added to Member’s guide. The final version on my behalf was sent to every existing HFCLC members on April 21<sup>st</sup>. This Email (attachment 5) also included a draft of membership contract that Mrs. Söderlund and I designed according to the framework produced in the workshop. I presented the key changes in HFCLC’s operation already in the Email and encouraged everyone to give comments and further suggestions. I received 15 Emails from members, who thought that the Member’s guide’s new policies were “good” or “great”. Each and eve-

ry one of those 15 were willing to sign the new membership contract. One member decided to resign after receiving the Member's guide and the contract.

What was the impact of the workshop regards to the self-direction of HFCL? Taking a look at the list from (Chapter 2.3) of the teacher tutor's role and tasks deriving from the position power answers the question. The teacher tutor was responsible for every function of HFCL before the workshop.

- Who is eligible to join HFCL? – The teacher tutor stays in charge of the application process; members are incorporated in the process and to the definition of the membership requirements.
- How, where and when HFCL officially meets? – Club leader and coordinator are in charge of organizing official HFCL meetings,
- What are the projects HFCL takes part? – HFCL members are in charge of finding, negotiating, contracting and executing projects.
- How does HFCL communicate with its stakeholders? – HFCL forms a project team that designs HFCL website and communication plan.
- Who represents HFCL? – Mainly HFCL decides its representatives. Still, the teacher tutor may be consulted if conflicts of interest show up.

Haaga Future Leaders Club decided to have the accountability of the entire ditto list excluding the application process. The teacher tutor will continue to run the selection of new members in order to keep as fair as possible. Therefore the selection of new members must be carefully organized so that possible maleficent individuals are excluded from HFCL.

## 7 Discussion

Understanding learning and leadership helped me a great deal in preparing the workshop and finding a direction where Haaga Future Leaders Club should be steered. Transformative learning offers us a comprehensive view of what happens in the learning process and what are its requirements and outcomes. Learning may lead to social change as learners become more capable of taking responsibility of their own learning. Leadership is an integral part of any group activity and it may either support or hinder the learning process. Transformational leadership is a fine match for transformative learning as it emphasizes leader's accountability to genuinely help the follower to become self-directed through development. This development (or learning) derives from empowerment, trust and high expectations. However, the complexity of the theoretical framework also made its application in practice more difficult. I used various techniques of both learning and leadership throughout the process, but its presentation in written form was challenging. The project included the theoretical framework, but I must admit that I failed to present the connection between theory and practice to some extent.

Haaga Future Leaders Club needed a change. The workshop succeeded according to the feedback regards to the comments of the Member's guide, which was compiled with the material produced in the workshop. However, the timetable of the workshop was slightly too tight and I believe that it should have been extended to a two-day event. This would have provided more time for both lecturing and action. I am uncertain whether I was able to communicate the theoretic framework of learning and leadership effectively and how the contribution of the aforementioned phenomena to the self-direction of Haaga Future Leaders Club. Hence, the delimitation of the theory of the thesis was too broad.

The primary objective for the thesis was reached as we managed to create the framework for the operations of Haaga Future Leaders Club and start the change process. From a practical point of view, the final evaluation of the change process cannot be



executed now, since the relevance of both the workshop and Member's guide's is decided by the members in the future. That is to say, the process succeeded if what we suggested with Member's guide is integrated into Haaga Future Leaders Club's operations. Obviously, the new club leader has a vital role to play and I am satisfied that Mrs. Söderlund and I were able to cooperate and support each other. The secondary goal of the thesis was reached as the thesis gives a firmer base to justify the existence of Haaga Future Leaders Club and open the discourse in HAAGA-HELIA. This discourse will hopefully address the relevance of the group and if its operational model may be applied to another HAAGA-HELIA unit with different degree programmes.

## **7.1 Process evaluation**

Timewise, the process exceeded its deadline presented in my action plan roughly by a month. Thus, I cannot be satisfied with my process management. This was due to the challenges in delimitation and scheduling the meetings and the workshop. I underestimated the duration of getting a comprehensive view of learning and leadership through literature. The process of organizing the workshop and editing the collected material was straight forward and the result was creditable. I also managed to apply the theory even if its presentation in the thesis is troubled to some extent.

At personal level, the thesis process became a true learning experience. It can be argued that the topic may have been too personal or that the outcome would have been better with a different approach. Despite the fact that the theory was occasionally more relevant to myself as a project leader of HFCL's change than to the academic framework of the thesis the process helped me to understand my own learning in depth and helped me to become a better leader. The process succeeded in what the Haaga Future Leaders Club was founded for.

## **7.2 Conclusion**

The subjectivity of the thesis may lower its academic value, but I sincerely believe that the tradeoff was worth it for the benefit of Haaga Future Leaders Club and the thesis lived up the HFCL slogan of using the "freedom to engage our passion to make a dif-

ference”. It is a pathbreaking and experimental thesis and there was a risk that it would not qualify in the operations model of HAAGA-HELIA. I am also willing to take a chance of sounding sentimental by stating that I wrote the thesis for Haaga Future Leaders Club and not for the academics; it is about the people and not academic writing that change organizations and the life of individuals in them.

The future looks bright for Haaga Future Leaders Club. It holds great potential reaching and surpassing its goals and becoming a well-known and benchmarked student organization to bridge the gap between educational institute and the industry. It has already raised the interest of a few companies towards HAAGA-HELIA.

Haaga Future Leaders Club is on its way to become truly self-directed and has the power to decide where to go. Its success culminates in the activeness of its members and their motivation. Are Haaga’s student willing to commit to Haaga Future Leaders Club? As members, are they motivated enough to work for learning more and helping each other to learn? Are the members prepared to lead and be led? Skills, capabilities, competencies and talents are there without a doubt. It is about the attitude and commitment. Hopefully, the members are ready to accept the challenge. I am confident that HAAGA-HELIA will continue to support Haaga Future Leaders Club if it keeps developing and improving.

### **7.3 Topics for further studies**

Haaga Future Leaders club offers an ample selection of different topics for bachelor’s thesis. However, the development of the Member’s guide would obviously be a priority from my point of view. Other important topics related to HFCLC’s framework would be feedback sessions and project management models. Feedback is essential for learning in Haaga Future Leaders Club and project management model helps to ensure that the projects are actually beneficial and worthy for HFCLC. This thesis offers some starting points for developing a systematic feedback process.

It would be interesting to compare and benchmark Haaga Future Leaders Club to other similar clubs. The Club leader was addressed with the responsibility to increase the

HFLC network and cooperation. There is already a good start with École hôtelière de Lausanne's Career Club. The students of École have done an excellent job in concepting, branding and finding partners and HFLC could learn a great deal from them.

There are also exciting topics for the research-type theses such as the image of HFLC among other Haaga students; the impact of HFLC membership in a success in a work life, which obviously needs some more time as the first group of HFLC alumni have not yet graduated at the time I am writing this; finding out the true motivation of the applicant to join HFLC; and taking a closer look at the application process.

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– *Freedom to engage our passion to make difference* – Based on workshop 15.4.2011

## Attachments

Attachment 1. Haaga Future Leaders Club – Member's Guide

## Who are we?

Haaga Future Leaders Club is a group of highly motivated students of Haaga, who wish to learn more than curricula offers. Our main activities are real-life projects with real resources and outcomes in cooperation with HAAGA-HELIA and companies. As a rule we don't receive credits for attending HFCLC activities. Reward is the possibility to do what we want to and further develop ourselves!

We value development through challenges, leadership, and openness and trust

All HFCLC members are eager to develop themselves. We seek creative solutions for real challenges by applying the knowledge acquired through education and our work experience. We see learning as life-long activity and it is a result of mirroring the outcomes of our experiences.

Everyone leads – principle. HFCLC is run by students. Every member is considered a leader and required to lead a project or event during an academic year. Leadership for us is a skill that helps us to inspire people around to reach higher results. Good leadership combines positive attitude, empowerment and setting an example.

Haaga Future Leaders Club believes in openness and trust. This means that we foster co-learning among members and actively communicate about our activities. Trust is also needed for successful operations – we wish to form meaningful cooperation between students, companies and HAAGA-HELIA.



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## What do we do?

Until now, HFCL has worked with companies such as Battery, Stockmann, Nespresso and Excellence Finland. Creativity and innovation are our basic tools as we are still fresh from the oven or still baking. Typical project for HFCL is development work in a form of updating an old concept or creating a completely new, creating new service design or standard operating procedure and pre-business plans.

HFCL also participates in events such as competitions and fairs both in Finland and abroad.

### **Projects**

Members are in charge of finding, negotiating, contracting, planning and running projects in HFCL. Typically 1-8 members are involved in a project.

### **Project Leader**

Project Leader is responsible for recruitment of the project team, acts as a contact person between the client company and project team, leads the project to exceed the expectations of the client, and reports to the client and the club leader. Project Leader also takes part in negotiations and contracting the project and ensures that feedback sessions are organized.

Feedback is an essential part of learning process. Feedback sessions are organized once during a project and once after the final presentation. They are open to all HFCL members. Jaakko will write a feedback session guidelines.





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## **Project Coordinator**

Project Coordinator is the person in charge of designing the project plan. Project Coordinator also assists the project leader in practicalities such as organizing and recording meetings and delivering project material (contract, project plan, meeting memos, reports, presentations etc.) to club coordinator to be uploaded to Moodle.

Project plan manual and project contract with guidelines for an acceptable project shall be drafted.

## **Representation**

Haaga Future Leaders Club represents HAAGA-HELIA's Hospitality education and may be given an honour to participate in competitions and assemblies.

In March 2011, HFCLC formed a delegate that attended in Young Hoteliers Summit in Lausanne, Switzerland. The summit included top management key note speakers from international hotel companies and a creativity challenge provided by Rezidor hotel group.

## **Events**

What kind of event could HFCLC organize?



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## **Career planning**

Members of HFCLC are encouraged to start career planning by organizing at least two annual events. One being a networking reception to bring current industry leaders closer the members for possible mentors and the other a coaching seminar followed by personal meetings.

## **Special courses**

Special courses may be organized according to the wishes and skills presented by members. Club Coordinator is responsible for collecting the wishes and presenting them to members. Courses may be taught by members, HAAGA-HELIA teachers or third party trainers or educators, and must be approved by Teacher Tutor in order to allocate resources.

## **Wellness**

Recreational and wellness activities are important for relaxation and team building. Members may collect leadership completions by organizing a wellness event. Until now HFCLC has took two karate and asahi lessons.



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## What are we aiming at?

Not only does HFCLC offer a great venue for Haaga students to further develop their professional skills and network with the like-minded students, it also provides a pool of fresh ideas for companies.

What do we see HFCLC becoming by 2017? It will be a preferred student organization for companies to cooperate in Finland in the field of hospitality and services. It will become a reference for its alumni as an internationally recognized talent incubator representing high motivation, leadership and co-operation.



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## Organization

Run by its very members, HFLC is an independent student organization. Its incessant positions of trust are club leader and club coordinator. Positions of trust are elected minimum per two semesters and maximum 4 semesters. Mainly changes in positions of trust take place during the period 5. Teacher tutor is HAAGA-HELIA's representative co-operating with HFLC.

### Member

As a member of Haaga Future Leaders Club you are expected to be eager to constantly learn more. You are reliable, responsible, highly motivated, and capable and willing to share your knowledge and help other members. As a future leader you are correspondingly ready to step up and lead your peers in inspiring manner to break new ground.

A member may register as “inactive” for one academic year due to attending an exchange program or work placement, and for one semester due to personal reasons. Membership status for autumn and spring semesters must be updated by November to the Club Coordinator.

Requirements for membership per annum:

- Attendance for official HFLC meeting (1/period, excluding illness)
- Min. 1 leadership completion (leading or coordinating a project, wellness day or event, taking part in application process as a member OR teaching other members, students, teachers or HAAGA-HELIA staff)
- 36hs answering emails – policy
- Min. 1 industry contact (lead for a possible cooperating with a company) OR
- Min. 1 representation (partaking in an event as a HFLC representative)



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## **Club Leader**

Club Leader's most important task is to ensure that the club is moving towards its vision. You are constantly looking for improvements in HFCLC's operations and mobilizing others to do so as well. Club Leader follows up with all the activities and reports to Teacher Tutor when needed.

An official HFCLC meeting takes place once per period. Club Leader is accountable for organizing these meetings and the content.

Annual target setting, managing results and reporting are similarly Club Leader's responsibilities, as well as setting an example of empowerment, trust and inspiration. Club Leader stays connected with other student organizations and expands the HFCLC network both in Finland and internationally.

## **Club Coordinator**

As a right-hand of the Club Leader, Club Coordinator is accountable for practicalities of administering HFCLC and planning the communication. Recording and writing memos of official meetings; keeping track of member status, industry contacts, HFCLC alumni, leadership completion and wish list for special courses; and updating Moodle and uploading all HFCLC material are all Club Coordinators duties. Club Coordinator makes sure that all the templates (memo, contracts, project manual etc.) are available in Moodle and is in charge of delegating the arrangements of wellness days.



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## Teacher Tutor

HAAGA-HELIA's representative in HFLC is Teacher Tutor. HFLC was kicked off by Programme Director Ari Björkqvist and supported by Haaga's programme directors. Teacher Tutor approves HFLC's activities when there are resources needed from HAAGA-HELIA.

Teacher Tutor is also in charge of application process of new members and disciplinary actions when a member fails to complete the requirements for a membership.

## Application

Teacher tutor represent HAAGA-HELIA and is in charge of the application process and approval of new members. Mainly 2nd year students can apply for the HFLC and can be members from year two until their graduation. The grade point average must be at least 3.5 and the minimum of 40 credits successfully completed by HFLC member before application. Application is carried out during Aug-Sep or when needed in the case of various members graduating, going abroad or resigning. HFLC members promote the application process by raising the awareness of the club by participating in various events in Haaga and paying visits to classes of first year students.

An applicant is first to send a motivational letter to teacher tutor (Programme Director Ari Björkqvist, [ari.bjorkqvist@haaga-helia.fi](mailto:ari.bjorkqvist@haaga-helia.fi)) which is followed by an interview with Mr. Björkqvist with an existing member of HFLC. After that applicants are asked to take part in a psychological test carried out by a third party. Finally an applicant must commit to a member contract.



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## **Communication**

HFLC's communication is planned by the Club Coordinator. Official internal communication is centralized in Moodle and all official emails are sent from [hflc@myy.haaga-helia.fi](mailto:hflc@myy.haaga-helia.fi). Facebook group functions as an unofficial forum for posting photos and chatting. External communication is directed to HFLC homepage, which is the major channel in passing information about clubs activities to external stakeholders such as other students, companies and alumni.

## **Graduation**

HFLC Certificate will be given to the members who have completed their tasks and actively partaken in HFLC's activities as stated in the membership contract. Willing graduates are also registered as HFLC alumna and alumnus and will be contacted yearly for updates, possible projects, mentoring, lecturing etc. HFLC alumni will be lead by Alumni Executive who will help Club Coordinator in organizing an annual Alumni networking event, where former and existent members meet.

## **Topics to look at in Jan 2012**

### **Improving HH education**

Could HFLC be part of improving Haaga's curriculum?

### **Sponsors**

How could HFLC gain some financial assets to cover some of the costs from i.e. events etc.?

### **Field trip**

Referring to the previous topic, could HFLC organize a field trip?

Attachment 2. Values and attributes of a good leader – Email

16.3.2011

Hi all,

Thanks for yesterday's meeting!

Please see the memo attached. Sami did a good job covering Thuy with that :).

The new Club Leader was announced and Evon shall be the person! She has agreed to lead the club until end of this year. Congratulations!

I also presented what I've been up to regards to my thesis. We shall organize a one-day workshop in order to co-create a HFLC Members' guide, which is planned to facilitate Club's operations. I'll come up with the suggestions for dates asap.

Concerning the workshop I would kindly ask you to answer two questions by next Tuesday (22 March). This includes all of you, even the ones abroad etc.:

What are the 4 values you perceive the most important for HFLC?

What are the 4 most important attributes of a good leader?

Also, if you have any ideas to develop HFLC include those to that email.

Best regards,

Jaakko Eskola



### Attachment 3. Workshop invitation – Email

31.3.2011

(RSVP doesn't concern you if you are abroad. Just wanted to let you know what is going on. Siri, Ida & Minttu, enjoy the warm spring of Germany! Rebekka, hopefully London is treating you well! Toni, have a good time in Hong Kong! Please let me know if you have any suggestions and/or questions)

Hi all!

Tea, Jessica, Joanna, Ansku, Petra, Heta, Aru, Violeta, Maria, Thuy, Hanna, Jenni, Tony, Tero, Jussi, Iiro, Sami & Alvis

I've understood that you are currently in Finland. Some of you have been more active than others and some have stated that they will not take part in HFLC activities. We would still need all of you to come to decide together where to take the club.

Our first meeting was held 15 January 2010. Since then we've had some trials and tribulations, victories and setbacks. Let's take a quick look back to what happened during the first 15 months of HFLC. Opening project with Battery and Elmo wasn't quite what we expected. Our input was still great and I wish to thank you all taking part in that. Hopefully we all learned something from that. The latest projects such as Oasis of Excellence and Nespresso/Stockmann - case seem to become successes! Congratulations to participants! Our presence in competitions have also been noticed and some of you will probably get an employment or internship with Kempinski!

We have seen that the first year raised more questions than gave answers. Who are we as a group? What do we wish to accomplish? How should we communicate? What kind of projects we wish to carry out? How do we celebrate and make sure that the club goes on? We believe that only us, the members of the Haaga Future Leaders Club, are able to answer!

Thus Evon and I would like to warmly invite you to decide together where to take this club! We are organizing a workshop on

Friday 15 April starting at 9.00 and finishing by 17.00.

We wish to have all of us 20 who are in Finland there! You may leave earlier than 17.00 but your participation would be essential! Please let me know before next Monday 4 April whether or not you are able to attend.

Hopefully you have the possibility and energy to contribute to the future of the club!

Looking forward hearing from you!

Best regards,

Jaakko & Evon

(044 292 50 83 & 045 135 86 99)

## Attachment 4. Workshop timetable and content

### **HFLC Workshop:** *Freedom to engage our passion to make a difference*

9.00-9.10                      **Opening & Breakfast**    Evon & Jaakko

Welcome: Thanks for Nespresso for sponsoring the coffee machine! We are 14 students of which a couple come later and some leave earlier. Besides there is Ari & Pirkko + Dale (Coaching)

The workshop aims at establishing a framework for self-directed HFLC! What does it mean? We are responsible for our own learning, we have a common goal and organizational policies to help us operate efficiently towards it, we have access to resources and we are constantly looking for ways to improve all the aforementioned!

Today's agenda!

9.10-9.20                      **Word from Ari**    Ari

Authorization, empowerment, promise of resources

9.20-9.30                      **History**    Jaakko

9.30-10.30                      **Exercise**    Dale

10.30-10.40                      **Break**

10.40-11.30                      **Values, slogan, mission**    Jaakko

**Friday April 8** Evon, Dale & Jaakko met in G308 and started to break this thing  
*Freedom to engage our passion to make a difference*

Three aspects (Freedom, passion, change): Freedom to express passion through self-

direction from taking responsibilities of learning and leadership, as leaders we want to make a difference!

**We value:**

**Development through challenges, Leadership, Openness and trust**

Development is learning and change, challenge is the motivation of facing something new; leadership is responsibility, inspiring others to reach high results and develop, and constantly looking for making things better; trust and openness are needed for all the aforementioned!

**Our mission** is to engage motivated students of Haaga to develop their capabilities through industry projects and representation

11.30-12.00

**Learning**

Jaakko

Towards self-directed HFLC! Why self-directed? We are pampered in our normal classes as the projects are given to us. It seems to be the requirement of today's work → Entrepreneurship-mindedness → Arguably the highest form of learning (cumulative, assimilative, accommodative, transformative)

What is learning? → Life-long process of change → Change in actions, difference between memorizing and applying

What are the key issues in enhancing the learning of the members and thus organizational learning leading to self-direction? → Forming knowledge from experiences, knowledge is not absolute, but a product of cognitive process, which can fail → Critical thinking, withhold judgment, evaluate source → Critical reflection, compare situation to yourself, subject becomes an object → Assumptions, Frames of reference → Frame of reference → Habit of mind, point of view → How to revise them? Subject to object, "view doesn't own me, I own the view" → Critical incidents →

Rational discourse → Feedback and discussion (Experience as such not necessarily causing any learning) → Peer support, trust, group cohesion  
How does this affect today? → We don't expect to cause transformation, but we can use critical thinking and try critical reflection

SHOW YOUR VALUES! (as an educator): Individual and social change → Personal journey → Critical incident, not writing my thesis for A21 → Wanting to change the club, almost a year of maturing to realize this → Writing a handbook, "I can change this club" → Starting to study learning, challenging assumptions with others (Ari + Eija) → study of leadership, confirmation of new, more inclusive info → critical reflection → Transformation of Jaakko! → Include others, start practicing better leadership! → What we do today is mainly organizational change which is designed to lead to individual change → Cycle starts over as the club breaths dynamic air! We make the difference!

In practice: How to get the individual/collective experiences → Members are responsible for finding projects (their own learning) → Learning goal setting for project → Organize reflection sessions (one during, one after) with whole HFLC to talk about feelings and views  
Members teach members → How to implement  
Information sharing → Material available for everyone in Moodle

12.00-12.30

**Lunch**

12.30-13.15

**Leadership & Vision**

Jaakko & Evon

First of all, apologies to all of you for Laissez-fair leadership!

Continuing with values of the Club! Do we need a leader?

6 Fair

4 Visionary

3 Motivation

3 Enthusiastic

3 Organized

3 Determined

What kind of leadership fosters learning? → Transformational!

What is leadership? → Critical incident of good leadership: Describe when you had a good moment as a leader or follower, note: Difference between leadership and management, Leaders don't settle for status quo! → Are there things that you would like see in yourself as a manager?

Managing change, Entrepreneurial, enhance cohesion

Five practices of leadership:

**Model the way** – find your values, believe in yourself and the cause, and set the example!

**Inspire a shared vision** – Listen to others, stay positive and communicate a better future for everybody to be proud of!

**Challenge the process** – don't settle for status quo! How can we improve, how can we learn? Tolerate failure as it leads to learning, listen!

**Enable others to act** – empower, share information, inspire, trust!

**Encourage the heart** – Recognize achievements, celebrate, receive and give feedback!

(Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. 2007. The Leadership Challenge. 4 ed. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco.)

→ It is a process! it isn't a trait! Leadership is pattern of actions that involves influencing others in groups with common goals, leader doesn't exist without people wanting to follow, followers have needs and motives

too! Leader's duty is to map these motives → Leadership includes example, You are the first to go to new grounds!

→ Leadership is an urge to see how things can be improved and stay positive! They are more ready to tackle crisis as the spirit is kept up

→ Good leaders are eager to learn themselves and help subordinates to develop and try a variety of things by delegating, trusting, and giving and receiving feedback

→ They see opportunities instead of threats and are able to communicate them and show their values to touch followers values for intrinsic motivation and inspire (in HFLC we must be able inspire each other since it is voluntary)

→ Leadership is "We", not "I", goals are reached as if not all, but majority of the team succeeds!

→ What resources followers need to succeed? Responsibility, stimulation to learn and acting as a catalyst for creativity

→ What must the leader do to provide this? Freedom (empowerment), trust, direction where to go, acceptance of failures

→ Leaders empower followers by hands-off approach! Although making sure they have what they need to succeed! Mutual trust!

→ Followers capabilities and personal ambition should be considered when delegating

→ Leaders are able to notice and celebrate victories and take difficult decision in the case of losses

What predicts leadership?: Extraversion, Self-confidence (charisma), Openness to experience/Risk taking, Locus of control

In practice: Everyone is a leader and everybody leads – principle!

Goal setting by the end of 2011 (Results to be reviewed in Jan 2012):

1) X members (12 members have announced leaving the Club)

2) X official meetings

- 3) X wellness and team building events
- 4) X industry contacts
- 5) X projects completed and Y in course of preparation

HFLC vision: Emerges from collective interest! “If you had a magic wand, what would HFLC look like in 5 years?”

13.15-13.30

**Break**

13.30-

**WORKSHOP**

Organization creates policies and rules so that things run smoothly and efficiently, not to make a slow and bureaucratic monster → these rules are not meant to last forever and need to be revised! **Remember what, how, why!** Then **who, when** → “What we value” guides us in decision-making → GOAL SETTING WITH EVERYTHING!!

Description:	Task allocation	
	Member, requirements,	(3 members)
	Club Leader, Coordinator	(Evon, Thuy, Iiro & Jaakko)
	Teacher Tutor	(Ari, Pirkko & member)
	Project work I	(3 members)
	Project work II	(2 members)

Representations (2 members)

- Career planning, mentoring & coaching (Ari/Pirkko + 2 members)
- Special courses (Ari/Pirkko + 2 members)
- Meetings (monthly/ X per semester) (2 members)
- Wellness & team building activities (2 members)

How to collect feedback (3 members)



Communication (3 members)

Resources: Room, Web, HFLC mailbox (2 members)

HFLC Event (Conference, Seminar etc?)

HFLC-branded material

Sponsorships

Field trip

Expanding HFLC network (Pore, Other schools, companies)

Improving Haaga's education and curricula

Graduation

16.30

16.30-17.00

**Recap & Closing**

Evon & Jaakko

**Things to do:**

Expectations from a member – list + HFLC member contract (“By this contract I promise to bring my ‘A-Game` to the club every time, and to attend meetings and be active etc...”) HFLC – Leadership, Everybody leads – principle (1/semester/academic year), Members teach members

Activity description:

Project work (HFLC seeks, negotiates, executes and leads, and organizes feedback and reflection session for and of its projects, Requirements of admitting a project, project planning, project approved by both HFLC and Teacher Tutor, and project organization: Project leader & Project Coordinator, mapping what interests members to facilitate the process of finding projects)

Representations

Career planning, mentoring, coaching

Special courses

Meetings (monthly/ X per semester), socializing)

Wellness & team building activities

HFLC Event (Conference, Seminar, Competition, Networking event, Alumni Event?)

Sponsorships

Field trip

Expanding HFLC network (Pore, Other schools, companies)

Improving Haaga's education and curricula

How to collect feedback? Members, teacher tutor, companies etc!

When to revise this document?

Communication (Stakeholders: Members, teachers tutor, other Haaga Students, Programme Directors, teachers, HAAGA-HELIA, companies & alumni), the role between Moodle and Facebook as a comm. Tool  
Meeting reporting, project material, HFLC "Customer database", HFLC Alumni list

Resources: Room (or HFLC corner in Luotsi?), more authorization in moodle (+cleanup), website (Restonomi24/7.fi?), HFLC mailbox

HFLC promotion (and recruitment done by students), Review the application requirement of new members

Board? (HFLC's governing organ for tricky situations: Club Leader, Coordinator and Teacher Tutor)

Disciplinary Actions: Inactiveness of a member

Graduation: Alumni Events, HFLC Certificate

HFLC-branded material: Logo, Leaflet, pen, pin, brochure...?

**Positions of trust:** Descriptions and who does what?

Club Leader  
Coordinator  
Teacher Tutor  
Board?

## History

First intake in December 2009

First meeting was held Jan 15 2010 → Suggest this becomes a BIRTHDAY

→ Small event invite

alumni

17 members.

Club Leader – Jaakko

Coordinator – Iiro

First official project case with Elmo Bar/Battery Energy Drink - Brand.

Project Leader – Ansku

Coordinator – Petra, almost all 17 were involved

*Case a bit of a disaster, expectations of the project kept changing, finally nothing got executed and many members found themselves remarkably uninspired as they put a lot of effort*

*into the project. There were also challenges with the language as it was never really clear if English was accepted in meeting etc.*

Second project Gastro Pro - seminar in spring 2010

HFLC participating as Ari declared the club to 80 participants mainly upper management of the Finnish hospitality industry

Leaflet presenting the members – Tea

*HFLC members were also taking part of organizing the keynote speakers transportation etc. and acted as personal tour assistants.*

Third project work started during summer 2010 Oasis of Excellence - Sem-

inar held in Caribbean in May 2011

Two HFLC members – Heta & Joanna

Fourth project case Nespresso/Stockmann in February 2011 – Heta & Joanna, Violeta & Maria, Petra & Jessica

*HFLC was asked to develop a cafe concept and the results seem promising. Both companies are considering implementing our ideas. There were three pairs of members competing with their ideas and the feedback from members have been positive.*

Fifth project summer terrace concept for Katajanokka Best Western Premier Hotel – Hanna & Thuy

Competitions:

Mise-en-Place, NHTV Breda, the Netherlands Jan 2010; YHS, EHL Lausanne, Switzerland Mar 2011; Resto 2011, UAS Turku, Finland Apr 2011

Tailor-made courses: 3X4h, Photoshop, Feb 2011; 2X8h, Group coaching, Dec 2010

Well-being & Team building:

2X1,5h, Mind and Body Karate, Spring 2010 & 2011

Attachment 5: Workshop wrap up - Email

(Thanks to all of you who contributed to the workshop! I think we were able to start with the change for good and there are many great possibilities for HFLC! As attachments: the outcome of the workshop and a draft of HFLC Membership contract.)

Dear all,

Happy Easter holidays! Please read this email carefully as it is very important for the future of the club and your participation in it.

I've concluded the outcome regards to the things that were produced, or agreed to, in the workshop. We all shared the opinion that HFLC, as it was during the first year, needed a change.

I hope also that you have ten minutes to go through the two documents. I want to emphasize that they can be changed according to your comments. There is plenty of interesting new things to do in the autumn and we need to know your status in order to get enough motivated members to commit to the club and take it forward! Hopefully we could rely on as many of you as possible.

HFLC will continue to be voluntarily but every member is expected to contribute to the club and sign a contract. Please read the contract and respond to me if you are able to commit to what is stated: The new policy is that you are expected to answer HFLC emails within 36hours, but since it is Easter we'll take a break :). I'll be waiting for your responses until next Thursday 28 April.

I'd appreciate if all of you could look into this and respond if you wish to continue un-

der the new policy in the autumn. If not, please let me know about your resignation and I'll contact you about the HFLLC Certificate and plans for alumni activities. Evon will also be in contact for the remaining topics for this spring.

BTW, from autumn on the Official meetings will be held on Monday afternoons at 14.00 so that you are able to plan your schedule accordingly and change possible shifts at work etc.

Please contact me if there was something you didn't understand! I'd be more than happy to clarify things and receive comments!

BR,

Jaakko Eskola



## Membership Contract

Surname \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_

Student number \_\_\_\_\_ Degree programme \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

This contract is between the above student and Haaga Future Leaders Club (later HFLC). The student and HFLC agree to the following:

1. HFLC does hereby agree that the student shall be entitled to all privileges as a member until the graduation of the student in HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences.
2. In consideration therefore, the undersigned student agrees to maintain an academic performance of grade point average minimum 3,75/5, with the minimum grade point of 3 in compulsory courses.

3. The student hereby agrees to abide the following requirements and policies:

Attendance at all official HFLC meetings (absence due to illness or other valid reason must be reported to Club Coordinator) and

36 hours email response – policy and

Minimum one (1) leadership completion per academic year (leading or coordinating HFLC, a project, wellness day or event, or taking part in application process as a member, or teaching other members, students, teachers or HAAGA-HELIA staff) and

Minimum one (1) industry contact per academic year (a lead for possible cooperation with a company) or

Minimum one (1) representation per academic year (partaking in an event as a HFLC representative).

4. The student hereby understands that failure to abide the aforementioned leads to termination of the contract.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Place) (Date) (Student's signature)