Visionary Innovators
and their role in moving towards innovative companies

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Preface

The idea of being able to take a peek behind the scenes of a range of large-scale companies to see how they innovate was how this graduation project came to be. In the months prior to my graduation project, I was studying an entirely non-design related discipline. During these months, I realised I missed working on strategic design-related projects. Thus, I was very much looking forward to starting this project, and this energy has kept me going throughout the entire project. I am glad to look back on a very interesting project which has helped me develop as a strategic designer.

Of course, I would not have been able to do this project without a great amount of help from a lot of people. Throughout the project, as I was searching for “the solution” to innovation within large-scale organisations and stumbled upon visionary innovators, I had the chance to meet many very inspiring people. I would like to thank all the visionary innovators who were open and kind to dedicate some of their valuable (and sometimes very hard to get a hold of) time to tell me about their visions for change. You have provided me with a great source of inspiration and energy, thank you. Furthermore, I would like to thank their team members and colleagues for making time for me and providing many more valuable insights. To all of you: thank you for letting me take a look inside your fascinating companies.

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I am excited to present to you my graduation thesis, enjoy the read!

Tytzza
Introduction
The urgency to innovate for organisational survival has become increasingly recognised, with the result that innovation has conquered a position high on the management agenda. However, leading innovation in large-scale legacy organisations can be challenging, due to intertial historical forces for stability from legacy structures, processes and culture that resist the changes required for innovation. Therefore, leadership that understands the urgency of innovation and possesses the know-how and resilience to overcome the barriers to organisational change is required. This research provides exploratory findings of visionary innovators, individuals who aim to develop innovation capabilities in their own companies. They possess the political and business know-how and the capabilities to lead a company-wide change movement towards innovative companies.

The purpose of this project was two-fold: first, the aim was to provide an illustration of who these visionary innovators are, and how they overcome the challenges of bringing innovation to large-scale legacy organisations. For this purpose, two research questions were formulated. This is reported on in the first part of this thesis. Second, based on the challenges identified, the purpose was to design a tool to aid visionary innovators in successfully leading a company-wide change. The design is presented in the second part of this graduation thesis.

Part I: Defining the Visionary Innovator
To investigate the construct of visionary innovators, a case-study research was carried out through which eight visionary innovators were studied. Prior to the case-study interviews, research was conducted through an analysis of extant literature and several expert interviews, which was used to determine direction for the interviews. During the case-study research, more than 25 interviews with the visionary innovators and their colleagues were conducted. After a thorough cross-case analysis of the results, several common themes surfaced regarding the attributes of visionary innovators.

Attributes
Thus, in answering the first research question: What are the attributes of the visionary innovators that make them effective in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations? the case study findings indicate that these attributes are: shared traits, a strong vision combined with an urge to share this vision, political and business know-how and space provided by their ‘superiors’ to move freely and carry out the first steps towards realising their vision. These are summarised in a framework for the visionary innovator, illustrated in figure 1.1. Each of these themes are key to overcoming the barriers to change in large-scale legacy companies. It is the combination of these attributes that make the visionary innovators effective in transforming their organisations towards modern companies capable of continuous innovation.

Challenges
The patterns regarding the challenges that surfaced from the case study findings indicate that in leading a change movement, visionary innovators move through several phases of change. To begin, the team starts small and focuses on collecting a portfolio of successful innovation projects to prove the value of innovation. Next, as the support for the movement grows, the movement is scaled up and the team is expanded. In the final phase, the focus lies on company-wide change and implementation such that the change becomes permanent. During each phase of change, the visionary innovators encounter a specific set of challenges. A recurring theme amongst the challenges is the difficulty for the visionary innovator to manage the various responsibilities involved in leading his/her team to innovate. As the success of the change depends highly on the team being able to innovate, enabling the team to innovate takes up a great part of the visionary innovator’s time schedule. Thus, in answering the second research question: How can the visionary innovator be aided in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations? it was found that visionary innovators may be aided in dividing their scarce time efficiently and effectively amongst the team to enable the team to innovate successfully.

Part II: Designing for the Visionary Innovator
An increasing number of roles and responsibilities present themselves to the visionary innovators as the change they initiated spreads throughout the organisation. As the team and the movement grows, and their exposure increases the visionary innovators become increasingly busy and it keeping an overview of the team more challenging. Therefore, the following design goal was formulated: To design a tool that provides quick, reflective insights on the visionary innovator’s roles to determine what actions to take to effectively and integrally lead his team from any location.

To aid the visionary innovator in fulfilling his/her roles successfully, the Visionary Dashboard is introduced to facilitate communication between the team quickly and integrally. The dashboard provides quick insights into the status of each of the roles of the visionary innovator by collecting feedback from the team and summarising them through visualisations. The aim of the design is to provide focus for the visionary innovator on which of his/her roles require attention, such that the scarce time can be used effectively and efficiently to fully empower the team to innovate.

Conclusion
The feedback from a test of the Visionary Dashboard concept with one of the visionary innovators indicated that the dashboard could potentially help the visionary innovator lead the team more successfully, therein aiding the visionary innovator in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations. The report provides a detailed illustration of the visionary innovators and their teams. Furthermore, a description of the change movement initiated by the visionary innovators is provided. However, the findings from this project serve as a starting point to introduce the concept of visionary innovators. Further research on the construct of visionary innovators and potential collaboration with them is required.
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0. Introduction

To start, the graduation assignment is presented in this chapter. Background information regarding the context of the assignment is provided followed by an overview of the project scope and the project approach.

In this chapter:
1. Background
2. Project Scope
3. Project Approach
In an ever-changing competitive world, the urgency around innovation for organisational survival has become increasingly recognised (O'Reilly and Tushman, 2013, 2004; Yukl, 2008; Mumford et al. 2003; Dess and Pickens, 2000). With innovation high on the management agenda, shifts in resource allocation to more explorative activities are finally taking place, moving closer to achieving organisational ambidexterity (O'Reilly and Tushman, 2013; 2004). However, a one-size-fits-all innovation approach does not exist, such that firms are forced to experiment in their approach to innovation. Such experiments take the form of innovation labs, hubs and internal accelerators, with varying degrees of success.

A widespread amount of literature is available on the possible forms of innovation and how organisations should structure themselves to facilitate innovation (Ries, 2017; Kotter, 2014; Kwakman & Smeulders, 2012; Christensen, 1997). However, in large-scale organisations barriers to successful innovation tend to include legacy systems and processes, a siloed structure and a surplus of stakeholders involved in decision making due to many hierarchical layers. Thus, these barriers need to be overcome to realise the fast-paced adaptions required to fit changing environments and customer needs (Yukl, 2008; Kotter and Cohen, 2002).

How is it possible that some organisations are more successful at overcoming such barriers than others?

Even organisations with legacies dating back to more than 100 years ago have been able to transform themselves to become ‘modern companies’ where continuous innovation takes place (Ries, 2017), when other companies have failed. It is this question that motivated me to begin the research into innovation at a range of large-scale legacy organisations.

Research regarding the concept of Visionary Innovators form the centre of this report.

"My role is crucial, it really makes or breaks the success of bringing integral innovation to [my company]."  
- Victor, Visionary Innovator

I have named these individuals ‘Visionary Innovators’, based on their leadership position through which they provide vision for their teams, combined with their proactive involvement in bringing innovation inside their business. The strong similarities between each of these individuals and their potential impact are the reasons why these individuals form the basis of the remainder of my research, described in the rest of this report.
0.2 Project Scope

The aim of this thesis is to paint a picture of these leaders - the visionary innovators - in terms of characteristics and actions. This will be done on the basis of a case study research involving such leaders. The second aim of this thesis is to indicate opportunities for design in areas where these leaders can be aided in their quest to bringing innovation inside their organisation. A proposal for a solution to aid them will be provided and tested.

Investigating Visionary Innovators

Previous scholars have described key leadership roles in relation to organisational change and innovation. As such, Mumford (2003) states that ‘Leadership can make a difference in the success of creative efforts’. Change management theory describes the key role of ‘change leaders’ for realising organisational change (Kanter, 1999a). DiLiello and Houghton (2006) propose the presence of ‘SuperLeaders’, a leader that is self-aware and able to empower others, for higher levels of innovation in an organisation. Besides leadership roles, key roles to foster innovation are discussed. For example, Martin (2011) identifies the importance of ‘innovation catalysts’, to embed design thinking into organisations for successful innovation. Furthermore, Ries (2017) describes leaders that ought to be involved in the transformation towards modern companies and Kelley and Littman (2006) describe ‘faces’ of innovation. However, empirical evidence regarding who these individuals are and what makes them effective at enabling innovation in large-scale organisations specifically, is lacking. Therefore, to explore the concept of the visionary innovator I carried out a case study research with the aim to answer the following research question:

1. What are the attributes of the visionary innovators that make them effective in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

In answering this research question, the aim is to determine the main challenges faced by the visionary innovator.

Part one of this thesis reports on the findings of the case study research, coupled with findings from literature. These are combined in a model that illustrate the key attributes of the Visionary Innovator.

The challenges faced in bringing change

A cross-case analysis of the case studies indicated several patterns in the challenges encountered by the visionary innovators in leading change in a large-scale organisation. The challenges differ based on the phase of transformation the visionary innovator is in. Therefore, the second research question is as follows:

How can the visionary innovator be aided in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

In answering this research question, the aim is to determine the main challenges faced by the visionary innovator.

In the second part of this thesis report, the challenges are translated into design opportunities.

1. What are the attributes of the visionary innovators that make them effective in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

2. How can the visionary innovator be aided in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?
0.3. Project Approach

During this project, I followed the four phases of the design process as represented by the double diamond model of the Design Council. Overall, the project consisted of two parts: in part one the concept of the visionary innovator was discovered and defined. In the second part of the project, a design brief was developed for the visionary innovator and a design was delivered. The phases of the project and the corresponding report chapters are illustrated in figure 1.2.

Part I: Defining the Visionary Innovator

1. Discover
   To begin the study of innovation at large-scale organisations, a literature review was conducted on the topics of organisational ambidexterity, vision, foundations for an innovative company, leaders in innovation and organisational transformation. The main findings of the literature study are reported in Chapter 1: Discover. As another source of information for exploration around innovation several interviews were done with ‘experts of innovation’, a range of people who are in some way involved in bringing innovation into large corporations. Insights from these interviews are also reported in Chapter 1. In combining the research from extant literature with the insights from expert interviews, a knowledge gap was identified. Furthermore, an initial construct for the visionary innovator was created. To address the knowledge gap a case study research was set up and conducted. The methodology and a short introduction of each of the eight case studies are presented in Chapter 1.

2. Define
   In Chapter 2, the findings from within- and cross-case analysis of the empirical evidence collected from over 25 first-hand interviews with visionary innovators and their colleagues are presented. The patterns that emerged were combined into a model for the attributes of the visionary innovators. The attributes are compared to previous findings from the literature analysis. Furthermore, the challenges of the visionary innovators are analysed. Finally, the findings regarding the attributes and challenges are synthesised to determine opportunities for improvement.

Part II: Designing for the Visionary Innovator

3. Develop
   In chapter 3, the opportunities identified are further examined. The insights regarding the visionary innovators from the case study research are used to create a persona and a typical day in the life of a visionary innovator. By examining the visionary innovator from a user-perspective, design requirements are determined. Furthermore, a design brief is formulated.

4. Deliver
   An increasing number of roles and responsibilities present themselves to the visionary innovators as the change they have set in motion spreads throughout the organisation. To increase their impact, the visionary innovators expand their teams. As a result, the visionary innovator is increasingly busy and it becomes challenging to fulfill the different roles of the visionary innovator. In Chapter 4: Deliver, a design is proposed to aid the visionary in fulfilling his/her roles successfully by providing quick insights into the status of each role. The aim of the design is to provide a focus for the visionary innovator such that the scarce time can be used effectively and efficiently to empower the team to innovate.
Phase I: Defining the Visionary Innovator

1. Discover

This chapter provides a description of the discovery phase of the project, which is focused on the collection of research regarding the visionary innovators. This includes a literature study, expert interviews, initial insights and a description of the case study research.

In this Chapter:
1. Literature Study & Expert Interviews
2. Research Set-up
1.1 Introduction

To explore innovation within large-scale organisations, extant literature on the management of innovation management is examined. To expand the insights gathered in the explorative phase, several expert interviews were held regarding innovation in large-scale organisations. In the remainder of this chapter the insights gathered from the literature and the interviews are presented.

1.2 The Modern Company

To start, the concept of a modern company is investigated. A modern company must be adept at innovation, but innovation requires other capabilities than the capabilities to efficiently run current business. Organisations that are able to run current business efficiently and simultaneously capable of innovating on a continuous basis are called ambidextrous. This concept is further investigated in section 1.2.

1.3 Vision as a guide for Innovation

The extant literature indicates that vision lies at the basis of any organisation. Moreover, vision provides a guide for innovation. In this section, literature regarding the role of vision in innovation is examined.

1.4 Foundations for an innovation environment

An innovative company lives and breathes innovation at several levels: from accountability measures, to processes, to culture to people. At every level, this requires a different content than what is in place for exploitation activities. Together, these levels form the foundation for an innovative company, which are further examined in section 1.4.

1.5 Leaders in Innovation

From the expert interviews and extant literature, the important role that people play in innovation surfaced. To further investigate the role of individuals in enabling innovation, and specifically leaders, literature on leaders in innovation is studied in this section.

1.6 Organisational Transformation

For successful company-wide transformation, change needs to take place at several levels. As enabling innovation within large-scale legacy organisations requires change, the final section investigates literature of organisational transformation.
A modern company is one where continuous innovation takes place and current business is run successfully. The organisational skills and infrastructure required for innovation differ from those in place to run current business efficiently. The ability to innovate and run current business is known as organisational ambidexterity, which is further elaborated upon in the following section.

Ambidextrous organisations

To remain relevant in a rapidly changing world, organisations need to become adept to change through continuous innovation. At the same time, current business needs to be run successfully to remain profitable. Organisational ambidexterity therefore is considered a crucial capability (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Raisch et al., 2009), defined as the ability of an organisation to ‘both explore and exploit’—to compete in mature technologies and markets and in new technologies and markets (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013). This requires hosting contradictory structures, processes, and cultures within the same firm (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013). As such, exploitation activities are characterised by refinement, production, efficiency, control, and incremental improvement (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013). Exploration is focused on efficiently running the current business. For example, Lean Management is a form of production management invented by Toyota (Liker, 2004) that focuses on efficiently running and improving current business, thereby representing exploitation activities.

On the other hand, exploration activities must take place to foster discontinuous innovations that relate to new technologies and markets. Exploration requires experimentation, flexibility, investigation and autonomy (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013). Due to the contradictory structures, processes and culture, organisational ambidexterity requires a complex set of decisions on the reallocation of organisational assets for both exploitation and exploration activities. In large-scale organisations, a greater portion of resources tends to be allocated to exploitation. Furthermore, exploration requires new capabilities. Thus, increasingly balancing exploitation with exploration requires an organisational change.

A range of theories in extant literature describe how best to structure an organisation to run both activities. Structural ambidexterity proposes the simultaneous pursuit of both exploitation and exploration through separate subunits (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013). This requires an overarching vision that incorporates the need for both exploration and exploitation. Structural ambidexterity can be achieved through hosting parallel structures, or physically separated structures. Christensen (1997) shows how established organisations that continue to develop incremental innovations can go out of business as a result of disruptive innovations from unexpected competitors. To prevent being disrupted, Christensen (1997) proposes developing disruptive technology with a new customer base in a separate business unit focused solely around the development of the disruptive technology, thereby pursuing structural ambidexterity.

From Structural to Integrated Exploration

O’Reilly and Tushman (2013) conclude that structural ambidexterity is crucial in creating the context for established firms to explore within their existing strategy and history. However, once the exploratory units gain support, firms may take advantage of the exploration capabilities by switching into more integrated structures. Thus, an integrated organisational structure that supports exploitation and exploration is desirable, but first the exploratory unit needs to achieve political and economic legitimacy (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013).

The Modern Company

Ries (2017) defines a modern company as a company that has ‘both halves, both systems. It has the capacity to produce products with great reliability and quality, but also to discover what new products to produce’. In other words, a modern company is ambidextrous. Ries (2017) proposes that a modern organisation is focused on long-term results and has ‘internal startups’ fully dedicated to continuous innovation. Thus, through internal startups, a modern company hosts exploration activities whilst exploitation takes place within the rest of the company. The internal startups consist of ‘passionate believers’ of innovation. These teams experiment rapidly and scale their impact. Ries (2017) stresses the importance of experimentation and the learning that comes from it. Ries (2017) advocates that the importance of experimentation and learning should be embedded in the entire company, and the opportunity to experiment should be available to every employee.

For the transformation towards a modern company, the internal startup may start small and over time make the methods and structures available to everyone as the value of the innovation projects become more visible (Ries, 2017). Therein ‘recruiting’ more employees. This transformation process coincides with O’Reilly and Tushman’s proposal of initiating exploration activities through structural ambidexterity, and over time moving to an integrated system.
1.2.1 Leading Ambidexterity

A Dedicated Entrepreneurial Function
Kotter (2014) stresses the importance of an organisation’s leadership to launch and maintain such an exploration network, stating that an executive committee must create it and explicitly support it. Furthermore, Kotter (2014) states that the network must be treated as a legitimate part of the organisation, to prevent it falling short within the hierarchical structure. In line with these findings, Ries (2017) proposes that company leaders understand the startup as an "atomic unit of work," distinct from other project teams. The author therefore advocates that entrepreneurship, i.e. exploration, needs its own dedicated place within the organisational chart in the form of the Entrepreneurial function, an official department dedicated to entrepreneurial expertise. The Entrepreneurial function is responsible for supporting and overseeing the company’s internal startups, and to manage their success and growth.

Top-level Buy-in at ING
In an interview with P. Das, member of the board of Innovation at ING, the importance of explicit support for the exploration activities from top-level management was illustrated. Das described how innovation within ING received a boost with the arrival of the new Chief Executive Officer, who incorporated innovation in the company vision: "He provided the following vision: ‘We have to think beyond traditional banking’.

By incorporating innovation in the vision for the organisation, the CEO advocated publicly not just for exploration activities (Kotter, 2014; Ries, 2017). He further stresses the importance of top management support: "You can set up all these interesting initiatives and accelerators, but if no one in the top management says ‘Yes, we’re going to implement this, then you’re just doing something that will not be implemented.’"

Leading Proactive Punctuated Change
Tushman et al. (2013) distinguish between reactive and proactive punctuated change. Reactive punctuated change is motivated by crisis conditions, whereas proactive punctuated change is motivated by a compelling overarching aim to both exploit and explore, and if the company does not initiate exploratory innovation now, a future crisis will emerge. Tushman et al. (2013) find that proactive change, if properly timed and executed, is associated with better performance than reactive change.

Experimentation and Learning
In line with the notion to embed experimentation and learning in the entire company (Ries, 2017), Tushman et al. (2013) suggest that organisations must learn how to execute innovation and proactive punctuated change through experimentation, reflection and learning about what works well and what gets in the way. Through an ambidextrous structure, space is created for senior leadership to experiment and learn about the future whilst the exploitative core of the organisation is protected. As these innovations are initiated when the company is in a strong position as opposed to being in a crisis, there is time to experiment and learn from mistakes.

Leadership initiation
As proactive change is not associated with crisis, these changes are more difficult to motivate, fund, and lead. Therefore, as also stressed by Kotter (2014) and Ries (2017), Tushman et al. (2013) underline the important role of senior leadership in initiating, energising and modelling the learning about change. It must be initiated from the top, then executed through an extended social movement led by senior leaders and carried through the organisation by a further extension of leaders who collectively initiate, reflect, and learn about leading change in their local departments (Tushman et al., 2013).
1.3 Vision as a guide for innovation

A compelling vision is found to be the basis for leading organisational change (Kotter, 2014; 2007; Kanter, 1999a). O’Reilly and Tushman (2013), Tushman et al. (2013) and Kotter (2014) stress the importance of an overarching vision to motivate and guide the organisation’s exploitation and exploration activities. Literature that point to vision to directing innovation activities is therefore further examined in the following section.

Ries (2017) proposes that large-scale organisations adopt a startup-like way of working to foster innovation, as startups are adept at innovation. Ries (2017) illustrates that the foundation of a startup is a strong vision to clarify the desired goals. The team’s mission follows from this vision. Subsequently, the vision provides coordination and a high level of motivation and energy, as also proposed by Kotter (2014). Similarly, Calabretta et al. (2016) states that a coherent vision fuels the organisation’s culture through increased dedication and ownership amongst company employees. Finally, an inspiring vision is essential for the recruitment of people.

As vision forms the foundation for an organisation, it remains a constant factor to fall back on during the innovation process. After a vision has been formulated, a strategy needs to be defined to realise that vision. From this strategy, new products and services follow (figure 1.3). As every product strategy builds on assumptions of feasibility, desirability and viability (Kelley, 2013), Ries (2017) illustrates how startups iteratively test those assumptions through experimentation. Through reflection and learning after each experiment, the relevance of the strategy is tested based on whether it takes the team closer to realising their vision. Subsequently, the team either stays on course of the strategy by making modifications to the product or service, or the team shifts strategy i.e. making a ‘pivot’ which Ries (2017) defines as ‘a change in strategy without a change in vision’.

To guide the ‘internal startups’ within large-scale organisations in their exploration activities, the first step must be to formulate a clear vision and to ensure that the vision is understood and shared.
Vision at ING
In the interview, P. Das also stresses the importance of a clear vision which is backed by the top management for successfully managing innovation: ‘A vision makes or breaks everything. Without a clear vision and strategy, and commitment to it from the top management, you are doomed to fail.’ He further explains that every company can establish innovation activities. However, to implement innovation and really benefit from exploration activities, a vision must be present: ‘I hosted a lot of external parties who came to visit to enquire about innovation and how we innovate. But then they did not yet have a vision in place, or top management. Then it gets really difficult. Then you’re just innovating for the sake of it, instead of innovating to achieve something.’

Scoping through vision
In discussing his experience in advising large-scale organisations on fostering innovation during an expert interview, Anthony Meyer Zu Schlochter also stressed the responsibility for leadership to provide a vision: ‘To provide focus for several teams working on initiatives of innovation, it is important that leadership provides direction in the form of a vision.’ As innovation is explorative, ambiguous and requires experimentation and iteration in many directions, it can be difficult to determine the relevance of innovation initiatives to the organisation. Anthony explains that vision can help to provide a scope for exploration activities: ‘The vision specifies a scope over time, such that in the short term as well as the long term innovation initiatives remain within the smaller scope of the vision. Within the vision, teams can move freely to develop innovations as long as they are aligned within the scope of the general vision.’

Insights:
• Even though innovation can be ambiguous and broad, it can be guided. The guide that provides direction for innovation is vision.
• A shared vision needs to be established to drive exploration in the company.
• The vision for innovation must complement the overall company vision.
• A shared vision yields team energy and dedication.

1.4 Foundations for an innovation environment
Exploration requires the development of capabilities, structures and processes that are new to many organisations. In this chapter, the foundations for creating an exploration environment that can host innovation are more closely examined.

1.3.1 Accountability
To build a modern company where innovation can take place, Ries (2017) indicates four organisational levels at which changes need to be made. These changes together form the foundations for a modern company, illustrated in figure 1.5.

‘Building an environment fully engaged in positive change, and a culture rich in creativity and renewal, means creating a company with 360 degrees of innovation’. (Kelley and Littman, 2006)

The modern company

Ries (2017) introduces ‘Innovation accounting’, through which the metrics that are in place in established organisations are replaced by metrics that can measure the progress of iterative experimentation, providing a common language and set of accountability standards that can be used for innovation projects across
1.3.2 Processes

Processes consist of the tools and methods that employees use in their work including for planning, management, team coordination and collaboration. Ries (2017) proposes that processes follow from accountability systems, because once teams are given the proper incentives, they can self-organise around new tools and methods that are aligned with the accountability system and overarching vision. For exploration activities the desired processes involve rapid experimentation. Thus, the accountability system in place must encourage all forms of trial and error, reward learning and not punish any form of failure because exploration is not always successful (Tushman et al., 2013).

Philips’ Co-creating innovation framework

Another process for exploration is Philips’ innovation framework (figure 1.7), which involves prototyping, experimentation and iteration (Calabretta et al., 2016). During the position stage, relevant business opportunities are identified and meaningful propositions are derived to iterate on. In the create stage, propositions are tested through fast experimentation and iterations to determine the relevance, feasibility and viability to the business. This is supported through the enable stage, where the necessary infrastructure i.e. hardware, software, privacy policies enable the realisation of prototypes. In parallel, the empower function creates support within the company for design thinking in the form of trainings of the process that are made available to everyone. The framework combined with the trainings introduced at Philips are an example of how the introduction of new tools support the transformation towards a company capable of exploration.

The Lean Startup and the Co-creation framework illustrate that processes for exploration incorporate experimenting and learning. Furthermore, the Co-creation framework illustrates how creating support within the company is part of the exploration process.
01. DISCOVER

Setting up an innovation process for FrieslandCampina

In an interview, L. de Bruijn talks about how she is responsible for setting up and implementing an innovation process for FrieslandCampina. FrieslandCampina recognises the importance of bringing innovation into their organisation but they have indicated that they have no knowledge regarding the processes required for innovation. De Bruijn is setting up an innovation process. Coss-sectional project teams from across FrieslandCampina are selected to develop innovative ideas in line with identified themes that are aligned with the company vision. During this process, they work as startups at an external location, not being held accountable for any exploitation activities. They are trained in applying build-measure-learn loops, and experimenting with customers. During a three-month period, they learn by doing and familiarise with the innovation tools and methods.

Process overload

De Bruijn describes how in her experience, most corporates are not innovative but form ‘One big sticky syrup where nothing gets done’. The biggest problem is the overload of legal and legacy processes that are currently in place. To be able to carry out an experiment, she describes how there are more processes in place that ‘work against you, than that aid you’. FrieslandCampina actually possesses over an enormous R&D department focused on research regarding new technologies and chemical processes. They have the innovative knowledge and capabilities inhouse, but innovations rarely get implemented. De Bruijn further explains: ‘A lot of potential goes to waste, and the reason for this is the huge number of legal processes. It takes years before an innovation is submitted to customers.’ This highlights the necessity of new processes that are aligned with exploration. The challenge lies in freeing innovation teams from the processes that were put in place to optimise exploitation activities.

Mindset

With the introduction of tools and methods aligned to exploration activities, the mindset with which the tools are applied is crucial. As such, Sanders and Stappers (2012) describe how they have seen good methods fail if they fall in the hands of a person without the mindset to use them. Once the new tools and methodologies have been introduced, the aim is to move beyond process to mindset. Through learning by doing, experimentation and validated learning, the lean startup process helps to develop a learning and experimentation mindset. Stoimenova and De Lille (2017) describe a case where the mindset of a team shifted after they were introduced to design methods. Once the desired mindset is adopted, a team may reorganise to use new processes in line with the mindset to react to an ever-changing environment.

Moving from talking to doing

De Bruijn has experience in coaching startup teams during her time at Startup Bootcamp, and is now coaching teams from large-scale organisations. She explains that the difference between the mindset of both parties is huge: ‘It’s incredible, the difference between the mindsets of entrepreneurs and corporate employees. The entrepreneurs from Startup bootcamp are teams of people who are highly motivated and get so much done in one day and find ‘no bridge too far’. In their case you need to teach them to apply structure and set realistic goals. With people who come from large corporates the difference is huge. I feel like people are just sitting around all day. I have to try so hard to get them ‘fired up’.’ ‘Go, go, Get out to that consumer, test it, try it.’

Failure is OK

A learning mindset is key for successful innovation, which is inherit to failure (Kotter, 2014; Ries, 2017; Tushman et al., 2013). To create a culture of experimentation a sense of trust that experimentation and failure is acceptable must be created. A culture that tolerates failure fosters an ecosystem where a diverse range of business ideas can be tested and developed. Therefore, Ries (2017) stresses that mental models of ‘My job is to learn new things’ need to be created to support experimentation.

Sanders and Stappers (2012) present the many contextual layers involved in cultural change (figure 1.8), and depict the relationship between tools to a change at the cultural level. Tools is the first step in the transformation of culture. Tools need to be applied through relevant methods, often nested within methodologies. To create a culture, the tools need to be applied via methods and methodologies and with the right mindset by a number of people within the organisation. Over time the habitual processes turn into a culture, which is based on how the organisation has operated in the past (Ries, 2017). The culture is thus formed over time as a result of the process and accountability choices of the company.

1.3.3 Culture

The fourth element that serves as the foundation for a company are its people, who are attracted to a specific culture. The success of an organisation therefore depends largely on the people it is able to recruit and retain. To install a new culture within a large-scale organisation, individual self-organised teams need to be nurtured well as they could become the seeds of a new company-wide culture (Ries, 2017). A culture may be founded from a small social movement of people who share a culture of exploration and then expand to be integrated throughout the entire organisation (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Kotter, 2014).

In the expert interview, Calabretta emphasises the importance of people as key drivers for innovation: ‘The human factor can be the main obstacle to innovation. For instance, many employees do not want to change. So besides a visionary leader, you also need employees that are willing to change. The success of innovation is very much people related and the drive for innovation therefore has to come both top down and bottom up.’

The middle managers

Zijltsnoot explains how she finds that the middle managers display the greatest amount of skepticism for new tools and ways of working that are brought in to support innovation. In her experience, this is partly due to the lack of time they have to fully focus on experiencing the new tools and their added benefit. They do not have the time to fully commit to innovation: ‘Senior managers don’t have to do all the other long lists that the middle manager has to. They are ‘mannetje van alles’; lots of to-do’s, so they can’t really do research or deep dive, while the board goes to conferences to collect knowledge. I think having that knowledge and the time for the knowledge really helps’. She further explains “Transforming the mindset of managers is really an important one but it’s also difficult because they have the least amount of time.”

01. DISCOVER
The Leader as a Facilitator

The tensions of managing the contradictory demands of exploration and exploitation requires leaders with an integrative mindset, who can balance the competing pressures of different organisational structures (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Smith and Tushman, 2005; Martin, 2009). Previous studies have demonstrated that leadership practices can affect the success of exploration and exploitation, as such misalignment of leadership style with the underlying activity (exploration or exploitation) is more damaging for exploratory than exploitative projects (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013). Furthermore, transformational leadership, associated with a careful listener, transmitter, and an open communication style has been found to correlate with exploratory innovation (Tushman et al., 2013; Avolio et al. 2009; Yukl, 2008).

Transforming an organisation involves leaders to facilitate an environment where innovation can be fostered. As such, Ries (2017) argues that leaders are in charge of building a program to support the efforts of the teams involved in innovation. Furthermore, in guiding teams through the adoption process of the new way of working that involves experimentation and learning, teams need to be coached and mentored. In this regard, leaders need to take on the role of a coach, shifting their leadership role from directive to open and inquisitive.

Insights:
- To transform large legacy companies to modern companies that explore and exploit, a structure that can host innovation needs to be erected.

The building blocks for an innovative company

Leaders as Facilitators

- This structure requires new accountability systems, processes that support experimentation, a learning culture and people open for change.
- Leadership is especially important for managing exploration.
- Leaders can facilitate the successful transformation towards an innovative company by taking on new roles.

Leaders in Innovation

The innovation network’s definition of innovation: ‘people creating value through the implementation of new ideas’, emphasises the importance of people in innovation (Kelley and Littman, 2006). The crucial role of people, and more specifically leaders, in the shift to increased exploration in organisations motivates further analysis of extant literature on leadership in innovation. Several types of leaders that have been positively associated with innovation are discussed.

Previous scholars have proposed several leadership styles in relation to successful organisational innovation. As such, change management theory introduces the essential role of change agents in realising organisational change (Kanter, 1999a), which is required to bring innovation capabilities into legacy organisations (Ries, 2017). On the other hand, DiLiello and Houghton (2008) suggest that the presence of ‘SuperLeaders’, a leader that is self-aware and able to empower others, may lead to higher levels of innovation in an organisation. Martin (2011) fosters the idea of ‘innovation catalysts’ to embed design thinking into organisations.

SuperLeader

A form of leadership that has been proposed by previous scholars in relation to innovation is the concept of self-leadership, which focuses on autonomy, self-reflection and continuous learning (Manz and Sims, 2001). Within this body of literature, DiLiello and Houghton (2006) introduce the idea of SuperLeaders; leaders who bring out the best in others in promoting creativity rather than conformity, sharing information, collaborating with others and working interdependently. A SuperLeader is a self-motivated, positive thinker, and DiLiello and Houghton (2008) suggest that SuperLeaders are more likely to have higher levels of innovation potential.

Change Leader

Another leadership style that has been proposed in relation to innovation by previous scholars includes transformational leadership (Tushman et al., 2013; Avolio et al. 2009; Yukl, 2008), which stems from literature on change management. Kanter (1999a) introduces the concept of Change

‘Visionary leaders across every kind of business are waking up to new possibilities, ones that blend the best of general management with the emerging discipline of entrepreneurial management.’ (Ries, 2017)

Leaders in change-adept organisations. They innovate by helping in new concept development and are open to collaborate and make connections. They bring passion, conviction and confidence in others, ‘offering a dream, stretching their horizons, encouraging people to do the same’. Kanter (1999a) states that they should be able to challenge the organisational wisdom, form a vision and share it in ‘communicating a compelling aspiration’. They must also be able to build a coalition by identifying key supporters to sell the dream to and understanding the ‘politics’ of change. Finally, they are described to transfer ownership to a working team by providing ‘the protection they need to implement change’ and recognition. These skills are reflected in the eight required actions for successful organisational change (Kotter, 2007). However, even though Kanter (1999a) and Kotter (2007) describe the actions and skills required for successful change leaders, questions remain regarding who these leaders are.

Innovation Catalyst & Change Agent

Another key role described in the literature regarding innovation is that of innovation catalysts (Martin, 2011) and design innovation catalysts (Wrigley, 2013). The role of these catalysts is focused on embedding design in organisations to
achieve design-led innovation. The catalysts are described to be influential but closer to lower levels of hierarchy in the organisation whereby they need manager’s approval to create change. Similarly, Kanter (1999b) proposes ‘change agents’, leaders of the future coupled to top managers to find and lead innovation projects within many fields and functions. Ries (2017) describes change agents as the leaders who, on a daily basis, drive the larger project of transforming the company, who need cover ‘from above, from someone who has the support of the CEO to ensure the change progresses’. Both the change agents (Kanter, 1999b) and the catalysts (Martin, 2011) are selected from within the organisation. On the other hand, the design innovation catalysts (Wrigley, 2016) are described to be external designers embedded in the organisation to bring in design knowledge relevant to the business.

Champion

Wrigley (2016) introduces the design champion inside the organisation as an enabler of the design innovation catalyst by protecting them from organisational politics and assisting communication to the rest of the organisation. Matthews, Buccolo & Wrigley (2012) describe ‘champions’ as designers who promote a design approach in firms, sponsored by the executive team. They are described as employing change processes, such as formation of a coalition, aligning ideas to company vision and strategy and forming a larger group inside the organisation. Similar to these concepts, Kanter (1999b) describes the potential of ‘network champions’ to direct internal and external collaboration. Such champions are senior managers in possession of peer credibility, many connections, deep organisational knowledge, diplomatic skills, imagination to see opportunities for connections and an openness to collaborate. In coming from inside the organisation, these champions possess organisational knowledge and connections to provide protection from organisational politics.

Similarly, Ries (2017) proposes that every innovation team needs a sponsor in the company leadership that can be called upon when needed, to provide cover and resolve the problems the team faces in interactions with the wider organisation. This sponsor clears obstacles and has connections to wave problems away but must be engaged on a daily basis. A sponsor with CEO-support must provide cover for the company’s change leaders who lead the overall organisational transformation to ensure the change progresses. The ‘sponsor’ described by Ries (2017) is similar to the champions described by Kanter (1999b) and Matthews, Buccolo & Wrigley (2012). However, empirical evidence regarding such champions is limited.

Comparison Leader Characteristics

A summary of these roles and their attributes is provided in figure 1.9. Varying forms of leaders have been described to foster innovation inside organisations. A comparison of the descriptions of these leaders indicates differences in the attributes accredited to them. Furthermore, empirical evidence to illustrate such leaders is limited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader Attributes</th>
<th>SuperLeader</th>
<th>Change Leader</th>
<th>Innovation Catalyst</th>
<th>Change Agent</th>
<th>Champion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovator</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discoverer &amp; Translator</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Thinker</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connector &amp; Collaborator</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivated</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision &amp; Inspirer</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger of status quo</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political protector &amp; Enabler</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner &amp; reflecter</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leveraged at C-level</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design focus</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Applies only the champions described by Wrigley (2016) and Matthews et al. (2012).
1.5.10 Supporting roles

Previous scholars have described several supporting roles to enable innovation within the organisation. These can be fulfilled by different leaders from within the organisation. Alternatively, a leader may fulfil multiple roles at once. The supporting roles and their characteristics are described in this section.

‘Companies that want to succeed at innovation will need new insights. New viewpoints. And new roles.’ (Kelley and Littman, 2006)

The Executive-level Champion

The executive-level champion is to provide support to the champions as the transformation progresses by advocating publicly for the new way of working and making the necessary resources available (Ries, 2017).

A key enabler for transformation at ING is the presence of such an executive champion. Das describes how innovation was lifted to another level: ‘The innovation suddenly jumped from being important to this important, you know where it’s now, everyone is talking about it.’ This change took place when the new CEO determined that innovation was a central part of the new strategy for ING: ‘When the new CEO came, he brought a new strategy and wanted to focus on ‘Beyond Banking’ and innovation. So the CEO is the direct sponsor of innovation at ING, which is highly important.’

The Visionary founder

The founders of the innovation movement need to go from being the leader of a small team to the leader of an ecosystem of small teams over time. Vision provides direction for the strategy and products to be developed in such ecosystems. Without a vision, it is hard for teams to work individually and to determine if a change in strategy is necessary. Thus, Ries (2017) states that a visionary leader must be present to provide vision and direction, and to attract more followers of the movement.

Innovation Ambassadors

Similar to change agents, Esther describes recruiting her own ‘innovation ambassadors’ to help spread innovation within organisations; enthusiastic people who are intrinsically motivated to spread the new way of working and get others involved. ‘Enthusiastic people. Who are also willing to dare to just step out of the crowd and who are also persistent.’ Persistence is key, because ‘you will get backfire. And you will get problems: that people don’t have money for you, that you don’t fit the budget’. Thus the ambassadors need to be strong enough to say ‘okay I’m going to do it anyway’ and ‘have guts’.

Movers

In line with the notion of leading proactive change (Tushman et al., 2013), Anthony distinguishes between different types of decision makers within organisations. The ‘movers’ are those who are already innovating. They are aware of innovation and possess knowledge of how innovation plays a role internally and externally to their organisation. The five properties they possess are: intrinsic drivers and a high level of self-knowledge; vision; able to provide a safe environment that allows for learning, making mistakes and transparency; able to empower others; a mindset to move from thinking to doing, and a level of engagement in the innovation process. Together, these properties help Movers to foster innovation in their organisation as Anthony states that enablers for innovation are empowerment, safety, engagement and direction. ‘Movers are essential to foster innovation within organisations.’ On the other hand, there are the people who are driven by fear to innovate. ‘Many executives are driven by fear. They do not possess the knowledge of how to innovate’.

Personas

Kelley and Littman (2006) introduce personas that play different roles in innovation, to illustrate the various roles required in organisations to enable innovation. They propose that people can switch and play multiple roles to facilitate innovation.

Learning Role

The learning roles are focused on keeping an organisation from becoming too internally focused by continuously questioning the current knowledge. These personas bring new insights to the organisation by observing human behaviour, exploring other cultures and industries and translating findings back to the organisation. Furthermore, they prototype new ideas continuously to learn and take risks to achieve success through experimentation. Kelley and Littman (2006) describe the learning roles to involve people who are humble and open to question their own world view.

Organising Role

The organising roles are focused on the politics and process of resource allocation required in large-scale organisations to get ideas realised. They include developing a knack to outsmart roadblocks, bringing eclectic groups within the company together for new collaborations and sparking creative talents of the team. Organising roles are taken on by people who are savvy about the processes required to move ideas forward in organisations, where ideas must continuously compete for time and resources. They recognise the process of budget and resource allocation as a complex game of chess which they play to win (Kelley and Littman, 2006).

Building Role

Finally, the building roles are focused on making innovation happen. They are involved in the innovation act and create an environment where innovation teams can thrive, transforming physical environments into creative performance enhancing environments.

Innovator Roles

Bring in new knowledge from the customer, experiments and external sources

Organise

Create an environment for creativity and innovation

Build

Apply political savvy to overcome roadblocks and empower cross-functional innovation teams

Learn

Provide direction for the strategy and products to be developed in such ecosystems
As highlighted by many previous scholars, developing the new capabilities for large-scale legacy organisations to innovate on a continuous basis requires a transition at multiple organisational levels. In this section, the phases of such a transformation are further examined.

In moving a legacy organisation towards a modern organisation, Ries (2017) distinguishes three phases of transformation at three organisational levels. In the initial phase the foundation is laid out through experimentation, adaption and translation. This phase focuses on collecting evidence in building a ‘critical mass’ of success stories and demonstrating that the new way of working is viable and preferable. Next, rapid scaling and implementation takes place, followed by the final phase during which the ‘deep systems’ of the organisation must be transformed; the most difficult systems to change as they are deeply embedded in the legacy of the company. These systems create the inertial forces that cause people to return to old habits. Therefore, to prevent the transformation from being temporary, these systems need to be addressed. The actions required for each phase and the levels to be targeted are summarised in figure 1.11.

### Organisational Transformation

#### Phase 1: Critical Mass
- **Goal**: Build Critical Mass to get senior leadership bought in for a company-wide roll-out.
- **Support**: Organisational weight to have the political capital necessary to tackle the difficult issues in phase 3.

#### Phase 2: Scaling Up
- **Goal**: Build organisational weight to have the political capital necessary to tackle the difficult issues in phase 3.
- **Support**: Make Way of Working tools and training widely available to everyone.

#### Phase 3: Deep Systems
- **Goal**: Build organisational capability for continuous transformation.
- **Support**: Establish growth boards, innovation accounting and strict accountability for all senior leaders to allocate resources to the change.

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**Figure 1.11 Roadmap to transformation, adapted from The Startup Way (Ries, 2017)**
Corporate innovation: the story of ING
The innovation office at ING consists of several pillars: a pillar focused on exploration of trends and developments that are entered into the accelerator, where teams validate ideas and bring them to market. Another pillar is FinTech, focused on collaboration with external startups and scale-ups. The third pillar is the Transformation office, which is focused on training and engaging the wider organisation in innovation. Special coaches are introduced to teach employees the new innovation methods and ways of working. According to the three phases of transformation, this is part of the transformation at the Enterprise level.

Inspire and execute
Patrick describes that as the innovation department at ING expanded, they moved from the inspiration phase towards the execution phase: ‘We started with step 1 to inspire the organisation, and are now on to step 2, the execution. The execution takes place through the accelerator teams, and the transformation of the wider organisation.’

1.6.12 Transformation & Design
Organisations are increasingly adopting a design approach to define and implement their innovation strategies, for organisational transformation and as a basis for an overarching philosophy to guide the organisation (Calabretta et al., 2016). The authors propose four phases with corresponding strategic design practices for developing an innovation project with an organisation:

1. Setting the objective:
The first phase of initiating a project involves setting the right conditions for innovative thinking (Calabretta et al., 2016), which involves:
- **Envisioning:** helping organisations incorporate a long-term perspective into their innovation strategy and objectives. Through envisioning, future opportunities can be explored and a vision is provided to direct the activities of the organisation.
- **Inspiring:** persuading business stakeholders to think and act differently, embracing more innovative strategic decisions and staying with them over time. Calabretta et al. (2016) describe how designers’ use of visualisation, prototyping and their adoption of co-creative approaches help to inspire organisations to change.

2. Configuring
During the configuring phase, the strategic problem space is clarified and the organisation is prepared for the development of the solution. This involves:
- **Simplifying:** selection, connection and synthesis of information and the ability to choose a starting point and act on it in order to lead the organisation towards effective outcomes.
- **Structuring:** defining and realising each step on the road to achieve the project objectives.

3. Orchestrating
During this phase the interests, objectives and expertise of the various stakeholders involved must be coordinated. This involves:
- **Aligning:** steering the solution in a direction that matches the organisation’s strategy, values and assets.
- **Translating:** converting information from one language to another to enable knowledge sharing and creation, and translating the story across different business units. To do so, the goal of each business unit and the metrics and reward systems must be known to design the right story for each business unit- one that will convince people, excite them, engage them and align them (Calabretta et al., 2016).

4. Embedding
The final phase is to ensure that the outcomes of the project are implemented, advice is adopted on a permanent basis and ensuring exploitation of the opportunity.
- **Embracing:** creating widespread organisational commitment to the project outcome, and to the design approach used during the project.
- **Educating:** building design capacity among organisations by teaching them the ins- and outs of design.

Several parallels can be identified between the phases described for an innovation project with an organisation (Calabretta et al., 2016) and the phases of transformation (Ries, 2017), as it starts with setting the right conditions and formulating a long-term vision; and ends with practices to ensure the outcomes are implemented and become permanent.

**Insights:**
- Transformation needs to take place to bring innovation to large-scale organisations:
- The four phases involved in an innovation project are as follows:

  1. Setting the objective: Envisioning
  2. Configuring: Inspiring
  3. Orchestrating: Embracing
  4. Embedding: Educating
1.7 Summarising Findings

- For companies to remain relevant in the future, they must become adept at change. Thus, a ‘modern’ company must be able to run business successfully and innovate continuously.
- To transform large-scale legacy organisations into modern companies, ‘exploration start-ups’ must be set up. To overcome the barriers to change inside large-scale organisations, it is advised to start small and then scale up.
- A leader is required to act as the driving force of the transformation to innovation. Moreover, such a leader is needed to inspire, guide and manage the ‘exploration start-up’.
- For the exploration activities to gain momentum, support from the top is a must.
- At the basis of successful management of organisations, change and innovation lies an overarching long-term vision that is shared amongst the stakeholders involved.
- Extant literature points to many potential leading roles in change and in innovation. However, the majority of the findings point to leadership styles, not specific cases of individual leaders. Thus, questions remain as to who exactly these people are.

Knowledge Gap:
Who exactly are the leading individuals [visionary innovators] that drive the exploration movement and teams in large-scale legacy organisations? What are their attributes and what challenges do they encounter?
To address this knowledge gap, and with that the research questions, further research was carried out in the form of interviews.

The Construct: A Visionary Innovator
Based on the literary findings and exploratory interviews, an initial construct of these leading individuals -the visionary innovator- can be made. The visionary innovator is:
- A leader: Management position.
- Driving force of change: Part of an innovation team or any new initiative in the firm to bring change.
- Visionary: Strong vision of what the future should look like.
- Inspiring powers: Ability to get others onboard.
- Support from above? As this is indicated as an important factor for achieving momentum.

Furthermore, the focus lies on enabling innovation within large-scale legacy organisations. For the purpose of this research, I chose to define a large-scale organisation as one that has more than 250 employees*. Additionally, I chose to define legacy organisations as one that exists for more than 40 years. Thus, further research is focused on leaders active in organisations that fit these criteria.

1.8 Research Set-up

To address the knowledge gap that has been identified, and to further develop the construct of the visionary innovator, a case study research was carried out through which eight visionary innovators were studied.

Motivation
Building theory from case studies is a research strategy that involves using one or more cases to create theoretical constructs or propositions from case-based, empirical evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). The central notion behind theory-building case research is to use cases as the basis from which to develop theory inductively. The theory is developed by recognising patterns of relationships among constructs within and across cases and their underlying logical arguments. Case studies are rich, empirical descriptions of particular instances of a phenomenon, and multiple cases are discrete experiments that serve to replicate, contrast, and extend the emerging theory (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2003). The theory-building process occurs via recursive analysis of the case data, emergent theory, and later comparison to extant literature.

A case study approach is well-suited for further investigation of a novel construct where a lack of theory and empirical evidence is available (Eisenhardt, 1989). As this is the case for the visionary innovators, this is the main motivation for a theory-building case study research. Furthermore, as case studies emphasize the rich, real-world context in which phenomena occur, case study research was selected to capture the rich context surrounding visionary innovators.

Methodology
The research consists of an empirical study of eight individuals who were identified as visionary innovators through interviews at eight large-scale organisations with more than 250 employees* and established over 40 years ago. Based on findings from preliminary exploratory interviews and a literature study, a construct of the visionary innovator was made. From the construct, criteria for the selection of each of the individuals were determined to be the following: the individuals held a management position such that they were responsible for managing a team of two or more employees; that had a vision for the future of their company and were able to inspire others with that vision. Additionally, individuals were selected who occupied a role related to innovation, digital, design thinking or change.

The first three individuals were approached as they had experience collaborating with either my chair or supervisor. They were selected based on their leading position in innovation inside a large-scale organisation with a long-standing heritage. The remainder of the cases were selected as theoretically useful cases (Eisenhardt, 1989), therein filling the conceptual category of a visionary innovator. Thus, the individual was approached after being referred to by two employees in the organisation who were posed the question: ‘Can you indicate a leader who inspires you and has a vision on how the company should adapt the coming years?’.

The main subject of interest was the visionary innovator, as they play a pivoting role in the research. The main aim was therefore to capture rich insights of these individuals in their working environment. For each case study, information was collected through semi-structured one-hour interviews with the individual at hand. Furthermore, for data triangulation purposes (Eisenhardt, 1986; Yin, 2003; Sanders and Stappers, 2012) besides a first-hand interview with the potential visionary innovator, a team member and an employee from another department were interviewed. This raises confidence in the reliability of the results (Sanders and Stappers, 2012). However, due to the lack of time this was not done for all the eight case studies.

*As the European Union has defined Small and Medium-Enterprises as companies with <250 employees [Source: European Commission]
Interview guide

As the literature points to the importance of vision in leading change, and the construct of the visionary innovator is centred around a leader with a strong vision this was a central theme in the interviews. Furthermore, extant literature highlights the importance of support from top management which was therefore a theme of interest. To structure the interviews, the following themes were discussed:

1. **Background**: Current management role, previous roles, relations with top management.
2. **Vision**: The individual’s personal future vision for the organisation and experience in expressing the vision.
3. **Approach**: Methods to express the vision, challenges and learnings on activating others and in realising the vision.
4. **Result**: Motivation to work within the organisation and aspirations for the coming years in terms of their role and vision development.

In interviews with other employees, the main themes discussed were their perception of the leader’s vision, characteristics and actions.

As a form of methods triangulation and to dive deeper into the levels of knowledge as indicated in figure 1.13, (Sanders and Stappers, 2012), besides the interviews additional methods to study the visionary innovator were employed. Observation of the visionary innovator was done during a two-week interval at the office of one of the visionary innovators. Furthermore, the emerging theory was compared and contrasted to extant literature.

**Case study selection**

In total 13 organisations were approached. 16 potential visionary innovators were identified. From these potential visionaries, 13 were open for interviews, and accordingly a one-hour semi-structured interview took place with each of them. After a first analysis of the interviews, it was found that five did not meet all the requirements (they were either not in the position of a management function, did not have a clear vision or were not actively involved in changing their organisation). Thus, eight cases of visionary innovators were selected for further analysis.

**Data Analysis**

With the consent of the interviewees, the interviews were recorded. Analysis on the wall was chosen as a method to interpret data, as it is recommended for small sample sizes up to around seven participants and allows for the richness of the data to come out (Sanders and Stappers, 2012). Transcripts of the interviews were created, read and the most important quotes were copied onto cards and placed on the wall. The data was interpreted, related into categories and other patterns to then be used for the proposal of a theoretical framework for the visionary innovator (Sanders and Stappers, 2012). A within case study was done to identify recurring themes for each case study to determine the most important quotes, followed by a cross-case analysis to allow for general patterns to emerge (Eisenhardt, 1989).

**Overview of Cases**

An overview of each of the organisations and the interviewees is provided in figure 1.14. For anonymity of the cases, fictional names have been provided for the companies and interviewees. For an understanding and as a means of comparison between the visionary innovators, information regarding their reach in terms of team size, the number of years inside the organisation, whether they have a design background and who they report to is provided in section 1.8.15.

Interestingly, even though each of the visionary innovators sees the potential value of applying design inside the business, and elements of design such as user-centeredness and experimentation are incorporated in their vision, only three of them have a background in design. One may also observe that despite the variation in team size and experience, each of the individuals report to a member of top level management in the organisation.

**Emerging Theory**

The themes that emerged from the case study research form the basis for a framework created to illustrate the attributes of the visionary innovator. These are presented and elaborated on in the following chapter.

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**Table: Overview of Cases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Name (Fictional)</th>
<th># Personal Interviews</th>
<th># other Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FlyMe</td>
<td>Airline</td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>3 interviews</td>
<td>3+ colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopGo</td>
<td>Supermarket</td>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>3 interviews</td>
<td>2 colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FashForward</td>
<td>Fashion retail</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>1 colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronite</td>
<td>B2B consumer electronics</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>2 interviews</td>
<td>1 colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health+</td>
<td>Electronics for healthcare</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TeleCo</td>
<td>Telecom service</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>2 colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iBank</td>
<td>Commercial Bank</td>
<td>Anton</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>2 colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InsureAll</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Robin</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*figure 1.13 Uncovering different levels of knowledge, Sanders & Stappers (2012)*

*figure 1.14 Overview interviews (Note that the names of the visionary innovators and their respective organisations have been adapted for anonymity purposes.)*
1.8.15 Overview Case Studies

In this section, a brief introduction of each of the eight visionary innovators is provided. For each visionary innovator, information regarding their organisation, their background, years of experience within the organisation, their supervisor, and the team they are responsible for is provided. In Appendix A, a detailed description of each case study and corresponding quotes can be found.

- **Sam**
  - **Company:** Airline (35,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** Business Experience: 10 years at the company.
  - **Report to:** Chief Operations Officer.
  - **Responsible for:** Managing of Innovation in Operations, team of 70 employees.

- **Victor**
  - **Company:** Supermarket Chain (80,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** Business Experience: 8 years at the company.
  - **Report to:** Chief Commercial Officer.
  - **Responsible for:** Managing the innovation team, team of 5 employees.

- **Charlotte**
  - **Company:** Fashion Industry (18,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** Business Experience: 6 years at the company.
  - **Report to:** Chief Financial Officer.
  - **Responsible for:** Management of Digital innovation, team of 120 employees.

- **George**
  - **Company:** Electronic Consumer Goods (3,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** Design and Business Experience: 25 years at the company.
  - **Report to:** Chief Executiver Office.
  - **Responsible for:** Embedding Innovation and Design Thinking within the organisation.

- **Michael**
  - **Company:** Health+ (70,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** Design Experience: 11 years at the company, 6 years in current role.
  - **Report to:** VP Design.
  - **Responsible for:** Running team of 15 people, embedding Design Thinking inside the organisation.

- **David**
  - **Company:** TeleCo (14,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** Sustainability Experience: 6 years at the company.
  - **Report to:** Board of Directors.
  - **Responsible for:** Transformation towards an agile organisation. Running alternating teams across the organisation.

- **Anton**
  - **Company:** iBank (50,000+ employees)
  - **Background:** History & IT Experience: 45 years at the company.
  - **Report to:** Head of Innovation Wholesale.
  - **Responsible for:** To drive and mentor innovation in wholesale banking. Responsible for several innovation teams.

- **Robin**
  - **Company:** InsureAll (2,400+ employees)
  - **Background:** Business Experience: 10+ years at the company, 8 years in current role.
  - **Report to:** VP Design in Philips Design.
  - **Responsible for:** Innovation centre, team of 9 people, calls himself a change agent for innovation.

‘Are you designing or are you being designed?’
-Sam

‘Think Big, Start Small. Start Now.’
-Victor

‘Provide a dot on the horizon.’
-Charlotte

‘look at the world as a designer, and you say “how does this match?”’
-George

‘Collaborating like a beehive.’
-Michael

‘The peat fire has become a forest fire and everyone is dancing. That’s the goal.’
-David

‘Innovation eats Strategy for breakfast.’
-Anton

‘It is my goal to innovate the world of Insurance in such a way that in the end no insurances are necessary anymore.’
-Robin
1.9 Chapter Review

In this Chapter, the findings from the literature review and expert interviews were provided. Extant literature points to organisational ambidexterity as a crucial capability for organisations to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world. Ambidextrous organisations are able to host both exploration and exploitation activities. To transform large-scale legacy organisations towards ambidextrous organisations, a small team dedicated to exploration i.e. innovation may be set up and expanded over time. Essential factors for the success of such an innovation team is full leadership support, and fostering an experiment and learn mindset in the company.

At the basis of guiding innovation lies a long-term vision. Therefore, as the innovation team is founded a clear overarching vision must be established to drive the exploration activities and to create team energy and dedication. Extant literature further indicates that the vision for innovation must complement the overall company vision.

To build an organisational structure that hosts innovation, previous scholars advocate that organisational change must take place at various organisational levels. This structure requires new accountability systems, processes that support experimentation, a learning culture and people who are open for change. This includes leadership, and extant literature stresses that leadership is especially important for the success of innovation teams. Leaders can facilitate the successful transformation towards an innovative company by taking on new roles that support innovation.

To transform large-scale legacy organisations into modern companies, several phases of transformation may take place. Previous literary findings propose that in overcoming the barriers to change inside large-scale organisations, it is best to start small and then scale up.

A leader is required to act as the driving force of the transformation, and needs to inspire, guide and manage the innovation teams. For the transformation to gain momentum, support from the top is a must and support from the wider organisation must be attained over time.

Several types of leaders have been positively associated with innovation by previous scholars. Furthermore, supporting roles throughout the organisation to enable the innovation teams are identified. However, the findings point to a lack of empirical evidence regarding individual case descriptions of leaders in innovation. As a result, the research questions remain unanswered.

Thus the knowledge gap remains:
Who exactly are the leading individuals [visionary innovators] that drive the exploration movement and teams in large-scale legacy organisations?
What are their attributes and what challenges do they encounter?

To address this knowledge gap, and with that the research questions proposed at the beginning of this report, a case study research has been set up. The methodology and an overview of each of the eight case studies is provided.

Chapter Two

In the next chapter, the findings from within and cross-case analysis are presented and a framework for the visionary innovator is provided.
The findings from within and cross-case analysis are discussed in this chapter. Based on the emerging themes, a model is introduced that depicts the attributes of the visionary innovator. Furthermore, recurring patterns amongst the challenges encountered by the visionary innovators in leading change are discussed. The attributes and challenges are illustrated through quotes from each of the case studies. Finally, a synthesis of the findings is presented.

In this Chapter:
1. Introduction of the visionary innovator
2. Illustrations in the form of quotes
3. Synthesis
2.1 Introducing the Visionary Innovator

Several patterns have emerged from analysis of the data. The emerging patterns have been clustered into themes and compared to findings from extant literature. A summary of these findings is provided in the following section.

Based on the information collected during the interviews, four recurring themes were identified that the visionary innovators have in common. Thus, in answering the first research question:

What are the attributes of the visionary innovators that make them effective in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

The findings indicate that these attributes are: shared traits, a strong vision combined with an urge to share this vision, political and business know-how and space provided by their ‘superiors’ to move freely and carry out the first steps towards realising their vision. Each of these themes are key to overcoming the barriers to change and achieving an impact in a large-scale legacy organisation. It is the combination of these attributes that makes the visionary innovators effective in transforming their organisations towards modern companies that host continuous exploration activities.

To answer the second research question:

How can the visionary innovator be aided in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

The patterns regarding the challenges that surfaced from the that case study findings were analysed. Based on these patterns, it was found that the visionary innovators can be subdivided by the phase of organisational transformation they have achieved. During each phase, the visionary innovator faces the challenge of managing the responsibilities of leading the team to innovate.

The attributes and the challenges of the visionary innovator are further elaborated on in the following sections.

2.1.1 Attributes

The four attributes are combined in a framework for the visionary innovator, illustrated in figure 2.4. At the heart of the framework, one can find the attribute Vision, which represents the unique personality and skillset that visionary innovators share. This personality leads them to challenge the status quo and discover new opportunities for innovation for their organisation, followed by quick action to realise such opportunities. Comparing these traits to existing literature, the traits to explore and discover are described in relation to the ‘learning roles’ (Kelley and Littman, 2006), and speed (Kotter, 2014) and rapid experimentation is discussed by Ries (2017).

The next attribute depicted by the framework is Vision, which represents the visionary innovator’s ability to envision a long-term future for the organisation, which involves change. The case studies indicated that visionary innovators have developed a strong vision which they feel passionate about and are determined to pursue. In their enthusiasm regarding this vision, visionary innovators have in common an urge to share the vision and to engage others in their pursuit to realising the vision. The importance of vision is also a recurring theme in extant literature, to lead change (Kotter, 2014; 2007; Kanter, 1999a), and to motivate and guide others in innovation (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Tushman et al., 2013; Kotter, 2014).

Another common phenomenon found across the case studies is Experience. Experience represents the knowledge of internal company politics, processes and culture together with a large network of people that the visionary innovators have accumulated over time, as they occupied a range of positions within their company over the years. Furthermore, Experience also covers the business knowledge that visionary innovators possess regarding the dynamics of a corporate environment and industry expertise.

This is similar to Kotter (2014)’s description of the volunteers involved in the second operating system who are still involved in running daily business and therefore have organisational knowledge, relationships, credibility, and influence. As also found by Kotter (2014), the visionary innovator therefore understands the need for change and has the motivation and fervour to implement it. The final attribute presented in the framework is Space, which reflects the common phenomenon amongst visionary innovators of a close connection to top management. As a result, they have the mandate to act freely and full responsibility to create an exploration function within the organisation. This coincides with the mandate that Change Leaders possess (Kanter, 1996a) and the sponsors from executive management that Champions have (Kanter, 1996b; Wrigley, 2016). The importance of such support from above is also stressed in relation to successful change and the process of setting up an exploration function (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Tushman et al., 2013; Kotter, 2014; Ries, 2017).
Selection Bias

I note that in selecting individuals with a management position, it is not surprising to find that they have several years of inside-company experience, as a management position is often accomplished after several years of experience. However, the focus is therefore on experience gained inside their own organisation and the resulting organisational know-how that comes with that. Furthermore, the individuals were selected based on their leading roles in innovation. In selecting the individuals, they were purposefully selected if they were described to have an inspiring vision. Thus, it is not surprising to find that a key attribute is a vision regarding the future of their organisation. Within vision, the focus is therefore on the similarities regarding the content and the actions around the vision.

Besides the four attributes described, another recurring theme that surfaced from the case studies is self-development. The interviews indicate that the visionary innovator possesses a high amount of self-knowledge and a learning mindset. Using these characteristics, the visionary innovator develops and improves his/her attributes over time. As the visionary innovator develops further, the attainable impact within the organisation increases, as illustrated in figure 2.5. The figure depicts the ‘ripple effect’ of change throughout the organisation achieved by the visionary innovator, as the change spreads throughout the organisation. As the visionary innovator develops one or more of his/her attributes, the size of each layer grows. Thus, each visionary innovator may differ in terms of size per layer. As the size increases the impact increases.

Relating this theme to findings from literature, it can be found that the general topic of learning and reflection is frequently discussed with regards to exploration activities (Ries, 2017; Kotter, 2014; Tushman et al., 2013). More specifically, personal development and self-reflection are discussed in relation to SuperLeaders (Manz and Sims, 2001; DiLiello and Houghton, 2006).

figure 2.5 Different stages of development of the visionary innovator and varying levels of impact.
2.1.3 Phases of Change

During the cross-case analysis, several contrasts surfaced between the case studies of the visionary innovators regarding team size, support from the organisation and the organisational level at which transformation took place. Some of innovation teams have only been established less than two years prior to the interviews, an indication that some teams may be at the starting phases of transforming their organisation whereas others have advanced much further. For some case studies, the visionary innovators were interviewed at several time intervals within a six month period. In comparing the concerns and challenges expressed by some of these visionary innovators at the different time intervals, it is evident that these evolve over time as the change movement expands throughout the company. Furthermore, the findings point to the difficulty of leading change:

‘One word that I would say is representative for our department is ‘Growing Pains’, we grow and learn but it does not go without pain. (Team Member FlyMe)

In categorising the challenges encountered by the visionary innovators as described in the interviews, patterns emerged between subgroups of case studies. In comparing these patterns to extant literature, parallels could be drawn with the visionaries innovations and methods where possible. In the meantime, the visionary innovator works hard to make sure the initiative is properly supported every step of the way, by providing the necessary resources and resolving political problems.

Phase one
Phase one is the beginning of the ‘new movement’ that the visionary wants to set in motion. During this phase the visionary innovators indicate the importance of starting small, carrying out small-scale experiments and ‘staying under the radar’, because of the minimal support present throughout the organisation. Through clearly delivering value to the business and achieving the first innovation successes, the team carefully expands the amount of space provided by their executive sponsor. The visionary innovator moves from discovering opportunities, laying out the foundations of the movement through developing a vision and recruiting a team, to realisation and delivering innovations. Once the first wins are achieved, the visionary innovator promotes the wins to top level management and the rest of the organisation. As the organisation starts to believe the new way of working is viable and preferable, and the added value of innovation is increasingly understood, the visionary innovator is ready to scale up and expand his team, moving to phase 2.

Phase two
In phase two, the focus is on scaling up the movement. This involves recruiting additional ‘believers’ of the movement to join the innovation teams. Larger and bolder innovation projects can be set up. It also includes scaling up the experiments and increasing the visibility of the movement through presentations. To lay the foundations for company-wide change, the visionary innovator and the teams organise workshops with people from throughout the company to introduce them to the new way of working and foster an innovation mindset. Furthermore, to make changes permanent the visionary innovator restructures departments, of working and foster an innovation mindset.

Phase three
Phase three is about empowering the organisation and preparing to move out in the long term. The movement is widely recognised and supported throughout the organisation at all levels of management. Each of the visionary innovators explain in the interviews that ideally, in the long term their role would be obsolete such that the organisation possesses the capabilities to innovate and adapt at a continuous basis. To achieve this, the movement must be integrated within the entire organisation and be legitimised, therein receiving full recognition from the organisation. This means that the ‘deep systems’ of the organisation must be transformed; the most difficult systems to change that are deeply embedded in the legacy of the company (Ries, 2017). Furthermore, the way of working must be systemised, the vision fully understood and shared by the team and full support from the top and middle managers must be present such that the teams are fully empowered to work autonomously.

The phases of the change of the organisation are visualised in figure 2.6, together with an indication of the phase that applies to each of the case studies.
2.2 Attributes of the Visionary Innovator

The attributes identified recurred in each of the case studies of the visionary innovators. In this section, the attributes are further elaborated upon and illustrated in the form of quotes from each case study provided.

2.2.8 Self

In comparing the behavior and personalities of the eight visionary innovators, the case studies indicate four common traits. Based on these traits, I call them holistic thinkers, daring challengers, smart connectors and pragmatic doers. The combination of these traits are what lead visionary innovators to discover opportunities for innovation, followed by the realisation of innovations. Thus, the visionary innovators possess the ability to move from the discovery phase towards the active realisation phase of ideas, as illustrated in figure 2.7.

Holistic Thinkers

A key recurring theme in the interviews is that visionary innovators are strong analytical thinkers. Sam’s colleague describes him as a fast thinker: ‘He is incredibly quick at thinking far and fast ahead. I find it fascinating’. Some visionary innovators are described to possess extensive knowledge. As such, Robin explains ‘I enjoy giving lectures to students on business and innovation on some weekends’, and a colleague describes Anton as being ‘The innovation guru within iBank, he possesses so much knowledge on anything innovation related that everyone knows to find him’.

In terms of holistic thinking, George explains that he constantly considers ‘what is the impact on short term and long term, direct and indirect, to our business. Why is it relevant?’. Similarly, Michael talks holistically about Design Thinking: ‘Let’s talk thoroughly on the content of Design Thinking, yes it is complex. If you want to impact society you need to dive deeper than four simple steps.’ David describes that he prefers a holistic approach: ‘I try to address the entire context; from customer to technique to output. No one else seems to want to do that, because it touches on a lot of subject from finance, technique, compliance, management to culture.’

Charlotte summarises these traits herself, in describing the qualities and qualities she looks for in others: ‘I really believe that the people you need are very positive and think in terms of solutions instead of problems and possess the ability to see and understand the bigger picture instead of building a small solution in silo’. Such holistic thinking is discussed by Smith & Tushman (2005); O’Reilly and Tushman (2013), who describe the ability to deal with strategic contradictions between, for example, the short-term and long-term, exploration and exploitation, focus and flexibility as crucial managerial skills. Kanter (2011) further describes the ability to switch interchangeably between ‘zooming in’ and ‘zooming out’ as a necessary managerial skill.

Daring Challengers

Another common recurring theme is their courage to challenge the status quo and to take risks in trying something new, making them ‘daring challengers’. They describe their mission to challenge the current systems, processes and culture within their organisation:

It’s kind of a countermovement [...] You have this old myth from Prometheus who steals the fire from the Gods to give it to the people. I like that. That movement against the culture [...] I enjoy bringing this culture into the business, and knocking out that old-fashioned topdown command and control. (Sam)

I notice there’s a strong culture of ‘Yes-is’ and doing what you are told by the boss. I prefer that my team says ‘no, we’re not going to do that’. And adding that rebelliousness of ‘you have to use the system’ we’re not going by the system. (Victor)

I am occasionally still a bit challenged to confront people, but it is what I do. (Michael) We were very much inspired. We thought ‘How can you not see that this is the truth?’. So we came to them, to tell them how they should work. (Charlotte)

Moreover, the visionary innovators stand to challenge anyone, independent of hierarchy: ‘I challenge my CEO too sometimes, regarding his idea of Horizon 3 projects’ (George).

I went to the CEO and he asked me; what do you think the future of the digital showroom looks like? I told him we need to set up a separate department for this as the topic is too important. […] And then he literally said ‘Great, do you want to set this up?’ (Charlotte)

In line with these findings, DiLiello and Houghton (2006) state that challenging the status quo are needed to redesign bureaucratic processes. Kotter (2007) similarly describes that leaders who successfully transform businesses are able to convince managers that ‘the status quo is more dangerous than the unknown’, and should ‘encourage risk taking and non-traditional ideas and actions’. The tone of voice of some of the visionary innovators goes beyond challenging the status quo to rebellion, which goes further than descriptions from previous scholars:

If you really want to do something, you need to tell your own supervisor ‘Whatever, I am going to do it.’ You have to dare to act on the edge. (Victor)

One of the senior-VPs said to me ‘[Sam], you’re supposed to check such a presentation before you send it to us.’ And I told him ‘well, that’s something I am never going to do.’ I think that’s such incredible nonsense. (Sam)

Being a rebel is a lonely profession. It varies from ‘pinpricks’ to occasionally getting angry. Trying to see where you can influence things. But also safeguarding your own borders; what things you don’t mind and what things you decide not to go along with anymore.’ (Anton)

Victor started doing things differently and fighting the established order. If you call your team ‘The rebels’, like he did, you really send a signal out to everyone. (Team member, SuperGo)

Pragmatic Do-ers

Even though the case study findings indicate strong thinking as a common characteristic for visionary innovators, the visionary innovators themselves unanimously agree that the ability to ‘Do’ i.e. act is more important. They express focusing more on doing than thinking:

Inherently I am an introvert, boy who really loves thinking. But what I noticed, I get disappointed when nothing becomes of it. So I taught myself to think, how can I make sure my ideas get realised. Then, at some point I discovered that you need to go do it yourself. So I actually became very good at that, if I may say so. (Sam)

You can think a lot but in the end you need to start doing. So the first quarter I was in thinking mode, and then I thought ‘start now. Just do it.’ So I deflected from lots of strategising and thinking to just doing. (Victor)
We try to do as many things as possible simultaneously, because if you don’t start now with the things that you want to achieve in two years then you will not get there. So I try to combine a pragmatic approach and a more long-term approach. (Charlotte)

Do hands-on workshops, move to execution mode. Develop, develop, develop. (George)

When I see an opportunity, I just start. In my position I receive information very quickly, to determine where it hurts in the organisation. And then I jump in. (David)

This is key to what makes the visionary innovator so effective; their urge to realise their vision quickly. This emphasis on ‘doing’ is discussed by Kotter (2014), who proposes that the second operating system works with higher agility and speed ‘searching, doing, learning, and modifying’. Furthermore, Anthony describes the characteristic of moving from thinking to doing amongst Movers. This idea of moving from thinking to doing is echoed in the new way of working that the visionary innovators describe to introduce in their organisations, focused on learning by doing, and experimentation:

Silos, that’s what I literally see here. So my conviction was to encourage people to collaborate more and to create something together. To help them think up solutions and prototype them, so they go out to test them to learn what works. (Michael)

My motto is ‘Innovation eats strategy for breakfast.’ I move much quicker than any strategist can think. For me, innovation is a matter of doing. My vision in short is: Do. That translates to establishing a mindset and method that enables starting many things, quickly setting up a good team, quickly investigating whether the idea is good, and quickly quitting if it isn’t good.’ (Anton)

Smart Connectors

Another key trait that surfaced as a common theme is their ability to connect relevant developments and bringing them to the company and to bring people together for fruitful collaborations:

One of the learnings I got is that again I think differently. [...] I see connections [...] you have to continually translate what you see to others and what that connection could be to others. (George)

Flying to San Francisco and talking to a founder of a start-up, going to a conference for start-ups and going to a bar at night talking to the most interesting people. Just do it. Going to a conference where you know the airline’s CEO’s will be and then saying, ‘I want to talk to the CEO of Southwest and Jetblue as those are very cool airlines, I just want to ask him his opinion.’ Those kind of things. Just do it. (Sam)

(Victor) is a really good connector. He is always able to connect people or companies of which he knows they could benefit from each other. He is very social and thoughtful. [...] And his strength is being able to switch between all levels, from the executives to us and recruiting interns. (Team member, ShopGo)

Health+ is a company with a lot of knowledge spread across lots of buildings in rooms that do not unite. My aim was to get the people out of their rooms, bring them together, unite them. (Michael)

Externally and additionally reading a lot. [...] I always try to be occupied with innovative things that have not yet been explored, which I think could be relevant for TeleCo. (David)

The connector role is further characterised by an optimistic and opportunistic mindset:

In that sense I am very opportunist. I think you need to look at things like; where are the opportunities, what can potentially turn into something successful, try that out and see if you really have something there and then go for it with full conviction. That is my personal vision. (Anton)
2.2.9 Vision

An important factor that characterises the visionary innovator is the possession of a strong vision regarding the future of their organisation.

‘Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there’ (John P. Kotter)

Customer is Key and Power to the People

Even though in each case study the individuals describe a vision attuned to their own organisation, parallels can be drawn between their visions. As such, they stress the importance of the customer and the ability to adapt to changing customer needs. Furthermore, they believe direct and quick realisation are key to remain competitive. Also, they believe in empowering people inside the business to innovate. To do so, they actively restructure departments to remove silos, get rid of abundant decision makers and spark creativity.

I believe in the culture change of making your own people more effective. Just get rid of all those meetings and make sure you start thinking yourself, because people are capable of doing that themselves. (Victor)

I strongly believe in respecting people’s expertise. So instead of saying ‘this is what you should do, build this’ more ‘how would you solve this, what do you see?’ And using everyone’s input in that manner. (Charlotte)

I try to organise it in such a manner that everyone understands when they work, how they add value to TeleCo and to the customer. And I sincerely believe in bottom-up. Turning around control. Leadership where necessary, and managing to facilitate teams. (David)

We have a lot of fantastic colleagues […] but they determine from the office what needs to happen. I don’t believe in that. […] How can we turn that around? How can we empower the customer and the operating staff to influence what their future looks like? (Sam)

Share a compelling vision

The case studies further indicate that visionary innovators have in common an urge to actively propagate this vision and to engage others in their pursuit to realising the vision. In empathising with their audience they are able to translate their vision so that it catches on. Previous scholars describe the importance of vision to lead change (Kotter, 2014; 2007; Kanter, 1999a), and to motivate and guide others in innovation (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Tushman et al., 2013; Kotter, 2014). The visionary innovators express their awareness of the importance of providing vision:

‘Repetition does not spoil the prayer’, I better over-communicate than under-communicate, because you can’t expect the message to always land in large teams as these. (Charlotte)

It’s inspiring them and showing them also that other companies are doing it successfully. […] Again it’s not new in transformation, but it’s something that you have to be very practical at, very concrete. (George)

If you contaminate people with a compelling talk in front of 50 category managers, and tell them ‘all meetings to free up your agenda’s!’ then it reflects back in their work and they get time to experiment. (Victor)

The only thing I do is set bins on fire to get people to start running. And to enthuse them. We did a tour throughout the country to propagete it. (David)

You need to tell and show them consistently […] Especially make sure that you give them examples and lessons learned. Show them successes, it’s

If you tell a completely visionary story that’s almost science fiction, people will not follow. You need to tell an interesting story that is thoroughly thought out, is spot on and can be told with much enthusiasm (Michael)

You need to sell your story there, so I try to make people dream, dream along with the story I am telling. (Sam)

I’m not going to try to get people to tag along when they aren’t interested. If people are interested in joining my vision, they will come to me. That’s what I see when I give internal talks, afterwards a new group of people comes over and asks how they can join. (Robin)

A source of Inspiration

Finally, what further surfaced during the interviews is that visionary innovators feel passionate and determined about their vision, similar to the volunteers described by Kotter (2014) who bring energy, commitment and enthusiasm to the network. As a result they have an inspiring quality about them, as described by their colleagues:

It’s incredible how many times people meet Sam for the first time and afterwards they say to me ‘wow, he is such an inspiring man!’ (Colleague, FlyMe)

I find Charlotte a highly inspiring person. An inspiring person for me is someone who is authentic and autonomous. And she really fought to get where she is now. (Colleague, FastForward)

I find David inspiring, because he is really authentic but at the same time he clearly has a passion for what he is doing and brings energy. (Colleague, TeleCo)

Noticing things such as ‘Hey, if we do this, we need to talk to this person and keep this other person in the loop to be able to set up this project with success.’ That’s the type of people you need. (Charlotte)
2.2.10 Experience

Similar to the change agent, champion and catalyst (Kanter, 1999b; Matthews et al., 2012; Ries, 2007; Martin, 2011; Wrigley, 2016), the visionary innovator emerges from inside the organisation. As a result, he/she possesses organisational knowledge and connections to provide protection from organisational politics and business knowledge to keep the teams moving within the context of the relentless big corporation.

Motivation

In comparing the experience of the visionary innovators, we found that they each have more than five years of experience inside their organisation. This experience is what triggered their motivation to initiate change inside their organisation: ‘I worked beside our CCO. I saw how it goes in terms of culture towards her vs. me. Everyone is used to nodding yes. But I like thinking differently.’ (Victor)

And the more I noticed, the way we worked was comparable to an oil tanker. If TeleCo wants to keep the right to exist, it must become a more flexible and flatter organisation. (David)

Such intrinsic motivation triggered by years of inside-company experience is not evident in the leadership roles covered in the literature analysis.

Deliver

Over the years, the visionary innovators have accumulated specific and general business expertise. The interviews indicate that they are well-aware of the urgency to run a business and deliver in the short term as is expected in large-scale organisations:

Go go go, win with everything we’ve got because we are part of a corporate, and we want to get our way because otherwise we cannot realise our dream. (Sam)

In his previous roles [Victor] learned what it is like to have to make profits. And also to collect evidence that something works and will yield profits and not only costs, because he knows then it is not going to last. (Team member, SuperGo)

In these large-scale corporates you often do not have two years’ time to deliver nothing, so you need to deliver in the short term. (Victor)

We are even setting up our own startup, so we can sell it to other companies. [...] We hope next year we have our first client. (Charlotte)

Which illustrates how she puts to use her business knowhow to commercialise one of the innovation projects developed.

Political Savvy & Pragmatic Solutions

Furthermore, during years inside their own organisation they accumulated political knowledge, as Sam’s colleague describes: ‘[Sam] is extremely good at politics. Don’t forget that he is one of the youngest directors at FlyMe, ever. There’s a reason for that.’ As a result, visionary innovators share an ability to dream big and to translate ideas into the corporate language and actions required to receive support from executive management.

For example, they describe purposefully focussing on innovations that fit within the organisation’s overall vision:

So this is my dream in the future, but first let’s go back to the company’s strategy, because then we have another hook and then everyone can say it falls within the strategy. And experiments help too. And that’s it language you have to understand. (Victor)

The [name of the department], that’s also a pragmatic solution of mine [...]. We received a lot of push-back from the organisation and by wrapping it as a ‘support department’, people thought ‘fine, there’s only so much harm they can do’. So then we positioned it that way, to then continue powerfully to ensure we could realise that change. (Sam)

My main focus and my biggest allies, and I’m creating them, will be the business leads [...] because they have the budgets to make things happen, make changes in organisations. (George)

Such translation of new ideas to the organisation’s vision is also described by Wrigley (2016) as a capability of Design Champions. Furthermore, business know-how is described as essential by Kanter (1999a) and Kotter (2007). Deep organisational knowledge is described as an attribute of Network Champions (Kanter, 1999b). Additionally, organisational and political understanding are described as required capabilities for Change Leaders (Kanter, 1999a).

Provide Cover

Another common phenomenon found across the case studies is the large network of people that the visionary innovators have accumulated over time. The combination of their network and political know-how gives them influence within the organisation to remove obstacles that resist the change they pursue. Moreover, they are skilled at empowering the teams to innovate:

[Sam] is very good at protecting his people against bureaucratic hassles. [...] That means he does not bother us with abstract objectives from the top such as KPI’s. (Team member, FlyMe)

In most cases, [Victor] clears the road for us. He is a kind of gatekeeper that literally protects us from all the barriers. (Team member, ShopGo)

I jump in in the instances where it gets really tough, where people get stuck. Sometimes it’s mediation. (David)

Your responsibility increasingly shifts to telling narratives and internal company politics to keep your growing teams running. (Michael)

My role is to support the innovation teams, to help them when they run into obstacles. (Anton)

Sam excels at the political game and has the influence to make decisions. He has the credibility to play the highest boss, so when a team is up against something they can’t beat, they need Sam. (Team member, FlyMe)

I make sure the middle management does not get in the way to innovation. They are often counteractive because they have short-term goals and therefore do not feel like cooperating. (Robin)

In line with these findings, Kelley and Littman (2006) describe the ‘Organising Roles’ required to play the political game and provide the resources and attention for innovation teams. Furthermore, an important ability for Change Leaders and Champions is the ability to provide protection from organisational barriers (Ries, 2017; Wrigley, 2016; Matthews et al., 2012; Kanter, 1999a; 1999b). Kanter (1999a) further describes that change leaders must transfer ownership to a working team, ‘provide coaching and resources and patrol the boundaries within which the team can freely operate’. They must ‘set boundaries for collaboration, autonomy and sharing of knowledge and ideas’. Kotter and Cohen (2002) describe empowerment as being ‘all about removing barriers’. Furthermore, DiLiello and Houghton (2006) advocate environments that support innovation through encouraging autonomy.
### 2.2.11 Space

The fourth recurring attribute amongst visionary innovators is space to realise their vision. Each of the four individuals receive support from executive management to enact their vision. Such mandate is essential to achieve the impact they desire: [My CCO] is not the easiest person. But she gives me space, and I have to take that space. (Victor)

The believer community is growing bigger and bigger, because also it’s endorsed from the top! Because again the CEO is pushing it too […] so I’m not alone in this. (George)

It grew organically, but because I report directly to the executive board so there is little choice not to do so. (Sam)

And that is a big advantage and you will see this in many large companies, you need management support, without that one sponsor in the top who believes 100% in your idea, it is tough. We were in luck with a CEO that really.. he believes in it. (Charlotte)

I need support from the top level. If I don’t, I can’t do my job. I need protection from the board of advisors. That’s why I can do what I do. But I always try to postpone playing the power card to win trust. (David)

In the case of Robin, the mandate was clearly present. During a visit to the innovation centre to interview Robin, the company CEO was there on his occasional visit to the center to show his full support. Such mandate is described in relation to Change Leaders (Kanter, 1996a) and by Kotter (2007) who recommends a coalition with enough power to lead the change. The Champion is described to have sponsors from executive management (Kanter, 1996b; Wrigley, 2016). However, Change Agents and Innovation Catalysts are not necessarily in possession of such power. Kotter (2014) stresses the importance of an organisation’s leadership to launch and maintain such an exploration network.

It must be the executive committee that creates it and explicitly support it.

**Legitimisation**

Finally, the visionary innovators indicate how the next step is to legitimise and professionalise the innovation team and the processes they introduce:

With the arrival of the new CEO 4,5 years ago, he boosted innovation within the company. And then you enter the phase where you need to organise and control. We are currently in that conflict. […] How can you make room for the disruptive nature of innovation in a company, but ensure you do not over-organise and over-control it? (Anton)

Within Health+ everyone understand that the clever process we designed represents Health+ Design. So it is really put forward as the official way and professionalised. (Michael)

The managing board now also states that our way of working is they way for change within FlyMe. (Sam)

Similarly, extant literature discusses how exploration must be treated as a legitimate part of the organisation and be explicitly supported by executive management (Kotter, 2014; Reis, 2017).

### 2.3 Reflection and Development

The case study interviews indicate that the visionary innovators value reflection highly, and aim to dedicate part of their time reflecting. Moreover, they indicate that they value reflection with team members. Instead of seeing themselves as a leader, they prefer to see themselves as a coach.

#### Self-Reflection and Development

On a personal level each of the individuals value learning and reflection highly. They spend weekly moments reflecting on their vision, strengths and weaknesses and aim to constantly develop themselves: I tend to reflect on my role, my actions and how I appeared. I really believe that you can’t be a good leader without understanding who you are. (Charlotte)

I really enjoy taking a moment to reflect on what I think should happen next and that can concern anything: from paving stones to world peace. And that’s what actually gives me energy. (Sam)

The act of mapping out where I am in a trajectory, your strengths and weaknesses and where you need to turn to help is very valuable. (Michael)

That is also a learning experience. And then you go to the next step. […] You are never done learning. (David)

Furthermore, they contemplate new sources of inspiration externally and internally. As such, they are not bounded to the limits of their organisation. The small technical side, I’m trying to be on the business side, and also try to do the design side. Trying to have a global view, I read a lot in those three components this gives me the richness to be able to talk with our business leads. (George)

Fly to San Francisco to talk to the founder of a start-up, a conference […] And then on the contrary also talk to the plumber, to see if I am able to explain to him that same dream I have and then check his response and then learn from it. […] I try to do that every day. (Sam)

I tend to marinate it for a while. I use Wunderlist and literally when I read an article or talk to someone and I think ‘That’s interesting, I need to put that in my vision document’ then I write it down. (Charlotte)

The self-leadership literature advocates that an effective leader must ‘have an intimate knowledge of oneself and must be able to self-reflect, self-evaluate and self-direct’ (DiLiello and Houghton, 2006). Furthermore, Kanter (1999a, 1999b) stresses the importance of improving competence by learning, and connections in the form of collaborations. This corresponds to the reflection and development of the visionary innovator, and their contemplation of information outside the organisation.

**Coach**

Part of their vision is also to stimulate others in ‘thinking big’. Thus, a common theme is their ability to coach others: ‘You need to facilitate and coach them so that they become masters’ (George).

I have the ambition to help the young millennial generation spread their wings with their own talents. […] I ask him what do you want to learn? You do that. I prefer to have my people develop their skills than to put them in a cage. (Victor)

That’s leadership, go somewhere that otherwise does not exist, search for people who believe in it and who develop and improve from the journey in itself. And that’s how I try to shape it. (Sam)

I set up a mentor programme for students. I am an Innovator for life and I want others to be able to experience that too. (Anton)
I find Sam very inspiring [...] he really listens to his people and does not tell them how it should be done. He brings out the best in people. (Team member, FlyMe)

One day you’re a coach, one day you’re a consultant, the next day a mediator. I feel comfortable with that as it gives me freedom to learn new things. (David)

This coaching ability also includes stimulating others to adopt the new way of working and understand the value of learning. To facilitate the teams to experiment and learn, the visionary innovators create an environment and a culture that fosters and rewards experimentation. We each have our own responsibility, our own freedom and our full trust in each other. That gives us a lot of intrinsic motivation to go for it all the way. (Simone)

I don’t know if I’m a leader. I would say... no leader isn’t the right word. I see myself as the driving force to a team that is accelerating. (Victor)

When people mess up. She prefers to think in terms of solutions instead of holding people accountable. Then she says ‘That’s not so clever, so instead try to do it like this’. (Team member FashForward)

The change lies in getting people to dare, and that as a result of that they do not get punished. Such that in case they show guts, they are free to fail. (Team member, SuperGo)

Such a coaching mindset recurs in extant literature. As such, SuperLeaders are described to bring out the best in others (DiLillo and Houghton, 2006) and Change Leaders to ‘bring confidence in others’, encouraging them (Kanter, 1999a). The innovation catalyst and change agents use coaching to embed design and change into the organisation. Similarly, to support innovation activities Ries (2017) discusses the appointment of internal coaches that are a guiding, honest and committed. Furthermore, to guide teams through the adoption process of new ways of working Ries (2017) states that leaders need to take on the role of a coach, shifting their leadership role from directive to open and inquisitive.

2.4 Comparison to literature

Similar to the change agent (Kanter 1996b; Ries, 2017), catalyst (Martin, 2011; Wrigley, 2016) and champions (Kanter, 1999b; Matthews, Bucolo & Wrigley 2012) the visionary innovators come from inside the organisation. As a result, they possess organisational knowledge and connections to provide protection from organisational politics. In contrast to the catalysts and the champion, the visionary does not necessarily possess design capabilities. Compared to other leaders described in the literature (figure 2.12), holistic thinking and pragmatic action-orientation are unique for visionary innovators. The combination of these traits is what characterises the visionary innovator’s ability to switch between discovery of innovation opportunities and rapid realisation of innovations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader Attributes</th>
<th>SuperLeader</th>
<th>Change Leader</th>
<th>Innovation Catalyst</th>
<th>Change Agent</th>
<th>Champion</th>
<th>Visionary Innovator</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Connector &amp; Collaborator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vision &amp; Inspirer</td>
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<td>Communicator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political protector &amp; Enabler</td>
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<td>Coach</td>
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<td>Learner &amp; reflecter</td>
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<td>Design focus</td>
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*Applies only the champions described by Wrigley (2016) and Matthews et al. (2012).

figure 2.12 Comparison of leadership roles
2.5 Phases of Change

Cross-case analysis of the data indicated a pattern in the challenges visionary innovators encounter as their change movement expands throughout the organisation. To begin, they start small and surround themselves with a select group of believers i.e. ‘like-minded’ people to join in the change. The visionary innovator dreams big and thus aims to create a change that will impact the entire organisation, if not the entire industry. As the visionary innovator works towards this goal, the team grows and the change gradually spreads throughout the organisation. The final goal is to integrate the change within the company culture in such a way that the role of the visionary innovator becomes obsolete.

2.4.13 Phase one: Building a critical mass

Phase one mark the beginning of the ‘new movement’ that the visionary innovator establishes. In the interviews, the visionary innovators indicate the importance of starting small during this phase, carrying out small-scale experiments and ‘staying under the radar’.

And that is the way to tackle it. First, you take a small part, then you start, and then you can use those learnings to tackle the greater part. (Charlotte)

Sometimes you think ‘This is never going to succeed’ and yet you progress step by step. (Anton)

By trying not to appear too visionary, Victor now tries to get things done. So instead of taking things very far from now, he tries to do things in the present so then later on he can do more long-term things. (Team member, Victor)

The focus is very much on delivering value to the business and collecting the proof that innovation and the new way of working is beneficial to company: ‘You need to tell and show them. Especially make sure that you give them examples and lessons learned. Show them successes, it’s the proof of the pudding with which you show them.’ (Anton)

During this phase, the number of followers of the movement is small. Besides the executive sponsor, the support from top and middle level management is minimal. As a result, during this phase the visionary innovators are met with a lot of friction and encounter setback after setback. The interviews indicate how every change in this phase requires a fight. To survive this phase one must have a ‘very long breath’:

In the end, it’s that freedom that you need to fight for. (Victor)

Chris still needs to fight hard for the things he wants to do. (Team Member, SuperGo)

And I think that is the crux, just don’t get frustrated. As long as you are not bothered by it and just start doing and think ‘whatever, I don’t need anyone’. (Victor)

Kotter (2014) describes such perseverance in the need to ‘Never let up’. Furthermore, in the expert interview Zijlregtop describes the importance of perseverance.

Challenges

1. Unsystematic approach

The visionary innovator is very much learning by doing, and is in the middle of prototyping a new way of working for the team and the rest of the organisational systems. This creates challenges for everyone concerned, especially for the team, which results in more requests for explanations and guidance.

2. Remain inspired as energy drowns

It can be challenging when to remain inspired and energised when the visionary innovator and his team are met by setback after setback.

3. Highly dependent team

The team does not yet function independent of the visionary innovator. They highly depend on the visionary innovator to provide vision and inspiration for guidance. Furthermore, as the support from the rest of the organisation is minimal, the team highly depends on his/her powers to protect them from political obstacles.

Besides successfully overcoming the resistential forces they are met with, the visionary innovators and their team members highlight the following challenges during this phase:

Unsystematic approach

Because the focus lies on quick wins and successes to supplement the collection of evidence, the visionary innovators are so preoccupied with ‘Doing’ and experimenting, that they sometimes forget to reflect and relate their actions back to a long-term plan. Furthermore, in all cases studies the visionary innovators are developing a new way of working that arises from the vision they have formed. This way of working is also new to them, and in this phase they are still prototyping and testing that way of working. This can be challenging to the team, as it is more difficult to teach the team how to work when a systemic way of working is not present.

I don’t know if everything goes according to a big master plan. I find it hard, because they are also inventing the wheel, so I find it difficult to say what their way of working is. They do not have a clear way of working, like the lean startup method or something. (Team member, Victor)

Energy drowns

Because of the lack of support for the change movement within this phase, the visionary innovators further indicate that it can be hard to remain inspired and energised:

He recently said that he does not feel that he is still inspired by others here. He just plays his game, it’s not that he gets support or new energy. (Team member, Victor)

A one-man show

During this phase, as the visionary innovator has only recently founded the change movement and attracted a small team of believers the findings point to the importance of the role of the visionary innovator to keep the movement going. The team is highly dependent on the visionary innovator’s
2.5.1 Phase two: Scaling Up

In examining the case studies of the visionary innovators that are in phase two of the organisational transformation, it can be found that this phase is fully focused on scaling up the movement. This involves recruiting additional ‘believers’ to join the movement:

Those ambassadors, I see them, they approach me. That’s why I had that talk for those 80 people, you see 10 leads result from it. So it’s a bit of ‘spread the word’. (Victor)

We are building more and more of those toolboxes inside some of the coaches, some of the internal coaches or supporters... I cannot call them coaches but it’s more the believers, and those believer community were bigger and bigger, because also it’s endorsed from the top! Because again the CEO is pushing it also, he’s challenging in the status quo and the pressure is getting even higher and higher, so I’m not alone in this. (George)

Scaling up also entails involving the wider company, to lay the foundations for company-wide change. This is done through workshops throughout the company to introduce everyone to the new way of working, fostering an innovation mindset: we do hands-on, workshops. So, I mean we’re coming together in workshops sessions where they see the tools for the first time, and they get the the power of those tools. (George)

Furthermore, support from management grows as a result of the credibility achieved with a portfolio of previous successes. Increased support translates to increased resources and space to carry out larger and bolder innovation projects. This helps to increase the visibility of the movement, which the visionary innovator further increases through presentations:

At this point in time, the emphasis is very much on harvesting in terms of communication. (Michael)

2.5.2 Challenges

In the meantime, the visionary innovator works hard to ensure that the innovation teams are enabled to work and deliver in carrying out the necessary managerial tasks. This poses additional challenges, as described by the visionary innovators:

Increased managerial tasks, keeping the essence in sight

As the role becomes increasingly managerial, the visionary innovators discuss how it can be challenging to remain inspired as the role moves away from the essence that triggered their motivation for change in the first place:

You transform into a manager having to maintain the team in a political company, getting stuck with meetings, employee performance discussions, sales talks and internal politics to enable the growing teams. You start doing increasingly many tasks that are far from your initial passion. For me, the innovation and consequently the motivation gets lost. (Michael)

Keep growing at various levels

Another challenge that recurred in the interviews is the challenge to ensure that the movement continues to grow. The growth is important to get closer towards realising the visionary innovator’s vision, but it also serves as a way of keeping the visionary innovator challenged and therein inspired:

350 people sounds like a lot, but within a company of 80,000 it isn’t. [...] So you must go up to the HR manager to say ‘we’re going to do this for all the 80,000 people’ only then the next challenge is there. (Michael)

Right now, the real emphasis lies on making clear to the world that we are good at it. It has become more of a communication story and more and more requests to give presentations and write articles, and that doesn’t really excite me. (Michael)

Moving beyond tools to culture

Another challenge discussed by the visionary innovators in this phase is the lack of depth of the discussion around the introduction of the new way of working. They indicate that it is difficult to move beyond the use of tools and processes to the mindset with which the tools are to be required. This makes it hard to achieve change at the cultural level within the organisation:

Ask people to use a tool, okay, they will do it and just use it only as a process, without understanding that actually the conversation is more important than just filling in the boxes. (George)

Design Thinking is a very powerful tool, but if you are not a designer by heart and you haven’t been doing it for a long time, chances are that it will become a kind of superficial trick [...]. if you really want to have an impact on society, you have to do it more profoundly, four simple steps are not enough. (Michael)

Challenges:

1. Remain inspired despite managerial tasks

As the role becomes increasingly managerial, the danger is that the visionary innovator can become less inspired.

2. Risk of stagnation: keep growing

For the successful transformation of the entire organisation, the movement must continue to grow. Growth also fuels the learnings and challenges that visionary innovators need to remain inspired. However, growing at an increasing scale is difficult.

3. Moving beyond tools to culture

To achieve organisational change, it is necessary to transform not only the processes but also the culture. The visionary innovators find it hard to elevate the discussion beyond tools to mindset to culture.
2.5.3 Phase three: Empowering

During the final phase of change, the goal is to prepare to take a step back. The visionary innovators describe how in this phase the movement has received recognition throughout the entire organisation. As such, volunteers sign up to join the movement on a continuous basis. The growth continuous is a more organic fashion, as the entire organisation starts to participate.

The spirit is out of the bottle within TeleCo. People have understood it now. There have been many enthusiastic reactions, and initiatives emerge. It’s no longer mechanic but organic, it’s growing. We see groups are starting up, meet-ups and innovation sessions are being organised. People voluntarily draw people in from other areas. (David)

A recurring theme across all eight case studies is the idea of ‘obsoleteness’. The visionary innovators state that ideally in the long term their role would be obsolete such that the organisation possesses the capabilities to innovate and adapt at a continuous basis even when they are not around.

To achieve the obsoleteness, the change must be legitimised, therein receiving full recognition from the organisation.

The ultimate goal is to make my role obsolete. I’d like to be able to pack my things and see the company innovate without me. (Victor)

You need to get rid of people like me as soon as possible. [...] a phase will come during which everyone will be doin it. Then you have already made the impact. The flywheels are turning. The peat fire has become a forest fire and everyone is dancing. That’s the goal. Then my goal is complete. (David)

Furthermore, the change must become permanent. To do so, the ‘deep’ legacy systems of the organisation must be changed (Ries, 2017). This includes changing the HR department and the recruitment systems. Even though the idea that HR must change to facilitate full organisational change is widely discussed in the interviews, none of the case studies provide evidence of a transformation that has progressed that far.

Of course it does not help, if an HR department says you cannot implement it broadly throughout the company. (Michael)

That’s the crux of the matter. [...] when the organisation isn’t able to free up people for innovation because of HR issues. And HR doesn’t have affinity with innovation. (Anton)

The HR team is now accommodating that mindset, so we can see that within HR they are looking at the future and new ways of working. [...] I think that change needs to come from HR. (Victor)

2.5.4 Challenges

As the team grows and the scale of the innovation projects grow, the visibility of the team increases. With increased visibility, the demand for innovation projects increases and the visionary innovators becomes increasingly busy. This poses additional challenges:

The Celebrity Effect: less face time for the teams

With increased visibility of the team, the visionary innovator also becomes increasingly visible. The case studies illustrate how the visionary innovators are flown in at various offices of the organisation around the world to teach about innovation and tell their story. As a result, the visionary innovator is away more often, and when they are around they are very busy.

‘Some people in the team have a hard time accepting that Charlotte is away more often now. We’re sort of spoiled. She is the source of our inspiration, people like to have her close.’ (Team member, FashForward)

Apparantly, people find it difficult to get hold of him, to get 5-10 minutes of his time. (Team member, FlyMe)

Leading a growing team with little time

As the visionary innovator has an increasing number of stakeholders to handle and responsibilities to fulfill, it becomes difficult to keep an overview and manage the growing team: I notice that it’s an obstacle to get people engaged in a good way, because it is almost physically impossible to be able to talk to everyone all day, so at a certain point you have to ensure that you have an amplifier to be able to get your message across properly [...] so that is a challenge now. (Charlotte)

Sam is so busy, that clarifying is not a priority for him. He is way ahead, and tends to forget that people need to run after him and that he needs to transfer his vision and provide direction. (Team member, FlyMe)

Challenges:

1. Keep the team inspired
   - As the visionary innovator is away more often to implement change in other parts of the organisation, less attention goes to nurturing the team. This makes it harder to keep them inspired.

2. Leading a growing team
   - As the teams becomes bigger it is a challenge to properly provide vision and coaching and other forms of leaderships expected from the visionary innovator.

3. Prevent old managerial habits
   - The visionary innovators indicate that they value ‘doing’ highly and that they aim to get rid of unnecessary meetings, as people sit around too much all day. However, when colleagues were asked to describe the schedules of some of the visionary innovators, it turned out that they tend to be occupied with meetings all day. As such, as the stakeholders involved and the teams increase, the number of meetings inherently increase. Furthermore, the visionary innovator describe the difficulty of not relapsing into old managerial habits:
     - Throughout the entire day, Sam is mainly engaged in meetings, because an important part of the job is aligning people (team member, FlyMe).
     - Sometimes, I find it difficult not to enter a context and tell everybody what needs to be done. Because that would be commanding and controlling. But that’s a form of leadership that I am very good at. (Sam)
2.6 Synthesising findings

In bringing together the attributes of the visionary innovators and the three phases of organisational change that they work hard to realise, and relating these findings to the findings from literature, I conclude that visionary innovators undertake a specific set of actions that makes them successful in overcoming the challenges to change. These are further described in the following section.

To overcome the many challenges to change within large-scale legacy organisations, visionary innovators undertake a range of actions to guide, enable and implement the change. In comparing these actions to the phases of change management (Kotter, 2014; 2007; Kanter, 1996a) and innovation processes (Ries, 2017; Calabretta et al., 2016; Kotter, 2014; Kelley and Littman, 2006), a model to depict the actions of the visionary innovator is presented in Figure 2.5.

Discover: Think & Challenge
To begin, through their open personality and ability to make connections, visionary innovators discover new trends and developments. In the interviews, they describe purposefully reading and making external trips to discover new things. Furthermore, their daring personality and years of experience leads them to challenge the status quo within the organisation. Thus, they discover innovation opportunities for their organisation. This initial step coincides with the ‘search’ and ‘learn’ step described by Kotter (2014) and Kelley and Littman (2006), which are focused on exploring a new perspective.

Envision & Inspire
Next, the visionary innovators apply their strategic ability and business experience to translate the opportunities into a long-term vision aligned with the organisation, followed by a strategic plan. They are skilled at sharing their vision in a compelling way, and occasionally take the stage to present their vision in front of an audience. Through their passion and conviction, the visionary innovators inspire others to join in their movement to change, in this respect being good Change Leaders (Kanter, 1999a). This step coincides with the ‘envision and inspire’ step (Calabretta et al., 2016) and Kotter (2014)’s accelerator steps ‘developing a change vision and communicating the vision for buy-in’. Moreover, the step is in line with the notion that vision must be developed first, to guide the innovation process (Ries, 2017).

Realise: Connect, Do & Reflect
The visionary innovators are quick to move from discovery to realisation of the opportunity, which is represented by the next step. In the interviews, the visionary innovators describe this as moving from ‘thinking to doing’ and ‘being pragmatic’. During this step, the visionary innovators and their teams innovate iteratively and focus on experimentation and learning. On a higher level, the visionary innovator experiments with new accountability measures, processes, tools and methods, team structures and recruitment. The focus during this step is on acting quickly, even if it is in the form of a small experiment, followed by reflecting and learning. This is the iterative act of innovating (Ries, 2017; Kotter, 2014; Tushman et. al, 2013).

Organise & Enable
Subsequently, the visionary innovators remove obstacles that they encounter as they propose and carry out the changes. These are problems due to politics, legacy systems, frictions with the wider organisation and lack of resources. By employing their political savvy, knowledge of company processes and their leverage with top management, they remove obstacles and acquire the necessary resources to enable their teams to innovate. The focus here is on empowering others in providing protection. This step is described as Organising by Kelley and Littman (2006), and empowering broad-based action (Kotter, 2014), and is described to be an important ability for Change Leaders and Champions (Ries, 2017; Wrigley, 2016; Matthews et al., 2012; Kanter, 1999a; 1999b).

Deliver & Celebrate
The next step is to actually deliver, and prove the value of innovation to top management. The visionary innovators describe the importance of running the business and bearing fruits of innovation once the new innovation function is in place. To win over ‘skeptics’ and convince the top level management of the organisation, they describe that “You need to walk the talk” before any change can become non-temporary. O’Reilly and Tushman (2013) describe such a phenomenon as that the exploration function needs to achieve economic and political legitimacy. Through the support from executive management and their political and business know-how, the visionary innovators are able to get ideas realised and deliver.

As surfaced during the case study research, this step comes paired with celebrating wins both to increase visibility of the innovation teams and their achievements, and to keep everyone energised during ‘the bumpy road to transformation’. As innovation and bringing change is met with a lot of resistance, most visionary innovators describe that it is important not to get frustrated and to persevere. Similarly, Kotter (2014) describes the accelerator steps of celebrating short-term wins and never letting up.

Legitimise & Grow
Finally, as the changes brought by the visionary innovator have delivered some successes and become increasingly recognised throughout the organisation, the team becomes increasingly legitimised. The visionary innovators describe in their interviews their aim to make their own role obsolete; their aspiration is that the organisation is able to take over their roles and is able to innovate on a continuous basis without their supervision. Thus, this involves integrating the exploration function company-wide (O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013; Kotter, 2014; Ries, 2017). The wider company needs to be involved and educated to make the change non-temporary and to embed the new way of working in the entire company (Ries, 2017; Calabretta et al., 2016).

Reflect & Learn, Iterate
The six actions as described to be undertaken by the visionary innovator are not exactly consequent, but take place throughout the entire change process set in motion by the visionary innovator. As such, even though a vision is developed first to guide the change movement, the innovation initiatives and the required political maneuvering, the vision is also further developed over time and must be present throughout the entire change process.

The entire process from discovering an opportunity so succesful in change towards an innovative organisation, followed by a strategic plan. They are skilled at sharing their vision in a compelling way, and occasionally take the stage to present their vision in front of an audience. Through their passion and conviction, the visionary innovators inspire others to join in their movement to change, in this respect being good Change Leaders (Kanter, 1999a). This step coincides with the ‘envision and inspire’ step (Calabretta et al., 2016) and Kotter (2014)’s accelerator steps ‘developing a change vision and communicating the vision for buy-in’. Moreover, the step is in line with the notion that vision must be developed first, to guide the innovation process (Ries, 2017).
visionary innovators enact multiple times. As the innovators start small during the first phase of change, they focus on a change that is ‘within their circle of influence’. As the first successes are achieved, they move to phase two and expand the change movement. The actions in figure 2.5 can be interpreted as an iterative cycle. As a cycle is completed, one phase of the change process is completed. When the visionary innovators continue, they develop new ideas, their vision, enlarge their teams and the change spreads more widely throughout the company. This is in accordance with the idea of ‘building momentum’ for the exploration function described by previous scholars (Kotter, 2014; O’Reilly and Tushman, 2013).

The most important insights gathered from the case study analysis and literature studies are combined in a customer journey for the visionary innovator and his/her team, as they progress through the three phases of change (presented on the next page). Based on the challenges encountered during the journey, several opportunities can be identified where the journey can be improved, which are discussed in this section.

### Phase 1
Because the visionary innovator is still experimenting in his approach in this phase, the processes and the relation of projects to the overall vision are not always clear to the team. As a result, they depend on the visionary innovator to give direction, instructions and coaching of the processes. Furthermore, the team does not yet have the credibility to resolve any obstacles encountered. They are therefore fully dependent on the visionary innovator to remove obstacles. Finally, in this phase as the team is small and very close everyone’s mood influences the team atmosphere. Letting up after setbacks can bring everyone.

**Opportunities:**
- How to help the visionary innovator carry out managerial tasks efficiently to free up time?
- How to help the visionary innovator spend less time on politics and more on the things he enjoys most?
- How to help and motivate the visionary innovator in training the wider company?

### Phase 2
As the team grows, the visionary innovator needs to get used to the idea that managerial tasks, PR and recruitment costs an increasing part of his/her time. Furthermore, time needs to be spend on removing political obstacles to enable the teams to innovate. As a result, little time is left to reflect, think, be engaged in the innovation and other activities he/she is passionate about. This can lower his/her level of motivation. Furthermore, to push the growth of the movement throughout the company a lot of time needs to be spent going to involving the wider company in the form of workshops, trainings and coaching. This costs a lot of energy.

**Opportunities:**
- How to ensure a shared vision guides the team with less time to communicate it?
- How to share time and attention amongst the team?
- How to celebrate wins, and provide the leadership style desired by the team?
The Journey of the Visionary Innovator and the team

Phase One: Start Small: Build Critical Mass
- Start Small and Under the Radar
- Collect Proof
- Fight & Persevere

Phase Two: Scale Up: Expand the movement
- Recruit Believers
- Involve the wider company
- Increase Visibility

Phase Three: Empower: Prepare to move out
- Gain Momentum
- Tackle Deep Systems
- Make Role Obsolete

Goal
- The focus during each phase of change
- The actions carried out to create change and innovate
- The challenges encountered during each phase of change
- Levels of motivation
- The current situation
- Areas where the level of motivation is low, or a gap is present between the visionary innovator and the team.

Opportunities
- As pressure to deliver increases, there is no time to celebrate and the visionary innovator tends to exert more control on the teams.
- How to help the visionary innovator celebrate wins, and provide the leadership style desired by the team?
- Gap between the team and the visionary innovator, as the team grows bigger. It is hard to provide enough attention, coaching and guidance to everyone.
- How to share time and attention amongst the team?

Challenges
- The challenges encountered during each phase of change
- Unsystematic approach
- Highly dependent team
- Remain inspired as energy drowns
- Remain inspired as managerial tasks increase
- Prevent stagnation: keep growing at several levels
- Keep team inspired with less face time
- Keep overview and provide attention to growing team
- Prevent relapse to ‘old’ managerial habits

Levels of motivation
- +
- -

Visionary Innovator
- The visionary innovator and the team. As the unsystematic approach is not always clear the team depends on the visionary innovator to provide instructions. How can the team be empowered despite the unsystematic approach?
- The managerial tasks, PR and recruitment costs most of the visionary innovator’s time. How to help the visionary innovator carry out managerial tasks efficiently to free up time?
- A lot of energy goes to involving & training the wider company. This is hard and costs a lot of energy as there are many skeptics. How to help and motivate the visionary innovator in training the wider company?
- Gap between the team and the visionary innovator, due to lack of time and priority on communicating the vision. How to ensure a shared vision guides the team with less time to communicate it?

Team
- Gap between the visionary innovator and the team. As the team cannot work without the clearance of obstacles by the visionary innovator, it is hard to take ownership. How can the visionary innovator enable the teams to work independently?
- Organising and enabling takes up a lot of the visionary innovator’s time. There is no time to reflect, innovate and other activities he enjoys. How to help the visionary innovator spend less time on politics and more on the things he enjoys most?
- As the team grows bigger, it is hard to provide enough attention, coaching and guidance to everyone. How to share time and attention amongst the team?

The focus during each phase of change
- The unsystematic approach is not always clear the team depends on the visionary innovator to provide instructions.

How can the team be empowered despite the unsystematic approach?

How to help the visionary innovator carry out managerial tasks efficiently to free up time?

As pressure to deliver increases, there is no time to celebrate and the visionary innovator tends to exert more control on the teams. How to help the visionary innovator celebrate wins, and provide the leadership style desired by the team?
Conclusion
In comparing the challenges and the corresponding opportunities identified as the visionary innovator progresses through each of the three phases of change, a recurring theme is the interaction between the visionary innovators and their team. During the phases of change, the visionary innovators encounter challenges in leading and enabling their teams to innovate. Additionally, as the change movement depends on innovation successes obtained by the team, the results indicate that the visionary innovators spend a great part of their time on managing and protecting the team. This in turn, leads to additional challenges such as the challenge of remaining inspired. Moreover, as the teams grow and the visibility of the change movement increases, it becomes increasingly challenging for the visionary innovators to lead and enable the teams successfully. Thus, to answer the second research question:

How can the visionary innovator be aided in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

It is found that the visionary innovators may be aided in dividing their scarce time efficiently and effectively amongst the team and across the necessary actions to enable the team to innovate successfully.

Chapter Review

In this Chapter, the findings from within and cross-case analysis of the interview data were presented and discussed. The findings indicate that the attributes of the visionary innovator are shared traits, a strong vision combined with an urge to share this vision, political and business know-how and space provided by their ‘superiors’ to move freely and carry out the first steps towards realising their vision. It is the combination of these attributes that makes the visionary innovators effective in transforming their organisations towards modern companies. Besides the four attributes described, another recurring theme that surfaced from the case studies is self-development. The interviews indicate that the visionary innovators possess a high amount of self-knowledge and a learning mindset, and use these characteristics to develop their attributes over time and coach their teams.

Furthermore, it was found that the visionary innovators can be subdivided by the phase of organisational transformation they have achieved. To begin, they start small and surround themselves with a select group of believers i.e. ‘like-minded’ people to join in the change. In the second phase, the team grows and the change gradually spreads throughout the organisation. The final goal is to integrate the change within the company culture in such a way that the role of the visionary innovator becomes obsolete. The foundations for this goal are laid out in phase three.

To overcome the many challenges to change within large-scale legacy organisations, visionary innovators undertake a range of actions to guide, enable and implement the change. First, they think and challenge to discover new opportunities; then envision a change and inspire others; then connect, do and reflect during which they innovate with their team and experiment; they then organise and enable, taking the necessary business and political actions to remove any obstacles; subsequently they deliver and celebrate any successes achieved and finally they legitimise and grow through establishing permanent changes and recruiting new people. These actions are what makes visionary innovators successful at establishing a change movement within their organisation and scaling it up to a company-wide change.

Finally, the findings were summarised in a customer journey through which improvements for the visionary innovator in leading change were identified. In analysing the challenges and the corresponding opportunities as the visionary innovator progresses through each of the three phases of change, a theme that recurs is the interaction between the visionary innovators and their team. It is found that the visionary innovators may be aided in dividing their scarce time efficiently and effectively amongst the team and across the necessary actions to enable the team to innovate successfully.

Chapter Three

In the next chapter, the challenges and opportunities identified will be further explored. The findings regarding the visionary innovators will be used to determine the wants and needs of the visionary innovator. Together, these findings are used to formulate a design brief for the visionary innovator.
In this Chapter, the previous findings regarding the visionary innovator are used to determine the wants and needs of the visionary innovator as a user. Accordingly, a design brief is formulated.
3.1 Introduction

During Phase II of the project, the focus lays on designing for the visionary innovator to aid in bringing continuous innovation to the organisation. To determine the design brief, the findings from the discover and define phase were synthesised to form an idea of the visionary innovator as a user.

Opportunities
The opportunities identified in the previous chapter indicate that overall, the visionary innovators may be aided in dividing their scarce time efficiently and effectively amongst the team and across the necessary actions to enable the team to innovate successfully.

Goal
The goal was therefore to design a solution for the visionary innovator that addresses these opportunities:
‘To design a solution that aids the visionary innovator in leading and enabling the team in an effective and efficient manner.’

This goal is further specified based on the findings in the remainder of this chapter.

Design Requirements
In designing for the visionary innovator, it is desirable to empathise with the visionary innovator as a user. To do so, the behavior, wants and needs of the visionary innovator were analysed. This was done through the formulation of a persona, a day in the life of a visionary innovator and illustration of the roles played by the visionary innovator. These are presented in the following sections. Consequently, design requirements were identified which were used to formulate the design brief.

3.2 Meet Steve, the Visionary Innovator

In this section, insights regarding the thoughts and statements of the visionary innovators are used to create a persona. A persona is an archetypical representation of intended users, describing and visualising their behaviour, values and needs (van Boeijen et al, 2013). The persona can help to translate the real-life behaviours, values and needs of the visionary innovator into the design goal.

Technology
Steve is a passionate, energetic father. He has a passion for digital technology and cars. He calls himself a ‘techie’, when a new technological gadget is released he is one of the first to get it. His most recent purchases are a drone for his kids, and a high-tech stove that can be controlled through his iphone.

Work
Steve started working at Carz as a trainee more than 9 years ago. He knows the ins-and-outs of the business. Carz is a large successful automotive company that was founded 60 years ago. Steve really has a heart for the cause of his company, but as he loves advancements he feels Carz could use a transformation to become more digital. Digitising the company will also help to create a longer customer journey and a more coherent service and could yield interesting collaborations with other progressive digital companies.

‘There are so many incredible digital opportunities we could play into with Carz. We need to change quickly, so we can become the forerunners of digital cars. We could make Carz a better company, and in the end create a better world for everyone!’

Vision
Steve has been reading a lot and watching tedTalks on digital transformations. With this info he has been cooking up a strategy on how to bring his idea to the company. Being such a passionate believer of his idea, he pitched it to his CEO last year whom he knows well. He was given the opportunity to start a new team to get it going.

‘I’m over the moon, so energised about this. We have a team with so many inspiring people, buzzing with energy.’

Design Wishes
- Technological gadgets are a plus
- Connected
- High-paced, Efficient
3.3 A day in the life of Steve

To further investigate the main challenges described by the visionary innovators and their team members, team members were interviewed and asked to describe a day in the week of a visionary innovator. In putting these insights together, a day in the life of Steve is created. As can be observed, the visionary’s time is scarce and consists largely of meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference call in the car</td>
<td>Team (Managers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick round around the office</td>
<td>All Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:1 meeting</td>
<td>Team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference call</td>
<td>Customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Head Quarters</td>
<td>Colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick call on the way</td>
<td>Skeptic employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT meeting</td>
<td>Executive team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call to fix last minute problem</td>
<td>Skeptic employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:1 meetings</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise day in my head as I go home</td>
<td>Myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick up the kids, dinner</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read emails</td>
<td>Team, company, customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last edits to presentations, emails</td>
<td>Team members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time is scarce**

A key insight from a day in the life of Steve is that time is scarce. Steve is busy all day, running from meeting to meeting or getting things fixed for one of the running projects.

‘He is always enormously busy, so I am always thankful for his time’. (Colleague Sam)

‘His week consists of around 80 hours. First he makes a round to answer questions from the teams. For the rest his day is full of meetings. In between meetings he is on the phone. For example, for last minute fixes.’ (Colleague Sam)

**Travel**

Another recurring aspect is the time spent travelling to various locations. In some cases this entails flying to offices around the globe. Typically, Steve therefore uses the time wisely by making calls on the way, and emailing or preparing presentations.

Yes, and I’m facilitating all the discussions yeah, so I did in China, Taiwan. I did it in the US and now we have four sessions here, so it’s a lot of travelling. (George)

She travels a lot abroad. To New York, for example, to visit the headquarters and to London. (Colleague Charlotte)

**Connected and Available**

Steve is mainly busy with meetings, whether they are planned or unplanned, and formal or informal conversations. In other words, most of the day Steve is in contact or in a conversation with people. This is typical for Steve, being a social person buzzing with energy.

‘She is always busy talking to people, always in contact with others’. (Colleague Charlotte)

‘You always get the feeling that she is constantly busy. As a result, sometimes it feels like you can’t talk to her. But if you do address her, she always makes time.’ (Colleague Charlotte)

**Design Requirements**

The insights that follow from the typical day in the life of Steve are translated into design requirements that need to be taken into account during the design stage.

**Time is scarce: Quick**

As Steve has no time to spare, let alone to make room for new activities, any design must fit within his schedule. To aid in making efficient use of time, the design must be quick. Preferably, it helps to speed up some of Steve’s daily practices, to make room in his schedule.

**Travel: Mobile**

As Steve is on the road a lot, he needs to be able to take relevant information with him on the way and abroad. Thus, a design must be mobile to transport it easily to other locations. For Steve, it would be handy if it were easily accessible during travel time.

**Range of Stakeholders**

As can be observed from the day in the life of Steve, he is in contact with many different stakeholders throughout the day. I.e. Steve talks to the team managers, several team members, skeptic employees from other departments, members of the executive board, customers and his own family.

Depending on the team size, on many days there is not enough time to talk to each team member on a daily basis. It is often the case that a team member or a team plans a meeting with Steve only when they want to discuss a pressing matter. This does not have to be a weekly meeting.

**Diverse range of Stakeholders: Integral**

Steve switches from one context to the next interchangeably throughout the day. In each context, he connects with a different set of stakeholders. Within these contexts, Steve fulfills a different position, with different responsibilities.

The design must be applicable for Steve in the different contexts and in the interaction with different stakeholders. Thus it must be integral, providing a holistic solution for Steve during the entire day.

**Connected: Facilitate communication**

As Steve is mainly absorbed in meetings and conversations with the people in his environment, the design must facilitate such contact. Furthermore, as a visionary innovator, Steve desires to be available to everyone at all times. Thus, the design must serve as a channel to facilitate communication from or to Steve.
3.4 Steve’s Leadership Roles

Extant literature highlights the diverse range of roles that must be involved in innovation (Kelley and Littman, 2006; Ries, 2017). The findings from the case study analysis and observation of one of the visionary innovators indicate that Steve has multiple responsibilities as the leader of the change movement. To fulfill these responsibilities Steve must take on multiple roles simultaneously, which are reflected in the attributes and the actions of the visionary innovator.

Visionary Role:
One of the attributes of the visionary innovator is Vision: a strong vision for a change, and the skill to share it to inspire others to join in change. The team that joins in the change movement naturally looks at Steve for vision, inspiration and direction to guide the innovation efforts. This role of the visionary is presented in the actions of the visionary innovator through the step ‘Envision and Inspire’.

The Coach
Another strength of the visionary innovator is their attention to reflection and development, and therein their ability to coach their team. This is presented through the ‘Connect, Do & Reflect’ step and the iterative ‘Reflect & Learn’ step. This role includes providing the right tools and methodologies and coaching the team to use them. It also includes installing a culture of learning and experimentation and a safe environment that foster innovation. As a coach, the goal is to empower the team to innovate. This includes providing guidance, balanced with the right amount of freedom to work independently. To be able to provide the right amount of coaching for the team, Steve must reflect on the team status to determine how the team members feeling, and whether they need more guidance.

The Protector
Finally, another attribute of the visionary innovator is Experience: business and political know-how, which enables the visionary to undertake the action ‘Organise and Enable’. Using Experience, Steve has an important role to play as the protector of the team; functioning as a mediator between the team and the wider organisation, removing obstacles and providing political protection. Resolving ‘burning fires’ takes up a large proportion of Steve’s time.

‘He plays three roles: the manager, the mediator and the firefighter.’
(Team member, FlyMe)

Balancing multiple roles
To lead and enable the team to innovate, the visionary innovator needs to fulfill multiple roles at once. The customer journey illustrates the three roles of the visionary innovator of providing vision, coaching and protection to lead, motivate and enable the team. As the visionary innovator gets busier and the team grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to balance the multiple roles well. The opportunities identified indicate several moments in the journey during which Steve could improve in one or more of these roles:

Opportunities for the Visionary
• How to ensure a shared vision guides the team with less time to communicate it?

Opportunities for the Coach
• How can the team be empowered despite the unystematic approach?
• How to keep each other motivated after setbacks?
• How to help the visionary innovator carry out managerial tasks efficiently to free up time?
• How to help and motivate the visionary innovator in training the wider company?
• How to celebrate wins, and provide the leadership style desired by the team?
• How to share time and attention amongst the team?

Opportunities for the Protector
• How can the visionary innovator enable the team to work independently?
• How to help the visionary innovator spend less time on politics and more on the things he enjoys most?
3.5 Design Brief

In this section, the insights from the persona, day in the life, roles and identified opportunities are put together to determine the design brief. The day in the life and the customer journey both stress the problem of a lack of time for the visionary innovator as the visibility of the team increases and the team grows. Thus, the design that aids the visionary innovator as a leader should help cope with the challenge of a lack of time and a growing team.

Problem Statement:
As Steve becomes busier and his team grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to fulfill the roles of the visionary innovator to keep the team motivated and empowered to innovate. This is because Steve has less time to engage with every team member on a daily basis, and it is more difficult to keep an overview of every team member’s thoughts and status as the team is large. Moreover, as Steve has many stakeholders to manage and is constantly moving from one meeting to the next, he tends to forget to take a moment of time to reflect on his leadership roles.

Design Goal
As an answer to this problem statement, the following design goal was formulated: ‘I want to make Steve aware of the status of his team by providing feedback on his multiple roles so he can use his scarce time effectively where it is needed.’

To take into account the design requirements that were identified, the design goal was narrowed down to the following:

‘I want to design a tool that provides quick, reflective insights on Steve’s roles to determine what actions to take to effectively and integrally lead his team from any location.’

Interaction Vision:
To give direction for the desired interaction between Steve and the design, an interaction vision was formulated as illustrated on the following page. From this interaction vision, several interaction qualities were determined. From the interaction qualities several concepts were developed. For the selection of a final concept, it was tested against the design requirements.

Design Requirements
• Quick & Efficient
• Mobile
• Connected: Facilitate communication
• Diverse range of Stakeholders: Integral

Design Wishes
• Technological gadgets are a plus
• Connected
• High-paced, Efficient

Interaction Vision
That radar speed sign that measures your action [driving speed] and smiles or frowns to remind you in a quick instant to focus on your driving, encouraging you to adjust your behavior if necessary.

Interaction Qualities
Measuring
Measures your actions and provides feedback.

Reminding
Sends a reminder, creating awareness of your behavior in an instant and forcing you to reflect on it.

Focusing & Encouraging
Provides a focusing effect on the action that is required and encourages to take action.

Concept Selection
During several brainstorm sessions and iterations, multiple concepts were proposed that met the interaction qualities and the design goal to some extend. In the end, three concepts were thought out in more detail. These were compared and based on an evaluation of how well they met the design requirements, a final concept was chosen. This final concept is presented in the following chapter.
3.6 Chapter Review

In this Chapter, the opportunities identified in the journey to change of the visionary innovator and his/her team were further explored to formulate a design brief. From the persona, it was found that it would be desirable to create a design that is a technological gadget, connected and efficient.

The day in the life of the visionary innovator indicated that design requirements were a design that is quick to use, as the time of the visionary innovator is scarce. It design must be mobile, as the visionary travels around a lot. It must be connected, therein facilitating communication between the visionary innovator and the team; and it must be integral, therein involving all the stakeholders.

Furthermore, it was found that to lead and enable the team to innovate, the visionary innovator has to fill multiple roles at once. The three roles of the visionary innovator that were indicated as important to lead, motivate and enable the team were the role of providing vision, coaching and protection. Additionally, it was found that as the visionary innovator gets busier and the team grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to balance the multiple roles well, as a result there were several moments in the journey of change where the visionary innovator could improve in one or more of these roles.

Finally, it was found that the visionary innovator has less time to engage with every team member on a daily basis and in moving from one meeting to the next, the visionary innovator tends to forget to take a moment of time to reflect on his/her leadership roles. To take into account these challenges together with the design requirements, the design goal was narrowed down to the following:

*I want to design a tool that provides quick, reflective insights on Steve’s roles to determine what actions to take to effectively and integrally lead his team from any location.*

To give direction for the desired interaction between the visionary innovator and the design, an interaction vision was formulated and interaction qualities were determined. From the interaction qualities several concepts were developed. For the selection of a final concept, it was tested against the design requirements.

Chapter Four

In the next chapter, the final concept that was chosen is presented and explained. Based on a user test, an iteration of the design was done. The final design is presented and illustrated.
4. Deliver

In this Chapter, the findings regarding the visionary innovator are used to determine what is known of the visionary innovator as a user. The wants and needs of the visionary innovator are further explored. Accordingly, a design goal is formulated.

In this Chapter:
1. The Concept
2. Validation
3. Final Design
4.1 A visionary dashboard

In this section, the final concept is introduced of the design that will aid Steve in fulfilling his roles as a visionary innovator. The final concept is a dashboard designed for the visionary innovator, which helps Steve to prioritise his time according to what role he must play and what team members to meet with. The dashboard also serves as a way for the team to provide feedback to the visionary innovator.

The Concept
The dashboard is a digital tool that provides feedback to Steve on the status of his teams. The feedback is divided up by the responsibilities that corresponds to each of the different roles Steve needs to fulfill as a visionary innovator. The insights are visualised and returned to Steve in the form of visualisations. By visualising the insights, Steve can quickly interpret the insights and take the necessary actions. The roles of the visionary innovator for which the dashboard measures the team status are the role of the visionary, the coach, the protector, and the plenary. These serve as a measure of Steve's role as a visionary innovator. The final concept is a dashboard designed for the visionary innovator, with the aim to collect feedback from the team to Steve, to provide an overview of what team status are the role of the visionary, coach, and protector. Additionally, a general overview of the running projects is provided which can be used to monitor the successes achieved by the team.

How it works
The dashboard works according to three simple steps, illustrated in figure 4.1:
1. Measuring: Insights regarding the team status are collected through a weekly individual questionnaire that consists of four questions. One question is intended to measure feedback on the overarching vision of the team. This is to provide insights on Steve's visionary role. Three questions are intended to measure feedback regarding how well the team feels they have the space to innovate. These serve as a measure of Steve's role as a coach. In addition to the weekly questionnaire, the team can use the dashboard to indicate any obstacles they encounter on a daily basis. This provides insights for Steve's role as the protector.
2. Visualising: The insights are presented to Steve in the form of digital visualisations. The insights provide an idea of what actions to undertake: who to connect with, what role to take on and how to meet. (1 on 1 meeting, plenary, a quick stand up etc.)
3. Acting: Based on the insights, Steve determines what team members to meet with. Based on the insights for the visionary, Steve could determine to spend more time on communicating his vision to the teams. To do so, he could give a general talk, plan personal discussions with individual team members or organise a co-creative session to brainstorm about the vision with the team. Based on the insights for the coach, Steve can plan to meet with team members individually to discuss the results from the questionnaire and determine how to provide better guidance. The dashboard can be used during these meetings as a reference. Finally, Steve can use the insights for the protector to directly solve any issues that withhold the teams from their work.

Prototype
To test the general idea of the design, a first version of the dashboard was created as illustrated in figure 4.2. The aim of the prototype is to determine how the functionalities could work, test what functionalities to include and whether the visualisations are clear. More generally, the aim of the prototype is to test whether the visionary innovators would find the product useful and whether the team and the visionary innovator would be likely to use the design. The prototype is used to test with the team and the visionary innovator, with the aim to collect feedback to iterate on the design of the dashboard. For testing, the prototype is made to appear simple and unfinished so as to encourage feedback. The prototype displays the three functionalities to test the status of the visionary, coach and protector role. Additionally, a general overview of the running projects is provided which can be used to monitor the successes achieved by the team. Finally, at the centre, the general performance of the visionary innovator can be monitored through measurements of the weekly time spent on meetings, the time spent on each role and the time spent with each team.
4.1.3 Validation

In this section, the design is evaluated based on the feasibility, desirability and viability of the design. Furthermore, the design is tested against the design requirements. To test the desirability of the design and determine improvements, the prototype was tested with David, one of the visionary innovators.

Desirability
During the session with David, the prototype of the dashboard was presented and discussed. The session focused on the following questions:
1. What benefits does the visionary innovator see in using the dashboard together with his team?
2. What improvements could be made to the content and design of the dashboard?

The general concept of the dashboard was discussed, after which each of the functionalities of the dashboard were discussed in more detail.

Upon presenting the concept of the dashboard to David, the response was very positive and it was especially interesting to see that he recognised the problem of staying up to date of the team as he can be very busy: ‘I tend to be all over the place, so my team tells me that I am sometimes difficult to reach. So I’m sure the team will be very happy to see this.’ Furthermore, David indicated to especially like the visualisations of the roadblocks as fires, because he recognised the fires taking up a lot of his weekly schedule. He thought it would be a good idea to involve the team in determining what feedback to collect, to increase the likelihood of them using the application for feedback.

Feasibility & Viability
To investigate feasibility of the dashboard, it was discussed how the dashboard could be integrated in the current schedule and tools used at the office. Currently, as the teams are working with agile processes and tools, David indicated that he saw a possibility to integrate the dashboard in the digital environment already in use. Also, he said the team is already used to working with a digital tool to indicate the project progress as part of the agile way of working.

Furthermore, to build the application to collect feedback from the teams many feedback applications are readily available that can be integrated with a dashboard.

Improvements
David further indicated that the dashboard looks very interesting already, but that many things are going on. So the number of functionalities could be simplified to include a fewer number of metrics. As such, in the redesign instead of including five functionalities for the dashboard (the visionary role, the protector role, the coaching role, visualising the overall progress of the running projects and a personal reflection tool) the number of functionalities were narrowed down to three. Because David felt the team is more important, he preferred the functionalities that facilitate communication from the team to him, instead of the personal reflection tool. Furthermore, David expressed that he was worried that posing too many questions to the team in the questionnaire would prevent team members from using the tool. Thus, the number of personal questions included in the questionnaire were narrowed down to three instead of five. Overall, he indicated that as they have no personal reflection tool in use at the moment, the dashboard could be a useful solution.

Recommendations
Finally, David indicated that he thought the functionality regarding the progress of the team could be very interesting as a separate tool. He would be interested in using it as a shared dashboard between him and the team. Especially being able to use the dashboard to post progress publicly to the rest of the organisation to increase visibility towards the organisation would be attractive. This could be an interesting extension to the current concept.

Evaluating the Design Requirements
For further evaluation of the design, it is examined whether it meets the indicated design requirements. As the design is a digital tool it can be easily accessed from anywhere, thereby meeting the requirement for mobility. Furthermore, as the focus is on facilitating communication between the team and Steve, it is connected. As it helps to keep an overview of all of the teams and the different roles played by Steve, it also meets the requirement of an integral design. Finally, with a simple design and visualisations it meets the requirements of being efficient and quick.

Design requirements
**Quick & Efficient**
Visualisations condense complex information in a comprehensive manner that serve as a call to action (Calabretta et al., 2016). By visualising the insights, the information can be quickly interpreted. The dashboard further facilitates the communication of information efficiently, reducing the need for meetings or calls to communicate the feedback.

**Mobile**
The dashboard can be accessed from any digital device on any location, so it is suited for travelling.

**Connected**
The tool facilitates the connection between Steve and the team through the collection of feedback from the team to Steve, after which Steve reaches out to connect with the team.

**Integral**
Insights of each of the roles are provided and feedback is collected from every individual team member, so an integral overview is provided.

The Final Design
Based on the evaluation of the design, the design of the concept is reiterated on, taking the feedback from the session with the user into account. To illustrate the use of the final design of the dashboard and the interaction with the team members and Steve a scenario is provided. As the scenario has three functions; to provide insight in the role of the visionary, the coach and the protector, separate scenario’s for each of these roles are provided on the following pages.
4.1.4 Functionality 1: the Protector

Because a great part of the role of the visionary innovator is protecting the team and removing political obstacles within the organisation that hold back the teams, a desirable function of the dashboard is to provide insight in the protector role of the visionary innovator.

To do so, insight into the so-called ‘fires’ that urgently need to be extinguished by the visionary innovator to enable the teams to work is required. As a solution, the teams use the dashboard to report a problem to the visionary innovator when it surfaces.

The scenario

In the current situation, the case studies indicate that the teams experience difficulties in reaching the visionary innovator when they encounter a problem. This is because the visionary innovator is constantly busy, either moving from one meeting to the next, or travelling around outside the office to make arrangements for the team. The scenario illustrates how the dashboard could serve as a medium to facilitate the communication of these issues in an easier way:

The team places a call for action through the dashboard, and Steve immediately receives a message. The dashboard displays that the message entails an urgent issue. Steve can quickly see that an urgent issue needs to be resolved, can read up about it and then take the required action. This can then be communicated back to the team in a clear manner through the dashboard.

Required dashboard functionality

A general overview of the ‘burning fires’ that need to be extinguished; i.e. the company-wide obstacles that need solving so the teams are enabled to continue their project.
4.1.5 Functionality 2: the Visionary

As one of the important factors that make the visionary innovators so effective in bringing change to the company is their vision and their ability to inspire others with a compelling story, it is desirable to measure how others perceive the vision and whether the vision is shared amongst the team. As such, Calabretta et al. (2016) underline the importance of a shared vision for a successful strategic project.

To do so, insight regarding the team’s perception of the vision is required. Furthermore, feedback on any unclarities needs to be returned to the visionary innovator. As a solution, the teams use the dashboard to discuss any questions regarding unclarities around the vision. The entire team gives feedback on the questions.

The scenario:
In the current situation, the case-study interviews indicate that some visionary innovators find it hard to read the audience as the team gets bigger. Furthermore, they explain that it is essential to communicate their vision to everyone but as the team grows and the visionary innovators get busier it becomes physically impossible to talk to everyone on a daily basis.

The scenario illustrates how the dashboard could serve as a medium to facilitate the communication of the feedback in an easier way:

The team poses a question regarding the vision through the dashboard, visible to everyone. Everyone is asked to share their thoughts on this question through the dashboard. The feedback from the entire team is visualised so everyone, including Steve can quickly see the team’s shared interpretation of the vision.

Furthermore, the discussion helps Steve realise that he has not communicated his vision concretely enough, even though the team indicates that they want a more concrete story. He uses this feedback for his next talk.

Required dashboard functionality:
A visualisation of the team’s perception of the overarching team vision, with regard to a question specified by the team or by Steve. For example, the team’s perception of the vision for the coming three months.
4.1.6 Functionality 3: The Coach

The coaching role is the role that the visionary innovator needs to take on as a leader of the team. This entails providing the right means i.e. tools, methods and methodologies for the team to get started on their own projects, but also enabling the team to use those means to innovate. Furthermore, as a coach the visionary innovator is responsible for creating an environment where the team feels fully free and encouraged to innovate. This includes creating an environment where learning and experimentation can take place, as this is important to foster the innovation mindset.

To help the visionary innovator fulfill his coaching role well, the dashboard facilitates the communication of feedback from team members as to how well they are stimulated to innovate.

The scenario:

In the current situation, the case-study interviews indicated that even though the visionary innovators value reflection and development highly, a lack of time is spent on personal feedback moments. In the beginning, as the team has just been founded, the visionary innovator tends to use an unsystematic approach therein experimenting and learning what processes to use. Interviews with team members indicated that this sometimes results in uncertainties for the team. On the other hand, during a later stage as the teams become increasingly independent and the face-time between the visionary innovator and team members reduces, the interviews indicated that the visionary innovators find it hard to gauge team member's personal satisfaction with the way of working, their project role and the environment. The scenario illustrates how the dashboard could serve as a medium to facilitate feedback from individual team members in an easier way:

Every team member receives a short questionnaire on a weekly basis, a 5 min. task which is intended as a personal moment of reflection. The results are visualized and can be viewed per team or individually per team member. Steve can quickly check out the visuals and gets an idea of what areas need more attention and he needs to focus on. As a coach, Steve checks in with each team or team member individually to discuss the overarching team dynamics. Based on the weekly results, he is up to date of the issues that are currently playing. Subsequently, he plans a meeting with Anne and together using the dashboard as a reference, they can discuss issues and how to solve them.

Required dashboard functionality:

An overview of the team status based on personal reflections collected from the team on a weekly basis. Thus, the dashboard must include an app to collect feedback from the team, which are then summarised and presented through the dashboard.
4.1.7 The Final Design

Ries (2017) states that in the creation of a dashboard, the process of choosing the metrics presented on it must take into account that the metrics be simple and actionable. The final design consists of two parts; the visionary dashboard through which the insights of the team are presented and the feedback application through which the insights are gathered.

The Dashboard
In the final concept design, the dashboard has three main functionalities attuned to the three roles of the visionary innovator:

The Visionary: Vision
To measure whether a shared vision is present, the perceived vision of the team members at any point in time can be measured and displayed through the dashboard.

To measure the team’s perception of the overarching vision, a question regarding the vision can be proposed to the team. The team is then asked to answer the question in the form of three key words.

To build the prototype, during a visit at the office of one of the visionary innovators the entire team was individually posed the question: ‘Can you name three key variables that according to you represent what the department stands for?’ The key values were collected and visualised in the form of a wordcloud. The wordcloud depicts all the key words that were mentioned by each of the team members. The biggest words were repeated most often and thus show what the majority of the team perceives as part of the vision.

The Protector: Fires
To measure what obstacles the teams are running into, a general overview of the ‘burning fires’ that need to be extinguished are presented through the dashboard. The team members can indicate the urgency of the problem in terms of when it needs to be resolved. Any obstacles that are resolved, are presented as celebrations. This gives an indication of the successes achieved for the visionary innovator in the protector role.

The Coach: Team Status
According to Ries (2017) the teams involved must agree on metrics they find important. To provide an overview of the team status, the team is asked to fill out a team reflection based on three key team values deemed important by the entire team to be able to innovate successfully. The insights are gathered on a weekly basis through a short questionnaire that consists of three questions. The scores are visualised, and any values that are not green need special attention for coaching.
The Feedback Application

A dashboard can display all kinds of information, but the metrics should be kept simple and actionable to create a focusing effect on actions that hold priority for the visionary innovator. For the visionary innovator to be able to absorb the information quickly, and to create a low threshold for the team to engage in the questionnaire, the number of metrics measured through feedback application should be kept at a minimum. The design therefore includes a range of 3-5 values.

Determining the metrics co-creatively

To encourage the team to take the feedback application seriously, the metrics measured will be determined in a co-creative session. Thus, prior to the launch of the weekly feedback sessions, a co-creative session will be organised with the entire team, including the visionary innovator. During this session, the team brainstorms on key values that they regard as important to foster the desired culture and way of working in their environment. For example, transparency and safety to fail could be desirable values as these are often found to advance experimentation. Together, the team and the visionary innovator settle on 3-5 most important values.

Subsequently, the team agrees to fill out a weekly questionnaire during which every team member reflects individually to what extend their work and environment meets the key values. The questionnaire includes one question for each of the key values. By answering the question, the team member is asked to indicate their satisfaction of the level at which the key value is present in their work or their environment on a scale of 1 to 5.

To provide an example of the final design of the feedback application, as presented in figure 4.8, three key team values were identified from findings from literature and the interviews:

Safety to experiment and learn

The literature analysis and expert interviews pointed to the importance of developing a culture where failure is accepted to foster experimentation, learning and iteration (Ries, 2017; Tushman et al., 2013). The importance of creating a learning mentality was also discussed in the interviews. The first question of the questionnaire therefore measures the team member’s satisfaction with the space to experiment and learn.

Freedom

In the interviews, the visionary innovators indicate the challenge of balancing the right amount of guidance for their team members in their project assignments and simultaneously providing freedom for the team to take ownership of their assignments and work individually. Furthermore, freedom to work individually is found to be related to creativity. Thus, the second question measures the satisfaction with the level of freedom provided.

Ownership

Ownership is essential for the successful implementation of innovation (Calabretta et al. 2016). Again, this is also a recurring theme in the interviews as visionary innovators describe a strong sense of ownership to be part of the desired mindset to foster innovation within their company. Thus, the third question measures the satisfaction with the level of ownership provided.

Next Steps

The next steps for developing the design would be to carry out additional tests with the remainder of the visionary innovators. Furthermore, due to the lack of time it was not possible to organise an evaluative session with the entire team and the visionary innovator. As the design facilitates communication between the team and the visionary innovator, it is essential to carry out validation of the concept with the teams.

Furthermore, before development of the application and the dashboard it is recommended to carry out a pilot over a longer period of time; a month to several months, during which the interaction between the design, the team and the visionary innovator can be further examined. Especially the integration of the design in the daily work needs to be studied. Furthermore, the likelihood to provide honest feedback through the use of the application needs to be examined. Based on the pilot, feedback could be collected for further iterations on the design.

Furthermore, the design and functionalities of the dashboard could be easily personalised to match the wants and needs of each of the eight visionary innovators and their teams. Therefore, a case study of the design with each team is recommended to determine which functionalities would best be suited for each case.
4.2 Chapter Review

In this Chapter, the final concept that was chosen is introduced and elaborated on. The final concept is a dashboard designed for the visionary innovator, a digital tool that provides feedback on the status of the teams. The feedback is divided up by the responsibilities that corresponds to each of the different roles the visionary innovator needs to fulfill. The insights are visualised and returned to in the form of visualisations. By visualising the insights, the visionary innovator can quickly interpret the insights and take the necessary actions. The roles of the visionary innovator for which the dashboard measures the team status are the role of the visionary, the coach and the protector.

Furthermore, the concept is evaluated based on the feasibility, desirability and viability of the design. Furthermore, the design is tested against the design requirements. To determine improvements for the design, a prototype was created and tested with one of the visionary innovators. The design of the concept was reiterated on, taking the feedback from the session with the user into account.

To illustrate the use of the final design of the dashboard and the interaction with the team members and the visionary innovator, a scenario is provided for each of the three functionalities. For the visionary innovator to be able to absorb the information quickly, and to create a low threshold for the team to engage in the questionnaire, the number of metrics measured through feedback application that accompanies the dashboard tool are minimised to range between 3-5 values.

Finally, next steps for developing the design are discussed, which includes additional tests with the remainder of the visionary innovators and their teams.
5. Conclusion

In this Chapter, the findings regarding the visionary innovator are used to determine what is known of the visionary innovator as a user. The wants and needs of the visionary innovator are further explored. Accordingly, a design goal is formulated.

In this Chapter:
1. Conclusion
2. Recommendations & Implications
3. Personal Reflection
5.1 Conclusion

Large-scale organisations are recognising the importance of innovation to adapt to the dynamics of changing customer preferences, technological developments, competition and economic turmoil. However, leading innovation in the environment of large-scale legacy organisations can be challenging, due to resistential forces from legacy structures, processes and culture. Therefore, leadership that understands the urgency of a rapid response and possesses the know-how to enable realisation of such innovations is required. This research provides exploratory findings of visionary innovators, individuals who understand the urgency of continuous innovation and aim to create organisational change to develop innovation capabilities in their own companies. They possess the political and business know-how and the capabilities to realise change.

The purpose of this project was to provide a further understanding of who these visionary innovators are, and how they overcome the challenges in bringing innovation to large-scale legacy organisations. Two research questions were formulated regarding the visionary innovators. To answer these questions, research was conducted through a literature review and a case study research to collect empirical evidence of eight visionary innovators and their teams. Through a cross-case analysis of the data from the interviews several patterns emerged regarding the visionary innovators. Thus, in answering the first research question:

What are the attributes of the visionary innovators that make them effective in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

It was found that these attributes are traits, organisational and political know-how, a guiding vision and space to realise their vision. Specifically, based on these traits, visionary innovators can be characterised to be holistic thinkers, daring doers, smart connectors and pragmatic doers. The combination of these traits are what characterise the visionary innovator’s ability to switch between discovery of innovation opportunities and rapid realisation of innovations.

Furthermore, it was found that in bringing change to their organisations, the visionary innovators go through several phases of change. At first, the movement starts small and focuses on proving the value of innovation. Next, the movement is scaled up and additional ‘believers’ of the movement are recruited. In the final phase, the focus lies on company-wide change and implementation such that the change becomes permanent. During each phase, the visionary innovators take the following actions: they think and challenge to discover new opportunities; then envision a change and inspire others; then connect, do and reflect during which they innovate with their team and experiment; they then organise and enable, taking the necessary business and political actions to remove any obstacles; subsequently they deliver and celebrate any successes achieved and finally they legitimise and grow through establishing permanent changes and recruiting new people. These actions are what makes visionary innovators successful at establishing a change movement within their organisation and scaling it up to a company-wide change.

Finally, it was found that visionary innovators encounter various challenges as they bring change to their organisations. To answer the second research question:

How can the visionary innovator be aided in leading change towards innovation in large-scale organisations?

It was found that visionary innovators may be aided in dividing their scarce time efficiently and effectively amongst the team and across the actions required to empower the team to innovate. To aid in doing so, the visionary dashboard is introduced to facilitate communication from the team to the visionary innovator quickly and integrally.

5.2 Recommendations & Implications

Recommendations

The case studies described in this report serve as a starting point to provide an understanding of visionary innovators. Further research regarding the construct of the visionary innovators is required. Due to limited time, it was not possible to interview multiple team members or colleagues from other departments for each of the case studies. Thus, for further research it is recommended to triangulate the data found through additional interviews with other colleagues of the visionary innovators. Furthermore, each of the interviews were carried out by the author of this report. However, to increase the reliability of the results it is recommended to interchange the interviewers. Even though the framework was presented to four of the eight visionary innovators for feedback, additional validation of the framework needs to be done. For example, a dedicated session could be organised to reflect on the elements of the framework with the visionary innovators and their colleagues involved in the case studies.

In proposing the value of visionary innovators for the transformation of large-scale organisations, further questions arise. Is it possible to easily identify such visionary innovators inside large-scale organisations? Would it be possible to select people who could be visionary innovators in development? If so, a training trajectory to develop visionary innovators could be offered to young individuals inside the organisation. Furthermore, would it help further development of the visionary innovators if they were identified and connected internally or externally? Further research on identifying and connecting to the visionary innovators present in large-scale organisations is recommended.

Implications

Through a case study research, this report provides empirical evidence of visionary innovators leading transformation to innovative companies was found to be lacking in extant literature, this research contributes to extant literature by providing illustrations and detailed descriptions of such leaders. Furthermore, the framework presented in this report provides an initial idea of the characteristics of these leaders.

Furthermore, the visionary innovators studied during this project have a vision to aid their organisation in developing the necessary capabilities for continuous innovation. However, six out of the eight visionary innovators do not have a background in design and therein turn to others to provide the necessary tools and methods for innovation. Furthermore, during interviews the visionary innovators indicate to value design highly. Thus, the discovery of visionary innovators may serve as an opportunity for designers to bring design capabilities into organisations. Visionary innovators may provide a way in and serve as the catalysts to embed design into large-scale legacy organisations. The framework presented together with the illustrations, could help identify visionary innovators in large-scale organisation to collaborate with to bring design to large-scale organisations.
5.3 Personal Reflection

This project started with the very broad aim to investigate what determines the success of an innovation approach in large-scale legacy organisations. I was excited to be able to go in every direction, being provided with the freedom to investigate any company and to choose any perspective on innovation that interested me. Initially, I tried to immerse myself in the topic of innovation, reading many books and diving into explorative interviews with a broad range of interesting people. But, I soon realised a graduation project does not get easier when you start with such a broad topic.

Thankfully, as I had interviewed about 15 people, attended three conferences and made many trips to study organisations from up close; ranging from start-ups to incubators to accelerators to megacorporations, I ran into some very inspiring and energetic leaders who talked about their perspiring but successful journeys to change their organisation. This is when I decided I needed to find out more about visionary innovators, and they became the focus of this graduation project.

As I look back on this project, I look back on a fun, inspiring and informative journey. This project has shed a whole new light on how I see the role of people, I have learned what impact all of us can have in enabling organisations to innovate. In focusing on the role of people, I have found out more about visionary innovators, and they became the focus of this graduation project.

During this project, I am happy to have been able to do the things I enjoy most: exploring a lot of organisations and meeting and interviewing a wide range of new people. As I began the project, I faced the challenge of having to find, approach and arrange my own interviews. It is difficult to determine where to start, when the contacts are not predetermined by the company’s network that issued the project. In the beginning, it took some courage to address and interview everyone by myself as in the previous projects this was always a group effort. It takes some getting used to guiding, listening and simultaneously noting the interviews by yourself. But, now that I have lose count of the number of interviews I conducted, I am glad to say that I have acquired some very valuable interview skills. I have learned to really listen and engage with the interviewee, and to touch upon deeper levels of knowledge. It’s especially satisfying when interviewees tell you how much they enjoyed the interview.

Finally, I am glad to have been challenged to write a paper on my findings halfway through the project. It was a great experience to present my findings at the ADMC conference in London, and a fantastic, fun trip with the TU Delft crew to my graduation project.

5.4 References

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