

Straight Talk with a Heart

The Danish Male Top Manager Anno 2011

Chefen skal helst være en mand

Vi har brug for kvindelige ledelse sværdir

ambitioner om mere Der er koldt på toppen -

Mænd og kvinder løser samme opgaver forskelligt

PRIORITER UD I DET OG SPRING

- Toppen af dansk erhvervsliv er en selvsupplerende formumme loge med særlige ritualer. Kvinder? Etniske minoriteter? Not on my shift.

'Vi skal anerkende, at der er forskelle'

nsidig fokusering på arbejdet

Bryd vanetænkningen - køn og ledelse 31-10-2011

Djæfs Mødecenter, Gothersgade 133, 1123 København V. 1350

TOP CHEFER i mændenes verden

Debat

'Køn skal betyde mindre, end det gør i dag'

Ølsaloner for mænd og kaffesaloner for kvinder - det minder om 1880'erne og er udtryk for en forældet kønsopfattelse, skriver Anette Dina Sørensen om Østre Gasværks seneste tilbud til teatergængerne.

Malene Wigant Decker
Pernille Såby Worm

CBS
December 2011

Straight Talk with a Heart – the Danish Male Top Manager Anno 2011

Ærlig snak med hjertet – den danske mandlige topleder anno 2011

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Sammendrag

Vores kvalitative analyse er blevet til på baggrund af 14 personlige interviews i henholdsvis 7 private¹ og 5 offentlige² virksomheder i Danmark. Specialets primære fokus har været på interviewene med 10 respektive mandlige topledere. For at understøtte resultaterne er der foretaget interviews med 2 kvindelige topledere, samt 2 executive searchers. Interviewene, der alle tager udgangspunkt i den pågældende topleders personlige karriere, oplevelser og erfaringer med topledelse, har haft en varighed af cirka 1 time.

Specialet har fokus på topledelse, og i særdeleshed mænd som topledere. Inspireret af den offentlige debat, har vi ønsket at dykke ned i konceptet 'topledelse' og kigge på det fra et nyt perspektiv. I stedet for at tale om mænds talenter eller mangel på samme, og i stedet for at tale om hvad kvinder kan eller ikke kan, mener vi at der bør tales om de kompetencer og krav der tilsammen udgør topledelse anno 2011.

Den nuværende offentlige debat skildrer fortsat mændene som hindringen for mangfoldighed på toppen, og fortsat rettes opmærksomheden på de formodede biologiske forskelle mellem mænd og kvinder. Listen af stereotype forestillinger om mænd og kvinder er i det hele taget stadig lang. Mænd er aggressive, konkurrencelystne og ambitiøse. Kvinder er omsorgsfulde og medfølelse. Empiriske undersøgelser har vist at ledelse stadig er karakteriseret af egenskaber og karakteristika der typisk associeres med mænd. Til trods for den stigende 'feminisering' af ledelseslitteraturen hævdes det stadig, at den moderne mandlige leder kontinuerligt opererer inden for et 'tænk leder – tænk mand' paradigme, som derfor beskriver ham som en forhandlingsorienteret leder karakteriseret af maskuline egenskaber.

Resultaterne af vores kvalitative analyse giver et noget anderledes billede af den nuværende mandlige topleder end den generelle ledelseslitteratur, og der er klare beviser på, at forskelligheden mellem kvinder og mænd ikke eksisterer i så firkantet en form som ledelseslitteraturen antager. 10 topledere er ikke i tvivl. Topledelse kræver, at du på én gang kan være 'den kontrollerende kaptajn' og 'den coachende formidler'. Der er klare beviser på,

¹ Følgende private virksomheder har medvirket til vores speciale: Irma, IBM Denmark, Microsoft Denmark, Nykredit, TDC A/S, Lisberg samt Flensby & Partners. Vi foretog 2 interviews i IBM.

² Følgende offentlige virksomheder har medvirket til vores speciale: PostNord, Miljøministeriets Departement, Statens Administration, Det Biovidenskabelige Fakultet – Københavns Universitet samt Økonomistyrelsen. Vi foretog 2 interviews i Statens Administration.

at den danske mandlige topleder i almindelighed trækker på såvel feminine som maskuline paradigmer, at den mandlige topleder må og skal være i stand til at trække på den forhandlingsorienterede såvel som den transformationelle ledelsesstil, og at den mandlige topleder besidder en stor mængde karakteristika, der ifølge litteraturen traditionelt set, er egenskaber der oftest tilskrives kvinder, og derved ikke udelukkende kan karakteriseres i forhold til maskuline egenskaber.

Gennem interviews med 2 kvindelige topledere og 2 executive searchers fandt vi, at ingen signifikant forskel eksisterer mellem danske mandlige topledere og deres kvindelige modstykke. Ligesom de mandlige topledere, besad den kvindelige topleder også en række omvendte kønsstereotypiske egenskaber og karakteristika. I overensstemmelse hermed, pegede også executive searchers samstemmigt på, at danske topledere anno 2011 forventes at kunne balancere og administrere feminine såvel som maskuline kompetencer, og gøre brug af begge dele på en naturlig og oprigtig måde.

Det er vores konklusion, at tiden er kommet til at løfte debatten om topledelse op på et nyt niveau. Når medierne såvel som den akademiske litteratur fortsat taler topledelse i form af mand eller kvinde, maskulin eller feminin – hvad enten det er i forhold til ledelsesparadigmer, ledelsesstil eller egenskaber og karakteristika – så undlader vi at give et nuanceret billede af den nuværende danske mandlige og kvindelige topleder. Efter vores mening er dette nuancerede billede af topledelse nødvendigt hvis der fremover skal sikres en konstruktiv debat om hvad topledelse er. Det er på tide at gøre op med forestillingen om topledere som karate-sparkende macho-mænd. Lad os i stedet tale topledelse: om hvad det indebærer, hvorfor det er attraktivt, og hvilke fravalg det utvivlsomt kræver at få en plads i direktionsstolen. 12 topledere har vist os, at topledelse anno 2011 ikke kan defineres som enten mand/maskulin eller kvinde/feminin. Det handler ikke om køn. Det handler derimod om at ville topledelse, og have ambitionen om det. Og mest af alt, så handler topledelse om at være sig selv. Maskulin, feminin – eller noget midt i mellem.

Med dette speciale har vi ønsket at skubbe lidt til den offentlige debat og vende det hele på hovedet. Med udgangspunkt i dette speciales resultater har vi derfor valgt at give vores bidrag til den offentlige debat ved at skrive kronikken *'Hvis topledelse var et køn var det tvekøn'*. Kronikken blev bragt i *Berlingske* den 19. december 2011.

Table of Contents

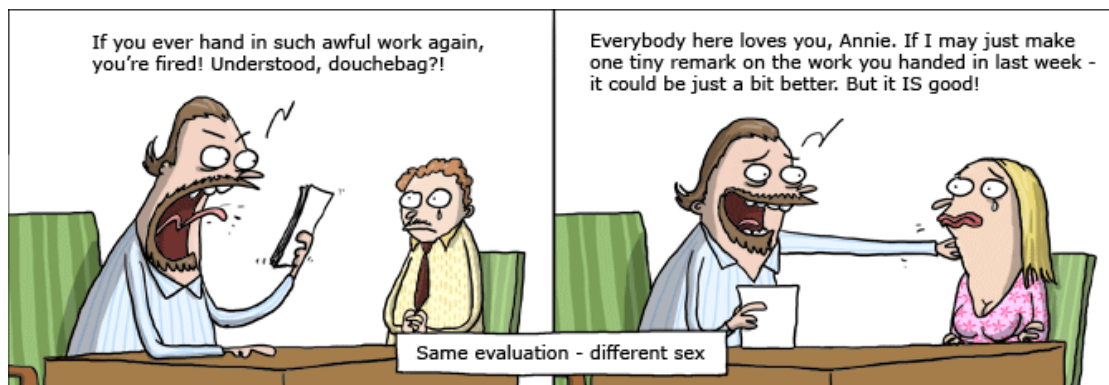
Sammendrag.....	3
Introduction	7
1. Challenging the Traditional Way of How to Think about Top Management.....	8
1.1 Primary Source of Inspiration.....	9
1.2 Research Question and Sub-Questions	10
1.3 Definitions	11
1.4 Limitations to this Thesis	13
1.5 Chapter Outline.....	14
Research Philosophy and Methodology	17
2. Research Philosophy and Methodology.....	18
2.1 Inspired by the Hermeneutic Research Philosophy	18
2.2 Qualitative Research Strategy.....	19
2.3 Abductive and Exploratory Research.....	20
2.4 Theoretical Methodology	22
2.5 Qualitative Research of Top Management	22
2.5.1 Inspirational Secondary Sources	22
2.5.2 Considerations in Relation to Qualitative Research Method.....	23
2.5.3 Selecting Interviewees.....	24
2.5.4 Designing Interview Research	28
2.5.5 Interview Settings.....	29
2.6 Data Processing.....	30
2.6.1 Transcribing Interviews.....	30
2.6.2 Coding Interview Data.....	32
2.7 Fulfilling the Scientific Requirements – Validity and Reliability	33
2.7.1 Generalizability of our Findings	34
Theoretical Framework	35
3. Reviewing Management Literature	36
3.1 Gender Stereotyping in Management.....	37
3.2 Think Manager—Think (Fe)Male?.....	38
3.3 Male Leaders are Transactional. Female Leaders are Transformational.	41
3.4 Men are Instrumental. Women are Expressive.....	44
3.5 Same, Same – No Difference.....	46
3.6 A Binary Concept Called Management	47
3.7 Model for Data Analysis	49
Analysis	51
4. Setting the Scene	52
4.1 Analysis Part 1: Analyzing Management Paradigms.....	53
4.1.1 Manage to be Yourself – Role Models and Sources of Inspiration	53
4.1.2 To Dare and To Do.....	55
4.1.3 It’s Exciting when there are People Behind.....	57
4.1.4 Summing Up on Management Paradigms	60
4.2 Analysis Part 2: Looking into Leadership Style	61
4.2.1 Approaching Employees through Respect and Understanding	61
4.2.2 You can’t Succeed Alone – Teamwork is Key	66
4.2.3 Summing Up on Leadership Style	68
4.3 Analysis Part 3: Examining Personal Attributes and Characteristics	68
4.3.1 All Roads can lead to the Top – It’s not about having a 20-Step Career-Plan	69
4.3.2 Top Management is Risky Business	72

4.3.3	You don't Talk About Long Hours at the Office	75
4.3.4	Never more than a Phone Call Away	77
4.3.5	Summing Up on Personal Attributes and Characteristics	81
4.4	Analysis Part 4 –Top Management from yet another Angle.....	82
4.4.1	A Female Touch.....	82
4.4.2	Executive Searchers - Linking Companies and Candidates	89
4.5	Top Management Anno 2011	95
4.5.1	The Premise for Top Management.....	96
4.5.2	Top Management is not about Gender. It's about having an Inner Fire.....	99
Discussion		100
5.	Top Management Anno 2011 is Bisexual.....	101
5.1	Top Management outside the Box	101
5.1.1	Stepping Beyond the Stereotypical Swamp.....	102
5.2	'Troubleing' Gender at the Top of the Hierarchy	104
5.3	Towards a New Perspective	107
5.3.1	Our Contribution to the Public Debate.....	109
Conclusion		110
6.	Answering our Research Question	111
Future Implications		113
7.	Future Implications	114
Bibliography and Appendices		115
8.	Bibliography.....	116
Appendix 1: Overview of Articles		122
Appendix 2: Definition of a Top Manager		125
Appendix 3: Documentation of Interviews.....		126
Appendix 4: Distribution of Quotations		127
Appendix 5: Interview Guide.....		128
Appendix 6: Original Quotations used in the Analysis		131
Appendix 7: Model of Economism and Humanism		144
Appendix 8: Model of Modern 'New Leadership' vs. Yesterday's Leadership Values		145
Appendix 9: Items for the BSRI.....		146
Appendix 10: Feature Article.....		147

List of Figures

Figure 1: Tendencies in the public debate	10
Figure 2: Project model	16
Figure 3: Model for data analysis	50
Figure 4: The premise for top management	97

Introduction



Wulfmorgenthaler, August 6, 2010

1. Challenging the Traditional Way of How to Think about Top Management

Corporate Denmark is a man's world!

93.48 % of all managing directors in private sector companies are men.³

77 % of top managers in Danish municipalities are men⁴

81 % of top managers in Danish regions are men.⁵

86 % of governmental top managers are men.⁶

Well-known, however unproved, myths and ideas seem to exist about the world at the executive floor. It is cold and lonely on top of the hierarchy. Men want men. And glass ceilings⁷ and old boys' networks⁸ are claimed to be barriers to women entering top positions. Several authors have called attention to an apparent preference for male leaders in politics, organizations and businesses, and much has been written about how closely men equals the common perception of a top manager and whether top management is male or female, masculine or feminine (e.g. Brown et al, 2011; Coleman, 2003; Gmür, 2006; Powell & Butterfield, 2002). Continuously much attention is given to supposed differences between men and women: that men are aggressive, competitive and ambitious; that women are caring, nurturing, and compassionate. The list of stereotypical characteristics goes on (e.g. Bem, 1974; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; 1989; 2002; Eagly et al, 2003).

The above figures from Statistics of Denmark show that corporate Denmark is dominated by men. It is still a man's world at the top of Danish organizations. Many initiatives aim to increase the number of women in top management, e.g. the Danish Government has in cooperation with public and private sector companies initiated the 'Charter for more Women in Management' aiming to ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to pursue management careers (Kvinder i ledelse, 2011a). Moreover, the debate in Europe currently focuses on whether self-regulation or regulation should be the way to make significant changes quickly, and in March 2010 the European Commission initiated a Women's Charter to promote more equality in decision making across the European Union (Reding, 2010;

³ Danmarks Statistik, 2009

⁴ Ligestilling i Danmark, 2009

⁵ Ligestilling i Danmark, 2009

⁶ Ligestilling i Danmark, 2009

⁷ A metaphor for the invisible barriers women meet when approaching top management positions

⁸ Refers to the assumption that men choose only men from their network for top management positions

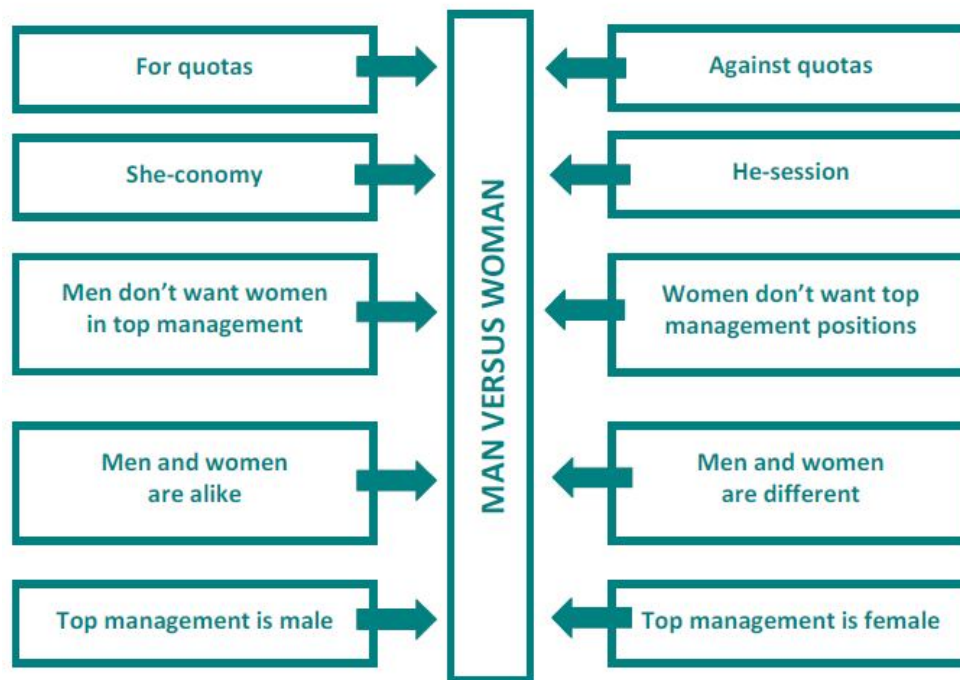
European Commission, 2010).

The intention of this thesis is to contrast with the prevailing women-in-top-management-debate. The discussion about women in top management is interesting as there is no doubt that by attracting more women, Danish organizations would have a greater pool of qualified candidates to draw on. However, we believe that this discussion only creates continuing polarization between men and women. Instead of talking about what men can and cannot and what women can or might do better, we are interested in finding out more about top management anno 2011. We are interested in finding out whether the story about top management is either masculine or feminine, or if one could assume that it is more than that. This thesis challenges the traditional way of how to think about top management, and thus the primary focus of this thesis is the Danish male top manager that currently constitutes the majority of the executive seats in Danish organizations.

1.1 Primary Source of Inspiration

During the last 6 months we have been following the general public debate about top management closely, and it is evident that focus on gender takes up most space when discussing top management in the Danish media: whether one sex has a greater impact than the other on bottom line results; whether employees have a preference for ‘him’ or ‘her’ as top manager; whether men and women have equal opportunities; whether female quotas is the way to make significant changes quickly; whether top management is male or female. The current debate about top management is complex and a number of opposing tendencies can be identified (please see Appendix 1, ‘Overview of Articles’):

Figure 1: Tendencies in the public debate



Hardly ever do the various media discuss top management from a more diverse perspective. This thesis questions whether top management is multi-faceted and not simply male or female. The dichotomistic focus in the current debate has inspired us to contribute with a new perspective to the public debate about top management anno 2011. Thus, as part of the results of this thesis, a feature article was published in the Danish newspaper *Berlingske*, December 19, 2011.

1.2 Research Question and Sub-Questions

Our thesis statement can thus be stated: the current public debate about top management is not diverse enough and a new perspective is needed. By directing attention to what top management entails and what it requires both personally and professionally, this thesis will contribute to a new perspective and hopefully a more diverse picture of top management, which has led us to the following research question:

Who is the Danish male top manager anno 2011, how does he understand the concept of top management and how does he approach his leadership?

In order to answer this research question, a number of sub-questions have been necessary to provide clarification of our thesis statement. These sub-questions will furthermore provide a structure of both our theoretical framework (chapter 3, page 35) and the analysis section (chapter 4, page 51):

- I. Which management paradigms and leadership styles dominate academic management literature?*
- II. According to which personal attributes and characteristics does such literature describe the general top manager, and can any prevailing gender stereotypes be identified?*
- III. How does the current Danish male top manager conform to the conception of management provided by academic literature – i.e. within which management paradigm does the Danish male top manager operate, and consequently by which leadership style and personal attributes and characteristics can he be characterized?*
- IV. How does the current Danish male top managers' understanding of top management conform to their female counterparts', as well as executive searchers', understanding of top management?*

1.3 Definitions

In order to specify our thesis statement we find it relevant to explain our understanding and use of the following concepts:

Top Manager:

With inspiration from the Danish Management Society⁹ (Denmark's largest member network for corporate managers and executives) and the State Employer's Authority¹⁰ (Appendix 2, 'Definition of a Top Manager'), the participants in this thesis can be defined as: A person who is involved in the decision-making of the organization at the highest possible level and thus employed under the category (1) Managing Director (MD), (2) Manager referring to a Board of Directors, or (3) Director of a specialized area of the business who refers directly to the MD.

⁹ Dansk Selskab for Virksomhedsledelse

¹⁰ Personalestyrelsen

Manager versus Leader:

In Danish terminology one does not distinguish between ‘manager’ and ‘leader’. Colloquially both terms are understood as synonyms. Both terms are thus seen as a formal position with relatively well-defined tasks and a certain decision-making authority, and will be used synonymously throughout the thesis.

The Concept of Top Management:

A manager/leader has two functions; to manage and to lead. The following distinction can be made between leadership and management: management deals with the administrative aspects such as planning, budgeting and controlling, whereas leadership deals more with the interpersonal aspects of a manager’s job (e.g. having a vision of what the organization can become, and using every manner of persuasion) (DuBrin, 1995). In this thesis, however, the concept of top management is understood as an ‘umbrella term’ that simultaneously contains the management and leadership style and is understood as “*a process whereby intentional influence is exerted over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization*” (Yukl, 2010, 21).

Management Paradigm:

A paradigm is a certain way of perceiving the world – a certain framework within which the individual thinks and acts (Thurén, 2008). In this thesis ‘management paradigm’ should be understood as the specific way our interviewees think about top management. Management paradigm is closely related to leadership style.

Leadership Style:

In this thesis, ‘leadership style’ is defined “*as relatively stable patterns of behavior displayed by leaders*” (Eagly et al, 2007, 569). In this thesis ‘leadership style’ refers to the way that our interviewees provide directions, implement plans, and motivate employees.

Personal Attributes and Characteristics:

Personal ‘attributes’ and ‘characteristics’ are understood as the qualities that constitute effective leadership according to the individual managers. This includes the interviewees’ competencies and skills. Personal attributes and characteristics will help us investigating who the current Danish male top manager is.

1.4 Limitations to this Thesis

This thesis has been limited to focus on the management paradigms in which current top managers operate, as well as an analysis of their leadership styles, and personal attributes and characteristics. The goal of this thesis is to contribute to the management debate with a more diverse picture of the conditions and requirements for the male top manager anno 2011.

This thesis is based on interviews with top managers and their personal perception of top management. We strive to obtain a more diverse understanding of top management and what it requires both personally and professionally, and we wish to distinguish ourselves from the gender-focus in the current debate about top management (please see section 1.1). The purpose of this thesis is thus not to give advice to the organizations that appear in this thesis about how to deal with gender diversity. Nor do we intend to analyze any initiatives there may be in the particular organizations with regards to diversity management. And finally, we do not analyze the effect of, or dedication to, 'Charter for more Women in Management' which has been signed by all the organizations.

The aim of this thesis is to affect the current debate about top management and contribute to the existing perceptions of top managers. Despite our wish to challenge the traditional approach to top management, and the stereotypes that may exist, we will not apply Critical Management Theory (CMT) as theoretical framework. CMT is founded in the social constructivist research philosophy (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008), and hence, this research philosophy is neither applicable on our research approach nor on the chosen method for data analysis. However, CMT provides an umbrella of theoretical perspectives, such as poststructuralist feminism and queer theory, which intend to change reality and question and reformulate ideas and practices that are often discursively tagged as 'common sense' ways of going about management (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008). One of these scholars is the American philosopher, Judith Butler, who confronts the idea about treating sex as a foundational and a pre-established identity (Butler, 1990).

Due to the pragmatic goal of this thesis, we found it necessary to use a functional model for analysis. However, by touching upon this critical theory, it allows us to distinguish ourselves from the traditional mainstream management literature and take a critical stance to the functional approach we have chosen for our research analysis. Hence, as will appear in the discussion (chapter 5, page 100), we acknowledge the critical stance of Butler's gender

troubling theory and the controversial queer theory – not as theoretical foundation, but rather as an open door to a whole new (and arguably necessary) way of thinking about management.

Furthermore, we have limited our analytical framework to contain management and leadership style theory; hence we have not applied the concepts of discourse analysis. A discourse analysis is interested only in how the discourse is put together, which means how to talk and think about the world, and is not interested in how the discourse is related to 'how it really is' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Thus a discourse analysis builds on observations and has no particular interest in the subject matter – top management. Our intention is not to merely understand the linguification of top management. Rather we seek to understand the concept as a whole and dig into the literature as well as the interviews to analyze *what* is said rather than *how* it is said.

1.5 Chapter Outline

In this section we elaborate on the general structure of this thesis and thus explain how we will answer our research question.

In order to guide us through the research process, a project model has been constructed (Figure 2, page 16). Based on the idea of building blocks, the project model has given direction to our efforts, and enabled us to conduct our research systematically by outlining clear objectives of this thesis. Each part of the model makes up an important step in the process of investigating the concept of top management. Step by step we have entered new levels of knowledge that all together have enabled us to reach the final conclusion and answer to our research question. The structure of this thesis – the project model – strengthens our final result and enables us to give a more diverse picture of top management. The chapter outline is as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction:

This chapter describes the frames for this thesis. It includes a presentation of our primary source of inspiration to conduct this specific research and the research question that will be answered by this thesis.

Chapter 2 – Research Philosophy and Methodology:

To construct a certain foundation for this thesis we begin with a clarification of a number of methodological questions. This chapter presents this thesis' research philosophy and our

methodological considerations in terms of gathering and analyzing our empirical data. Moreover, we will reflect upon how this thesis meets the scientific requirements.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework:

Throughout this chapter we present this thesis' theoretical framework. The theoretical framework consists of management literature from 1965 till 2011. It will clarify the most dominating management paradigms and the associated leadership styles, and personal attributes and characteristics. Finally, we will discuss the different dynamics that exist within the literature, and subsequently we will present our model for data analysis (Figure 3, page 50).

Chapter 4 – Analysis:

In line with the theoretical framework, the analysis is divided into three sections; (1) an analysis of the paradigm that the 10 male top managers operate within, (2) we analyze how these managers approach the role as a leader and thus their leadership style, and (3) we will examine the personal attributes and characteristics of them. This overall analysis will hereafter be compared against 2 female top managers and 2 executive searchers in order to ensure a female contribution to this thesis, and also draw on the experiences and thoughts of executive searchers, the liaison between companies and candidates. The chapter will conclude by a discussion of what we term 'the premise for top management'.

Chapter 5 – Discussion:

In this chapter we will discuss our findings from the analysis, and hence the answer to our research question. Moreover we will reflect upon the usability of our theoretical model and consider other ways of approaching the concept of top management.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion:

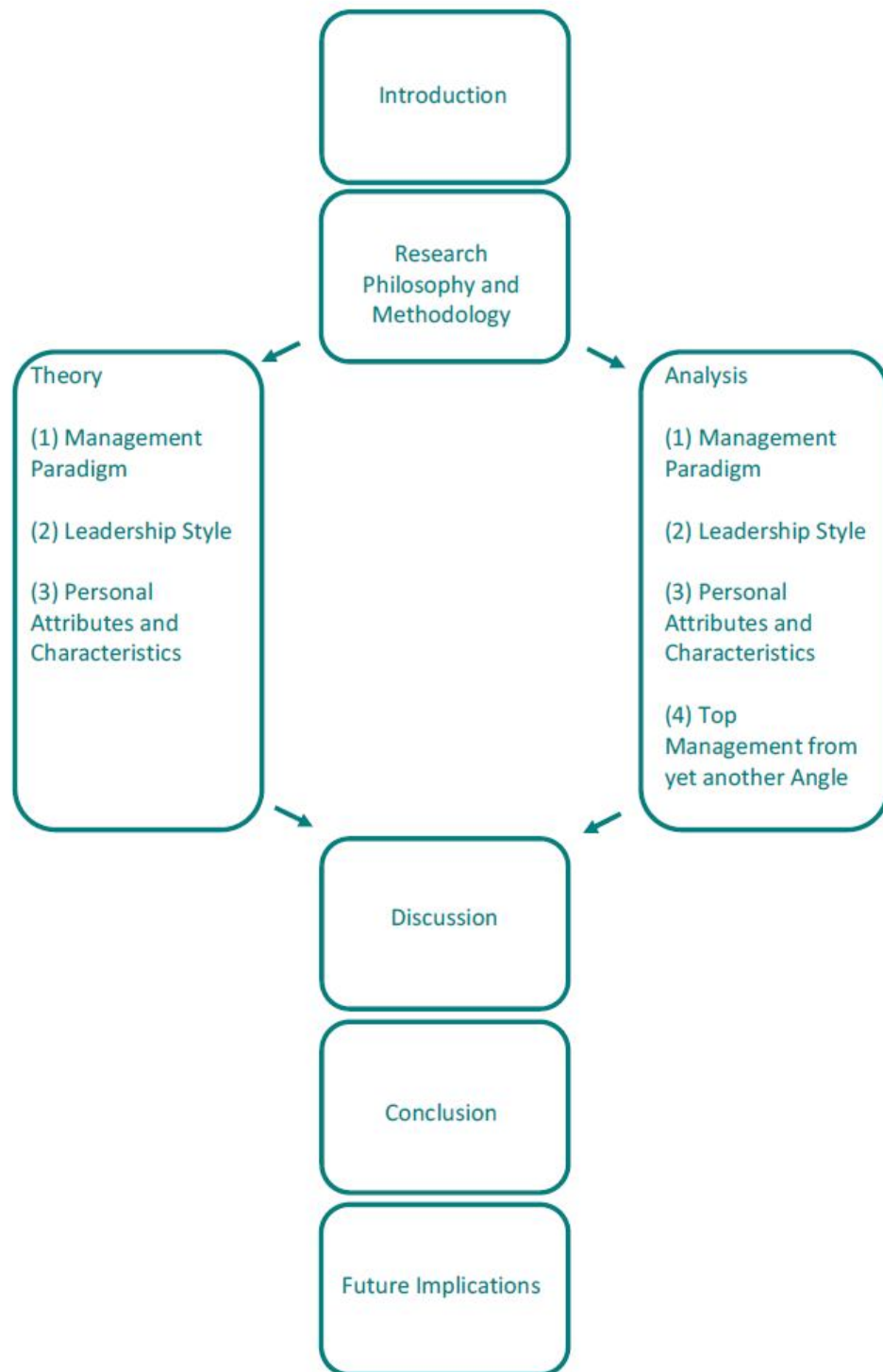
This chapter concludes the whole thesis which, on the basis of the previous chapters, will answer our research question and sub-questions.

Chapter 7 – Future Implications:

This last chapter aims at broadening this thesis' problem statement. Hence, in this chapter we will suggest how further research can be conducted with point of departure in our findings.

The structure of this thesis is illustrated in the model below which, furthermore, will serve as a guide for the reader throughout this thesis:

Figure 2: Project model



Research Philosophy and Methodology

2. Research Philosophy and Methodology

When producing knowledge it is of utmost importance that we are transparent in our choices and procedures. Hence, the following sections will outline this thesis' research philosophy, as well as our considerations and concerns in relation to our research approach, and the use of the particular research strategy. Subsequently, yet a section explains the data collection process, and makes clear how the collected data – primary as well as secondary – will be used in the following analysis of our empirical data.

2.1 Inspired by the Hermeneutic Research Philosophy

We will in this section introduce our theoretical scientific position. As indicated in the research question, our analytical interest lies within the investigation and understanding of the current Danish male top manager; the management paradigm in which he operates, his leadership style, and his personal attributes and characteristics. For that reason we draw on hermeneutics and the hermeneutic way of interpreting. Additionally, the following section will include an explanation of how we understand the concept of top management.

Based on our research, we wish to expose trends and tendencies within top management and draw lines from our research to other similar organizations. In this thesis we wish to generalize upon our findings, however, we also acknowledge that business situations are complex and unique, and that people may have different interpretations on the situation in which they find themselves (Saunders et al., 2003). As a result of our assumptions and pre-understandings we perceive top management as a predefined concept; a concept that contains a number of definitions and interpretations. Although we do not seek to uncover a final truth we believe it is possible to discover trends in our data analysis, and hence to point at tendencies within the field. Therefore, we also perceive top management as a non-static and changeable concept that develops through time – a concept that we are about to influence with new insights.

There are several ways to investigate the concept of top management. In this thesis the investigation of the concept is based on our interpretation of 14 interviews with top managers and executive searchers. Therefore we draw on hermeneutics and the hermeneutic way of interpreting. Hermeneutics is aimed at studying and interpreting text, dialogue and conversation, and social actions and practices (Højberg in Fuglsang & Olsen, 2004).

Hermeneutics attaches greater importance to understanding and interpretation than explanation. Also, hermeneutics is built on the assumption that the social actors who are being studied carry with them their own understanding of the world that will always be affected by the relation between context, culture and history (Højberg in Fuglsang & Olsen, 2004).

An important component of hermeneutics is the hermeneutic circle. The hermeneutic circle describes the interaction that takes place between the part and the whole in the process of understanding (Højberg in Fuglsang & Olsen, 2004). One cannot understand the whole without the parts and similarly one needs the whole to understand the parts. In this thesis the hermeneutic circle represents the continuing interpretation of the parts (management paradigms, leadership styles, and personal attributes and characteristics) and the whole (the concept of top management). As the hermeneutic circle obtains an epistemological function in the process of understanding the concept of top management, this thesis should thus be seen as a dynamic paper that has constantly evolved in line with our improved knowledge within the concept of top management.

2.2 Qualitative Research Strategy

In this section we will outline our research strategy which is a general plan of how we will go about answering the research question of this thesis. As investigators we may employ a number of different research strategies in our research, for example a survey, ethnography or a multi-case study (Bryman, 2004; Saunders et al., 2003). Each of these strategies contains a number of requirements. The methodological considerations in relation to the research strategy have led us to the acknowledgement that this particular research does not fit into either of the abovementioned research strategies. First, in line with the hermeneutic research philosophy, this thesis is built upon a qualitative research strategy consisting of interviews with 12 top managers (10 male managers and 2 female managers) and 2 executive searchers in public and private sector organizations located in Denmark. Thus, the use of a survey would not apply to our research philosophy. Second, as it has not been our intention to use ourselves as instruments we distinguish ourselves from the ethnographic approach. Moreover, one may argue that we are strongly inspired by a multi-case study. A multi-case study *“embodies the logic of comparison in that it implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations”* (Bryman, 2004, 53). Within a multi-case study the strategy

for data collection will be based on several cases (e.g. several organizations) focusing on comparing similarities and dissimilarities between the cases (Bryman, 2004). The aim of this thesis is not to seek explanations for similarities and differences or to compare contrasting cases. Neither the aim is to look into how the different organizational cultures and settings affect the interviewees' approach to top management.

The aim of this thesis is to create a common conception of top management based on an analysis of the individual top managers' and executive searchers' understanding of the concept. By strategically choosing top managers from various private and public sector organizations we are able to investigate and seek a broader and more diverse understanding of the top of the hierarchy, and contribute constructively to the public debate about top management.

The hermeneutic interpretation is valuable when it comes to understanding people and their actions, and what constitutes the basis for these actions (Thurén, 2008). Consistent with the hermeneutics we agree that interpretations of the collected data will be affected by the interpreter's – our – assessments and pre-understandings that together make the interpretations somewhat uncertain. Hence we must at all times be aware that we can affect or be affected by the context of our research. We acknowledge that our interviewees carry with them a subjectivity. Therefore, as interpreters, we must set aside our own pre-understanding, and through empathy and a rational understanding gain access to the motives and feelings of the interviewees in order to gain a deeper understanding of the top managers' statements (Højberg in Fuglsang & Olsen, 2004). We thus seek to *understand* rather than merely explain the concept of top management.

2.3 Abductive and Exploratory Research

In this section we will describe how we approach our research of top management in terms of how we approach our collection of data.

This thesis is build upon empirical data collected through interviews with 12 selected top managers and 2 executive searchers. In the process of developing our research question, we were intrigued by the notion that the public debate's gender focused portrayal of top management might differ from the experience of the top managers themselves. This raised a number of sub-questions regarding how top management is practiced, and whether management literature (as well as the broader public debate) sufficiently provides a diverse

picture of top management. Furthermore, it encouraged the assumption that a more diverse portrayal of top management may lead to new insights and a more constructive debate about the concept. Our empirical data has been gathered with point of departure in these sub-questions and pre-understandings.

Due to the particular scope of this thesis – to influence the concept of top management – we have taken an abductive approach to our research. The abductive research approach is evident in the constant interaction between empirical data and theory throughout the process of this thesis (Halkier in Pedersen & Nielsen, 2001). First, we have reconsidered our theoretical framework as we have obtained a deeper understanding of our interviewees' thoughts and understandings of top management throughout the intensive research process. Likewise, we have also found it necessary to reconsider our analytical approach and reject some of our initial ideas and pre-understandings, as we have gained a better theoretical understanding of the concept of top management.

In accordance with our abductive research approach, the data in this thesis has been explored without a predetermined theoretical or descriptive framework. A prior specification of a theory tends to be disfavoured because of the possibility of introducing a premature closure on the issues to be investigated (Fuglsang & Olsen, 2004), which we have attempted to avoid through the abductive approach. This means that the data was first collected and then explored to see which themes and issues to concentrate on and inquire into.

One of the major considerations when using an abductive research approach is that you will never know in advance if a useful pattern will emerge from the collected data. However, abduction – the interaction between data and theory – enables us to understand, rather than just describe the concept of top management, and it enables us to approach our research without a set of specific hypotheses that must be tested and verified. Hence we believe that this is the most interesting and thorough way to conduct research for this particular thesis.

In line with the abductive research approach this is an explorative study. Exploratory studies *“are a valuable means of finding out what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light”* (Saunders et al, 2003, 96). Since our research is intentionally done at one point in time – like a snapshot – it has been impossible to determine with certainty what direction our research would take. Hence, the great advantage of the explorative approach is its flexibility and changeability. It has given us the opportunity to change our direction as a result of new insights that occurred to us during the process,

meaning that we as explorative investigators initially have a broad focus and then becomes progressively narrower as the research progresses (Saunders et al, 2003).

2.4 Theoretical Methodology

The theoretical framework of this thesis comprises a review of a broad spectrum of management literature from 1965 till 2011. By reviewing the literature we have been able to assess developments and detect the different aspects and dynamics within the literature. Rather than a simple examination of individual theorists' authorship, we have chosen to present a range of theorists within the field of management with point of departure in the most dominating topics: management paradigms, leadership styles, and personal attributes and characteristics.

Throughout the process we realized that some of the theories we found important to introduce, did not necessarily match our hermeneutic research philosophy. However, as mentioned in the limitations part (section 1.4, page 13), touching upon other lines of theory enables us to be reflexive and to deconstruct the concept under scrutiny – top management (Kellner, 1995). Using multiple perspectives on top management improves the complete picture of the concept and increases our objectivity, but forces us to constantly reflect on the relation between our methodology and our theory (Kellner, 1995). Our abductive research approach allows us to let theory follow data; hence we have only used theories that are relevant in order to answer our research question.

2.5 Qualitative Research of Top Management

The empirical data used in this thesis, primarily originates from primary data sources; our 14 qualitative research interviews. As mentioned earlier, when producing knowledge it is of utmost importance that we are transparent in our choices and procedures. As the process of qualitative research has sometimes been accused for its lack of transparency (Bryman, 2004), the following sections include our most important considerations in relation to the process of collecting data in order to emphasize what we as investigators have actually done and how this leads us to the conclusion of this thesis.

2.5.1 Inspirational Secondary Sources

To get a grasp on the public debate and get an indication of present-day thoughts and opinions about top management, we have made random checks from the biggest Danish newspapers from March 2011 to September 2011; we have visited various influential blogs on the Internet

to get the newest comments on the subject; we have followed a number of Danish magazines; we have read debate books from management consultants, executive searchers, journalists, top managers and other experts. We acknowledge that neither blogs, newspaper articles nor debate books are of any high academic rating and can be very subjective, however, those sources have been used as an inspirational source and to obtain an in-depth understanding of the concept of top management. We believe that in-depth research of the public debate on top management contribute to the quality of the qualitative interviews. Obtaining a previous knowledge on our research topic and thus being aware of the numerous opinions, understandings, perspectives and ideas of top management, enables us to ask qualified and relevant questions, and have a critical and interpreting reflection about the interview process and the value of the knowledge that our interviews provide.

2.5.2 Considerations in Relation to Qualitative Research Method

In order to answer our research question, a significant amount of data has been collected in the form of interviews. The explorative approach to our empirical material, allows us to collect knowledge about top management through open interviews, an interactive approach that gives us an opportunity to interact face-to-face with our interviewees (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Such a direct interaction helps us to obtain central keywords about our research topic in terms of both verbal language and nonverbal language (body language) that will provide our research with extensive and detailed descriptions. There exists only few standardized rules for qualitative research, and the great virtue of the qualitative method is its openness, as our interviewees are given an open field of answer possibilities.

Qualitative research has sometimes been criticized as being too subjective and relying too much on the investigators' often unsystematic views about what is significant and important (Bryman, 2004). Hence, as novices in the qualitative research interview, we acknowledge that we must account for our inexperience, and thus careful preparation of central questions was considered before meeting our first interviewee – the *what*, *why* and *how* in the interview project (Kvale, 1997). As interviewers we should not ask *how* the interview should be analyzed without a declared goal for the research – the *what* and *why* (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

To account for the uncertainties by using an explorative approach to our data collection, a clear outline of the purpose of the research was made beforehand. The questions were formulated specifically to help answer the research question, and the interview guide was re-

evaluated and updated after each interview to improve the collection of data. As previously mentioned, a thorough examination of the public debate ensured we got a prior knowledge about our research topic before formulating the interview guide (Kvale, 1997).

Our goal with the qualitative research interview has been to capture our interviewees' perception of reality by getting a deeper understanding of their thoughts, considerations and actions in terms of top management. The interviews have given us an opportunity to get insight into the life world of the interviewees, and in this way obtain knowledge about how the interviewees experience and understand a top managerial position, and how they approach their role as leaders.

2.5.3 Selecting Interviewees

In the period from June 6, 2011 till August 18, 2011, we conducted 14 interviews of 44-80 minutes duration. In total we contacted 17 potential interviewees, and got 14 positive responses in return. We regard this wide support of our research as evidence of the relevance of our research question.

All interviews took place at the organization in question, either at the personal office of the interviewees or in a meeting room. In advance, the interviewees had received an email with information about the scope for this research, however, they were not provided with the interview guide at any time. Please see Appendix 3, 'Documentation of Interviews', for further information. The interviewees are:

10 male top managers

- Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma
- Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord
- Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic, IBM
- Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment
- Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration
- Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark
- Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive & Country Mgr in IBM Software Group and Manager of Gender Diversity Board, IBM Denmark
- Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen (future President of Copenhagen Business School)
- Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit
- Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration

2 female top managers

- Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management
- Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale

2 executive searchers

- Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg (now HR Partner at Maersk Line)
- Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners

The interviewees age from 34 to 59 and all apply to our definition of a top manager; “*a person who is involved in the decision-making of the organization at the highest possible level and thus employed under the category (1) Managing Director (MD), (2) Manager referring to a Board of Directors, or (3) Director of a specialized area of the business that refers directly to the MD*”. All our interviewees manage (or are part of the executive group in) some of Denmark’s major and well known organizations. The size of the organizations ranges from 500-15,000 employees (please see Appendix 3, ‘Documentation of Interviews’, for further information about the organizations). Besides the interviewees’ position, the interviewed top managers have been selected according to a number of criteria: (1) a representation of different organizations, (2) a mix of both public and private sector organizations, and (3) organizations that have already committed themselves in relation to diversity management at top managerial level.

This thesis illustrates tendencies across a broad spectre of organizations and industries. For this reason a number of different private and public organizations are represented to conduct a wider qualitative research. Since the focus of this research has been to ensure a high quality of our research in terms of the position of our interviewees, it has not been our intention to ensure a common denominator for the involved organizations. However, to ensure that all top managers are part of an organization that takes an active approach to our area of investigation, we have been inspired by ‘Charter for More Women in Management’ (Kvinder i ledelse, 2011a) when establishing contact to the top managers. The charter is part of the effort by the Danish government to engage more women in top management. All 12 top managers that have been interviewed in this thesis are thus employed in organizations that have signed the charter (Kvinder i ledelse, 2011b). The advantage of using these particular organizations is that they, in agreement with ‘Charter for More Women in Management’, already have committed themselves to implement certain organizational policies in relation to diversity management, and that they explicitly have chosen to participate in the discussion of top management (and gender). We believe that this will bring a higher quality to our research.

The Theoretical Saturation Criterion

The number of interviews must always be considered when designing an interview research

(Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The theoretical saturation criterion proposes that when the investigator reaches the point that he or she is able to anticipate fairly accurately what the next interviewee is going to say, there are probably enough interviewees already (Bryman, 2004). For this thesis we chose to interview 10 male top managers which in our opinion would give us a reasonable amount of data and a usable extract of male top managers. As the scope of this thesis is to investigate male top managers, we decided to interview only 2 female managers. Involving female top managers allowed us to compare the data from the male managers with the data from their female counterparts, which in case of similarities would strengthen the generalizability of our findings. Furthermore, we teamed up with 2 experienced executive searchers who function as a linking element between top managers and organizations.

Despite the differences between the interviewees (e.g. age, experience and occupation in either private or public sector organizations) we were after the fifth interview no longer presented to any new perspectives markedly different from the perspectives and arguments already adduced. Rather, the last 7 interviews offered us a more detailed impression of the working conditions and requirements that top management implies. In other words, we believe that since our major analytical categories (management paradigms, leadership styles and personal attributes and characteristics) had been saturated, there seemed little point in continuing, and so we found it appropriate to bring data collecting to a halt after 14 interviews.

Last but not least, the number of interviews must be considered in relation to the restrictions of this thesis in terms of time and resources. Due to the specific requirements given by Copenhagen Business School regarding thesis writing, this thesis is restricted to a schedule covering 8 months, and no budget or funding exists to support the research.

Interviewing the Elite

When interviewing top managers, our interviews will have similarities with what Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) refer to as the 'elite interview'. Since our focus is top managers, all our interviewees hold powerful positions in the organizations where they work. Hence we had to consider the asymmetric power relation of the interviews and ensure that our interviews went beyond a possible hidden agenda of the top managers. Therefore, we had to demonstrate that we were extremely well prepared and had done our homework in terms of previous research on the topic, first in order to obtain a certain degree of symmetry in the interview relation and, second, to legitimize our role as researchers.

When starting to conduct our interviews we were influenced by a great deal of respect towards these powerful top managers and a certain degree of acceptance of authority. However, already during our first interview we were struck by the informal and honest nature of our interviewees. As a result of our careful preparation and their informal nature, we did not experience any significant asymmetric power relation.

Involving people in top management also reveals certain limitations to the collection of data both in terms of logistics and confidentiality. The calendars of top managers are most often overbooked which restricted us to approximately one hour of interview with each interviewee at their choice of location. Therefore it has not been possible to gather the top managers for a group interview. When able to build on one another's responses such group interaction may have led to a highly productive discussion and maybe allowed us to identify other thoughts among the interviewees (Saunders et al, 2003). Furthermore, due to the confidentiality of their work and relations to employees, observations have not been possible, however, as all interviews with the 12 top managers were conducted in the organization of the particular interviewee this has contributed to an insight into their world and sphere of work.

Another major consideration has been the ethical issues that occurred across the stages of this research project. Ethical considerations include, among others, confidentiality, the privacy of the participants, the effects on the participants of the way in which the data is analyzed and presented, and which consequences the participation may have for the interviewees (Kvale, 1997; Saunders et al., 2003). Most of all we strongly considered how to pose the questions regarding their private life without crossing a personal boundary. Because of the public exposure of top managers, they must consider their statements. First, in order to accommodate these ethical considerations and in order to encourage the top managers to speak frankly, we provided a detailed description of the purpose and scope of the interview to all interviewees. Second, we made an agreement with all interviewees before the interview started, that they were naturally allowed to skip questions they felt too personal. However, such a situation never occurred and the answers were in all cases frank and honest – some even controversial and surprising. Finally, all quotes used in this thesis have been approved by the interviewees in order to prevent misunderstandings or ill interpretations (please see Appendix 4 for an overview of distribution of quotes between the 14 interviewees).

2.5.4 Designing Interview Research

The following section deals with the construction of the interview guide that was used during the interviews with top managers and executive searchers. All interviews were conducted as individual interviews to obtain information to meet this thesis's particular purpose. When preparing our interview guide, we acknowledge that our approach to interviewing is related to our epistemological point of departure and depend on what we wish to know about our research topic (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Semi-structured Interview Guide

The interviews have been organized according to the semi-structured interview approach, an approach situated between the open dialogue and the careful planned questionnaire (Kvale, 1997) (Appendix 5, 'Interview Guide'). This interview technique provides the most explaining, accurate and detailed answers as the questions can be clarifying, absorbing and interpreting (Kvale, 1997). The use of a semi-structured interview guide had two functions: (1) to gain insight into the private and professional life of the interviewed top managers, and (2) to explore other interesting topics that we were not yet aware of, which all together help us to gain a more diverse understanding of the concept of top management.

Due to our explorative research approach the use of closed questions was excluded as such questions assume a previous knowledge that we were about to find through our interviews. Relying on open questions gave us a possibility to get insight into the opinions, experiences, thoughts and ideas of our interviewees by encouraging them to individual narratives from their private- and professional life, and thus give us concrete examples on their work. In order to compare the 14 interviews it has, however, been important to ensure a certain consistency in the replies to the interviews. The semi-structured interview technique allowed us to prepare an interview guide before conducting our interviews, hence it ensured the structure we needed by giving us an opportunity to 'stage managing' the dialogue to a certain extent. Naturally, it is unavoidable for our questions to have an influence on the answers of the interviewees, as the purpose of our semi-structured interview guide is exactly to direct our interviewees in order to make sure they stick to the central themes and thus provide us with the information we need. Due to time constraints we occasionally had to interrupt with structured questions, in order to ensure the interview remained within the frames we believed to be important (Kvale, 1997). However, we believe an approach with open questions has increased the

reliability of our research, as our understanding of what was important got neutralized by the interviewees' own considerations and thoughts. Moreover, this approach allowed the interviewees to come up with a varied number of responses. Finally, the interview guide has been used to thematize the answers, thereby making it easier to analyze them.

The interview guide has been fine-tuned during the process, in this way digging deeper into unexpected themes that may arise in the interview situation. The early interviews have influenced the questions and content of subsequent interviews, however, the majority of questions were identical in all our interviews. All questions have been formulated with inspiration from the knowledge we have previously obtained about the research topic, e.g. from the inspirational secondary sources. Throughout the interview we have strived to ask clarifying questions. We have taken into consideration the crucial topic of question wording, making sure that our interview guide reflects a well-known terminology to the interviewees, thereby avoiding possible misinterpretations of our questions and in this way creating reliable and valid responses (Johnson & Reynolds, 2008). We provided the interviewees with a briefing before the interview and a summary at the end to ensure that we had correctly understood the intention of the interviewees' main points. All interviews were ended by a 'catch-all-question' asking the interviewees of which good advice they would give 2 students if having the ambition to head towards the executive offices (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

During each interview we were both present in order to supplement each other and ensure a high quality of questions and answers. It is argued that open questions raise higher demands of control and structure during the interview, and we have thus ensured to have a clear understanding of our roles during the interview to avoid confusion about what should be said, when to interrupt, and which questions we had to follow in case the interviewee ended up following an irrelevant road of narratives (Kvale, 1997).

2.5.5 Interview Settings

As previously mentioned, all top managers decided both time and place for the interviews and they all suggested that we should meet at the locations of the respective organizations. This has been a great chance to visit a number of corporate locations in Copenhagen, and an excellent opportunity to gain an insight into different work spheres. In the following we wish to illustrate the difference between the locations we have visited and provide a few examples of those interview settings that made the greatest impression on us.

In Nykredit, for example, we met Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, in his private office at the top floor. We made ourselves comfortable in the huge leather couches and enjoyed an extraordinary panoramic view of the city while going through our questions. At Microsoft we were invited into the, according to Managing Director Jørgen Bardenfleth, finest meeting room at the company. At PostNord we got to see the 100 year old conference room before our interview with Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark. At the Danish Ministry of the Environment we met our interviewee, Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, in his small office filled with books and documents, and children's drawings hanging on the walls. And when visiting Managing Director Alfred Josefsen at Irma's headquarters, located in the suburbs, sheep were grazing in front of the windows at the homelike office which functioned both as the office of Alfred Josefsen and as a major conference room.

In general, we were given a warm welcoming either by the interviewee in person, or by a secretary or personal assistant. Many of the interviewees loosened their tie and made themselves comfortable offering coffee and candy. At the end of every interview they were all keen on giving us advice and guide us in relation to our career that we are just about to begin. Hence, we gained very informal and honest interviews and at the same time a taste of the environment at the executive floor.

2.6 Data Processing

Data processing is an important part of the subsequent data analysis. Therefore, the following section will include an explanation of how we have transcribed the interviews and carried out the subsequent categorical coding.

2.6.1 Transcribing Interviews

After conducting our interviews, all interviews have been transcribed based on the audio recording from a digital voice recorder. The transcribed written text constitutes the material used for our analysis. The interviews have been transcribed from the idea that such an approach to our data processing would minimize the risk to oversee important details. In correlation with Kvale (1997) we understand our transcriptions as interpretative constructs that are useful tools for given purposes. This definition implies an element of interpretation when the interviews are transcribed as important aspects from the interview situation, like

mime and voice, are not included. However, we have strived to reproduce the conversations as precisely as possible.

The transcription of the interviews involves a translation from a physical conversation with an oral language, to a language fixed in written form. Transcribing our interviews helps us to organize the interview conversations in a form that is suitable for the following analysis, and the transcription has been a first step in the analytical process. To ensure we both had a uniform approach to the transformation of oral and written language, we agreed on a number of transcription rules or guidelines to ensure we used a common style while transcribing (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). We decided to transcribe the interview in its full lengths with the exception of (1) our introductory presentation of the thesis, (2) interjections such as “eh”, “hem” etc. to ensure a flowing written language, (3) unfinished sentences without coherence or meaning, (4) any story that did not directly relate to the scope of this thesis or the questions in the interview guide, and (5) pauses for thoughts, background noises and interruptions. We have aimed to use the transcription to ensure a precise reproduction of the interviews, and we have hence included non-standard grammar, dialects and slang directly as it has been said in most of the interviews. Afterwards, the transcription has been checked against the audiotape for accuracy.

There is no standard method – no ‘via regia’ – to find the true meaning in the things that have been said in an interview (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Interviews should consequently not only be seen as ‘transcripts’, but also as lively conversations. A necessary approach to the transcription of our interviews therefore implies that we engage in a dialogue with the text material. As investigators, we must ensure to inquire about the theme of the text, and in this way try to develop, clarify and extend what have been said during the interview (Kvale, 1997). As previously mentioned, to increase the reliability of our empirical data, we have given the interviewees the possibility to approve their statements, and hence ensured that their opinions and attitudes are reproduced correctly (Johnson & Reynolds, 2008). Furthermore, as the interviews have been conducted in Danish (the mother tongue of both interviewers and interviewees), the interviewees have following approved our translation of original quotes. In that way we have covered the possibility of misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

2.6.2 Coding Interview Data

Categorical coding is, like transcription, an early step in the data analysis. Coding is a useful way to reduce and organize large amounts of transcribed text into a number of themes that enables us to discover patterns that would be difficult to detect by reading alone (Kvale, 1997).

We investigated all interviews in order to find interesting patterns, quotes and opinions among the interviewees. Part of this work had already been done through the preparation of the semi-structured interview guide. In practice we have therefore made a semi-enclosed coding, that during the coding process has been open to the appearance of new sub codes and patterns (Olsen, 2002). Herein lies a major difference between quantitative and qualitative methods; quantitative coding occurs *ex ante* while coding in qualitative research takes place *ex post*. Obviously, coding cannot be carried out until one or several interviews have been completed. Hence, for qualitative methods it is characteristic that meaning is created subsequently (Olsen, 2002).

In correlation with our explorative research approach, the coding has been a continuous process. First, after initial coding that generated numerous codes, we reviewed them, eliminated the less useful ones, subdivided large number of responses that had been given the same code, and formulated a focused coding scheme. Since the purpose of the interviews is to test our hypotheses and to gather answers to our research question, the coding scheme was constructed with point of departure in our central research question and sub-questions (Kvale, 1997). After developing the coding categories, we made a list that assigned each code a description:

- **Setting/Context:** Codes that provide background information such as civil status/family background, education/supplementary education and study/work abroad.
- **Interviewees' way of thinking about people:** Codes capturing their leadership style, their approach to their employees, role models and inspiration, and their view of human nature.
- **Interviewees' perspective:** Codes that capture how they define work/life opportunities/challenges.
- **Interviewees' characteristic:** Codes that relate to how they accomplish things, personal drive, power and influence, ambitions, formal/informal relationships and values.
- **Interviewees' definition of top management:** Codes that categorize the worldview of the interviewees and how they understand the concept of top management.
- **Event codes:** Codes directed at unique events or successes in the interviewees' professional lives.

- **Myths about top management:** Codes relating to possible myths about top management.
- **Stereotypes:** Codes relating to the interviewees' perception of diversity and masculine/feminine stereotypes.
- **The public debate:** Codes categorizing tendencies and changes over time in top management and in the public debate concerning top management.

We acknowledge that the coding of our empirical data involves the risk to separate a text segment from its context and distort meaning or over-interpret. However, we have ensured the reliability of the data by comparing the coding of one another (Kvale, 1997). Moreover, we have avoided breaking up text segments into little pieces, and when in doubt, the actual text segments have been coded with several codes. We also recognize that software programs such as Atlas.ti, NVivo9, XSight etc. could be useful tools when coding interview data, as such systems facilitate systematic, efficient coding and complex analyses. We, however, chose to take the steps ourselves and by coding our data manually we find that we have obtained a deep insight into our data and gained an understanding of the conceptual relationships that exist in our empiricism.

2.7 Fulfilling the Scientific Requirements – Validity and Reliability

According to Kvale (1997), generalizability, validity and reliability constitute the holy trinity of modern social sciences. As the interest of this thesis is to understand and outline the conditions and requirements for Danish male top managers, it is important that we are able to demonstrate that our data material is both valid and reliable before generalizing our findings.

Johnson and Reynolds (2008) provide a set of guidelines which, if fulfilled, can help to ensure the validity and reliability of the interviews. These guidelines are as follows: (1) the requested information must be available to the interviewee, (2) the interviewee must know what, to the interviewer, is a relevant and appropriate response, (3) the interviewee must be motivated to provide the interviewer with the information, (4) the interviewer must accurately record the interviewee's responses, and (5) the responses must reflect the interviewees' intentions, not the interviewer's (Johnson and Reynolds, 2008).

In accordance with these guidelines and thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of our data, we have taken the following actions (some of them have already been mentioned throughout this chapter): (1) before submitting this thesis all statements used in the analysis have been approved by the interviewees in order to prevent misunderstandings or ill interpretations. (2) Before the interviews every top manager was provided with an e-mail

explaining the purpose of the interview. Moreover, due to their positions, our interviewees must be considered experts within the field of top management, thus one must be confident that they provide the relevant information. (3) As previously mentioned our interviewees are hardworking and extremely busy people. Hence, we assume that they would not participate in an interview if they did not find the topic relevant and important. (4) All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and checked. In addition we were both present during every interview and we have both contributed to the succeeding analysis of the interview data. (5) Throughout every interview we used a range of open questions and followed up by asking the interviewees to provide practical examples of their statements. In order to ensure that we were correct in our own interpretations of the interviews with the 12 top managers, we compared the results to those of the interviews with the executive searchers. In Appendix 6, 'Original Quotations used in the Analysis', you will find a list of the original quotes.

2.7.1 Generalizability of our Findings

It is often suggested that the scope of the findings of qualitative research is limited since this type of research often is conducted with a small number of individuals in a certain organization or locality, and that it is consequently impossible to know how the findings can be generalized to other settings (Bryman, 2004).

We recognize that the subjectivity of the interviewees and the influence of the context in which they find themselves complicate generalizations. In addition, we will as investigators and observers also ascribe a certain interpretation to the concept of top management. And finally, we acknowledge that the working conditions of top managers in Denmark are obviously influenced by Danish culture and structure of society, therefore our conclusions may only be transferable to countries with a similar culture, for example the Scandinavian countries and other western cultures.

However, as mentioned before, we were after the fifth interview no longer presented to any new perspectives markedly different from the perspectives and arguments already adduced. Rather, the last 7 interviews offered a more detailed understanding of the concept of top management. This, we find, indicates that the collected data from the interviews carried out successfully have identified the most important aspects of top management, a fact that positively affect the generalizability of our conclusions. Therefore, we believe that our research is representative and that general conclusions can be deduced from our findings.

Theoretical Framework

Part 1: Think Manager—Think (Fe)Male

Part 2: Male Leaders are Transactional. Female Leaders are Transformational.

Part 3: Men are Instrumental. Women are Expressive.

Part 4: Model for Data Analysis

“Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth”

James MacGregor Burns

3. Reviewing Management Literature

The following chapter will give our reader an impression of in which theoretical frame we will investigate our empirical data, thus how we will examine the lives and experiences of the interviewed top managers, and their understanding of the concept of top management. In order to broaden our theoretical understanding of top management and to construct a solid theoretical framework for this thesis, we will review and analyze a sizeable extract of management literature from 1965 till 2011. The conceptual framework that supports this thesis consists of two primary constructs – gender and management. The literature on management clearly illustrates the power of stereotypes when thinking, writing and speaking about or practicing management. Therefore, we will begin this chapter by introducing the stereotypical way of thinking about management. As we will illustrate, the academic debate concerning management has since the early 1970s been characterized by opposing dynamics when discussing the ‘good manager’, leadership styles, and managers’ personal attributes, and characteristics. The literature on management continues to discuss a number of different, however, not mutually exclusive, management paradigms. Therefore, this review is subsequently divided into three major areas that we have identified within the literature: (1) management paradigms, (2) leadership styles, and (3) personal attributes and characteristics. Throughout the review we will introduce a number of models that have been popular among theorist when analyzing management and managers, and based on our analysis of the literature we will conclude this chapter by construction our own model for data analysis.

Due to our abductive and explorative research approach, the theoretical framework of this thesis has evolved through the interaction with data. After inquiring into the extensive amount of management literature, and in interplay with our empirical data, our theoretical framework has been selected based on what we discovered to be commonly mentioned terms within the concept of management: management paradigm, leadership style and personal attributes and characteristics.

In short, the purpose of this chapter will be to create a foundation for the subsequent analysis (chapter 4, page 51) that will draw on concepts and basic assumptions presented in the following. Thus, this chapter includes a review and analysis of relevant literature associated with gender and management theory, with a particular focus on the underlying sub-questions:

- I. Which management paradigms and leadership styles dominate academic management literature?
- II. According to which personal attributes and characteristics does such literature describe the general top manager, and can any prevailing gender stereotypes be identified?

3.1 Gender Stereotyping in Management

Early management literature was written about men, for men and by men excluding and ignoring women as part of business (Kelan, 2008). Since the mid-1960s, when the Harvard Business Review published the article, “Are Women Executives People?” (Bowman et al., 1965), much has been written about how closely the stereotypic image of the ‘good’ manager is associated with the masculine stereotype and how this common perception that ‘male = manager’ works against women aspiring to senior management positions (Coleman, 2003; Gmür, 2006; Koenig et al., 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979, 1989, 2002; Schein, 1973; Sheridan, 1994).

The increasing number of women in top management has somewhat changed management literature, e.g., in Denmark the proportion of female managers has increased from 3.8 % in 2002 to 6.52 % in 2009 in private sector companies (Danmarks Statistik, 2009; Minister for Ligestilling, 2006). Not least the feminists have since the early 1970s contributed to the debate on whether women are the same or different from men, arguing about the political and managerial consequences and implications of the traditional sex role stereotypes (Fuglsang et al., 2005, Andersen & Kaspersen, 2005). However, research has shown that deep-rooted beliefs in society still continue to support the view that leadership is vested in male. Hence the identification of leadership with men and a male stereotype of leadership remains the underlying norm (Coleman, 2003; Gmür, 2006; Kniveton, 2008; Powell & Butterfield, 1989; Powell et al., 2002; Schein, 1992).

Eagly and Carli defines stereotypes as expectations to members of a certain group to “...possess characteristics and exhibit behavior consistent with those stereotypes” (Eagly & Carli, 2003, 818). In general, gender stereotypes are understood as categorical or widely shared beliefs or expectations about the characteristics, attributes or behaviors ascribed to individuals on the basis of their sex (Powell et. al., 2002, Duehr & Bono, 2006, Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Stereotypes help us to simplify information processing in today's complex world by categorizing – what we basically do when we make use of stereotypes (Heilman, 1997; Powell et al., 2002). Especially sex (man or women) provides a very strong basis for categorizing people, and as Eagly and Karau states, “*stereotypes about women and men are easily and automatically activated*” (Eagly & Karau, 2002, 574). The problem with stereotyping is, as Duehr and Bono (2006) says, that once such “*schemas are established, they are very resistant to change, even in the face of disconfirming evidence*” (Duehr & Bono, 2006, 818). Arguably, as stereotypes tend to be overgeneralizations, there exist great risks that stereotypes might be incorrect for the individual that belongs to a certain group (e.g. the category of men or women). Researchers have argued that the presentation of management in biographies of successful managers, in press reports and even in cartoons, reproduces stereotypical expectations for men, women and top managers; as such stereotypes are continuously introduced as ‘practical’ illustrative material in academic research they continue to reflect the world of the 1960s rather than present time (Gmür, 2006; Sheridan, 1994; e.g. see cartoon by Wulfmorgenthaler chapter 1, page 7).

As will be illustrated in the following review, we have found that a great amount of management literature operates from such a stereotypical pre-understanding of men and women claiming that each sex possess different attributes and characteristics and consequently approach leadership differently.

3.2 Think Manager—Think (Fe)Male?

A lot of research within the literature explores various alleged differences between men and women in management and the concept of management has been investigated extensively among researchers (Robinson & Lipman-Blumen, 2003). The research regarding leadership roles are predominantly concentrated within two opposing management paradigms. The following section will give an overview of the different research perspectives that have evolved over time, and consequently, an overview of the different attributes, skills and characteristics each paradigm has attached to the concept of ‘good’ managerial performance.

One of the best-known management paradigms remains Schein's (1973) **think manager—think male paradigm**. Almost 40 years ago Schein (1973) showed that successful middle managers in many cases were perceived to hold characteristics, attitudes and temperaments more commonly ascribed to men than to women. Investigating the relationships between sex-role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics among men (Schein, 1973) and

women (Schein, 1975), Schein developed the Schein Descriptive Index (SDI). The SDI contains 92 adjectives and descriptive terms. Using the 92 terms Schein asked respondents to rate (1) typical men, (2) typical women, and (3) the ideal manager. According to this approach, the type of manager is identified, first by comparing the similarities between the ideal manager and men, and second by comparing the similarities between the ideal manager and women (Schein, 1973; Schein, 1975). Hence, the SDI method do not assume a predefined male or female type, but rather identifies the type for each study on the basis of the differences the survey data produce (Gmür, 2006). Items that according to Schein's research characterized managers as more similar to men were: emotionally stable, aggressive, leadership ability, self-reliant, not uncertain, vigorous, desires responsibility, well informed and direct (Schein, 1973, 98). Contrarily, women were seen as more tactful, gentle, and quiet than men. The reason for this, Schein argued, was partly due to the over-representation of men in management positions, which made her classify the managerial job as a masculine occupation (Schein, 1973). The think manager—think male effect occurs when men and leaders are seen as similar, while women and leaders are seen as distinct (Koenig et al., 2011). Koenig et al. (2011) point to two other management paradigms related to Schein's think manager—think male paradigm, **the agency-communion paradigm** that has also addressed the cultural masculinity of leader stereotypes (Powell & Butterfield, 1979), and **the masculinity-femininity paradigm** that sought to test the occupational sex typing among college students (Shinar, 1975 in Koenig et al. 2011). In their meta-analysis of primary studies that fits within one of the three above mentioned paradigms, Koenig et al. (2011), investigated the extent to which stereotypes of leaders are culturally masculine, and examined under which conditions this masculinity is more or less pronounced. From their research they found that people tend to perceive leaders as quite similar to men (and not very similar to women), more self-organizing, proactive and self-regulating than communal, and as more masculine than feminine (Koenig et al., 2011). Thus, their findings establish a strong tendency for leadership to be continuously identified as culturally masculine.

Also, Pirson and Lawrence (2010) have identified two distinctly different management paradigms, **economism** on the one side associated with the transactional leadership style and **humanism** on the other side associated with the transformational leadership style (to be further elaborated in the next section). Please see Appendix 7, 'Model of Economism and Humanism', for Pirson and Lawrence's model. Economism has its origin in management

theory largely informed by economic theory (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). Authors argue that with the current economic crisis the ability to operate and execute work effectively has become high priority and hence the continuing power of the economic paradigm remains intact to a certain extent (Orr & Sack, 2009; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). However, the increased organizational focus on job enrichment, high performance cultures, and moral values has given birth to a new management paradigm – humanism (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). Pirson and Lawrence present the philosophy of humanism which perceives the individual as a relational man, someone who materializes his freedom through value-based social interactions, and someone who aims at long-term relationships with other human beings. Thus, the management characteristics of the economic paradigm are significantly linked to the transactional management style and the same is evident for the humanistic paradigm and the transformational leadership style.

As mentioned above, literature continues to demonstrate overall masculinity of leader stereotypes. Opposing tendencies do, however, point in the direction of a new management paradigm containing various leadership values and attributes more commonly ascribed to femininity than masculinity, thus challenging the traditional “manager = male” paradigm. *“Management theorizing is not gender neutral”* (Fondas, 1997, 257); on the contrary management literature has been increasingly feminized during the last three decades (Fondas, 1997). Similar to Pirson and Lawrence (2010) and Cook and Rothwell (2000), Fondas (1997) argues that characteristics and attributes commonly ascribed to femininity are spreading to management texts and hence management styles are changing towards **a feminine paradigm**. By the word ‘feminine’ Fondas is referring to the characteristics of females, stressing however, that when something is labeled masculine or feminine it does not necessarily relate to *men* or *women*, instead, it is culturally associated with the categories male and female (Fondas, 1997, 260). Recognizing authors’ debate about the source of these qualities, for example childhood socialization or familial power relations, Fondas has pointed out a number of those characteristics defined as ‘feminine’ including empathy, helpfulness, caring, nurturing, interpersonal sensitive, responsive to other’s needs and motivations, orientation toward the collective interest and cooperative relationships (Fondas, 1997). According to her analysis, the changing paradigm is evident in the manager’s changing role in relation to the employees. As workers increasingly are expected to be self-managing and to contribute to problem solving and cost reduction, managers are supposed to reorient themselves toward a more coordinating, facilitating and coaching role (Fondas, 1997).

In their book about X and Y leadership, Cook and Rothwell (2000) also point in the direction of a prevailing feminine management paradigm introducing the two management paradigms **Yesterday's leadership values** (mainly male) and **Modern 'new leadership'** (mainly female). They argue that masculine roles are commonly associated with success outside the home in more modern societies, similarly to earlier civilizations' male occupations such as hunting or ploughing. On the contrary, femininity is associated with relationship-building, tenderness, taking care of the home and the children, and of people in general (Cook & Rothwell, 2000). According to Cook and Rothwell (2000), a 'masculine' leader is thus supposed to be assertive and decisive, whereas the leader in a 'feminine' culture is less visible, intuitive rather than decisive, and is accustomed to seek the views of others. Please see Appendix 8 for Cook and Rothwell's 'Model of Modern 'New Leadership' vs. Yesterday's Leadership Values'. Thus, the new ideas on leadership appear to be oriented towards (and to advocate more) feminine leadership (Billing & Alvesson, 2000).

3.3 Male Leaders are Transactional. Female Leaders are Transformational.

Many studies have termed leadership according to distinct leadership styles such as **autocratic** (male) versus **democratic** (female) or **directive** (male) versus **participative** (female) (Eagly et al., 2003). Traditionally, men are believed to adapt a more autocratic leadership style, contrary the more participative (female) style of management, hence leaving out elements of consultation and delegation in decision-making processes (Mukhar, 2002). In 1979, Burns introduced the concepts of **transformational** and **transactional** leadership in his treatment of political leadership (Burns, 1979), and the theory of transformational versus transactional leadership style now dominates current thinking about leadership research when theorizing about management (Robbins & Coulter, 2003).

Pirson and Lawrence (2010) refer to the transactional leadership style as a sort of leadership (or management) style that understands the role of management merely in terms of immediate efficiency maximization. The transactional leader considers employees as resources, and employees are thus motivated by pay for performance to ensure they deliver and hence generate the greatest possible profit to the owners of the organization. Transactional leaders are primarily involved in enforcing contracts and coordinating employees using command and control mechanisms, and they only engage in transactional, short-term relations with others,

approaching their employees with an eye to exchanging one thing for another, for example salary for hours of work (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). Loden (1985) notes that ‘masculine modes of management’ are characterized by competitiveness, hierarchical authority and emphasis on control (Loden, 1985). These characteristics are commonly perceived as being synonymous with successful management, often referred to as ‘instrumental’ traits.

Maccoby (2000) found that the most effective leaders hold positive (and necessary) levels of narcissism. Extraordinary leaders, the ‘productive narcissists’ as Maccoby (2000) called them, were characterized by attributes such as eloquent, egotistical, controlling, risk-taking and aloof, and true visionary leadership called for innovation, independence, charisma and self-confidence, personal characteristics that were all reflective of productive narcissism (Maccoby, 2000; 2001a; 2001b). Though Maccoby does not label these attributes as ‘transactional’, they are very much alike the attributes and characteristics of the transactional leadership style.

The changing work environment, as a consequence of the economic shift away from mass production towards a greater emphasis on services and high technology, has caused business analysts to call for a more participative, people-oriented approach to managing – a feminine transformational leadership approach (Loden, 1986). In relation to the call for a more participative, people-oriented approach to managing, Loden (1986) refers to Burns (1979) who advocates a new leadership style which encourage employees to take more risks, to be more self-reliant and to manage more creativity. He calls this new management approach ‘transformational leadership’ (Burns, 1979). While more complex, the transformational leadership style is more potent in contrast to the traditional transactional management style (Burns, 1979). By contrast to the transactional leader who, as mentioned above, is emotionally disconnected from the staff and thinks in terms of efficiency maximization, the transformational leader aims at warm relationships with employees and at engaging them emotionally with the organizational tasks (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). Moreover, the transformational leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of potential employees, and seeks to satisfy these needs and engage employees (Burns, 1979).

According to Robins and Coulter (2003) transformational leaders are charismatic and motivate employees by inspiring them, consider them as individuals, and stimulate their intellectual needs. In line with these ideas, a study found that transformational leadership has only minor differences from charismatic leadership that acknowledges the importance of

symbolic behavior and hence focuses on the leader's role in making events meaningful for employees; rather than merely emphasizing rational processes (Michaelis et al, 2009). The transformational leadership style has been found to correlate significantly with the satisfaction among employees as transformational leaders act as role models for the people they lead, and hence provide special attention to individual employees' aspirations and needs for growth and achievement by acting as mentor or coach (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010). Some writers have maintained that female leaders are more transformational than male leaders, and hence that a feminine leadership style tends to be less hierarchical, more cooperative and collaborative, placing greater emphasis on team structures where power is decentralized, as well as positive relationships to employees, and a stronger focus on long-term goals (Eagly et al., 2003). In support of this, Eagly and Johnson (1990), in their review of sex differences in leadership style, found a significant tendency for women to adopt a more democratic and participative style and men a more autocratic leadership style, not only in contrived settings, but also in organizational settings. Hence, women were more likely to behave according to a more interpersonally oriented leadership style being more helpful, friendly, available, explaining procedures and tending to the morale and welfare of others (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

Loden (1986) sees feminine leadership as different from male-oriented management, but equally effective, and stated that feminine leadership makes businesses more profitable, hence suggesting that women can add to any organization's strengths and accomplishments by providing the necessary balance into the corporations. Loden's (1986) approach to feminine and masculine characteristics and attributes is biologically defined, and thus she describes these qualities as more common to women than to men – however, not totally absent in all men. Similarly, Eagly (2007) indicates an advantage for female leaders, as women, more than men, seem to lead in styles (the transformational) that recommend them for leadership, and exert leadership through behaviors that relate positively to effective leadership under current conditions. Eagly and Johnson (1990) did, however, emphasize that since a democratic leadership style may enhance leader effectiveness in some circumstances, and an autocratic style may facilitate it under different conditions, women's tendency to lead more democratically should be seen as either an advantage or disadvantage.

Arguably, the difference between transformational and transactional leadership can be explained in terms of what leaders and employees offer one another (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Given empirically findings on the effectiveness of transformational leadership (Judge &

Piccolo, 2004), and the positive impact of such charismatic leadership (Michaelis et al., 2009), the appropriateness and effectiveness of the masculine model of management is questioned in corporate settings, and in the field of management men now seem to represent the status quo, while women are the modern day (Fagenson, 1993). As argued throughout this section, literature that current managers ought to operate within a feminine, modern, and increasingly humanistic new management paradigm (Cook & Rothwell, 2000; Loden, 1986; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010).

While the transactional-transformational leadership theory has been used to describe and analyze the function of leaders, the management characteristics ascribed to the two terms are also associated with the more broadly defined management paradigms: think manager—think male; agency/communion; economism/humanism; yesterday's leadership/modern new leadership (Cook & Rothwell, 2000; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; 1989; 2002; Schein, 1973; 1975).

3.4 Men are Instrumental. Women are Expressive.

The trait theory of leadership is linked to the assumption that women and men differ in terms of significant personality characteristics (Fietze, Holst & Tobsch, 2011). The differences in temperaments of men and women have commonly been labeled **instrumentality** and **expressiveness**, hence explaining men's greater instrumentality and women's greater expressiveness as an effect of society's gender-role distinctions (Spence & Buckner, 2000). In their study of college students, Spence and Buckner (2000) found that few people subscribe to the understanding that men and women differ in terms of instrumental and expressive characteristics. The study did, however, imply that in situations with implicit gender-role demands, both men and women tend to "play by the rules", thus acting out the expected gender roles that men are assertive and women are interpersonally oriented. Interesting, the results then indicate that stereotyping – the belief that men and women are basically different in their underlying assumptions – may be reinforced by both genders (Spence & Buckner, 2000).

Bem (1974) directly challenged the assumption that males were supposed to be masculine and females were supposed to be feminine, questioning the belief that masculinity and femininity were opposites. Based on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI), Bem advocated that androgyny (defined as a high propensity towards both masculine and feminine characteristics) represented a more suitable standard than the traditional standard of masculinity for males and

femininity for female (Bem, 1974). The BSRI approach is one of the most widely used sex role index in the literature since the 1970s, and hence several studies investigating male and female stereotypes and the ideal manager profiles draw in the BSRI (Gmür, 2006). The inventory consists of three scales: one masculine, one feminine, and one gender-neutral. Each scale contains 20 characteristics viewed as desirable for men and women in the American society at the beginning of the 1970s (Bem, 1974). By this 'new' inventory, Bem wished to contribute to a more flexible sex-role self-concept, illustrate society's influence on sex-role self-concept and encourage people's endorsement of both masculine and feminine personality characteristics (Bem, 1974). The sex-role inventory treats masculinity and femininity as two independent dimensions, thereby making it possible to measure masculinity, femininity, and in turn, 'androgyny' (Appendix 9, 'Items for the BSRI'). These personality characteristics were selected on the basis of sex-typed social desirability. Hence each item was evaluated and rated by a great number of judges on a scale from 1 (not desirable) to 7 (very desirable) for a man or a woman (Bem, 1974). Accordingly, men are supposed to be aggressive, assertive, competitive, individualistic, independent, and dominant. Women, on the other hand, are thought of as gentle, loyal, shy, soft spoken, sympathetic, tender, and understanding (Bem, 1974). To ensure that the BSRI would not only be portraying a general tendency to endorse socially desirable traits, the inventory also includes a scale of items that were measured completely neutral in regards to social desirability (Bem, 1974).

Soon after Bem's introduction of the BSRI, Powell and Butterfield (1979) applied the concept of androgyny to management. Between the mid-1970s and the end of the 1990s, Powell and Butterfield (1979; 1989; 2002) conducted several studies investigating to what extent the image of the ideal manager is linked to stereotypical male, female or gender-neutral (androgynous) characteristics. If a more effective person was androgynous then a more effective manager would also be androgynous (Powell & Butterfield, 1979). Acknowledging that the number of women in managerial positions was increasing, Powell and Butterfield hypothesized that there had been a shift towards an androgynous standard in the perception of effective managers. In their research, however, they found that according to the BSRI, the 'good manager' was seen as masculine rather than androgynous (Powell & Butterfield, 1979). Reanalyzing their data and reexamining the gender-stereotypical content of the leader stereotype, Powell and Butterfield (1989) once again found that the 'good manager' was continuously described as masculine rather than feminine or androgynous. Reaching the same results as previously, Powell and Butterfield concluded that views on effective or good

management would be unlikely to have changed considerably among practicing managers, hence the managerial identity remained as masculine as it ever was (Powell & Butterfield, 1989). Despite a considerable increase in the proportion of female managers in the United States from 22.4% in 1977 to 36.0 % in 1985 (Powell & Butterfield, 1989), the results of these studies consistently showed that the ideal manager is predominantly described using male attributes, whereas stereotypical female attributes, to the extent they appear at all, are selected only in combination with male characteristics (Powell & Butterfield, 1979; 1989). The results were the same, whether the groups interviewed consisted of men or women, students or professionals. Over time there was, however, a decline in the preference for the purely masculine type (Powell et al., 2002).

Largely following the approach of the BSRI, however using a gender role inventory specifically developed for the analysis of managerial profiles, Gmür (2006) found that when investigating the influence of gender stereotypes, the gender of the person being evaluated plays a significant role. Thus, the 'good manager' is still expected to have stereotypical attitudes and to behave like a man, and this is true even for the 'good female manager' (Gmür, 2006).

Research by Spence and Buckner (2000) has shown that men and women's fundamental sense of gender identity and role expectations influence their self-perception and thus the way in which they believe they should act. Specifically, their results suggest that women are still significantly more likely to be associated with expressive traits such as kindness, devotion to others, helpfulness, being emotional and sensitive to others' needs. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to be associated with instrumental traits such as competitiveness, independence, self-confidence, decisiveness, ambitiousness, aggressiveness and willingness to take risks (Spence & Buckner, 2000).

3.5 Same, Same – No Difference

As illustrated above, management literature is rather complex and characterized by opposing dynamics when discussing management paradigms, leadership styles and personal attributes and characteristics. However, not all studies provide support for a traditional gender stereotypical view of management. Based on their U.S. study of middle and senior managers, Robinson and Lipman-Blumen (2003) demonstrated that neither men nor women uniquely can claim to leadership profiles that represents a better fit for today's business challenges. The authors thus claim that traditional gender role stereotypes should not be used as a major predictor of narrowly defined leadership behavior (Robinson & Lipman-Blumen, 2003).

Similarly, Donnell and Hall (1980) found that there are no differences in personal values or managerial philosophy between male and female managers. And interestingly, the results of a meta-analysis, identifying all possible studies of transformational and transactional leadership, revealed that transformational and transactional leadership are so highly related that it is hardly possible to separate their unique effects (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Though much has changed since Schein's (1973; 1975) research and although the number of women in management has increased, research has, as illustrated above, shown that people continuously tend to perceive the 'good manager' within the traditional masculine paradigm of 'think manager—think male' – still, managerial ideals are identified by masculine attributes and characteristics (e.g. Coleman, 2003; Embry et al., 2008; Koenig et al., 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 2002; Spence & Buckner, 2000).

3.6 A Binary Concept Called Management

As it appears from above, research has established a rather mixed picture for current leadership. Though it is no longer given that men make decisions and women take care, there seems to be a tacit assumption that women differ from men in the way they approach the management process. According to this stereotypical assertion, female managers use a transformational or relationship-oriented management style, encompassing collaborative and contributory behaviors to accomplish their tasks, whereas male managers are stereotyped as demonstrating a transactional leadership style based on task orientation, competition and power.

In an ideal world, gender would not matter. Our understanding of management would thus be based on individual qualifications and competences, rather than based on gender. In actuality, the world is far from ideal, and as it appears from above, the general literature on management continues to be centralized around a number of binary dynamics. In a review article on trends within the gender research in the past decades, Ely and Meyerson (2000) identify two typical approaches to management: 'fix the women' and 'value the feminine'. In the first perspective gender is seen as a result of biological differences that consequently are believed to affect the behavior and attitudes of men and women differently. The second perspective is based on the argument that organizations are gendered and that management is therefore often associated with masculine values, attributes and characteristics (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). Somehow, it seems that these implicit binary dynamics within the literature and the paradoxes within the debate over management make up the very foundation for the

understanding of management. Conscious and unconscious assumptions about men and women tend to influence our understanding of the concept of management, and as research has shown, unconscious ideals of masculinity and femininity still exist.

A problem with sex-role stereotyping is that it may simply end up becoming self-fulfilling prophecies – i.e. if research continues to operate within a binary framework of male/female, masculine/feminine, it may continue to reproduce the belief that gender differences exists, and hence the belief in men and women being different. Arguably, the debate over management is then, in effect, a self-fulfilling prophecy, continuously reproducing the traditional stereotypical leadership roles and behavior. If one looks for management is male, one will arguably assume that management is identified through a number of masculine characteristics. Contrary, if one looks for management is female one will tend to assume that management is identified through a number of feminine traits.

The dominant male discourse of management may be just as inappropriate for most men as for women, since such a stereotypical understanding of management retains managers in two fixed management paradigms – masculine or feminine – that inhibit a counter-stereotypic approach to the management discipline (Coleman, 2003; Embry et al., 2008; Koenig et al., 2011; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Though a great number of research point in directions of a new and more feminine management paradigm and leadership style, the continuous focus within the literature on either/or, maintain the traditional held beliefs about men and women as mutually exclusive groups.

We do realize that what can be considered masculine or feminine often varies across cultures and subcultures, across age groups, and within a given population across time (Hansen, 2010; Spence & Buckner, 2000). We also acknowledge that Bem's Sex-Role Inventory and Schein's 'think manager—think male' paradigm date almost 40 years back, and hence that even recent empirical research draws on the early work from the 1970s (e.g. Gmür, 2006; Powell et al., 2002). Palan et al. (1999) bring this problem to the very point arguing, that *"being feminine or masculine is not the same as it was twenty years ago, nor do we have any gender identity instruments that accurately capture the traits that characterize gender roles today"* (Palan et al., 1999, 375).

Yet a potential problem with Bem's sex role inventory is that it is unclear whether the ideal manager is more masculine or more feminine (Gmür, 2006). As Gmür (2006) points out, 60 attributes are not particularly relevant to the areas of leadership and management, and hence it

is not surprising that all of the abovementioned studies arrive at the same conclusion. However, as we have shown, few attempts have been done to bring up to date or redesign these models, thereby opposing the traditional binary approach within the management literature from 1965 till 2011. The research presented above is based on data collected in Western cultures, and also insist on similar adjectives when describing feminine/masculine and femininity/masculinity, and we thus believe that these adjectives can assist us in analyzing our empirical data and help us to investigate the premise for the current Danish male top manager. Moreover, the following analysis is looking to the individual – the top manager – and hence the opposing categories or descriptive items will be applied in a way that seeks to investigate whether it is possible at all to put our interviewees into such categories of masculine or feminine. Clearly, people still tend to have a strong belief that men and women behave in different ways.

3.7 Model for Data Analysis

The aim of this thesis is to create a more diverse understanding of the concept of top management and thereby move beyond the stereotypical way of thinking. In other word, this thesis aims to step beyond the stereotypical swamp that management literature (as well as the public debate) seems to be caught in. Yet we realize that it is complicated to distinguish ourselves from the view taken by general management literature, and thus a categorized and somehow binary approach to our analysis. As we have sought to develop a practical and functional tool for our analysis that allows us to rely on clear terms and descriptive items when analyzing our empirical data, these categorizations are useful in organizing our great amount of data and information into manageable size.

The purpose of the following tool for analysis will be to investigate if, and if so then how, the current Danish male top manager conforms to the conception of management provided by academic literature. Most of us are aware of traditional stereotypes about men and women, but how well do such stereotypical masculine characteristics actually apply to the current male top manager? Does he reflect a rather masculine paradigm, or does his story about top management show a more diverse picture?

Hence, by inspiration from the empirical research (e.g. Bem, 1974; Coleman, 2003; Embry et al., 2008; Fondas, 1997; Koenig et al., 2011; Loden, 1986; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010; Powell et al., 1979, 1989, 2002; Schein 1973, 1975; Spence & Buckner, 2000) we have developed the following model for our data analysis:

Figure 3: Model for data analysis

	Management is Male	Management is Female
Management Paradigm	<p><i>Think Manager—Think Male</i> <i>Economism</i> <i>Yesterday's Leadership</i></p> <p>Drive to acquire Drive to defend Focus on profit maximization</p>	<p><i>Feminine Leadership Paradigm</i> <i>Humanism</i> <i>Modern 'New Leadership'</i></p> <p>Drive to acquire Drive to bond Drive to comprehend Drive to defend Focus on balance of interests</p>
Leadership Style & Function	<p><i>Transactional</i> <i>Autocratic</i> <i>Directive</i></p> <p>Focus on short-term relations Focus on action and task Focus on rational processes Focus on hierarchical authority and control Consider employees as means to an end Orientation towards profit and efficiency Motivation by pay for performance</p>	<p><i>Transformational</i> <i>Democratic</i> <i>Participative</i> <i>Facilitating</i> <i>Coaching</i></p> <p>Focus on long-term relations Focus on relations and partnerships Focus on making events meaningful for employees Consider employees as means and end Orientation towards collective interest and cooperative relationships Motivation by inspiring and stimulating intellectual needs Act as role model/mentor/coach</p>
Personal Attributes & Characteristics	<p><i>Instrumental Traits</i> Actively approach to career Analytical Willing to take risks Aggressive/dominant Competitive Decisive Individualistic Defends own beliefs Independent and self-regulating Desires responsibility Egotistical Self-confident/assertive/self-reliant Direct/proactive Aloof Controlling Result-oriented Charismatic Ambitious</p>	<p><i>Expressive Traits</i> Passive approach to career Compassionate Risk-averse Gentle/friendly/tactful/tender Devoted to others Intuitive Communal Accustomed to seeking the view of others Responsive to other's needs and motivation Interpersonally oriented Nurturing/caring/helpful Sympathetic Less visible/soft spoken Communicative Affectionate Emotionally Empathetic Understanding</p>

Analysis

Part 1: Analyzing Management Paradigms

Part 2: Looking into Leadership Style

Part 3: Examining Personal Attributes and Characteristics

Part 4: Top Management from yet another Angle

Part 5: Top Management Anno 2011

"I have no talent. I am only passionately curious"

Albert Einstein

4. Setting the Scene

As outlined in section 2.3, we have conducted our research through an explorative approach in order to obtain a thorough understanding of the concept of top management. The exploratory study is a valuable means to seek new insight as it allows us to initiate our research through a rather broad perspective. We have conducted an extensive amount of data, and as the research progressed and we gained further knowledge within the field of top management, we narrowed the scope for our analysis. This chapter reflects the essence of our data and the aspects that we have chosen to put attention to.

During the process of conducting our interviews it became obvious that when talking about management, and top managers in particular, there is no such thing as ‘one model fits them all’. In total we interviewed 12 top managers and none of them are completely alike. Despite their dissimilarities, however, they were all characterized by huge and inspiring personalities, a tremendous engagement, and the effort they put into their work. Regardless of the managers’ various thoughts and opinions about management and leadership it has been possible to point out certain tendencies within top management. These will be outlined throughout this analysis.

Thus, this chapter serves the purpose of answering the following sub-questions:

- III. How does the current Danish male top manager conform to the conception of management provided by academic literature – i.e. within which management paradigm does the Danish male top manager operate (section 4.1), and consequently by which leadership style (section 4.2) and personal attributes and characteristics (section 4.3) can he be characterized?*
- IV. How does the current Danish male top managers’ understanding of top management conform to their female counterparts’, as well as executive searchers’, understanding of top management (section 4.4)?*

The first step, [Analysis Part 1](#) (section 4.1, page 53), is to analyze within which management paradigm the current Danish male top managers operate, and how they think about top management. The second step, [Analysis Part 2](#) (section 4.2, page 61), is to find out how the interviewees approach their leadership style and how they provide directions, implement plans and motivate employees. The third step, [Analysis Part 3](#) (section 4.3, page 68), is to examine which personal attributes and characteristics that constitute the current Danish male top manager. Together these three analysis parts will answer sub-question III.

The fourth step, [Analysis Part 4](#) (section 4.4, page 82), is to compare our findings from analysis part 1, 2 and 3 with the empirical data collected through following interviews with 2 female top managers and 2 executive searchers. This section will answer sub-question IV.

Finally, in [Analysis Part 5](#) (section 4.5, page 95), we will gather all the results and provide the basis for the subsequent discussion and conclusion.

4.1 Analysis Part 1: Analyzing Management Paradigms

Based on our theoretical framework (see Figure 3, page 50), [Analysis Part 1](#) will look into within which management paradigm the current Danish male top managers operate and how they think about top management. This section is based on a number of questions about the managers' sources of inspiration and how they want to be perceived as leaders.

In the theoretical framework of this thesis, we established the fact that management is profoundly and continuously perceived as a masculine discipline. Research has shown that, still, men are seen as better suited for managerial positions than women (Gmür, 2006; Kniveton, 2008; Powell et al., 1979; 1989; 2002; Schein, 1973). Although the male 'macho' style of leadership may be something of a myth, the general perception about top management remains dominated by a masculine stereotype (Coleman, 2003). But does the current male top manager operate within a 'think manager—think male' paradigm and hence solely think of management in terms of efficiency and profit maximization? Or, is it possible to trace a tendency towards a more feminine or humanistic management paradigm oriented towards the collective interest and cooperative relationships?

4.1.1 Manage to be Yourself – Role Models and Sources of Inspiration

In order to get an understanding of how our top managers understand the concept of top management and how they strive to practice it in their everyday work, we asked them about possible role models and sources of inspiration. The answers were various. 7 managers directly referred to colleagues and previous executives within their organization as sources of inspiration. As Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, mentions, one of the role models in his career has been Helge Israelsen, previous Managing Director of Post Danmark¹¹ through 21 years, and likewise, Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President

¹¹ After the merger of Post Danmark A/S and Posten AB in 2008, the name of the parent company of the joint group is now PostNord.

Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, has found great inspiration from a European Managing Director of IBM:

"He was in charge of our 'journey of excellence' as we call it here [at Post Danmark]. It's a management philosophy, which so to speak, embraces the entire company, and I was incredibly fascinated and very inspired by him. Also, he had this perseverance during challenging times" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 1).

"He had a very direct and inspecting leadership style. One thing he taught me was the value of 'operational excellence' as a method to drive value and show financial results relatively quickly (...) When you take over an organization it is important to show results within the first 3 months, it will buy you time to get the more long term transformation done" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, June 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 2).

Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, describes how a previous chairman of the Faculty of Life Science has inspired him due to his openness, honesty and ability to communicate clearly and concisely. Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, explains how he enjoys reading biographies of leaders with huge personalities that have achieved great business results through their careers, for example Paul Allens, co-founder of Microsoft.

As illustrated above, many of the top managers are inspired by the visions and strategic ability of people who have achieved great results within the business world. Arguably, these role models indicate that managers are oriented towards an economic management paradigm (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). Nonetheless, the quotes presented in this section also indicates an admiration of leaders who can engage others, who can think as others do and connect with minds other than their own – what Cook and Rothwell (2000) describes as a 'modern' and holistic leadership paradigm. As the statements indicate, the managers are also inspired by these particular peoples' ability to embrace the organization as a whole and hence to motivate their employees to follow them.

"In fact, I think that if I meet someone, then I think about what it is that works well for them, but it is not necessarily the entire package [that works for me]" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, July 28, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 3).

"At a fairly early stage, one said to me, 'as a leader, always remember to be yourself', and this has been at my heart ever since. (...) And this is exactly how I

think; you look to someone as a role model, but you shouldn't merely rely on a role model. You might get some inspiration from others, one can easily do that, however, you must make it your own and say 'what suits me'. I think that's quite essential" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 4).

"You'll have to find your own leadership style, if you compromise on who you are you will not be trust-worthy as a leader" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, July 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 5).

In general, all managers stress the importance of building your own understanding of management, and as the above quotes illustrate, role models will only serve as sources of inspiration and not as a thing to 'copy paste'.

4.1.2 To Dare and To Do

An important part of the job emphasized by all managers in this thesis is the ability to execute the organizational strategy. As Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, states, operational excellence is vital:

"No new leaders will survive the first 6 months without showing financial results. You just have to squeeze a bit more out of the lemon. So start by setting up a tight management structure, and then squeeze to drive the short-term value. Nobody thinks that is nice." (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, June 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 6).

To survive as a top manager it is essential to show results and Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen states clearly the importance of being profit and efficiency oriented, hence an orientation towards a rather economic (and masculine) management paradigm (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). At the top of the hierarchy it is not first priority to ensure that people feel comfortable and have a pleasant time; rather, as Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, emphasizes, his job is to make sure that people work efficiently, fast, and at a high quality. Though he underlines that satisfied and happy employees without doubt create the best result, still, it is first priority to continuously increase output in terms of better results at a higher speed and at a lower cost, or as Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, says:

"The task is primarily to make sure that a business or a business unit is functioning. It's not that we aren't allowed to have fun or have a good time, but the main task is to get this business unit to work well and hence deliver good results. But obviously things are connected and all research shows that

employees that are motivated and are working in a good atmosphere deliver better results" (Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 7).

In general, the managers make it clear that they expect their employees to provide results and meet objectives. It is not enough to rely on empathy and compassion if organizational goals are not met. All managers thus emphasize that being tough and consequent in certain situations can be necessary to ensure that organizational goals are met, and as one manager says, his work is to ensure that employees are brought back on track and deliver on targets:

"You'll have to ensure a tight and measurable execution of your strategy to reach the goals. Otherwise the organization will go in different directions, and nothing happens" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, June 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 8).

At the end of the day, being at the top of the hierarchy is a professional role:

"It's a professional relationship, and although I really like my staff and my managers, in the end I'm not their friend. They have family and friends outside [of work]. It is my job as a manager to say 'okay, it doesn't work anymore, you are the weakest link'" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, June 28, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 9)

For example, as some managers mention, keeping an employee who has been absent for an unreasonable long time, whatever the reason might be, is an expensive affair and often results in shortage of manpower. Hence, whenever needed, top managers must be able to compromise between being a task-oriented executer and a caring leader. Business is business, and no one is in business simply for the fun of it. Not only do the managers have personal goals or ambitions to succeed, they also have an obligation to the organization they manage in terms of its future success. As Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, says:

"All democratic societies are highly dependent on someone who takes the lead" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 10).

According to the interviewees, top management is 'to dare and to do' – setting the direction and meeting the objectives. The work as top manager implies a thorough understanding of the business and a very good understanding of how to create business results. It is evident that the

ability to meet strategic objectives and create a profitable and efficient business are two important components of the concept of top management.

4.1.3 It's Exciting when there are People Behind

Despite the managers various interpretations of top management, we experienced a general consensus among all 10 male interviewees about the importance of a strong focus on personal relations to their managers and employees. In spite of the managers' formal 'uniform' of suit and tie, they make a sincere effort to get to know their employees, to understand their situation and the reason behind their actions. Managing human resources is considered a very interesting part of the job by all our interviewees, both in terms of personal relations, but also when it comes to delivering excellent results through effective management:

"I believe management consists of strategy, motivation and personnel management (...) Personnel management is an important part. As part of a production machine, it's key" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 11).

"It's exciting when there are people behind – people are different, and therefore I'm convinced that I must also show a human side and that I must be understanding towards those of my colleagues who report to me and who may be in a different situation than me" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 6, 2011, Appendix 5, No. 12).

"I think that if you want to see things evolve, and if you want to work with other people and see how you together reach better results than if you were working towards the same goal individually – then I think you get an appetite for management" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 13).

"First and foremost, I think it's great fun to do something with other people (...) That's what management is all about; to lead a large team or a small team, but whether it's one or the other [management is about] trying to make a team deliver the best possible (...) If you don't like [to interact with people] then there's probably no fun in being a manager" (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 14).

The interviewed top managers stress that they continuously focus on maintaining a good relationship with their managers and employees. It is clear that the current Danish male top manager is dependent on his staff in order to succeed. Though all managers do not mention it directly, they all refer to the importance of empathy and emphasize that no leader can create

any results without an ability to understand his employees and a compassionate approach to his leadership. To interact with people is by all our male interviewees seen as a natural part of the job, and as the above statements illustrate, the managers are to a great extent driven by a desire to work and interact with people.

Make your Employees Walk an Extra Mile

Recent management literature suggests a shift in management paradigms and points at a feminization, or humanization, of the prevailing management paradigm (Cook & Rothwell, 2000; Fondas, 1997; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). However, authors argue that due to the economic crisis the current economic environment is characterized by a great deal of disturbance which affects the requirements of contemporary top managers (Orr & Sack, 2009). Managers must prove themselves to be master problem solvers when challenges or high stake situations occur, and though managers increasingly focus on bringing everyone along, process efficiency has become high priority (Orr & Sack, 2009):

"I think the financial crisis has led to even more control, more centralization and short-term vision, and even more focus on immediate results. I think that many [top managers] think, 'well, we're under severe pressure from the outside, hence we must reef the sails, make decisions, execute, follow up and impose strict control'" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, June 30, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 15).

Top management is about results and ensuring the future success of the organization. In order to get excellent results it is evident that as a top manager one must at times place a great pressure on the shoulders of the employees, challenge them and push them to their limits. The manager's task is thus to be aware of when to push harder, and when to stop:

"People must be challenged. They must stand on tiptoe all the times. They shouldn't jump on the tips of their toes, nor should they stand on the balls of their feet, but they must stand on tiptoe – meaning that they must constantly be challenged" (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 16).

The majority of our interviewees has been in managerial positions for several years and has therefore experienced organizational transformations and generational shifts within the executive offices. Consequently, the managers contributing to this thesis have experienced how the concept of management has changed over the years, and as Lars Gulberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, argues, top

management is a non-static and changing concept continuously revealing new trends and tendencies. In the following statement he outlines how he sees the current tendencies within the managerial practice:

“Just like you talk about technological developments, one can also talk about a development within management as various things become relevant or you spend more and more time on different things. Hence, human qualities such as empathy or emotional intelligence, coaching and holism take up more and more time (...) [As a top manager] you must have some human qualities to a much greater extent than previously” (Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 17).

Increasingly, top managers must make their employees walk an extra mile. Walking that extra mile often involves longer working hours and higher stress levels to make employees meet the deadlines. As Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, says, the financial crisis has now led to an even stronger focus on short-term visions and immediate results. In general, all the interviewed managers emphasize that in order to do more with less and succeed in an increasingly competitive business environment, they must make sure that their employees are fully engaged and satisfied. For that reason, as Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, highlights above, humanism in business is becoming increasingly popular. From the perspective of our interviewees there is no doubt about the prevailing focus on feminine values such as empathy and holism in the contemporary business world. If employees are not fully engaged, a top manager will not get maximum return. The current male top manager must push his employees to the very limit, but at the same time acknowledge that lowered employee satisfaction consequently cause lowered employee productivity. The interviewed managers thus all stress that focusing on relationships to their managers and employees can have profound effects on how business operates. A top manager has a direct impact on whether employees perform to their best and therefore he must at all time balance straight talk against empathy and heart in order to ensure an efficient organization:

“It’s important that you as a leader understand the balancing of driving people while maintaining respect of the person behind the job. I usually say ‘straight talk with a heart’. There must be this counterweight in your leadership” (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, June 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 18).

As Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen clearly indicates, the Danish male top manager anno 2011 must operate equally within the masculine and the feminine management paradigm identified by general management literature – he must practice straight talk with a heart. According to the interviewees, a top manager must manage to manage both bottom line results and employee satisfaction.

4.1.4 Summing Up on Management Paradigms

Being a top manager is an increasingly demanding role. High performance at all levels is crucial, and doing more with less has become a way of life in today's business world (Orr & Sack, 2009). Simultaneously the Danish male top manager anno 2011 is required to be emotional intelligent and to exercise an all-embracing, coaching, and holistic approach to his leadership. As we have shown, most management literature rests in either a masculine or a feminine paradigm claiming management to be characterized as either masculine or feminine (Cook & Rothwell, 2000; Fondas, 1997; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973). So, where does that leave the current Danish male top manager?

Top managers must often recognize a trade-off between people and profit; a trade-off between being concerned about their employees while at the same time making sure to execute ambitious strategies often within limited budgets. It is their responsibility to keep the business going, having high expectations and demands to their employees. There is no doubt that top managers are straightforward people.

However, in correlation to Pirson and Lawrence (2010) we have found significant evidence of humanism at the executive office. The interest and concern for the needs and motivational factor of the individual employee, has portrayed a top manager very much within the (feminine) humanistic management paradigm. According to the analysis in this section, current top managers are required to be empathetic and understanding in their approach to their employees. There is a strong drive to bond with other human beings and to build long-term relations. As it appears from above (and as it will appear later in this analysis) the drive to acquire and the drive to defend are, however, equally important at the executive floor. All together there is a strong indication that the interviewees in this thesis draw on both paradigms – the economic as well as the humanistic – and it is hence difficult to argue that the current Danish male top manager belongs to only one of the management paradigms. It is evident, that for these 10 male top managers, it is central to maintain a reasonable balance

between the two. Clearly, the concept of top management is understood in terms of both profit *and* people.

4.2 Analysis Part 2: Looking into Leadership Style

As it appears from the theoretical framework, management paradigms are closely related to leadership styles. In this section we will look into the way our interviewees provide directions, implement plans, and motivate their employees, hence how the current Danish male top manager manages to manage.

As described in the theoretical framework (chapter 3, page 35), humanism fosters transformational leaders who inspire the employees, stimulate them intellectually, and make sure to engage them emotionally with the organization. By contrast, economism fosters transactional leaders who are primarily involved in ensuring compliance and setting incentives to continuously increase employee efficiency (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). Traditionally, the stereotypical male manager is perceived to adhere to an autocratic/directive/transactional demand-and-control leadership style (Coleman, 2003; Eagly et al., 2003; Mukthar, 2002; Prison & Lawrence, 2010). In extension to the section above, we wish to examine whether a prevailing transformational leadership style is evident as implied by the literature, or if the traditional, transactional leadership style is still the norm. This is done through an analysis of our interviewees' relation to their employees. The question is; do the current Danish male top managers consider employees as mere means to an end, or do they perceive them as means *and* end?

4.2.1 Approaching Employees through Respect and Understanding

The top managers that have contributed to this thesis have placed great emphasis on engagement, dialogue and interaction. It is evident that the managers are all very aware of the impact they have as leaders on the employees. As Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, argues; if you get the reputation of a butcher no one wants to work for you. Rather, as a top manager you should gain the loyalty of the employees. In order to gain this level of trust and loyalty from the employees, the manager must show a human side of himself. For example, Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, seeks to know the name of all of his employees – they count 2000 at the moment – and he strives to create and maintain an open and honest culture where staff members are encouraged to discuss small as well as big issues with him rather than exposing their frustration at the front page of the newspaper. Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice

President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, explains how he strives to avoid having ‘a dead moose’ lying stinking in the corner. Instead he prefers to have problems on the table speaking frankly about any issues there might be at the office. Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, stresses how he makes an effort in being visible among the employees and speaking with them on a regular basis – e.g. instead of heading straight to his office after meetings, he sets aside time for a walk around the office to have a chance to talk with his employees and listen to what they may have to say. Meeting people at eye level is seen as key, and several managers emphasize that having trust in your employees and believing in their talent are important aspects in their leadership style:

“According to my view on human nature you must have trust in people and you must praise them for what they do well, and then believe that they will do even better (...) therefore, you must meet people at eye level” (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director of the Civil Administration, July 29, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 19).

And according to the interviewees, ‘good’ managers trust employees to do their jobs:

“In my opinion there are some [managers] who distrust employees or something like that, but in general, I don’t believe that any of my employees turn up at work thinking, ‘today we won’t pay any bills’” (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director of the Civil Administration, June 29, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 20).

As part of this analysis of the prevailing leadership style among Danish male top managers, we have asked the involved managers how they motivate their teams. Despite the strong emphasis on empathy, respect, and understanding of other human beings expressed by our interviewees, being a top manager is also a professional role and a role in which delivering excellent results is crucial. Obviously, the purpose of employee engagement is to improve the overall business performance – a happy employee is believed to be a more productive employee. Similar to the management literature, several of the interviewed managers claim that the autocratic leader is about to be history. Rather the managerial role anno 2011 implies acting as a coach and facilitator and hence focus on making events meaningful for employees (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010; Michaelis et al, 2009). Being a facilitating leader also involves a delegation of responsibility and power (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010; Coleman, 2003) – a leadership style that is strongly advocated by the involved top managers:

“If you tell people that you actually think they are skilled and able to solve the task, and if the task is clearly defined and they have the necessary resources, that

is a huge motivating factor for most people” (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 21).

Several of the male top managers underline the importance of making an effort to make visible to their employees who they are. They are extremely reflective about having the courage to be oneself, and they all point out that honesty and authenticity are crucial elements in their position as top managers. Employees will soon see through a disguise, and as one manager says, top managers must be able to show a human side of themselves:

“I’ve realized that if I open up myself to others and tell something about my life – if I put my cards on the table – then I usually get something in return. And then people are also more open to talk about things” (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director of the Civil Administration, June 29, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 22).

Furthermore, as mentioned in the section about, managers must be able to encourage their employees to walk an extra mile, and in order to do so approaching employees through respect is key:

“It’s all about respecting each other (...) You have to reach the point where people are willing to walk an extra mile for you” (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, June 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 23).

More and more, top managers are expected to engage with and being at eye level with employees on an ongoing basis. It is hence seen as the leader’s job to create an organizational environment, in which the manager must always be accessible to his colleagues. If you spend time checking up on how employees are dealing with different tasks, you take away their sense of responsibility, which, according to our interviewees, will lead to un-motivated employees. All the interviewed top managers thus share a strong belief that employees are motivated by praise, respect, and by a leader who believes in them.

Don’t believe that You’re the Sharpest Tool in the Shed

To be humble and to be aware of both your strengths and weaknesses are yet other abilities that have been emphasized by several of our interviewees. The brightest heads are not necessarily found at the executive floor, but certainly also among the employees. In fact, ‘to be humble’ is a quality emphasized by all 10 interviewed male top managers. Despite your own talent, your educational background, and the experience you may have gained throughout your career, it is clear that as a top manager you must be able to show a sense of empathy and

be able to listen to others. As Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen says:

"You shouldn't believe that you are yourself the sharpest tool in the shed" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 24).

Furthermore, Per Holten-Andersen stresses the importance of a top manager's ability to listen and acknowledge that others might know better:

"Good management is to set a direction, but also to listen. You mustn't be too protective of your honor and prestige; you must be able to tolerate the loss of face. But then again, you don't necessarily lose face if you change your mind; because when you have 2000 employees it is obvious that you aren't always the one who knows best. So, good management is to set a direction, but it's also to acknowledge if the direction is wrong or if it's simply not possible" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at Copenhagen University, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 25).

Being humble also means being aware of your own strengths and weaknesses, and not least to be honest about them. If you are not honest about them, you will lose your respect from others and people might even use it against you. One of our interviewees suffers from dyslexia, and as he says he has gained great respect and acknowledgement from being open and honest about it. Also, Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, the youngest of our executive interviewees, is well aware of his lack of experience due to his young age and hence he often seeks advice from colleagues within the organization. Arguably, it is possible to turn weaknesses into strengths and disadvantages into advantages. We hence conclude that self-insight is an important skill in order to succeed as a leader at the top of the hierarchy. Although the literature does not explicitly mention the importance of self-insight it could be argued that what Pirson and Lawrence (2010) refer to as 'a drive to comprehend' not only relates to the importance of understanding your employees but also understanding yourself as a manager.

The Ability to Speak from the Top of a Beer Crate

Being a top manager often implies managing a substantial amount of people as is the case for most of the managers who have contributed to this thesis. When working in such large organizations the routes of communication from the top to the bottom can seem rather endless. Therefore, most of the managers emphasize that in order to ensure that messages and

instructions get through to everyone they must be able to lead through others and communicate with their employees. As the following statement indicates continuous interaction and dialogue with employees is essential:

"For me personally there must always be a balance between the 'I' and the 'we'. Of course I must have a clear idea of where we're going, however, this idea is created through dialogue and interaction with the people I have around me" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 26).

Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, is addressing how a he finds inspiration from the frequent dialogue with people around him, and that a continuous interaction with employees is key in order to succeed in his job as top manager. The purpose of communication is of great importance to all the interviewed male top managers. As illustrated above, communicating is a way of gaining (and maintaining) trust and respect from the employees, and a valuable way of getting your messages across. Through communication the managers are able to show a sense of understanding and a willingness to listen to their employees and discuss their ideas for the future organizational strategy:

"I want input. I think it's central that [employees] are asked to come up with things they believe are important" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, June 28, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 27).

In order to motivate people to follow them, top managers must clearly communicate in which direction the organization is moving, and hence make evident to the employees what to do and what not to do. Also, as a top manager you must use your communicational skills and a bit of persuasion to make your employees trust that you know what you are talking about. As some of the managers put it, you must make your employees think that your idea is their idea:

"The leader who can create what is called the magic space where everyone feels that they are part of a success and that they have contributed to create this success – that's probably the ultimate for a top manager" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 28).

"You have to be good at communicating, both on the beer crate to make people follow you, but also in a relation like this, or when having a difficult conversation one-to-one" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 29).

According to the interviewed top managers, the purpose of communication is not merely about providing employees with a set of instructions. Information is provided to employees to promote a better understanding of the organizational strategy, and hence ensure that employees are walking in the right direction. Also, communication involves engaging employees. As a top manager you must ensure to interact with your employees and listen to the ideas of other. It is vital that communication takes place within an open and honest forum, thereby ensuring a constant interaction between top and bottom. As Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, says, current top managers must be able to speak from the top of the beer crate and make sure that everyone has a common understanding of the direction in which the organization is moving.

4.2.2 You can't Succeed Alone – Teamwork is Key

It is evident that the general understanding among all the interviewees is that teamwork and thus a constant interaction with employees is central to create good results. As one manager says, he must ensure to draw the direction and be sure to pull his people in that direction. But, it is uncommon that any situation within business life allows you to drive down the fast track all by yourself. To pay attention to the people around you and motivate your employees to work towards the same goal is by all interviewees emphasized as a central matter:

"In one's eagerness to show positive results, one must be careful not to run off on his own. Unless you're a professional racing cyclist you're rarely in a situation where you're able to succeed alone. Most people are in a situation where they only succeed by working together" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 21, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 30).

The human orientation is implicitly present in all the male managers' approach to their work. The interaction with employees serves to motivate them, create energy and the managers thus call attention to their ability to generate a fruitful teamwork or interplay within the organization. The hierarchy within the organization should not be too complex, and as Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, claims, Irma's success is mainly due to the fact that he has managed to transform Irma into an open organization free of hierarchical control mechanisms, without cheating, without doubt, fear, and frustration among the employees:

"If we can reduce [the power hierarchy] so being together and interacting with one another becomes more open, online, real, and true – the fact that we take care of each other and help each other – that's actually how we go furthest" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, June 30, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 31).

In line with Alfred Josefsen's effort to break down the power hierarchy at Irma, Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, argues that the autocratic leadership style is outdated and would by no means be accepted by employees at Microsoft nowadays. Rather his employees expect to be involved and to be granted a great deal of responsibility:

"I have always cherished the managerial principle that the one who knows best also gets to decide most. In that way I'm very bottom-up and network oriented in my leadership style" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 32).

According to theory, the democratic/participative approach to management has often been characterized as a feminine leadership style (Eagly et al., 2003; Loden, 1985; 1986). Personal relations, trust, openness and honesty have all traditionally been assigned to the transformational leadership style, and hence to a more feminine leadership style (Coleman, 2003; Eagly et al., 2003; Loden 1985; 1986). As the above statements indicate top management anno 2011 is no longer about being the autocratic or directive leader who demands and controls the employees. In general, the managers agree that they draw on their more feminine sides in the interactions with employees. In this thesis, the interviewed managers believe that employees are motivated if they are given a freedom of action, and hence the managers emphasize the importance of being responsive and attentive to the needs of the employees. However, they make it abundantly clear that in the end, top management is a matter of hard work and ensuring a highly productive organization.

"I believe in talent, thus to hire really talented people, I believe in creativity, I believe in teamwork and also that hard work often is necessary" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 33).

Although the managers strive to create and maintain a long-term relationship with employees, a top manager must at all times be ready to take the consequence, identify the weakest link and let him/her go. There is a strong focus on how a manager must step forward, demonstrate the future direction for the organization and hence act as a leader. However, the top managers seek to manage these masculine values in a more feminine way. In that way, they indirectly dissociate themselves from masculine characteristics such as individualism and self-reliance.

4.2.3 Summing Up on Leadership Style

As previously stated, this section questions whether the current Danish male top manager can be labeled according to either a transformational (feminine) or transactional (masculine) leadership style. Transformational leaders operate within a humanistic paradigm. The transformational leaders are described as collaborative leaders who develop and motivate employees to share a common vision for the organization they serve (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010, Burns, 1979; Coleman, 2003). Contrary to the transformational leader, the transactional leader finds it rather irrelevant to nurture long-term relationships. Instead the primary concern is efficiency maximization and profit – he is the captain who demands and controls (Coleman, 2003; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010).

Based on the above statements it is evident that the interviewees have a genuine concern for their employees. During the interview all managers have emphasized an ambition to approach their employees through respect and understanding. In order to create an environment characterized by mutual respect and understanding, the managers highlight how they constantly seek to empower their employees, and how they must ensure to engage their employees through interaction and communication. Honesty and the ability to listen to other are without doubt important managerial skills. Teamwork is believed to be key in the process of meeting organizational goals, and all managers clearly state that as a top manager one cannot succeed alone. Hence, the management style advocated by the current Danish male top manager is closely related to what theory would describe as a feminine or transformational leadership style in which employees are perceived as both means *and* end (Eagly et al., 2003; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). After all, top management is, however, about ensuring a highly productive organization. The managers make no secret that relying on such a facilitating, coaching and democratic leadership style serves the purpose of creating a profitable and efficient organization. Thereby, the current Danish male top manager is to some extent also oriented towards the transactional leadership style.

4.3 Analysis Part 3: Examining Personal Attributes and Characteristics

In the previous sections we looked into the management paradigm and leadership style of the male top managers. In relation to the previous sections the following section will seek to analyze the personal attributes and characteristics that constitute the interviewees, and hence we will dig further into the story about the current Danish male top manager.

As we have shown in our theoretical framework, the manager's role has traditionally been understood as based on supposed masculine values or characteristics such as decision-making power, the ability to create results and cut straight through, to stand out from the crowd, etc. According to stereotypical assumptions men are perceived as strategic, result oriented, and forceful (Bem, 1974; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Also, research has argued that the extraordinary leader is more risk-taking than average (Maccoby, 2000). In this thesis we do, however, question whether the current male top manager conforms to the binary conception of management provided by academic literature. On the following pages we will analyze whether Danish male top managers mainly draw on attributes that have traditionally been characterized as masculine, or if other characteristics, more feminine characteristics or 'soft values', also are brought into play in their daily work.

4.3.1 All Roads can lead to the Top – It's not about having a 20-Step Career-Plan

According to general management literature, men are understood as active and self-determined, while women, on the other hand, are seen as more passive (Bem, 1974; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Based on a traditional stereotypical understanding, men would tend to view their career as a result of rationally planned actions with a defined goal to be achieved. We would like to address attention to how current Danish male top managers actually reached the top, and look into whether they had a detailed and comprehensive career plan?

Our male interviewees consist of a varied crowd of people who have acquired their current positions as top managers in many different ways. As mentioned earlier they are aged 34 to 59 and have various educational backgrounds (please see Appendix 3, 'Documentation of Interviews'). 7 out of 10 managers have based their career on university degrees, for example Cand.merc., Cand.jur., Cand.scient., Cand.scient.pol., Cand.oecon., and MSc in Engineering, whereas one of the managers holds a Bachelor of Commerce¹². Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, spent almost ten years at university studying to become a high school teacher, however, as job possibilities turned out to be non-existing, he instead began his career as supporter in the IT department at the company where he is now part of the executive group. 3 of the managers have acquired further education such as a Bachelor of Commerce, a PhD, or an MBA. Remarkably, two of the managers have entered their careers without any formal education. One of them, Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, began his

¹² A Bachelor of Commerce is equivalent to the Danish 'HD'

work life at an assembly line at IBM and now, 25 years later, he is still working for the same company and ‘Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic’ has been added to his business card. The Managing Director of the Civil Administration, Sune Stausholm, began his career with an internal training program within Post Danmark, and is now in charge of approximately 500 employees at the Civil Administration.

Looking at the stories told by our interviewees, none have approached their career according to a detailed career plan. Rather than having a thorough career plan, the managers describe the importance of timing and the courage to grasp the opportunities they have been presented to. According to Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, one must have the courage to grasp the ‘windows of opportunities’:

“In relation to pursuing a career I think that what really matters is that you devote yourself to what you do. Thus that [your job] really means something to you, that you think it’s exciting and fun, and that you do what you can right where you are. I think that’s what management is all about. You might consider the direction in which you want to go, but sometimes these ‘windows of opportunities’ appear – and that’s when you manage and make a career for yourself. But to have such a 20-step-plan with milestones spread throughout the year; I simply don’t believe in that” (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, June 28, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 34).

In general, the interviewed managers did, however, stress the importance of education, and as argued by Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, education is always beneficial:

“It gives me the creeps, when people say that it has been an advantage that they didn’t have a technical understanding and hence weren’t pulled down into technical details, but could concentrate on the commercial side of business. I think that’s the most foolish thing you can say – it can never be a disadvantage to be knowledgeable” (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 35).

Naturally, the managers have benefitted from the skills acquired through education and the various management courses they have attended, and as Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, states, his university degree has given him the ability and confidence to deal with complicated tasks in a structured and effective manner. Furthermore, as Per Holten-Andersen adds, respect within the university milieu is also to a great extent earned through the educational background.

But as career planning is not mentioned as essential to the managers, so it appears that none of the managers highlight post-education as significant when pursuing a career as top manager. Rather, the interviewees emphasize that ‘on-the-job-training’ is key:

“Without being too much of a hayseed, I believe in on-the-job-training. I believe that one develops through the concrete challenges one gets (...)” (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 36).

In general, personal experience and network were emphasized as important stepping-stones in terms of personal and professional development. In some cases, the ability to draw on the competencies, experience and knowledge of their network can, as the managers makes clear, be just as good as a diploma. According to the interviewees this network involves external relations as well as internal relations in term of employees, and as mentioned before, the interviewed top managers strive to interact with their employees on a daily basis in order to benefit from their expertise, ideas and knowledge.

Think Global, Act Local

Only 2 of the involved top managers have had an international career. Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, has worked six years as an engineer in the US and before that, during his education, he has worked in the US and Austria. Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, currently has an office in both Denmark and Sweden¹³ and divides his time between the two locations. Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, participated in the invention of the Danish debit card, ‘Dankortet’, has been engaged in crossing border assignments too, still located in Denmark though.

Due to the wishes of their families and due to other personal preferences, 2 of the interviewed top managers made clear that they chose to stay in Denmark when offered a foreign assignment. However, all managers agree that international experience is crucial and more and more important in today’s global business environment:

“I firmly believe that you can’t act in Denmark alone without having a global perspective and an interest in what’s going on internationally. I usually say ‘think global, act local’” (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 37).

¹³ The headquarters of PostNord are located in Solna, Sweden

From our interview data it is clear that there is no ideal formula for a perfect career path. One thing all the interviewed managers have in common is, however, the hard work they have put into their career and the recognition that nothing comes by itself.

4.3.2 Top Management is Risky Business

All interviewed top managers are extremely goal-oriented and enthusiastic about setting a direction. They make no secret of the fact that their position at the top of the organizations sometimes implies harsh and difficult decisions – a side that is not seen as the funniest or most attractive part of their work:

“We have laid off in 2010 and again in 2011, quite a lot, approximately 100 staff. The process mustn’t take too long. Don’t search for the perfect process and spend more than half a year planning it (...) Once a layoff decision is made, make a plan, announce it and execute it. It might sound a bit cynical but when you need to layoff people, do so and move fast” (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 38).

In that way, one could argue that pronounced attributes among male top managers are decisiveness and a willingness to take the responsibility as a leader, and dare to act and move the organization in the direction they believe to be the future. It is extremely important for the top managers to create good results, and sometimes, good results on the bottom line unfortunately have human costs. This is, however, an accepted part of the managerial job on the top. In general, they all agree that if you do not have the courage to make the cuts, then you should not be a top manager.

Most managers implicitly understand their own personal success as their willingness to engage in risky projects, projects that in many cases seemed to be quite impossible. Inquiring into what the managers’ describes as their biggest success during their career, it is evident that, in general, the managers have a great appetite for challenges and are to a considerable extent driven by a continuously changing environment. In fact, all managers can be said to be extremely adaptable to change and constant development – they are driven by the strategic challenge in transformations. When asked to describe some of their greatest successes during their career, most managers tell the story about transformations and modernizations and how they developed the business into a profitable organization. One manager mentions how he contributed to the invention of the Danish debit card (‘Dankort’), another manager tells a

story about how he developed complicated IT solutions that no one believed were possible, yet another emphasizes how he in the beginning of his career deliberately chose to study IT beside his work, and hence dared to rely on the new computer technology. Last but not least, one manager mentions how he has been one of the driving forces in transforming and internationalizing a traditional and somehow outdated agricultural institution into a modern biotechnological life science university. From the interviews it is clear that the top managers are eager to engage in risky problem solving processes. They like to think in new ways, to find alternative solutions and to discover new opportunities:

"If you don't have the feeling that this is of any use, or that it makes a difference, well, then it's no fun. Somehow you've managed to leave a footprint" (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 39).

"I like to work in the field where the commercial stuff and the technical stuff meet; when you do something that's really complicated and that competitors may not be able to do in the same way, and then succeed commercially – I think that's very exciting" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 40).

The managers' risk-taking behavior is closely linked to a wish to use their influence to make a difference and hence create results for the business. They get an instant rush from seeing the effects of their efforts and experience that they really changed something – that they left their footprint within the organization. Their enthusiasm for challenging, demanding and risky projects thus indicates a desire to be frontrunners within their field and, as Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, states above, make their organization outperform competitors. Arguably, their competitive behavior makes them interested in projects that can help them to meet their own ambitions: aiming at the very best! The attributes such as decisiveness, power and influence, traditionally seen as masculine, are very clear (Bem, 1974; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973), and the managers openly admit that they are motivated by a wish to gather influence:

"The reason why I think that management is much fun is that I simply like to decide the matter. I like the action, and preferably as much as possible. And it's simple math that if you're one you can achieve much, but if you're ten then you can achieve even more. This sort of logic turns me on. And then I think it's fun to have the possibility to influence and also to have this overview to see what's going on – I think that's motivating, exiting and driving. It may sound very cold and power-ish, and in a way it is, but I don't see myself as evil-minded. I just

think that's driving" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, June 28, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 41).

When many of the managers explain how their position gives them a possibility to affect things, they also call attention to a great individual liberty – a sense of independence – which is obtained through their position as top managers:

"If things go well it's interesting to be a manager, and I purposely say 'if' things go well, because then you have an enormous freedom to meddle in things that you find important or interesting, but that aren't necessarily driven by others. So the freedom you have as manager to say, 'I would like to spend some time doing this, because I think this is important, and I would like to drive something forward', while you can delegate other things" (Jørgen Bardentfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 42).

"It's all about having the opportunity to influence both my everyday life and how things are done. And then I have a desire to change things once in a while. To make it better (...) Thus I want to be able to influence what I do and this is much easier when you're a top manager than if you're an employee" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director of the Civil Administration, June 29, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 43).

According to the interviewees, the ability to create your own tasks and day-to-day engagements are emphasized as a major advantage of being a top manager. Not only are top managers able to influence the organization through personal projects and decisions, they are also able to choose between projects and to engage only in those that they find truly interesting.

It appears from the statements above that the interviewed managers are more than willing to take risks, they have a pronounced decisiveness, they are driven by a competitive mentality, they are ambitious striving for the best results, and they have a confidence in themselves that make them dare to set the future direction for the organization. These attributes are by the general management literature ascribed to the masculine manager (Bem, 1974, Powell & Butterfield, 1989; Schein, 1973; 1975; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Based on the above statements, the interviewed top managers seem to live up to this managerial role, which according to theory is anchored mainly in masculine characteristics (Coleman, 2003; Koenig et al., 2011).

A Genuine Curiosity

Several managers emphasize how an important part of their individual drive has been, and continuously is, a constant and genuine curiosity. This curiosity makes them eager to continuously learn and makes them strive for making a difference:

"I have never been driven by titles and big cars. I've been driven by a belief that I had something to offer, that I could contribute with something and that I wanted to exert an influence on the business because I thought that I had some good ideas" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August, 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 44).

"Since I was an ordinary employee I have been curious to make technology work, and this curiosity has constantly caused me to say, 'well, you can also do it like this, or you could bring the company in this and that direction'. And when you have such ideas you might damn as well try to get some influence and power behind them" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 21, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 45).

Though the managers do not refer to their job as a hobby, neither do they mind that it takes up most of their time. The top managers are highly focused on reaching their inner goals and arguably, it is their personal and 'curios' ambitions that drive them in their professional career.

4.3.3 You don't Talk About Long Hours at the Office

To study top management in depth, some of our questions for the interviewees were linked to their private lives and to elaborate on the balance between work and life. As demonstrated in our theoretical framework, research has shown that the general perception of managers continuously rests in a paradigm of masculine attributes and characteristics (Coleman, 2003; Koenig et al., 2011; Schein, 1973). These typical masculine characteristics include independence, individualism, competitiveness, and aggressiveness – attributes without much notion of a present and caring father figure. On the contrary attributes associated with parenthood such as sensitivity towards others' need, nurturing and care rest in a feminine paradigm (Cook & Rothwell, 2000). All of our interviewees are married, one (on his own remark) even for the third time, and one is divorced. As a typical Danish family most of the managers have two, three or four children¹⁴.

¹⁴ According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, the common family in Denmark has 2 children.

Hence, this section will focus on the challenges and opportunities faced by current male top managers in relation to the role as both a top manager and a father. How do they deal with a time consuming job on the one side and a family on the other side. Do you find time to your family when your job requires most of your time? Is it true or more of a political correct statement when top managers are quoted saying “Of course I spend time with my family”?

Being a top manager is demanding and requires much time and dedication. Although the organizations differ in terms of how much each manager can delegate to other employees, there is a tendency that top management is more than 37 hours work a week. It is hard work, and the interviewees make it abundantly clear that they have worked hard for their current top position:

“It’s not that I think working a lot is a good thing, but I’ve just seen and learned that if one is to achieve anything it’s very, very difficult without a great deal of effort. You might be talented, you might be bright and creative and good at teamwork, but you must also work hard” (Jørgen Bardenfelth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 46).

“Once a guy told me, ‘you may get rich by gambling, but that isn’t very sensible; you can also inherit, but you shouldn’t really count on that because nowadays people spend their money; and what was left was only damn hard work – and that’s how I see it, there’s no one in this world who should expect everything to be handed to you on a plate – you’ve got to make a bit of effort” (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director of the Civil Administration, June 29, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 47).

It is evident, that in order to be a top manager ambitions are not enough; one must have a certain drive that makes you walk the extra mile. Top managers possess a drive so strong that they are willing to work around the clock if needed. Most of the interviewees have since childhood been involved in voluntary arrangements as scout leaders, trainers at the local football club, members of the school council and etc. They describe themselves as visionary and innovative with a pronounced organizer or involvement gene. Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, admits that follow-up work is not what drives him; rather, he finds it challenging to develop things and to build up projects. This is a general tendency among all the top managers contributing to this thesis. In fact, as the following statements indicate, it comes naturally to the interviewees to engage in countless projects:

"I'm probably the kind of person that will always have some projects going on, big or small. That's simply what drives me" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 48).

"I have this organizer-gene, and then I'm not afraid to get up and say, 'I'll handle this'. And I think it dates back to school days when something should be arranged and so" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director of the Civil Administration, June 29, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 49).

Or as Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, says, though it took him almost three years to put Irma's finances on a sound basis and get ahead with work, he promptly found other work-related projects to engage in:

"After three years I got ahead of this job. At that time I could probably have scaled down to a normal work week. I chose not to do so as I felt that so many other things related to this job were interesting" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, June 30, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 50).

Obviously, the managers find it hard not to involve themselves in numerous projects, in risky projects, and in people-oriented projects. To some extent, the boundary line between work time and leisure time is somewhat blurred as most managers are driven by an inner wish to continuously move things, change things and create results. One thing that characterizes all the interviewed top managers is this inner wish – an 'inner fire' – that constantly makes them strive for more and thus drives them in their every day work and has driven them throughout their entire career.

4.3.4 Never more than a Phone Call Away

As the Managing Director of Irma, Alfred Josefsen, argues:

"You can allow [your work] to tip over and choose to make it dominate your private life more or less, or you can chose to avoid allowing work to take up too much time of your private, leisure or family life" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma, June 30, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 51).

All situations pose a range of challenges and opportunities and one of the biggest challenges – as described by our interviewees – is to balance their time between work and family. Some find it more difficult than others to separate the two, some do not even distinguish between them, while others have a clear separation between work time and family time. A top position

often requires that you are available 24/7, if not in person, then on the phone. As the managers say, this means that the small device is following them wherever they go, also on holidays:

“When I’m on vacation at Lazanta Sport I always bring my phone because in case the fat is in the fire then I’m always available. In principle, in the job that I have you must be reachable around the clock all year around” (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 21, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 52).

As a consequence of the location of his job, one of the managers has chosen to move away from his family to live nearby his work during the weekdays. In his opinion, this solution has saved him and his wife from many arguments concerning working hours and dinnertime. Another manager was frank to tell us that at least one of his divorces was influenced by his job. Hence, it is obvious that top management has a price:

“Top management has its price – when I began in this job the youngest was 4 years old and suddenly the kid has turned 17 years old” (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 53).

“If one chooses to become top manager (...) then it has a price in relation to how much time you spend at work” (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 54).

Furthermore, as one manager explains, the working hours tend to get longer during the career, and one thing is the hours spent at the office, another is the hours spent thinking about the job when you get home. Being a top manager is a lifestyle. Top management is all-consuming. You cannot manage to have one life at work, a second life with your family, and a third life during leisure hours. As Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, says:

“Well, the problem must be solved. Then it’s not interesting how much time you spend on it, what matter is that it gets solved. In practice that means that for most people the closer you get to the top the more time you will spend, and the more time you’re expected to spend on your work” (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 55).

One week consists of 7 days. That equals 168 hours. If you spend approximately 60-70 of these hours working from Monday to Friday, that would make you work between 12 and 14 hours a day. Adding transportation time, and if you also intend to get your sleep, simple math

makes it clear that little time is left to family, friends and leisure. However, these honest interviews based on the personal stories of the managers, left us with the impression of a sincere dedication towards their family. Certainly, it is not all about work; time spent with the family is also a priority. Several of the managers explained how they strive to prioritize the family no matter what sort of activity this may include. Whether it is soccer, ice skating, racing bikes or hunting the managers seek to spend time doing what the family enjoys, including supporting their children:

"It has always been the kids, who decided what we should do in our spare time and then I just come along" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 56).

"My wife and I have horses that we ride in the forest every week. I play golf with my son and go to the gym twice a week. For me my family has a high priority" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic of IBM, June 8, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 57).

What the interviewed managers do not prioritize is time spent on themselves, their friends, and their hobbies:

"There's much time for the family; there's not much time for Finn – Finn and his friends. It's Finn's time and Finn's spare time that has been squeezed" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 58).

"I would like to practice all sorts of weird things, sport and things like that, but I don't. There's not much time for such things" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director of the Civil Administration, June 28, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 59).

Though they often bring their work home, for example checking emails, preparing for a meeting, or having a late night telephone conference with associates from around the world, most of our interviewees manage to take time off regularly during the weekends:

"I've always had a rule that I don't work from Friday evening to Sunday evening. It's incredibly rare that I work during the weekend, however, I work Sunday evening. I simply can't get my work done if I'm not working during Sunday night, because the amount of emails that I get is insane" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 60).

In general, it is obvious that a top managerial position does not leave much time for dishwashing, vacuuming or gardening, and hence top management is a matter of organizing

yourself and your family in such a way that everyone is satisfied. One of the advantages of being a top manager is the occasional flexibility that, according to our interviewees, comes with the job. Several mentioned this flexibility as a great opportunity to be the one following the kids to school or picking them up from the kindergarten once in a while:

"If the school called because of illness, it was actually better that I was the one who left work rather than [my wife], as she would then leave eighth class staring into space without a teacher" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark of PostNord, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 61).

Though the managers talked about their wives' careers, it has been clear that the working hours of a top manager make it rather convenient, if not necessary, to have someone at home to take care of the house and the children. For example, 2 of the managers told how their wives stayed at home while their children were small, and now only works part time. Moreover, only 2 of the interviewed male top managers have a wife who has an equally demanding career. Although these men do participate in child care and household chores, it is noticeable how they primarily engage in timewise flexible tasks such as bringing the children to kindergarten or school or taking them to the gym, whereas the wives primarily handle the timewise inflexible tasks such as picking the children up before the school closes. For most managers, as their careers progressed, agreements about the rules of the game have been created between them and their partners:

"It's been many years since we stopped saying that things will change, that things will get better" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 62).

Some managers have chosen to organize the household chores by hiring a nanny or a cleaning lady. Others have had a more classical division of domestic tasks between them:

"I take care of the gardening and things like that during the weekend, but I must say that it's my wife who does most of the work" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director of Nykredit, June 10, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 63).

Like Per Ladegaard, most top managers agree that their wives take care of most things at home. Several of the managers indicate that getting more help around the house would have generated less stress during spare time, however, as one manager says, despite the intention, his family has not yet managed to carry out the idea. 3 other managers explained that their

wives would rather take care of children and household than having an au pairs or domestic help.

Despite many hours in the office missing out school plays and soccer games, we have not been left with an impression of managers without time to care for their families:

"You should get a lot of children, because children really don't care about how busy you've been at work, so you might as well drop work, when you get home and spend time with them instead. Children make you think less about your work" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 64).

Of course an 'all consuming' career like the one of a top manager demands certain sacrifices, but to most of our interviewees, it seems like the sacrifice they make concerns themselves and the time spent on own interests – not time spent together with their family and their loved ones.

4.3.5 Summing Up on Personal Attributes and Characteristics

According to theory, managerial competences are, among others, believed to be decisiveness, assertiveness, self-confidence, aggressiveness and competitiveness – characteristics that are culturally ascribed to men rather than women (Bem, 1974; Koenig et al., 2011; Schein, 1973; 1975; Spence & Buckner, 2000). According to our theoretical framework, fixed expectations to the masculine part of the managerial role still exist. Hence a top manager is expected to possess a number of instrumental traits such as the ability to take the lead, to be active, competitive and forceful (Bem, 1974; Koenig et al., 2011; Schein, 1973; 1975; Spence & Buckner, 2000).

As we have demonstrated throughout this analysis, top management is about managing a business, and current male top managers are extremely focused on objectives and results. Most of the interviewed managers define success in terms of risky business – profitable, efficient and major organizational transformations. The managers are self-confident and have a strong belief in their ability to set the future direction for the organization, they are extremely decisive in the way they execute strategies, and they are to a large extent driven by competitiveness and a desire to outperform their competitors.

However, the very same analysis has shown that as a top manager you must have an insight of people, an ability to understand and trust your employees. All the interviewed top managers emphasize that you must have a certain degree of empathy in terms of the ability to see through people and hence identify and exploit their individual qualities. There can be no doubt that managing people are by all managers seen as a big and important component of the concept of top management. In correlation to the transformational leadership style that we identified above, we have also found evidence of expressive characteristics such as understanding, a sympathetic and collaborative behavior, and a sensitivity to others' needs (Bem, 1974; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Fondas, 1997; Spence & Buckner, 2000). As we have shown above, these expressive characteristics find expression in the managers' interaction with their employees which once again emphasize the managers' focus on approaching their employees through respect, trust and understanding. Hence, the ability to act as a facilitating and coaching manager is seen as a vital part of the top managerial role.

According to the interviewees it takes courage to be a top manager, and top management is cutthroat competition. In the above sections we have shown that when talking about top management, all roads can lead to the top. The managers have not approached their career through a step-by-step career plan, rather, their individual success has been driven by a genuine curiosity to change things to the better and ambition to gain more influence, and thus have a say at the round table. From the above analysis it is clear, that the Danish male top manager anno 2011 is driven by an 'inner fire'. He has a will that makes him work around the clock if necessary and accept the sacrifices that a job at the top requires. The position as top manager implies a choice – a choice about actively selecting your career.

4.4 Analysis Part 4 –Top Management from yet another Angle

Based on [Analysis Part 1](#), [2](#) and [3](#), the following section, [Analysis Part 4](#), will analyze how the male top managers' understanding of the concept of top management conform to their female counterparts', as well as executive searchers', understanding of top management. The following sections will thus answer sub-question [IV: How does the current Danish male top managers' understanding of top management conform to their female counterparts' understanding of top management?](#)

4.4.1 A Female Touch

As explained in our methodology we have interviewed two female top managers in order to ensure a female contribution to the thesis: Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the

Agency for Governmental Management, and Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S (please see Appendix 3, ‘Documentation of Interview’). In order to support our findings from the male interviewees and strengthen the generalizability of our results, we found it necessary to investigate whether the way these female top managers portray top management corresponded to the picture given by the 10 male top managers. Similar to the analysis of the male top managers, this section will contain an analysis of the female managers’ approach to management and their personal attributes and characteristics. Naturally, it is interesting to find out if these women may perceive top management differently.

Though theory suggests a continuous think manager—think male paradigm (Schein, 1973; Coleman, 2003), a simultaneous progression of feminine leadership characteristics is also evident in the management literature (e.g. Fondas, 1997; Koenig et al., 2011; Loden, 1985; 1986). These are characteristics such as being devoted to others, being emotional, understanding and gentle – all characteristics which according to stereotypical assumptions are more typically ascribed to women than to men. But when talking about top management, is it thus possible to identify any similarities between male and female top managers. Do female managers draw on a more feminine management paradigm as theory suggests (e.g. Schein, 1973; 1975; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; 1989), and can any difference be found in the leadership style compared to the male top managers? And finally, do the female top managers also, like their male counterparts, draw on a range of masculine personal characteristics in their management style?

Approaching Employees through Trust and Understanding

The word ‘trust’ is mentioned several times during our interviews. It is evident that trusting your team and their talent is essential for contemporary managers – men as well as women. When trusting employees and their abilities, a manager is able to delegate difficult tasks and assignments and use the team to create results and to move the organization in the right direction:

“According to my worldview, trust is a very, very important thing – in fact, trust can move incredibly much. If your business partners, your employees, or your colleagues feel that you trust them, then they’ll also have trust in you. One shouldn’t be blue-eyed and naive, but if you approach other people based on trust rather than mistrust, then you’ll move the world much faster. If I distrust

someone, he or she will also distrust me” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 65).

According to both Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, and Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, being trusted with challenging tasks serves as a motivational factor for the majority of the employees. However, not only must a leader trust her employees, employees must also be able to trust their leader. In case of trouble, Charlotte Münter argues, it is of utmost importance that a top manager is ready to step into character and take the responsibility. Both in case of trouble at work or issues at home, the employees must be able to turn to their leader. Hence, in line with our analysis of the male top managers, both female managers argue that openness and honesty are qualities they value high in the relation with their employees. As the following statement shows, Charlotte Münter seeks to gain trust by being informal and frank with her employees:

“[As a manager] I think it’s very much about the signals you give. You have to spend some time talking with people, and I think you should be relatively informal. I believe that if people experience that everything is very formal in the organization, it also becomes increasingly difficult to obtain openness” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 66).

Furthermore, despite their many years of experience and the power they possess within the organization, the two female managers make an effort to listen to ideas of others and being humble towards their employees:

“(…) it’s not a success criterion in itself that it’s me who find the answer to everything. You must be open to new ideas and you must be willing to hear them out rather than automatically question whether it’s too difficult or too expensive” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 67).

“It’s really exiting to be part of a team where you do this together – a team that consists of different people and where people come forward and say, ‘well, couldn’t you see the world like this’ or ‘I think of things in this way’. Thus to make a team work together and make some joint decisions” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, August 17, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 68).

As the statements above imply, the ability to accomplish great results through teamwork are also of great importance to our two female managers. They both use a great deal of energy

analyzing their different teams, getting to know the individual employee and putting together tasks and compensations that will keep them motivated and willing to work hard:

"One of the interesting tasks of being a manager is to motivate your employees, and also to take this differentiated approach to the task of motivating and say, 'this guy, I know he can run even faster, so he must be pushed a little further - we just need to figure out why he isn't performing the best he can'" (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, August 17, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 69).

As stated in the introduction, no two managers are the same, and neither are these two women. However, when using our theoretical framework to analyze the present management paradigm certain similarities occur. Accordingly, the leadership style characterized by the female top managers rests in what Cook and Rothwell (2000) call the 'Modern "new leadership" paradigm'. The attributes that characterize this management paradigm are for example collectivity, a focus on relationships and partnerships, and a coaching or facilitating approach to the managerial role – all attributes that correlates with the democratic/participative/transformational leadership style (Burns, 1979; Eagly et al., 2003; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). This management paradigm corresponds to the results found in our analysis of the male top managers. The fact that both groups of managers lead and motivate the employees by trust, praise, and delegation of tasks and responsibility indicates that the phenomenon of humanism in business seems to be evident according to this analysis.

Think Manager—Think Female?

Despite evidence of a humanistic and rather feminine management paradigm, we have also identified that the female managers have a strong drive to acquire, that they are very self-confident in their approach to their work, and extremely ambitious – attributes and characteristics that theory traditionally refers to as masculine. As Eva Berneke illustrates, to her it is not about empathy or 'gut feeling', rather she is analytical and strategic in the way she approach her job as a top manager:

"The ability to understand what's blocking people from performing better – some call it empathy, but to me it's really an analytical task. I sit down and think about it, so I wouldn't say that it's simply something I've felt" (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, August 17, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 70).

When asked about the qualifications it takes to acquire such a position, Eva Berneke mentions ambition, intelligence, the willingness to make an effort, and the ability to learn from past

experiences. She does not talk about empathy, kindness and helpfulness – attributes that according to our theoretical framework belong to the evolving feminine leadership style. Both Eva Berneke and Charlotte Münter claim that the most interesting part of top management is influence, and as it appears from the following statements, the two female managers are driven by the influence that allows them to create results and be at the very center of the decision making process, hence they are in many ways similar to their male colleagues:

"I've probably always been driven by action, to be where the action is, where changes take place and where you can see some results" (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, August 17, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 71).

"(...) you gain influence through these top management positions. It's really something about creating results and making a difference. And you're just able to affect things at a completely different level in this job compared to another management job, or as an ordinary employee for that matter. I think that's fun!" (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 72).

There is a Risk to Everything – Take it or Leave it!

The position as a top manager offers both its challenges and opportunities. The challenge most often consists of time and consideration for the family. Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, Charlotte Münter, and Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, Eva Berneke, are both married and have children, and both their husbands have similar demanding careers. Due to these conditions they have benefitted from the opportunity to get help in order to make things work on the domestic scene.

Charlotte Münter explains how she often in interview situations is asked how she deals with her work and life balance. This, she points out most female managers know all too well, however, their male counterparts are rarely confronted with that sort of questions. Instead, she argues, the dominant discourse among the male top managers often remains focused on the extreme amount of working hours that, in her opinion, is exaggerated. As pointed out earlier, counting the total amount of hours in one week makes it rather unthinkable to work 80-100 hours a week and then at the same time have time for a family. Hence, Charlotte Münter argues that attention should be paid to those who actually manage their work in less than 60 hours a week. Naturally, Charlotte Münter makes no secret to the fact that from time to time top management simply requires more than that. As stated by all of our interviewees – men and women – top management is not a 9-5 job. However, according to the female managers it is not impossible to be a passionate manager and at the same time a passionate mother. Where

many of our male interviewees have a partner who takes care of home and children, the two female managers have, as mentioned before, husbands with similar demanding careers. Hence, for them it has been necessary to get help picking up the children and taking care of some of the domestic work. As Charlotte Münter says, it is a matter of organizing your life to an extent that gives you the extra time and flexibility needed for family:

"I believe that the huge pressure of knowing that you must leave work and be somewhere at a certain time is almost ulcerogenic. The families that I know who practice to manage everything themselves while at the same time pursuing a career, to them it's very, very difficult to make ends meet – you simply lack some flexibility" (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 73).

Eva Berneke explains how her au pair is central to make all ends meet, and how she would rather do without a car than without her au pair:

"In fact, I'm more astonished than some choose not to get any help at home" (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, August 17, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 74).

Like the male top managers, both Eva Berneke and Charlotte Münter enjoy the flexibility that comes with the job – the ability to leave the office during the afternoon and take care of the remaining work after the kids have gone to bed. And again, similar to our male interviewees, what is compromised is the time for themselves and their own interests:

"I'd love to have more time for myself, but now that I've got four kids, well, then it's quite difficult. Currently, it's on their terms. Instead I go for a run after the kids have gone to bed. So I'm often out for a run at ten o'clock at night where everything is peace and quiet" (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, August 17, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 75).

One challenge, however, that our male and female interviewees do not have in common, is the prejudices against them because of the high priority they give to their job. During our interviews we have learned that most female managers experience a great lack of respect due to their choice of a career in top management. As reckoned by one of the executive searchers contributing to this thesis, this seems to be a challenge particularly to Danish female top managers:

"We have a hierarchy here in Denmark; Denmark is divided by casts. And the funny thing is that female top managers – the most high-profiled personalities –

they belong to the lowest cast if you see things through the eyes of women. Women are the worst. We look down on the top manager-mom who doesn't bring homemade cake every time there's some event at school. In general, women look down on those who take a higher education and pursue a career and say, 'that's a bad mother'" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 76).

It should be mentioned, however, that neither Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice Preseident of TDC A/S, nor Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, have experienced this as a great issue during their career. Rather they have acknowledged the consequences of their choice to pursue a career:

"Some believe that 'real' parents manage to do everything by themselves. Super parents (...) That's their opinion, and well, you can choose to overcome it. But of course there still exist a very fixed idea about what makes a real family, what makes a real family with children and what makes real career-focused people" (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 77).

The view upon female leaders in top management from the world around them seems to be what differs the most from our interviews conducted with the 10 male top managers. Although the male managers also face the challenge of prioritizing the family and spending time at home, somehow, it seems more likely accepted in society for men to choose the lifestyle of top management than for women. The thread of being perceived as a non-present parent, however, does not seem to be crucial to the two women we have spoken to. Rather it is a consequence they live with and a risk that comes with the title:

"Well, there's a risk to everything in this world, and due to the responsibility you take, being a top manager also involves a risk – but it's also fun. You must be able to weigh the pros and cons, and you must be self-confident enough to say, 'well, I know that there's a risk involved, and I know it's there for me and for everyone else in a job like mine, but I can live with that" (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 78).

Summing Up on a Female Touch

Think manager—think female? The answer to this is yes and no! As illustrated above, Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, and Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President of TDC A/S, operates within a rather feminine management paradigm. They rely heavily on trust in their management style, they base this

trust on long-term relationships, they intend to radiate a great deal of understanding, and they engage in the role as a facilitating and coaching leader – the transformational leadership style.

According to our theoretical framework, female characteristics require women to appear less aggressive and more modest. Taking care of the home and the children is historically and culturally assumed to be a feminine task while hunting, acquiring and defending are perceived masculine tasks (Cook & Rothwell, 2000; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010), however, in the above sections we have showed a number of similarities between our male and female managers. As it appears, these two women are highly motivated by results and organizational influence, they are determined in their career and they also possess a range of masculine characteristics and stereotypical managerial competencies: the drive to acquire great results, the analytical approach to employees (rather than intuitive), their high ambitions, their decisiveness and self-confidence – attributes and characteristics ascribed to the masculine management paradigm (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010; Powell et al., 1989; 2002; Schein, 1973; 1975).

Although we have found evidence that both the female and male managers to a great extent rely on the transformational leadership style that literature nominates as the modern leadership style, it is evident that men as well as women emphasize that attributes and characteristics ascribed to the masculine management paradigm are equally important components within the concept of top management. Arguably, both groups of managers tend to draw on different management paradigms, and hence rely on the transformational leadership style as well as the more traditional directive or transactional leadership style. This is consistent with Judge and Piccolo (2004) who found that transformational and transactional leadership are so highly related that the two are difficult to separate. Thus, trying to answer whether male top managers' understanding of the concept of top management conforms to the two female top managers', it is evident that one cannot talk about a feminine or masculine view of top management. Top management is both. Hence the interviewees in this thesis exceed the general stereotypical assumption about the characteristics of a top manager.

4.4.2 Executive Searchers - Linking Companies and Candidates

In order to gather a thorough understanding of top management, we decided to investigate which profiles and competences Danish companies requested when searching for top management candidates. For that we needed genuine expert knowledge about the recruiting process, and hence, we teamed up with two experienced executive searchers to hear their

version of top management. Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, and Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, helped us to get further insight into their work as executive searchers – the link between companies and candidates.

Based on interviews with the executive searchers, the following section will analyze which candidates Danish organizations search for and what kind of characteristics that are seen as crucial when searching for executive potential. And most interestingly, how well do the executive searchers' understanding of top management conform to the picture given by the male and female top managers? The following sections will thus help to answer sub-question IV: *How does the current Danish male top managers' understanding of top management conform to executive searchers' understanding of top management?*

'Must Have' Characteristics?

What are organizations looking for? Our interviewees have no doubt: for Danish organizations, there is no such thing as a standardized approach to executive search. Each organization faces different challenges, and whether such challenges imply efficiency maximization, organizational growth, expansion abroad, mergers or acquisitions, each situation requires different skills and hence distinctive profiles. As Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, says only one thing is certain; the organizations search for the best:

"It's obvious that when you talk with companies they never want someone who can manage the job – they want someone who can manage the job and even more" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 79).

During the interviews the executive searchers did, however, emphasize a number of attributes or characteristics that most candidates are requested to possess in order to be eligible for a position at the top.

First, experience and the right qualifications are crucial, and as one of the executive searchers states, most often the candidate's experiences are seen as the very foundation of their competences. In correlation with Orr and Sack (2009), the executive searchers emphasize that the economic crisis calls for attributes and managerial skills such as efficiency, the ability to execute and the ability to make decisions in an ambiguous environment. Currently, the financial crisis puts pressure on organizations to make 'safe choices' when they look for

candidates, and experiences such as industrial insight and knowledge of the market are seen as important factors in the selection process. Personal competencies or social skills are, however, increasingly seen as critical, and as Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, emphasizes:

"It's rarely the one who holds the perfect CV who gets hired. Usually, it's the one who has the right social skills, hence the right skills to get on in the world (...) Hiring people who fits perfectly into the company is key" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 80).

Although the candidate's experiences are seen as the foundation of their competences, organizations attach great importance to more interpersonal skills too, and attracting the right social competencies may at times weight more than the right experiences.

It is evident, that the transactional or autocratic manager that terminates, command and control is no longer favored by Danish organizations. As Susanne Becker Mikkelsen emphasizes, organizations do more and more request managers that inspire, managers that create relations across the organization and managers that make sure to involve employees in the decision making process:

"The ability to listen, inquire into employees and involve them, and not sit [at your office] and make decisions, that's some of the attributes which are definitely in high demand and what companies request when searching for top managers. You really can't afford that employees run for the exit" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 81).

From the interviews it appears that even though the financial downturn increasingly makes organizations oriented towards profit and efficiency, in all essentials, top managers must set a direction, but most importantly, top managers must ensure to engage people around them. In other words, top managers must understand how to act culturally, whether it is on home ground or abroad.

Secondly, top managers must have a personal drive – an 'inner fire' as one recruiter calls it:

"The good candidates, that's often those who are driven by and possess this inner fire, and therefore it's also most often those people who apply for a top position (...) So a good candidate is someone who can manage to drive others as well as himself or herself, a person who doesn't need someone to push him or her forward" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 82).

As the statement indicates, top managers are required to be proactive, independent and self-reliant. Entering the highest managerial level is a task of great responsibility, and the managers are expected to continuously drive the business forward. For that, as the executive searchers point out, top managers must be driven by the challenge, and not least the high level of responsibility. But as Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, says, career-focused people are turned on exactly by the idea of having such a responsibility – they are hooked on challenges, and often devote themselves to their work with heart and soul. From the interviews it appears that Danish organizations search for charismatic leaders that have the energy, a certain power of penetration, to engage and inspire employees across the organization. Managers at the top must take action and ensure to get things through. However, it is clear that most candidates already have this drive – they have an appetite for challenges and personal ambitions that aim at the best:

“To have this drive. This hunger. To want something and be ambitious with no need to be pushed forward. To have this natural desire to change things for the better, make things better, deal with difficult tasks. It’s like an engine burning inside of you. That’s what makes a top manager” (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 83).

And finally, top managers must make a choice. Both the executive searchers stress that top management implies long hours at the office. Working at the top of Danish organizations is not a working week of 37 hours:

“It’s very, very few top managers that I’ve met who doesn’t spend a minimum of 50 hours per week on their work. Those who say otherwise they simply don’t tell the truth. [The companies] really expect a hard working manager – no matter whether it’s a man or a woman” (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partner, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 84).

This statement clearly illustrates that top managers are expected to work more than average. Naturally, organizations attach great importance to a balanced family life, and the question about work/life-balance might be raised during the selection process, however, the right working attitude is seen as a central matter in the race for the executive posts. Aiming for the top implies a choice, and as Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, indicates, top managers must be willing to acknowledge that such a position requires certain sacrifices:

"I believe that those women who have chosen to become top managers they have made a very, very conscious choice and they make certain sacrifices – just like men, they make sacrifices too – they must let something go" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 85).

"In my opinion, those who are only interested in work/life balance they might not be the right candidates. We prefer people who give work highest priority. Well, I know it sounds completely wrong, but we must simply ensure that people don't leave at 3 o'clock, and thus that they really want to make a difference" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 86).

Suits and Cigars?

Who is the Danish top manager then according to the executive searchers? Are they cigar-smoking workaholics with no interest in family life? Are top managers hard-bitten people dressed in suits continuously aiming for more power? The answer is no! As one of the executive searchers says, much has changed since the time of 'Matador' where bank managers strolled in the streets of 'Korsbæk'¹⁵:

"I believe that Mr. and Mrs. Denmark, to use that expression, I think they find it difficult to understand what a top manager is; they believe it's like 'Matador'. It's not at all like that. In general, all managers are very sensible and agreeable people, so they are not anything like 'Matador' (...) and the cool thing is, that the brightest, most talented people, the best of the best, they don't care whether they live in Rungsted. They live damn well in Brønshøj or Greve Strand, it's not the status that means something to them" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 87).

The life as a top manager requires a great deal of organizing on the home front, however, the idea that top managers must be first man arriving in the morning and last man leaving in the evening is outdated and wrong. The job at the top is certainly compatible with a well-balanced family life:

"One can have children and a top position at the same time, you just need to organize yourself a bit differently, so you have the kids in a different way than if it's you who always collect and deliver" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 88).

¹⁵ Matador is one of the most well-known and popular Danish TV series produced between 1978 and 1981. It is set in the fictional Danish town of Korsbæk between 1929 and 1947.

As it appears from the statement above, the executive searchers stress that top management is not a matter of choosing between career and family. But as top manager, the number of hours spent at the office is indeed considerably higher than for ordinary employees, and the organizations make no secret that top management is undoubtedly hard work. Though organizations increasingly acknowledge that even top managers demand conditions that balance work and life, most communication to potential top management candidates remain focused on the challenges in the job and the candidates' ability to set the future direction for the organization:

"Our communication to the candidates is aimed at attracting the right candidates into the position (...) It's dangerous to begin communicating that [top management] is super cozy. Sometimes it's actually better to communicate the opposite and say, 'this is the hardest job', because if you really emphasize the challenges and the difficulties in the job, then the right people apply" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 89).

Consequently, top managers must prioritize their time, and ensure a set-up at home that allows them to choose both work and family:

"There's nothing else to say that if you reach for the top, you must make sure that you're covered at home so you're not 100 percent responsible for [the domestic role]. To do that you must have extra help at home that allows you to concentrate on quality time with your children" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner at Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 90).

And again, those people who aim at the top, they have a drive – an appetite for management:

"Those who are considered for top management positions, that's most often people who damn well like to work. They like to work 60 hours a week, they don't mind. Of course it's hard, but it simply comes naturally to them (...) You almost never talk about the hours" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant at Lisberg, July 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 91).

Summing Up on Executive Searchers

Arguably, both executive searchers call for instrumental traits such as independence, decisiveness, self-confidence and ambitiousness (Bem, 1974; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Bottom-line is key, and profit means survival. The current Danish top manager must know how to make procedures, people and profit more effective, even better and continuously higher. But, the contemporary top manager must also consider employees both as means and

end. He or she must be understanding, compassionate and collaborative – attributes that theorists would identify as expressive traits oriented towards a transformational leadership style (Bem, 1974; Spence & Buckner, 2000; Robbins & Coulter, 2003; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010).

Based on the above analysis, it is evident that the interviewed executive searchers understand the concept of top management in a similar way to both the male and the female top managers. The Danish top manager anno 2011 cannot be defined as either/or – he or she operates within a rather economic paradigm where profit and efficiency orientation is high priority, but at the same time a top manager cannot succeed alone. Whether male or female, a top manager is highly dependent on his or her team, and humanism in business is thus apparent too. Therefore, we can conclude that the male and female top managers who have contributed to this thesis do not conform to the binary model presented by general academic management literature.

4.5 Top Management Anno 2011

In this thesis we strive to create a more diverse picture of the current Danish male top manager. In the sections above we have made a thorough analysis of the current Danish male top manager, both privately and professionally. The above analysis of the male top manager has been structured in three levels: (1) we have analyzed the management paradigm the male top managers operate within, (2) we have looked into their leadership styles, and last but not least (3) we have examined the personal attributes and characteristics that constitute the male top managers. As it appears from this analysis, the three levels are, however, highly linked to each other and rather difficult to separate. One cannot talk about management paradigms without implicit referring to leadership styles; each leadership style entails a number of personal attributes and characteristics; and the same personal attributes and characteristics all have their origin in one of the abovementioned management paradigms.

This section will sum up on the 4 analysis parts above in order to find out whether it is possible to point out certain similarities and tendencies within top management when comparing the male top managers (section 4.1, 4.2, 4.3) against the female top managers (section 4.4) and the executive searchers (section 4.4). As we have shown in the above analysis top management is understood according to a number of indispensable conditions and requirements. Although arguably there is no such thing as ‘one model fits them all’ in terms of personality and exact leadership style, we have demonstrated how striking

similarities emerge when analyzing the management paradigm, leadership style and personal attributes and characteristics of today's top managers – men as well as women, private sector top managers as well as public sector top managers. Based on these similarities, we suggest a model of conditions and requirements that all together constitutes top management anno 2011. This model we term 'the premise for top management'.

4.5.1 The Premise for Top Management

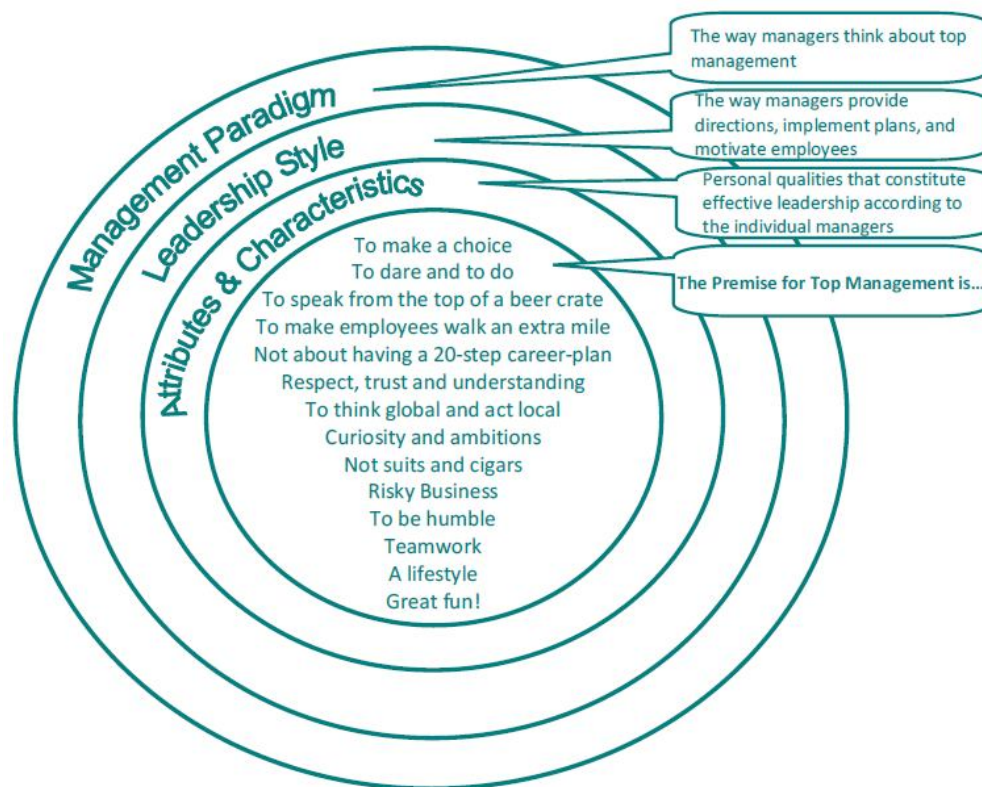
We find it of great interest that most of the interviewees describe themselves or their colleagues in a way that disproves the traditional stereotypical picture as portrayed by our theoretical framework. Overall, we have seen a tendency for the interviewees to exceed the gender stereotypes in the way the male managers expressed a number of expressive characteristics (that are normally ascribed to women) and that the female managers expressed a number of instrumental characteristics (that are normally ascribed to men).

Throughout the above analysis of the male top managers, female top managers and executive searchers, we have found support of both transformational and transactional leadership styles as well as instrumental and expressive attributes and characteristics. The interviewed top managers, men and women, do in many ways accentuate the same attributes and characteristics when asked to describe themselves as leaders. All 12 managers are highly determined and ambitious in their career and they are driven by organizational influence, competitiveness and the ability to acquire great results and change things for the better. Similarly, they are all characterized by decisiveness and self-confidence. Moreover, all of the managers are characterized by a number of expressive characteristics such as understanding, a sympathetic and collaborative behavior, and sensitivity to others' needs. The similarities between the male top managers', female top managers' and executive searchers' understanding of the concept of top management clearly demonstrates that the current Danish top manager must be able to operate within both a masculine and a feminine management paradigm. Hence, comparing our empirical data against our theoretical framework emphasizes that top management anno 2011 cannot be understood according to a binary approach to the concept of top management.

Although top management is a complex concept, the interviewed top managers as well as the executive searchers all agree on the conditions and requirements that constitute top management, and hence this thesis suggests that the premise for top management is the same regardless of gender. As a result of our qualitative investigation of top management, we have

listed the following terms which, by all our interviewees, are argued to constitute top management anno 2011 in Danish organizations:

Figure 4: The Premise for Top Management



Being a top manager is first of all about making a choice; a choice about pursuing an ambitious career and a choice about being ready to make the sacrifices it requires. However, as emphasized by the 12 top managers as well as the 2 executive searchers, top management does not necessarily imply making a choice of either family or career. The two are compatible, but it is a matter of organizing your life according to the solution that is best for ones family. Some of our interviewees emphasized the personal freedom they had to keep track on their own calendar and plan their own day. Overall our interviewees are characterized as men and women who give high priority to their family, not necessarily by spending the same amount of hours with them as they do on the job, but in terms of consideration and care for the interest of the family.

As it appears from above, the current top manager is indeed a multi-facetted acquaintance. A top manager is a central figure and the promoter of organizational strategies. He/she is in charge of the organization 24/7 which requires a great deal of his/her attention and presence.

The working day of a top manager is often unforeseeable and hence most top managers must abandon the thought of a structured and well scheduled everyday life. As argued by the executive searchers, the ability to balance work and family is desirable, but not essential. To some management candidates balancing work and life may not be an issue at all – to them *work is life*.

The current Danish top manager is passionate about his/her work and the organization he/she manages. Due to the high position a top manager faces great expectations in terms of efficiency maximization and bottom line results. As we have seen, these expectations are often met by simultaneously great ambitions. The interviewed top managers are ambitious – not only do they launch ambitious goals for the organization; they also possess a strong personal drive to acquire and to continuously develop themselves and their surroundings.

Though top managers listen to their employees, they make the essential decisions themselves. Business can be tough, and the ability to deliver excellent results and organizational growth within a limited span of time – to make employees walk an extra mile – is vital in order to survive at the executive floor. Hence, a top manager is not afraid to execute power, for example if it comes to discharging an employee who has not contributed positively to the organizational goals. At the end of the day, what will ensure the survival of a top manager is the ability to make decisions under ambiguous conditions and to create bottom line results.

Despite the drive to acquire and defend, and despite an obvious self-confidence, the current Danish top manager is also greatly concerned about the well being of his/her employees and strives to maintain a close and long-term relationship to them. The two interviewed executive searchers made it clear how managerial experience, industry knowledge, knowledge of the market, strategic competencies, and a strong personal drive for creating results are crucial in the executive world. On the other hand, due to tough competition, economic pressure and the high value of know-how, organizations nowadays simply cannot afford a significant employee turnover. Hence sympathy and the ability to understand and motivate other human beings are desirable and required attributes for potential executives.

We have learned that results are increasingly created in teams and that goals are achieved through the employees and not by the top manager alone. Communication was by all the interviewed top managers and executive searchers argued to be of crucial importance in order

to execute good leadership. The current Danish top manager can thus be described as a team player who delegates tasks and assignments in order to reach organizational results. The noble task of a top manager is to set the future direction of the organization and to ensure that organizational targets are met. Hence, for a top manager, social skills and the execution of power are complimentary concepts.

A top manager is influential, and at the end of the day he/she is accountable for all decisions. A top manager is responsible if everything fails and receives the honor if the organization succeeds. Being at the very center of the decision making process is a highly motivational factor. A top manager does not pick up the kids after school each day, and a top manager does not volunteer at school arrangements. However, a top manager is no longer expected to be the 'first one in, last one out' at the office.

Being a top manager is an attractive position – top management is tough but fun:

"The nature of the tasks is varied, you don't just do one thing, there are lots of different things you can get involved in, and I think that is funny, I find it interesting. I like working with – it might be a bit of a cliché – but working with people and working through people, to get things to succeed, and to get the organizations to work" (Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, August 15, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 92).

"(...) it's fun to be a top manager because you move up the strategic level and the playing field gets bigger as well as the ability to influence and move things in a different direction. That's really, really fun" (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director of the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 93).

4.5.2 Top Management is not about Gender. It's about having an Inner Fire.

It is about time that we break away from the idea of top managers as karate-kicking macho men. Top management anno 2011 is characterized by feminine masculine men and masculine feminine women. Most of all, top management is about wanting it and possessing an inner fire – no matter whether you are masculine, feminine or something in between.

Discussion

"Man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and women and feminine a male body as easily as a female one"

Judith Butler, 1999

5. Top Management Anno 2011 is Bisexual

This chapter contains a discussion about the usability of our theoretical framework and whether top management can be approached differently.

With our 14 qualitative interviews we have sought to use the interviewees' stories to reflect on what is needed to create a more diverse – and arguably a more constructive – debate about top management. One of the male top managers pointed out, that what he found most fascinating about top management was the fact that the more one says; the more there is to say. Management is, as this manager said, an inexhaustibly phenomenon that always involves new perspectives.

A considerable proportion of the interviewees point to the fact that there appear to exist unrealistic ideas about what the work as top manager implies. They thus claimed that society's constant insisting on top managers as hard-bitten, karate-kicking macho men maintains an outdated and wrong understanding of top management, and hence continuously fosters a masculine stereotypical expectation to the job at the top. However, as we have shown in chapter 4, most of the respondents to this thesis clearly indicated that in top management, masculinity and femininity depend on personality rather than sex. Men can be feminine and women can be masculine. In order to succeed, top managers must obviously be both.

5.1 *Top Management outside the Box*

As a result of our qualitative research, we have identified a range of common characteristics of management that we call 'the premise for top management' (please see Figure 4, page 97). The above listed premise we have found valid to all of our interviewees – male or female. However, when taking a glance at the premise for top management, it is evident that despite the prevailing femininity in both literature and on the executive floor, it is still impossible to classify top management, and top managers not least, within the thought of 'either/or', and furthermore, it is inadequate to assume that gender determines how a top manager approaches his/her leadership. Hence, as our findings suggest, fitting the contemporary top manager into one of these management models that literature advocates, seems rather impossible – as top managers are a diverse group of people. As stressed in the beginning of this analysis there is no such thing as 'one model fits all'. Though we have pointed out certain tendencies within the managerial practice, it is evident that top managers differ in their leadership style as well

as in their personal characteristics, and that gender may not be a determinant of the way top managers approach neither their career, nor their employees or the tasks at the executive office. As previously stated in section 4.3.1 (page 69), many different roads can lead to the top. According to the interviewed Danish top managers, a thorough 20-step career plan does not necessarily result in a position at the round table. Hence, we ought not to discuss the ‘gender’ of top management and other stereotypical leadership styles. Rather what is interesting is to learn what top management is all about. We believe it is about time to expand our theoretical horizon and take into account new ways of approaching top management. In the next section we will therefore discuss the usability of recent thoughts about management and the management theories presented in our theoretical framework. Against this background we will introduce a new way of how to think about top management.

5.1.1 Stepping Beyond the Stereotypical Swamp

Research shows that most people still have a tendency to look at the sex of a person, and based on that sex determine how to look upon a given person (Coleman, 2003; Embry et al., 2008; Spence & Buckner, 2000; Koenig et al., 2011) meaning that both men and women adhere to some stereotypical assumptions about one another. From our interviews our sense is that the stereotypical masculine approach is still visible in the way that top managers focus on profit and efficiency. However, as we have also shown in this thesis, all the male top managers emphasize how they see the value of the feminine managerial role, and acknowledge the importance of it.

It seems that as long as there are two sexes, people find it interesting to discuss similarities and dissimilarities among them. The problem is, however, that the binary approach in the public and academic debate keeps the discussion about top management sucked into a stereotypical swamp that seems almost impossible to step beyond. From the theoretical frame it is clear, that when speaking of management much has indeed been said about these supposed similarities and dissimilarities. Within the research over gender during the last decades, two typical distinct approaches to gender and management can be identified: 1) ‘think manager-think male’, and 2) ‘value the feminine’ (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). In the first perspective gender is seen as the result of biological differences and hence the behavior patterns and attitudes of men and women respectively are understood as different due to biological differences. Here, it is implicitly supposed, that the way to solve the ‘problem’ is to teach women more masculine strategies and in this way help them to succeed better in the competition with men (Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; 1989; Schein,

1973). In other words, the solution model is to 'fix the women' and thus reproduce what Pirson and Lawrence (2010) term as the economic paradigm. The other perspective within the management literature is based on the argument that organizations are gendered and management is therefore often associated with masculine values. According to this perspective, organizations must be changed and learn to value and appreciate the feminine attributes and competences implicitly found in management (Fondas, 1997; Loden 1985; 1986).

In this thesis we believe that the stereotypical gendered view that lies at the root of both of these perspectives, and in particular the two distinct solution models, is wrong and outdated. The two perspectives do, however, still constitute the very foundation for the most recent literature on management. If one looks at the solution models that literature suggests, it is exactly these two perspectives that are emphasized. To mention a few contemporary suggestions within the debate about management where the old perspectives are still in force: the discussion on female quotas and the suggestion to impose quotas (however, not yet implemented in Denmark), the creation of women network internally and externally in Danish organizations, career courses aimed at either men *or* women, equality consultants or ambassadors, male panels (Djøf 31.10.2011; Politiken, 26.02.2011) – all are they based on the thoughts found in either perspective 1 or 2, that women must learn to work differently and rethink their approach to their career (meaning that they must think as men), or that men must learn to think more like women.

Our motivation to investigate the concept of top management has, as already mentioned (section 1.1, page 9), to a great extent been driven by the public debate in the popular press. Reading through newspapers and magazines we found that countless stories maintained a quite stereotypical understanding of male and female top managers respectively. It has not been the scope of this thesis to make a thorough analysis of the public debate, and thus we can only guess why such stereotypical gendered stories apparently 'sell' better. However, comparing these stories against our theoretical framework, their continuous popularity can most likely be explained due to the fact that exactly these stories resonate with the popular beliefs about top management. The problem is, that these stories reinforce the same old stereotypical perceptions of men and women, and hence the story about top management seems locked in the same old focus on gender.

At the beginning of this thesis we were curious to find out whether the current Danish male top manager could be described according to mere traditional masculine attributes. If so, we

found it interesting to investigate how the male top managers would then differ from their female colleagues. While digging into the academic literature on top management we realized that much research continuously tend to focus on these supposed similarities or dissimilarities among men and women. Though the literature seemed to disagree on whether management is male, female or something in between, the contradictory dynamics within the literature were ironically based on the very same dichotomistic approach to management. Back then in the early summer 2011 when beginning our research, we found this theoretical framework to be a workable foundation for our further analysis of the male top managers, and the opportunity to place our interviewees within one or several 'boxes' seemed to be a natural approach. Moreover, our model for data analysis (Figure 3, page 50) seemed to contribute to a tangible and pragmatic result of our thesis. Looking back, there can be no doubt that our model for data analysis has provided structure for our analysis and offered a number of concrete terms to the rather complex concept of top management. Thus, our model for data analysis has helped us to create a rather workable frame of understanding. However, as we took the first steps for our analysis and started to implement our model for data analysis, we started to realize that we too had been caught in the dichotomistic way of thinking. The possibility of change primarily begins with the awareness of our own ingrained prejudices and pre-understandings of the world around us. During this thesis process we had to realize that the very theoretical foundation on which we had built our thesis now prevented us from turning the debate upside down as we wanted. In other words, our theoretical framework did not allow us to distinguish ourselves from the gendered dichotomy. Somehow, our choice of theory indicated that our point of departure was based on our pre-assumption that some differences did exist between the male top managers and the female top managers respectively. For that reason, we had to acknowledge that other tools were needed in order to confront our own way of thinking that obviously still leaned against a male/female dichotomy.

5.2 'Troubleing' Gender at the Top of the Hierarchy

Interestingly, our analysis indicates that increasingly women are articulated as masculine and men as feminine. The way our interviewees talk about top management does obviously differ from the traditional stereotypical ideas about top management. It is evident, that both male and female managers rely on masculine as well as feminine attributes and characteristics in their daily work, and hence we can conclude that theories arguing that men and women differ in terms of how they act in top management positions are very problematic.

Our findings advocate that in order to effectively communicate on top management and attract the best and the brightest – regardless of sex – the future debate over top management ought to move its main focus from sex and gender, that makes sense only within the dichotomistic thinking, to communicating in a way that gives an honest and more diverse picture of top management. It is about time that one starts getting the current debate into a new perspective focusing on what really matters: the premise for top management. It is our belief that if one starts talking about what top management is, what top management implies and why it is interesting to be at the top of the hierarchy, one is capable to create a much more diverse understanding of top management, than if one continuously perceive top management as either too much macho or too much miss.

In her highly influential book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*¹⁶ (1999), Butler confronted the idea about treating sex as foundational, and thus as a pre-established identity. Inspired by Michel Foucault, the fundamental idea in Butler's work is that gender is a matter of 'doing' – not 'being'. Most people still believe that to be born with a certain sex is equivalent to a certain 'gendered practice', however, Butler's approach is basically to de-construct this supposed link where identity is seen as something you 'have' or 'is'. Rather, Butler advocated that identity is something that one perform, something one does and reverse and re-make through oneself and others. Though this performance is a constant incorporation and repetition of norms, something will always be dislocated in relation to the norm. In this way, gender always fails; however, according to Butler (1999) this is only good, as gender and identity should never be fixed, but always be changing, always be on the way to something, "*a construction that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end*" (Butler, 1999, 43). What Butler tries, is to rephrase the way we experience and express gender, sexuality and identity. According to Butler, we all perform the gender we think we ought to perform, however, given our bodies we seem to believe that only certain possibilities are open, those possibilities within the heterosexual matrix. Hence, the natural order of things is taken to be that a body considered as 'man' must consequently be masculine (and not feminine). Butler suggests to 'trouble' these fixed categories of man and female, and argues, that by subverting the naturalness of order, the possibilities of how to perform becomes infinite. Acknowledging that 'man' as well as 'woman' should be open to interpretation, and

¹⁶ 'Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity' is considered to be one of the canonical texts of post modern/post structural feminism.

hence that gender itself is a free-floating performative identity independent of sex, “*man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and women and feminine a male body as easily as a female one*” (Butler, 1999, 10).

In Butler’s terminology, this thesis aims to rephrase the way we express top management and not least the way we think about top management and hence top management identity. We acknowledge that Butler operates from a different epistemological point of view, however, as stated earlier, we have realized that our own approach has root in the dichotomistic way of thinking. Considering Butler’s gender troubleing theory, allows us to be reflexive and to distinguish ourselves from the traditional mainstream literature and to take a critical stance to the pragmatic approach we have chosen for our research analysis. It hence enables us to deconstruct the subject under scrutiny and construct a more diverse picture of the concept of top management (Kellner, 1995). Including queer theory in this thesis is obviously not due to Butler’s concern with gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender issues; rather, Butler becomes interesting due to her distinctive objective to deconstruct the heterosexual matrix and hence her wish to ‘trouble’ the fixed categories (of sex and gender). Thus, it is our belief, that queer is then not merely reducible to a concern with sex, gender or sexuality. As Parker (2002) points out, Butler’s queering also implies a nervousness about words, practices and the relation between them; a nervousness that also implies a curious desire to ‘fuck up’ the natural order, and make fluid what was previously seen as foundational (Information, 17.06.2011; Parker, 2002). For Butler, the very act of de-naturalizing the traditional attitude, which assumes that ‘male’ and ‘masculine’ stand in opposition to ‘female’ and ‘feminine’, has become her way to call on new forms of performance, and hence oppose the idea that unified categories exists for men or women. The problem then is twofold: not only do such categories lock individuals – man and woman – into definite gender categories where differential values are placed upon each sex, but also, such categories mean that one sex cannot be understood without the other sex (Bowring, 2004, 385).

One of Butler’s most powerful metaphors implies a celebration of the constructedness of gender, and thus advocates that gender should be considered as forms of ‘drag’. Viewing managers as if they were in drag, allows us to ‘trouble’ the frames for thinking about top management. By negotiating what to include and what to leave within the frame of top management, we suggest to negotiate the limits for the public debate over top management, and hence suggest a more diverse perspective.

The question is; if the foundation for top management is constructed on cultural, political and economic intersections, how is it then possible to assert that women are a unified group with common characteristics and interests? And how can one think of the Danish male top manager anno 2011 within a certain frame, claiming that men make up a category of uniform individuals that constitute a certain 'type' of manager. Butler invites us to engage with the contemporary and re-invigorate the view of how it is that managers manage to manage. As Parker (2002) claims, Butler's work seems to be a "*continuing 'war of movement' within the present*" (Parker, 2002, 159). Managing is doing, and doing manager is playing a role (Parker, 2002). In Butler's view, gender is not a primary category, "*Gender is not a thing, not an essence, but a 'stylized repetition of acts'*" (Butler, 1999, 140). Seen in this way, managers should and cannot be understood in terms of the material body, nor should we presuppose that managers operate in prescribed ways, that is, that one (of two types of) body is associated with one (of two types of) gender identity, gender characteristics, values and attributes (Bowring, 2004). Treating management as drag does, as Bowring (2004) states, imply that "*we liberate ourselves from having to perform a specific type of drag, and are free to perform whatever drag suits us*" (Bowring, 2004, 387). In other words, treating management as drag implies new and different costumes. Opposite the traditional understanding that sex makes gender, drag is driven by the performative gender, thereby opposing gender as fixed and immutable. Troubling gender at the top of the hierarchy, hence troubling the very discipline of management, arguably means, that management ought not to be constructed in stable terms where gender causes various acts to follow. In taking a queer perspective, we seek to release the debate over top management from prescribed gender roles, in much the same way that queer people are released from prescribed gender roles in society. If queer is an attempt to disrupt, to subvert, to set aside a traditional male/female dichotomy, and the binary oppositions that come with it, then Butler is seen as a powerful way to move towards a more fluid approach to the theorizing and practice of management. Most importantly, Butler allows us to subvert a taken-for-grantedness, and hence recognize that in terms of top management, cause and effect may not always be as we assume them to be.

5.3 Towards a New Perspective

The male/female dichotomy, Butler said, allows no room for neither choice, nor any difference or resistance (Butler, 1999). In this thesis, we believe that the general understanding of top management and hence the debate over top management is still profoundly gendered in conceptual terms. The dominant discourse seems to hang on to

traditional stereotypical gendered views on top management, and hence to rely on a male/female dichotomy that, in our belief, creates a one-track perspective on top management.

This thesis aims to move away from presuppositions and expectations at the heart of the binary distinctions that are so prevalent in the current debate over top management. Perhaps, the debate over top management should stop assuming that there exist only two types of managers, and hence that there are only two gender identities – those of male and female. And perhaps, one should realize that one male or one female does not speak for all males or females respectively. Top management is more than just male or female. The question should not be whether top management is a masculine or feminine discipline; rather one should ask what top management *is*. To answer this question an absolute point of view is needed in the current debate. To universalize the point of view of management as either masculine or feminine is simultaneously to destroy the possibility of individual performative liberty. As Butler says; “*Gender can be neither true nor false, neither real nor apparent, neither original nor derived. As credible bearers of those attributes, however, genders can also be rendered thoroughly and radically incredible*” (Butler, 1999, 180). Understanding management as neither real nor apparent, neither original nor derived, our understanding of the organizational world will no longer be linked to a dualistic paradigm of either that it is like, or that it is different from; rather, looking at top management through the eyes of Butler allows room for a more diverse understanding of the concept of top management.

Currently, the debate in reference to top management sinks deeper and deeper into the stereotypical swamp as no one seems to have the courage to add new chapters to the story of top management. Arguably, the real challenge when communicating about top management lies within the implicit activity of establishing common grounds – instead of speaking of either masculine or feminine attributes, competencies or characteristics, one should maybe just talk about top management attributes, competencies or characteristics. It is certainly not everyone who has the required managerial competences. From this perspective we believe the discussion about top management – the discussion of whether men and women can contribute differently to the field of management – can move towards an understanding of the ‘good manager’ as an individual (male or female) with both feminine and masculine attributes and characteristics, competencies and qualifications. After all, top management is more than big cars, suits and cigars. The work as top manager does not necessarily call for a complete

sacrifice of privacy and family life, and top management is compatible with a life outside the executive office. Top management is straight talk with a heart and profit with principles – regardless of gender.

5.3.1 Our Contribution to the Public Debate

12 top managers are not in doubt: Top management is not about gender. This thesis concludes that Danish top managers are expected to sincerely balance and administrate masculine as well as feminine attributes and draw on both masculinity and femininity. We believe it is about time to stop discussing what men can do, what women can do, what men cannot do and what women might do better. The time has come to break away from the traditional way of thinking about top management. Being a top manager is not something one ‘is or ‘has’ given one’s gender. Top management is something one does, something one chooses and something one acquires through hard work. Based on the analysis of our empirical data, we do not believe that ‘good’ management skills are specifically connected with either men or women. Therefore a new perspective is needed. The gender of top management anno 2011 should be understood as something that transcends the biological gender of men and women; the attributes of top management should be understood as bisexual.

Let us begin to talk about what top management is really all about, the conditions it entails and the indisputable sacrifices it requires. When the general public debate as well as the academic management literature continuously talk about top management in terms of man/woman, masculine/feminine we fail to create a constructive and more diverse debate about why top management is interesting, challenging, and great fun.

Throughout this thesis we have argued that the focus in the current public debate concerning top management is outdated and wrong. Based on our findings from our 14 interviews we have therefore sought to give our contribution to the public debate about top management anno 2011 by publishing a feature article in the Danish newspaper *Berlingske*, December 19, 2011 (please see Appendix 10, ‘Feature Article’).

Conclusion

“A story about top management is that we must make clear that top managers aren’t some karate-kicking macho people. It’s increasingly soft values and it’s increasingly human insight and understanding, empathy and caring that should be the decisive and controlling factors to ensure that organizations stick together and thus have the cohesiveness that can help us to build future prosperity”

Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director of Irma,
June 30, 2011, Appendix 6, No. 94

6. Answering our Research Question

The exploratory approach in this thesis has allowed us to seek new insight into the field of top management. Relying on the hermeneutic research philosophy, this thesis has on a continuous basis moved between ‘the part’ (management paradigms, leadership styles, and personal attributes and characteristics) and ‘the whole’ (the premise for top management) in order to answer our research question:

Who is the Danish male top manager anno 2011, how does he understand the concept of top management and how does he approach his leadership?

Empirical research has shown that management is continuously characterized by attributes and characteristics that are typically associated with men. Despite the increasing feminization of management literature it is still argued that, in general, the current Danish male top manager continuously operates within a ‘think manager—think male’ paradigm that consequently describes him as a transactional leader characterized by masculine attributes.

In [Analysis part 1](#) we investigated in which management paradigm the current Danish male top manager operates. Drawing on our theoretical framework, our findings give a somehow different picture of the current Danish male top manager than the general management literature. According to our empirical data there is clear evidence that the current Danish male top manager most often draw on what theorists refer to as a ‘feminine’ paradigm (e.g. communion paradigm, humanistic paradigm, modern ‘new’ leadership paradigm). We did, however, realize that regardless of the male managers’ rather feminine way of thinking, they still emphasized the importance of the paradigm that theorists have traditionally referred to as ‘masculine’ (e.g. agency paradigm, economic paradigm, yesterday’s leadership paradigm). Thus, the current Danish male top manager operates within both a feminine and a masculine management paradigm.

In [Analysis part 2](#) we examined the dominating leadership style of the male top managers. Similar to the findings on management paradigms, this part of the analysis clearly demonstrated that male top managers must be capable to draw on both a transactional/directive/autocratic leadership style and a

transformational/participative/democratic leadership style. Hence, to succeed as top manager within Danish organizations – private and public – all our interviewees emphasized that being ‘the controlling captain’ and ‘the coaching facilitator’ is equally important.

Finally, in [Analysis part 3](#) we identified the typical personal attributes and characteristics of the current Danish male top manager. As it appears from our theoretical framework, prevailing sex-role stereotypes can still be found in the literature, and in general, men are perceived *and* described according to mainly masculine characteristics. Our empirical data do, however, show that the male top manager cannot be characterized merely according to such masculine attributes and characteristics. From our analysis it is evident that our male interviewees possess a great amount of characteristics that, according to our theoretical framework, traditionally have been understood as characteristics most often ascribed to women.

In order to support the above findings, we conducted additional interviews with 2 female top managers and 2 executive searchers. In [Analysis part 4](#), by analyzing these four interviews, we found great support of our analysis of the male top managers, and thus that no significant difference can be found between the Danish male top managers and their female counterparts. Just like the male managers, the female interviewees possessed reversed gender-stereotypical characteristics. Likewise, the analysis of the interviews with executive searchers illustrated that current Danish top managers are required to hold attributes and characteristics from both the feminine and masculine management paradigm.

The above analyses have thus led us to ‘the premise for top management’. As illustrated in Figure 4, page 97, this premise is constituted by what all interviewees emphasized as vital in a position at the top. Most important, this final premise for top management clearly shows that when talking about top management in terms of masculine or feminine, we fail to provide a more diverse picture of the current Danish top manager. In our opinion, this diverse picture of top management is needed in order to ensure a constructive debate on what top management is really all about. This thesis concludes that the broader public debate as well as the general academic management literature must liberate itself from the gender-stereotypical categorization of men and women – no such thing as masculine and feminine exist within top management. Instead attention should be directed towards discussing *top management*: what it entails, why it is attractive, and which sacrifices it takes to become top manager.

Future Implications

*"Maybe we should try to talk more about what
the exciting part of being a top manager is"*

Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark,
August 15, 2011, Appendix 5, No. 95

7. Future Implications

This thesis posed the question about who the Danish male top manager anno 2011 is. Based on our findings we suggest that the public debate as well as the academic literature should be focused on what top management is really about; the opportunities it involves and the sacrifices that it requires. We believe that only by clearly stating the premise for top management, are we able to carry on a constructive debate about top management and top managers.

During our process of investigation, we found that certain myths and stereotypical assumptions about top management and top managers tend to exist. For example, studies have shown that in relation to management, students continuously display a strong preference for the masculine stereotype (Powell & Butterfield, 2002). Therefore, we suggest that further research should be conducted on the attitude towards gender and top management in the modern society. At least education, and especially advanced education in the field of business, could make an effort to counteract these expectations to what it takes to become a top manager. Furthermore, we suggest that the organizations ought to investigate further whether myths exist among the employees, and especially among potential leadership candidates, about the life, culture and environment that characterize top management.

At this year's International Women's Day, the previous Danish Minister for Gender Equality, Lykke Friis, launched her idea of the gender debate anno 2011, a 'male panel' (Politiken 26.02.2011). Similarly, Manu Sareen, current Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs and Gender Equality, recently emphasized the importance of involving men in the equality battle (Djøf, 31.10.2011). The emergence of 'male panels', implies an increasing tendency of involving men in the matter of women in top management. As the majority of top management positions are currently held by men, we suggest that organizations should increasingly consider using men as ambassadors of diversity management and encourage current male top managers to tell their story about top management, and thereby help making top management a brand that is worth paying for. Maybe, as Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director of Microsoft Denmark, suggests, organizations should begin talking about what it is that actually makes top management positions attractive and begin branding these positions as desirable. We hence encourage organizations to consider rebranding top management positions in order to attract the best and the brightest, no matter sex.

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Appendix 1: Overview of Articles

For quotas / against quotas:

31.10.2011: Djøf Workshop: *Bryd vanetænkningen – køn og ledelse*

28.10.2011: Berlingske: *Kloge Åser og trædemøller*

26.10.2011: Berlingske Nyhedsmagasin: *Kvinderne kommer – men til hvilken pris?*

07.10.2011: Politiken: *Kompetencer før køn – også i virksomhederne*

07.09.2011: Berlingske Business: *Kvindekvaliteten kommer*

07.09.2011: Berlingske Business: *Radiometer-boss: Kvindekvalitet er en katastrofe*

06.09.2011: Information: *Socialdemokraterne på tilbagetog om kønskvoter*
<http://www.information.dk/278149>

12.08.2011: Berlingske – Kronik af Rikke Kroer Høberg: *Kvinderne kuldsejler i karrierebaaden*
<http://www.b.dk/kronikker/kvinderne-kuldsejler-i-karrierebaaden>

07.07.2011: Information: *EU-parlamentet vil trumfe kvindekvalitet igennem*
<http://www.information.dk/272882>

21.06.2011: Jyllandsposten: *Kvindekvalitet vinder frem i EU*

21.06.2011: Jyllandsposten: *Langt mellem kvinderne*

20.06.2011: npinvestor: *Ny CEPOS-analyse: Kønskvoter i strid med grundlæggende retsprincipper*
<http://npinvestor.dk/nyheder/ny-cepos-analyse-koenskvoter-i-strid-med-grundlaeggende-retsprincipper-227003.aspx>

22.05.2011: Berlingske – Lykke Friis: *Ingen genvej til flere kvinder i ledelse*
<http://www.b.dk/politiko/ingen-genvej-til-flere-kvinder-i-ledelse>

08.04.2011: Djøfbladet Nr. 7: *Pyhrrussejr for ligestillingen*

14.03.2011: Berlingske Business: *Dagens synspunkt - Et skridt frem og to tilbage*

04.03.2011: DR P1 Morgen – Interview med Britta Thomsen MEP (S): *EU er klar med kvindekvalitet*

02.03.2011: Business.dk: *Stærk kvinde til tops uden særbehandling*
<http://www.business.dk/karriere/staerk-kvinde-til-tops-uden-saerbehandling>

02.02.2011: Berlingske: *Kvoter er for fisk. Ikke for kvinder*
<http://www.b.dk/kommentarer/kvoter-er-fisk.-ikke-kvinder>

She-conomy / He-session:

22.11.2010: Berlingske: *Tech-virksomhed, Kend din kvinde!*

10.10.2011: Politiken: *De tilhører ikke det svage køn*

23.07.2011: Berlingske: *Den svage danske mand*

21.07.2011: Politiken: *Kønskampen på komedie*

28.06.2009: EconomyWatch.com: *He-cession: The Recession is an Economic Crisis for Men*
<http://www.economywatch.com/economy-business-and-finance-news/he-cession-the-recession-is-an-economic-crisis-for-men-06-28.html>

31.07.2002: Fast Company: *The Female CEO* ca. 2002
http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/61/female_ceo.html?page=0%2C3

Men don't want women for top management / Women don't want top management positions:

31.10.2011: Djøf Workshop: *Bryd vanetænkningen – køn og ledelse*

09.09.2011: Djøfbladet 14: *Snublesnore på direktionsgangen*

20.07.2011: Berlingske Business: *Kvinder har ambitioner om mere*

10.06.2011: Djøfbladet Nr. 11: *Karrierekvinde på trods*

16.05.2011: Børsen: *Dyre fordomme og myter om kvinder*

17.12.2010: Børsen blog: *Jamen kvinderne vil jo ikke ...*
http://borsen.dk/blogs/alle_blogs/vis_blog/7326834/1105/jamen-kvinderne-vil-jo-ikke-.html

01.11.2010: Ledelseidag.dk Nr. 10: *Kvinde, hvor blev du af?*

Berneke, Inge (2010): *Kvinde kend din karriere – En personlig guide til din professionelle planlægning og karrierevalg*, L&R Business Egmont, København

Men and women are the same / Men and women are different:

12.11.2011: Berlingske: *Ligestillingsdebattens Catxh 22*

28.10.2011: Berlingske: *"Bitterfissen" og kvinder med holdning*

26.10.2011: Berlingske: *Det kvindevenlige universitet*

19.10.2011: Berlingske: *Chick fight mellem rød og blå stue*

19.08.2011: Information: *I Horsens opdeles børnen efter køn*

16.08.2011: Information – Duellen: *Køn skal betyde mindre end det gør idag / Vi skal anerkende at der er forskelle*

15.08.2011: Information: *Kønskampen rykker ind på børneværelset*

13.-14.08.2011: Moderne tider: *Drenge og piger*

13.08.2011: Politiken: *Nu har barnet to mødre!*

12.07.2011: Information: *Du kan få kvinder, kager...*

10.06.2011: Djøfbladet Nr. 11: *Mænd og kvinder løser de samme opgaver forskelligt*

28.05.2011: Politiken: *Vi er trætte af det ubrugelige ideologiske vraggods fra 1970'erne*

28.05.2011: Politiken: *Kønsforståelsen er dybt reaktionær på Østre Gasværk*

26.02.2011: Politiken: *Lykke Friis til kvinder: Stop kønskampen*

<http://politiken.dk/politik/ECE1207515/lykke-friis-til-kvinder-stop-koenskampen/>

16.12.2010: Børsen Blog: *Pigerne mod Drengene*

http://borsen.dk/blogs/alle_blogs/vis_blog/7329616/1103/pigerne-mod-drengene.html

05.11.2010: Flemmingsblog.com: *Forskellen på mænd og kvinder er enorm – accepter det!*

<http://flemmingsblog.com/leadership/accepterforskellen/>

06.08.2010: Wulffmorgenthaler – striben: <http://wulffmorgenthaler.com/strip/2010/08/06/>

Management is male / Management is female:

28.11.2011: Berlingske: *Borgfred og syndsforladelse*

15.08.2011: Information: *'Det er typisk, at man bliver enige om, at kvinden må arbejde mindre'*

14.07.2011: P1 Sommerbusiness: *Direktøren med de røde stiletter*

<http://www.dr.dk/P1/P1Business/Udsendelser/2011/07/06154113.htm>

12.06.2011: Berlingske Business: *Topchefernes sociale arv*

10.06.2011: Djøfbladet Nr. 11: *Karrierekvinde på trods*

08.06.2011: Politiken: *Det er blevet et mirakelmiddel at være kvinde*

01.06.2011: Media Planet, Nr. 1/Juni '11: *Kvinder og karriere – fremtidens vækstskebne*

16.05.2011: Børsen: *Dyre fordomme og myter om kvinder*

20.04.2011: Berlingske Business: *Chefen skal helst være en mand*

20.03.2011: Berlingske Business: *Vi har brug for kvindelige ledelsesværdier*

20.11.2000: Business Week: *As leaders, women rule: New studies find that female managers outshine their male counterparts in almost every measure*

http://www.businessweek.com/2000/00_47/b3708145.htm

Berneke, Inge (2010): *Kvinde kend din karriere – En personlig guide til din professionelle planlægning og karrierevalg*, L&R Business Egmont, København

Appendix 2: Definition of a Top Manager

E-mail from Bo Gjetting, Dansk Selskab for Virksomhedsledelse, 18.05.2011

Vores vedtægter angiver følgende definition, som er den eneste vi har at rette os efter. Håber det besvarer jeres spørgsmål.

Vh Bo Gjetting

§3 Medlemskab

a. Optagelse af medlemmer / medlemskriterier

Som medlemmer optages aktive chefer / virksomhedsledere inden for handel, industri og service samt ledere inden for liberale erhverv, offentlig administration, institutioner, organisationer, forskning og uddannelse. Endvidere kan optages nøglepersoner, som spiller en aktiv rolle i den offentlige meningsdannelse.

En virksomhedsleder defineres som en person, der på topplan deltager i virksomhedens overordnede beslutningsproces. Foruden aktieretlige direktører og bestyrelsesmedlemmer, optages i større virksomheder funktionschefer.

For så vidt angår de liberale erhverv - revisorer, advokater og virksomhedskonsulenter - forudsættes det, at der er tale om personer, der deltager i beslutningsprocessen i den virksomhed, de fungerer i, som partnere, aktionærer, bestyrelsesmedlemmer eller direktører.

Notes from telephone conversation with the State Employer's Authority, 18.05.2011

(Personalestyrelsen)

Statistisk opdeling: lønramme 39 og op. Dette vil dog inkludere nogle afdelingsledere som ellers ikke er talt med når man definerer topledere. En afdelingsleder har typisk 50 + medarbejdere under sig og er i direkte kontakt med en minister.

Ellers inkluderer ”Topledelsen” Departementschefer, Styrelsesdirektører og Vice Direktører.

Appendix 3: Documentation of Interviews

Male Interviewees:

Interviewee	Alfred Josefsen	Finn Hansen	Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen	Henrik Studsgaard	Jeppe Juul-Andersen	Jørgen Bardenfleth	Lars Guldberg Bang	Per Holten-Andersen	Per Ladegaard	Sune Sten
Position	Managing Director, Irma	Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord	Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic, IBM	Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment	Assistant Director, Civil Administration	Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark	Business Unit Executive & Country Mgr, IBM Software Group; Manager Gender Diversity Board, IBM Denmark	Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen President of Copenhagen Business School at January 1, 2011	Group Managing Director, Nykredit	Managing Director, Civil Administration
Date	June 30, 2011	June 21, 2011	June 8, 2011	July 1, 2011	June 28, 2011	August 15, 2011	August 15, 2011	June 10, 2011	June 10, 2011	June 29, 2011
Interviewers	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby	Pernille Saby /Malene Decker	Pernille Saby /Malene Decker	Pernille Saby /Malene Decker	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby	Pernille Saby /Malene Decker	Pernille Saby /Malene Decker	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby
Duration	00:55:23	1:10:02	00:44:46	00:43:30	00:53:36	1:00:28	00:54:39	00:48:04	00:48:25	1:05:18
Age	54	55	47	48	34	56	48	59	59	52
Civil status	Divorced, 2 children	Married, 2 children	Married, 2 children	Married, 4 children	Married, 3 children	Married, 4 children	–	Married, 3 children	Married, 1 child	Married, 1 child
Education	Cand.merc.	Cand.scient.	No formal education	Cand.jur.; Bachelor of Commerce degree Business Finance; Skov og landskabsingeniør	Cand.scient.pol.	MSc in Engineering; MBA in Finance &Marketing	Bachelor of Commerce, Management of Informatics & Economics	MSc in Forestry; Bachelor of Commerce; PhD.	Cand.oecon.	Internal at Post Danmark
Description of company	Irma is a Danish supermarket chain with approx. 2000 employees.	Mail Denmark is one of the four business areas of PostNord. Mail Denmark employs approx. 15.000 employees.	IBM is one of the leading global information technology companies. IBM Denmark employs approx. 4000 employees.	The Danish Ministry of the Environment employs approx. 2500 employees.	Civil Administration was established on 20th January 2011 and consists of approx. 500 employees, all of which were transferred from Finance Board.	Microsoft is one of the major global information technology companies. Microsoft Denmark employees approx. 900 employees.	IBM Denmark ApS is the leading company in information technology products, solutions and services. IBM Denmark employs approx. 4000 employees.	LIFE - Faculty of Life Sciences employs approx. 2000 employees and contains 5000 students.	Nykredit is one of Denmark's leading financial services companies. Nykredit employs approx. 4000 employees.	Civil Administration was established on 20th January 2011 and consists of approx. 500 employees, all of which were transferred from Finance Board.

Female Interviewees:

Interviewees	Charlotte Mønter	Eva Berneke
Position	Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management	Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S & President of TDC Wholesale
Date	August 18, 2011	August 17, 2011
Duration	55:54	45:53
Interviewers	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby	Pernille Saby/ Malene Decker
Age	45	42
Civil status	Married, 1 child	Married, 4 children
Education	Cand.jur.LLM, European Legal Studies	MSc mechanical engineering; MBA, INSEAD
Description of company	The Agency for Governmental Management employs approx. 600 employees	TDC is the largest Danish telecommunications company and employs approx. 10.000 employees

Executive Searchers:

Interviewees	Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen	Susanne Becker Mikkelsen
Position	Consultant, Lisberg Executive Search (Now: HR Partner at Maersk Line)	Partner, Flensby & Partners
Date	July 15, 2011	June 6, 2011
Duration	1:17:40	1:10:05
Interviewers	Malene Decker/ Pernille Saby	Pernille Saby/ Malene Decker
Age	36	50
Civil status	–	Married, 1 child
Education	Master of Psychology	Cand.merc. commerce/marketing
Description of company	Lisberg Executive Search is a Danish consulting firm with expertise in core services in executive search and leadership development.	Flensby & Partners recruits board members, Managing Directors, and Head of Departments.

Appendix 4: Distribution of Quotations

10 male top managers

Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma [5]

Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord [9]

Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing Nordic, IBM [7]

Henrik Studgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment [6]

Jeppé Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration [6]

Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark [13]

Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive & Country Mgr in IBM Software Group and Manager of Gender Diversity Board, IBM Denmark [3]

Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen (future President of Copenhagen Business School) [6]

Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit [7]

Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration [6]

2 female top managers

Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management [8]

Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale [7]

2 executive searchers

Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg (now HR Partner at Maersk Line) [9]

Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners [6]

Appendix 5: Interview Guide

Interview Guide: Male and Female Top Managers

Der vil være spørgsmål til dit privatliv, og hvis du ikke ønsker at svare, eller ikke ønsker at det skal indgå i opgaven, så må du naturligvis sige til.

Introducerende spørgsmål

- Navn?
- Job titel?
- Uddannelsesmæssig baggrund?
- Alder?
- Civil status?

Hvad er topledelse for dig?

- Hvad er det der tænder dig ved topledelse?
 - Hvorfor vil du gerne være leder? Er du passioneret for dit arbejde?
- Hvilke egenskaber er en forudsætning for at udøve god ledelse?
- Hvilke værdier bygger du din ledelse på?
- Hvad er det for et menneskesyn, der gennemsyrrer din måde at arbejde med andre på?
- Hvordan mener du, at man bedst motiverer medarbejdere?
- Hvad er det for ledelsesredskaber du foretrækker og føler dig bedst tilpas med?
- Hvad ser du som dine ledelsesmæssige stærke sider – og hvor oplever du dig selv som en mindre stærk leder?
- Hvordan vil du beskrive en dårlig leder?
- Hvis dit job skulle formuleres i en jobannonce – med hvilke ord ville du så beskrive dit job – og hvilke personlige egenskaber ville så du fremhæve som de vigtigste?
- Hvad er den største succes, du har opnået i jobbet som topleder? Eller hvad vil du gerne nå og opnå i din tid som leder?
- Har du haft udlandsophold i din karriere? Hvordan forholder du dig til udlandsophold? / Kræver topledelse at man er villig til udlandsophold?
- Har du en MBA? Efteruddannelse? Hvordan fik du familie og arbejdsliv til at acceptere den udgift det krævede? (økonomisk og tidsmæssigt)

Hvem er du som topleder?

- Er der en bestemt person der har været rollemodel for dig (og inspireret dig)? Hvorfor?
1. Hypotetisk situation: Der bliver ringet fra børnehaven om at lille Christian er syg. Hvem henter?
 2. Hypotetisk situation: En af dine medarbejdere viser tegn på stress. Hvordan vil du håndtere denne situation?
 3. Hypotetisk situation: Du føler pludselig, at en medarbejder svigter din tillid. Hvordan reagerer du, og hvordan griber du det an?
 4. Hvordan håndterer du fyringer?
 5. Hypotetisk situation: Du skal bruge en ny leder, og du har to topkvalificerede kandidater, den ene en kvinde, den anden en mand. Hvem vælger du? Er positiv diskrimination en udfordring – skal du leve op til bestemte målsætninger for kønssammensætningen?

- Har du mødt fordomme som mandlig leder?

Hvilke til- og fravalg indebærer din position?

- Hvordan prioriterer du din tid? Hvis din tid blev opdelt i fire kategorier – karriere, familie, husholdning og egentid – hvordan ville du så fordele din tid mellem disse fire elementer?¹⁷
 - Hvis vi spurgte din kone/assistent om det samme, ville hun så være enig?
 - I den ideelle verden – hvordan ser din prioritering så ud?
 - Gør I brug af hjælp til børnepasning og husholdning?
 - Hvordan ville du have det med at din kone stod for hovedindtægten i husholdningen?
 - Tror du en kvindelig leder ville prioritere anderledes?

Udsagn:

- Er du enig eller uenig i følgende udsagn:
 - Mænd bør tvinges til at tage minimum 2 måneders barselsorlov.
 - Der er koldt og ensomt på toppen – myte eller virkelighed?
 - Mænd er bedre end kvinder til at prioritere og uddelegere.
 - Mænd er i virkeligheden bedre ledere end kvinder.
 - Ligestillingsdebatten handler om en maskulinisering af kvinder.

Afslutningsvis:

- Hvad synes du om sammensætningen i topledelsen her i virksomheden – mænd/kvinder?
- Hvordan tror du opfattelsen er af din stilling – topledelse – internt i virksomheden? Er der nogen myter om topledelse?
- Har du nogensinde haft en kvindelig chef?
- Hvad tror du personligt er den største barriere for at der ikke er flere kvinder på dit lederniveau?
 - Vil kvinderne ikke, eller undertrykker I dem som mænd?

Et final cath-all spørgsmål: De gode lederråd. Hvad er dit råd til os?

Sum-up!

¹⁷ Med inspiration fra Berneke, I. (2010), Kvinde kend din karriere - En personlig guide til din professionelle planlægning og karrierevalg, L&R Business Egmont: (side 103)

- **Karrieretid** bruges på kontoret, på rejser og transport, på hjemmearbejde m.v.
- **Familietid** bruges på samværet med hustru og børn
- **Husholdningstid** bruges på indkøb, rengøring, madlavning, indretning, havearbejde etc.
- **Egentid** er tiden til dig selv, til sport, venner og veninder, fritidsinteresser etc.

Interview Guide: Executive Searchers

Hvilke profiler søger virksomhederne til ledelsesposter i dagens Danmark?

- Hvilke kompetencer efterspørger virksomhederne?
- Stilles der bestemte krav til tidligere erfaring (versus kompetencer)?
- Stiller virksomhederne krav til kønsfordelingen blandt kandidaterne, eller lægges der udelukkende vægt på kompetencer og erfaringer?

Hvordan brandes en ledelsesposition fra virksomhedernes side til potentielle kandidater?

- Hvad kommunikerer du videre til kandidaterne fra virksomheden?
- Hvor stor en rolle spiller du som executive searcher i valget af potentielle kandidater?
- Hvilken kompetencemodel bruger I hos Flensby & Partners/Lisberg til at screene kandidater og analysere deres kompetencer og erfaringer?

Hvordan oplever du forskellige kandidaters opfattelse af hvad en ledelsespost indebærer?

- Består kandidaterne af en relativ homogen gruppe?
 - Bliver kandidaterne i den samme industri som de hidtil har arbejdet i, og foretrækker virksomhederne kandidater fra samme industri?

Hvad er topledelse for dig, og hvad kræver det?

- Hvilke personlighedstræk vægter du højest når du screener potentielle kandidater til en toppost?
- Oplever du et højere ambitionsniveau hos de mandlige kandidater?
 - Oplever du at mænds ambitioner om en ledelsespost starter tidligere i deres liv end de kvindelige kandidater?
 - I hvor høj grad spiller karriereplanlægning en rolle? Er der her en tendens til at mænd og kvinder planlægger forskelligt?
- Har kvinder og mænd forskellige tanker om arbejde og familieliv?
 - Mener du at forskellene på mænd og kvinder er biologiske eller samfundsbebetinget?

Den offentlige debat

- Oplever du at den offentlige debats fremstilling af topposter, og kravene til disse, stemmer overens med virksomhedernes krav?
 - Hvis du skulle sætte dagsordenen for topledelse, hvordan ville den så se ud?
- Hvad er samfundets rolle? Spiller samfundet en rolle i at give familier værktøjer til at løse de logistikproblemer mange oplever i forbindelse med karrieren.
- Hvad tror du personligt er årsagen til, at vi ikke ser flere kvinder på det øverste ledelsesniveau?

Afslutningsvis: Hvad er dit råd til os hvis vi vil topledelsesvejen?

Appendix 6: Original Quotations used in the Analysis

No. 1

"Han stod meget for den her excellence rejse som vi kalder det. Det er jo en ledelsesfilosofi som så at sige favner hele virksomheden, og ham var jeg utrolig fascineret af og meget inspireret af. Også den der vedholdenhed, når der er stormvejr" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 2

"Han var meget, meget hård, kørte en meget hård, barsk lederstil. Men det han lærte mig var det her specielle om 'operational excellence'. Når du overtager en organisation, så det der er vigtigt til at starte med, det er at du viser resultater relativt hurtigt, for ellers så mister du folk" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 3

"Jeg tror i virkeligheden at hvis jeg møder én, så tænker jeg over, hvad er det der fungerer godt for dem, men det er ikke nødvendigvis hele pakken" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration, June 28, 2011).

No. 4

"Egentlig på et ret tidligt tidspunkt var der en der sagde til mig, husk altid som leder at være dig selv og det har ligget mig meget på sinde. (...). Og jeg tror lige præcis, man kan ikke tage en rollemodel, og man skal ikke tage en rollemodel. Man kan godt hente noget inspiration fra andre, det kan man sagtens, men det skal man så omsætte og sige 'hvad passer til mig'. Det tror jeg er ret væsentligt" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 5

"Du bliver nødt til at finde din egen stil, og du bliver nødt til at være din egen, fordi hvis du går på kompromis med hvem du er så er du ikke trust-worthy" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 6

"Der er ingen leder i denne verden der overlever at der går 6 måneder før du viser finansielle resultater. Du bliver nødt til at squeeze lidt mere ud af den citron. Du starter med at sætter en meget stram management struktur og så squeezer du. Der er ingen der synes det er rart" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 7

"Opgaven er jo primært at få et område eller en forretning til at fungere. Det er ikke fordi vi skal have det sjovt eller hyggeligt, det skal vi også, men opgaven går jo ud på at vi skal få det her forretningsområde til at fungere godt og levere et godt resultat" (Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, August 15, 2011).

No. 8

"Du bliver nødt til at afkræve relativ hård eksekvering af din strategi for at du kommer i mål, ellers løber de forskellige steder hen, og så sker der ikke noget. Det skal være målbart og man

skal kunne se hvor vi går hen” (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 9

“(…) på den måde er det jo en professionel relation, og selvom jeg rigtig godt kan lide mine medarbejdere og mine andre chefer, så er jeg jo ikke deres ven i sidste ende, det har de altså udenfor, de har familie og venner der, og det er det så er min opgave som chef og sige, okay, det går ikke længere, det er sådan set dig der er det svageste led” (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration, June 28, 2011).

No. 10

“Alle demokratiske samfund er meget afhængige af at der er nogen der går foran” (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011).

No. 11

“Jeg synes ledelse består af strategi, motivation og personaleledelse. (...) Personaleledelse er en vigtig del. Og i virkeligheden, som en del af en produktionsmaskine, er det den vigtigste” (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011).

No. 12

“Det er jo det der er det spændende når der er mennesker bagved – mennesker er jo forskellige, og derfor er jeg meget bevidst om, at jeg skal også vise en menneskelig side og jeg skal være forstående overfor de af mine kolleger der refererer til mig, der kan have en anden situation end den jeg har” (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 13

“Jeg tror, at hvis man har lyst til at se ting udvikle sig, og har lyst til at arbejde med andre mennesker, og se at der kommer noget mere ud af det, end blot det man selv kan gøre, så tror jeg egentlig man får appetit på ledelse” (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 14

”Først og fremmest så synes jeg det er svært at lave noget sammen med andre mennesker (...). Det handler ledelse jo meget om, at man skal stå på toppen af et kæmpe stort hold, og man kan stå på en delmængde af et mindre hold, men uanset om det er det ene eller det andet, [så handler ledelse om] at prøve at få det større eller mindre hold til at præstere bedst muligt” (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011).

No. 15

”Jeg tror at finanskrisen har givet endnu mere stram styring. Og endnu mere centralisering, og endnu mere kortsigtethed, endnu mere resultatfokus sådan på en akut tidsdimension. Jeg tror at der er mange der tænker, nå nu er vi pressede udefra, nu må vi ræbe sejlene, nu må vi virkelig sætte os i kommandocentralen, og beslutte og eksekvere og følge op og holde det hele meget stramt” (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma, June 30, 2011).

No. 16

"Folk skal udfordres. Så man skal stå sådan på tåspidsen hele tiden, man skal jo ikke stå og hoppe hele tiden, man skal heller ikke komme ned på fodballerne, man skal stå på tåspidserne; det vil sige det skal passe præcis til at man er udfordret hele tiden" (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011).

No. 17

"Altså ligesom at man snakker om teknologisk udvikling, så er det også en ledelsesudvikling, og der er forskellige ting som bliver relevante og der er forskellige ting som man bruger mere og mere tid på, hvor man kan sige de mere menneskelige egenskaber, empati, men taler om emotionel intelligens, coaching og holisme og sådan nogle ting der fylder mere og mere. (...) du skal have nogle menneskelige egenskaber i langt højere grad end tidligere" (Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, August 15, 2011).

No. 18

"Det der er vigtigt er, at du hele tiden forstår en balancegang i forhold til at skubbe folk, men samtidig også gøre det på en måde så folk også ser et menneske bagved. Jeg plejer at sige straight talk with a heart – du skal have begge dele. Der skal altid være den modvægt i din ledelse" (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 19

"Men mit menneskesyn det er jo det der med at have tillid til folk og kunne tro på dem og så rose dem for det de gør godt, og så har man jo en tro på, at så gør de endnu mere af det gode. (...) og så møde folk i øjenhøjde" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration, June 29, 2011).

No. 20

"Min opfattelse er at der er nogle der har sådan en mistro og sådan noget, og så siger jeg engang imellem at der er ikke nogle af mine medarbejdere jeg tror på der kommer for at sige: "at i dag, der vil vi ikke betale nogle regninger" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration, June 29, 2011).

No. 21

"Det at man fortæller folk, at man tror faktiske at de er dygtige og i stand til at løse opgaven og den er klart defineret, og de har de ressourcer, det er en voldsom motiverende faktor for langt de fleste" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 22

"Jeg har fundet ud af, at hvis jeg lukker op og fortæller noget om mit liv og lægger noget pant inde på bordet, så plejer der at komme noget den anden vej. Og så bliver folk også lidt mere åbne for at snakke om ting" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration, June 29, 2011).

No. 23

"Det handler om respekt (...) Hvis du kan få dine medarbejdere til det punkt hvor de siger, ham vil jeg gerne gå en ekstra mil for, så har du nået det rigtige punkt." (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 24

"Man skal ikke bilde sig ind at man er det kvikkeste hoved i biksen" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011).

No. 25

"God ledelse er at sætte retning, men også at lytte. Man må ikke være alt for ærekær, altså man må kunne tåle at tabe ansigt. Eller omvendt, man behøver ikke tabe ansigt hvis man skifter mening, fordi når man har 2000 ansatte så kan man sige sig selv, at man ikke altid er den der ved bedst. Så god ledelse, det er at sætte en retning, men jeg vil så også sige, at kunne erkende hvis retningen er forkert eller ikke kan lade sig gøre" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011).

No. 26

"Og det gør også for mig personligt, at der hele tiden skal være en balance mellem jeg'et og vi'et. Selvfølgelig skal jeg have nogle klare billeder af hvor skal vi hen, men de billeder får jeg jo blandt andet i dialoger og interaktioner med de folk jeg har omkring mig" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 27

"Jeg vil gerne have input. Også bede dem komme med ting som de synes er væsentlige" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration, June 28, 2011).

No. 28

"Den leder der kan skabe det man kalder det magiske rum, hvor alle føler de er en del af en succes og medvirkende til at skabe succeserne, det er nok det ultimative for en topleder" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 29

"Man skal være god til at kommunikere. Og det er både på ølkassen så man kan få folk med sig, men det er også i sådan en relation som nu, eller når man sidder i en vanskelig samtale en-til-en" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 30

"Man skal passe på med sin iver efter godt at ville vise en masse gode resultater, og så bare løbe derudaf selv. Det er sjældent at du er i en situation, med mindre du er professionel cykelrytter eller et eller andet hvor det kun er dig selv – de fleste er i en situation hvor det kun kan lykkes ved at de gør det sammen med nogle andre" (Finn Hansen, Chef for Breve Danmark, June 6, 2011).

No. 31

"Hvis vi får fjernet [magthierarkiet] sådan at samværet og samspillet det kan være mere åbent, online, ægte, rigtigt, at vi tager os af hinanden, hjælper hinanden – så kommer vi rent faktisk længst" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma, June 30, 2011).

No. 32

"Et ledelsesmæssigt princip jeg altid har hyldet meget er, at den der ved mest bestemmer også mest, så i den retning er jeg sådan meget uhierarkisk og meget netværksorienteret i min ledelsesstil" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 33

"Jeg tror på talent, altså at ansætte rigtig dygtige mennesker, jeg tror på kreativitet, jeg tror på teamwork, og jeg tror på hårdt arbejde" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 34

"I forhold til at gøre karriere, så tror jeg i virkeligheden at det afgørende er, at man går op i det man laver nu. Altså at det virkelig betyder noget for én, at det er spændende og sjovt, og at man gør hvad man kan, der hvor man er. Sådan tror jeg også meget ledelse er. Du kan tænke over hvor du vil hen, men nogen gange er der bare nogle 'Windows of opportunities', og så sker der et eller andet, og det er jo så der man leder – og der man gør sin karriere. Men at have sådan en 20-punktsplan med milepæle fordelt ud over året. Det tror jeg ikke på" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration, June 28, 2011).

No. 35

"Jeg kan få sådan helt myrekryb når folk siger, at det var en fordel for dem at de ikke havde teknisk forståelse for så blev de ikke trukket ned i de tekniske detaljer, men kunne koncentrere sig om det kommercielle. Det synes jeg simpelthen var det mest tåbelige man overhovedet kunne sige, fordi det kan aldrig være en ulempe at vide noget om tingene mener jeg" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 36

"Uden at skulle være for meget bonderøv, så tror jeg meget på on-the-job-training. Jeg tror på at man udvikler sig i de konkrete udfordringer man får (...)" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 37

"Jeg vil sige det så stærkt; man kan ikke agere alene i Danmark uden at have et internationalt udsyn og følge med i hvad sker der international. Jeg plejer at sige, tænk internationalt og ager nationalt" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 38

"Vi har fyret i 10 og i 11, ganske mange, cirka 100. Der må ikke gå process i det. Det må ikke gå forestillinger om den perfekte løsning der skal gennemtænkes, og at der så skal gå et halvt år inden man finder frem til løsningen. (...) Få lagt en plan, og få det så meldt ud og eksekveret. Det kan lyde lidt kynisk, men altså når det skal gøres, så skal det gøres" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011).

No. 39

"Altså, hvis ikke man har følelsen af at det her det nytter, eller det her det gør en forskel, så er det ikke så sjovt vel. Et eller andet sted er man jo lykkedes med at sætte et fodaftryk" (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011).

No. 40

"Jeg kan godt lide spændingsfeltet (...). Altså der hvor det kommercielle og det tekniske mødes, hvor man laver et eller andet som er rigtig svært, som konkurrenterne måske ikke kan lave på samme måde, og så få succes med det kommercielt – det synes jeg er spændende"

(Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, Microsoft Danmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 41

"Grunden til at jeg egentlig synes at ledelse er rigtig, rigtig sjovt det er, at jeg godt kan lide at bestemme. Jeg kan også godt lide at der sker noget, og helst så meget som muligt, og det er sådan simpel matematik, at hvis man er én så kan man nå meget, men hvis man er 10, så kan man nå endnu mere. Den logik tror jeg tænder mig. Og så synes jeg også at det er sjovt både at have mulighederne for at påvirke, men også have overblikket og se hvad der foregår – det synes jeg er motiverende, spændende, drivende. Og det kan godt være at det lyder sådan meget koldt og magt-agtigt, og det er det jo sådan set også et eller andet sted, men jeg opfatter det ikke som ondt. Men det tror jeg er drivende" (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration, June 28, 2011).

No. 42

"Det er interessant at være chef hvis det går godt, og jeg siger med vilje hvis det går godt, for så har man en enorm frihed til at blande sig i de ting som man synes er vigtige eller spændende, men ikke nødvendigvis bliver drevet af andre. Altså den frihed har man jo som chef, man kan sige, 'her vil jeg bruge noget tid, her synes jeg det er vigtigt, her vil jeg gerne drive noget frem', mens man kan uddelegere andre ting. (...) Når det går godt, så har man en enorm frihed" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 43

"Det er jo det at have indflydelse på både min egen hverdag og at have indflydelse på hvordan ting bliver gjort. Og så at jeg har en lyst til at lave om på ting indimellem. At gøre det bedre. (...) Altså jeg vil jo gerne have indflydelse på det jeg laver, og det er jo lettere når man er leder, end hvis man er medarbejder" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration, June 29, 2011).

No. 44

"Det der med titler og de store biler, det er aldrig det der har drevet mig. Det der har drevet mig er, at jeg synes jeg havde noget at byde på og byde med og at jeg gerne ville udøve indflydelse, fordi jeg synes at det vi nu sidder og arbejder med, der havde jeg nogle ideer" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 45

"Helt fra menig medarbejder, der var jeg nysgerrig efter at få noget teknologi til at virke, og den der nysgerrighed har gjort at man hele tiden har gået og sagt, 'nå, men så kan man også gøre det sådan, eller så kunne man bringe virksomheden i den og den retning'. Og når man har nogle ideer om det, så kan man sgu' ligeså godt forsøge at få noget indflydelse og magt bagved" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 46

"Det er ikke fordi jeg synes der er godt at arbejde meget, men jeg har bare set og lært at hvis man skal opnå noget, så er det meget, meget svært ikke også at skulle bruge noget knofedt. Det kan være man er meget talentfuld, og at man er god og kreativ og super til teamwork og sådan noget, men der skal altså også bestilles noget" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 47

"Som en engang sagde til mig, man kunne blive rig ved spil, men det var ikke særligt fornuftigt, og så kunne man arve, men det skulle man ikke regne så meget med for folk brugte deres penge nu om dage, så der var sgu kun hårdt arbejde tilbage – og det tror jeg altså, der er ikke nogen der får noget foræret, man skal yde en indsats for det" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration, June 29, 2011).

No. 48

"Jeg er nok den type hvor der skal være gang i et eller andet, stort eller småt, hele tiden. Det er noget af det der driver tingene" (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 49

"Jeg har et organisatorgen, og så er jeg ikke bange for at stille mig op og sige at det her det skal jeg nok. Og det tror jeg ligger helt tilbage til skoletiden når der skulle arrangeres noget og sådan" (Sune Stausholm, Managing Director, Civil Administration, June 29, 2011).

No. 50

"Jeg kom foran det her job efter jeg havde været her i tre år. Og der kunne jeg sådan set godt have droslet ned til en normal arbejdsuge. Det valgte jeg så ikke at gøre fordi jeg syntes, at der var mange andre ting der i tilknytning til jobbet var interessant" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma, June 30, 2011).

No. 51

"Man kan lade det vælte, vælge at lade det gå mere eller mindre ind over sit private liv, altså at lade det dominere også i sit private liv, eller vælge ligesom at undgå at få det til at dominere for meget i sit private- eller fritidsliv eller familieliv" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma, June 30, 2011).

No. 52

"(...) når jeg tager til Lazanta sport på ferie, så har jeg mobilen med, for hvis lokummet brænder, jamen så står jeg til rådighed. Så sådan et job som jeg har, der skal jeg kunne nås i princippet døgnet rundt året rundt" (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 53

"(...) det er en pris ved ledelse – da jeg startede i jobbet der var den yngste 4 og pludselig er vedkommende jo 17 år" (Per Holten-Andersen, Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, July 10, 2011).

No. 54

"Hvis man vælger at blive topchef, (...) så har det en eller anden pris i forhold til at man skal bruge noget mere tid på arbejde" (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011).

No. 55

"(...) jamen vi skal bare have løst problemet. Det er sådan set ikke interessant hvad tid der bliver brugt på det, det skal bare løses. Og det indebærer i praksis at for mange, jo tættere du kommer på toppen, jo mere tid vil du både skulle bruge og vil det også være forventningen at

du bruger” (Henrik Studsgaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of the Environment, July 1, 2011).

No. 56

“Det har altid været børnene der bestemte hvad vi skulle lave i fritiden og så var jeg med. (...) jeg er sådan lidt til det hele” (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 57

”Min kone og jeg har heste og vi rider i skoven. Jeg spiller golf med min søn og vi går i træningscenter to gange om ugen, og det prioriterer jeg. Det vil han gerne. Jeg prioriterer min familie højt!” (Henrik Frøkjær-Jensen, Vice President Strategic Outsourcing, Nordic, IBM, June 8, 2011).

No. 58

“Der er meget plads til familien, der er ikke så meget plads til Finn – Finn og vennerne. Det er Finns tid og Finns egen fritid der er blevet squeezed” (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011).

No. 59

”Og så bruger jeg nok ikke så meget tid ellers – altså jeg vil gerne gå til alle mulige mærkelige ting og sport og sådan noget, men det gør jeg ikke. Det er der så ikke rigtig tid til” (Jeppe Juul-Andersen, Assistant Director, Civil Administration, June 28, 2011).

No. 60

“Jeg har altid haft den regel, at jeg arbejder ikke fra fredag aften til søndag aften. Der er det utrolig sjældent at jeg har haft noget med mit arbejde at gøre, men jeg arbejder så søndag aften. Jeg kan bare ikke nå mit arbejde hvis jeg ikke arbejder søndag aften, for jeg får simpelthen så sindssygt mange e-mails” (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 61

“(...) blev der ringet med noget sygdom, så var det faktisk bedre at jeg tog af sted frem for at hun lod 8. klasse sidde og flagre i skolen” (Finn Hansen, Head of Business Area Mail Denmark, PostNord, June 6, 2011) .

No. 62

“Vi stoppede for mange år siden med at sige det bliver anderledes, det bliver bedre” (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 63

“Det der med haven osv, det gør jeg i weekenden, men min kone hun gør altså det meste af arbejdet, det må jeg sige” (Per Ladegaard, Group Managing Director, Nykredit, June 10, 2011).

No. 64

”Mit andet gode råd er, at man skal få mange børn, fordi hvis man har mange børn, så er de ligeglade med hvor travlt man har haft på arbejdet, det kan man godt droppe når man kommer hjem, for så skal man være sammen med dem i stedet. Og det har lidt den effekt, at så

tænker man ikke så meget på sit arbejde” (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

No. 65

”I mit verdensbillede, så er tillid en meget vigtig ting – tillid kan flytte utrolig meget. Hvis dine samarbejdspartnere, dine medarbejdere og dine kolleger føler du udviser tillid, så får man også tillid den anden vej, og man skal på ingen måde være blåøjet og naiv, men man flytter altså verden meget meget hurtigere hvis man møder andre med tillid end med mistillid, fordi hvis jeg viser mistillid til nogen, så viser de også mistillid til mig” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 66

”Jeg tror meget det handler om de signaler man sender. Man skal jo bruge noget tid på at snakke med folk, og så tror jeg man skal være forholdsvis uformel. Jeg tror at hvis folk har en oplevelse af at det hele er meget formelt, så bliver det også sværere at få en åbenhed” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 67

“(...) det er ikke et succeskriterium i sig selv at jeg har fundet på alting. Man skal være åben over for nye idéer, og man skal høre længe nok på dem til at man ikke laver sådan en automatreaktion ’arh, det der bliver for besværligt, eller for dyrt” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 68

”Noget af det jeg også synes er virkelig sjovt, det er at være en del af et team hvor man gør det her sammen. Hvor man er nogle lidt forskellige mennesker hvor der er nogle der kommer frem og siger ’jamen kan du ikke se verden sådan her’ og ’jeg mener altså sådan her’. Men det at få et team til at arbejde sammen og tage nogle fælles beslutninger” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale, August 17, 2011).

No. 69

”Og nogle af de ting omkring at motivere som leder, det er faktisk noget af det der er sjovt, også at tage den differentierede tilgang til det og sige: ’ham her, han skal altså bare trykkes noget mere på maven, for han kan bare løbe meget hurtigere, og vi skal lige have fundet ud af hvorfor det ikke lige er han løber hurtigere” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale, August 17, 2011).

No. 70

”Det at forstå hvad det egentligt er der blokker folk i at gøre det bedre, det kan man kalde indføling, men for mig er det mere en analytisk opgave egentlig. Jeg sætter mig ned og tænker over det. Det er ikke sådan noget hvor jeg siger, at det har jeg følt mig frem til” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale, August 17, 2011).

No. 71

“Jeg har nok hele tiden været drevet af det der med at være med hvor der sker nogle ting, hvor jeg synes der er noget ved musikken, hvor der sker nogle forandringer, og hvor man kan være med til at se nogle resultater” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale, August 17, 2011).

No. 72

“(...) man får indflydelse med de her lederstillinger. I virkeligheden der er det noget med at skabe nogle resultater og gøre en forskel. Og det gør man bare på et andet niveau i det her job end i et andet lederjob, eller som almindelig medarbejder. Det synes jeg er sjovt.” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 73

”Det der meget konkrete pres med at man skal være et bestemt sted på et bestemt tidspunkt hvor man skal være gået fra sit arbejde, det tror jeg er tilnærmelsesvis mavesårfremkaldende. Og de familier jeg kender der praktiserer at ordne alt det der selv og som samtidig prøver at have nogle jobs, det er meget, meget svært at få det til at hænge sammen, fordi man kommer til at mangle noget fleksibilitet” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 74

“Jeg er egentlig mere måbende overfor dem der ikke vælger at få hjælp derhjemme” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale, August 17, 2011).

No. 75

“(...) jeg kunne godt tænke mig at have noget mere tid til mig selv, men nu har jeg fået fire børn, så lige i denne her periode bliver der ikke ret meget af det. Så der bliver det lidt på de vilkår. Det jeg så gør, det er at jeg har valgt at løbe en del, og det er noget jeg kan gøre stort set når de er gået i seng, så jeg er tit ude og løbe ved ti-tiden om aftenen, for du ved, der er der så blevet fred og ro” (Eva Berneke, Senior Executive Vice President, TDC A/S and President of TDC Wholesale, August 17, 2011).

No. 76

“Vi har jo et hierarki, et kasteopdelt Danmark. Og det sjove er, at toplederkvinderne, dem der er højt profilerede, de er i den laveste kaste hvis du ser på kvindernes syn på hinanden. Vi kvinder, vi er værst. Vi ser ned på hende der topledermoderen som kommer og ikke har bagt hjemmebak når der er noget oppe i skolen. Så vi kvinder, vi kigger ned på dem der tager en højere uddannelse og tager karrierevejen og siger, at det er en dårlig mor” (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011).

No. 77

“Altså der er jo nogle der mener at rigtige forældre de når det hele selv. Overskudsforældre (...) Så det kan man sige, det er så jeres holdning til det, og ja, man kan jo sætte sig ud over det, men der eksisterer jo stadigvæk hos nogle mennesker en meget fast forestilling om hvad den rigtige familie er og hvordan man er en rigtig børnefamilie og hvordan man er alt muligt rigtigt også og hvordan man er et rigtigt karrieremenneske” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 78

“Altså der er nogle risici ved alting i verden og der er en risiko ved at blive topleder, det er der jo fordi du påtager dig et ansvar, men det er også sjovt. Den der afvejning skal man jo lave med sig selv, og man skal jo have den der ro i maven hvor man siger 'jamen jeg ved godt at den risiko er der', den er der for mig og den er der for alle andre i et job som mit, men det kan jeg godt leve med” (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 79

“Det er jo klart, at når man er ude at snakke med virksomheder, så ønsker virksomhederne aldrig en person der kan jobbet – de ønsker en person der kan jobbet og lidt mere” (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 80

“Det er sjældent den der har det mest perfekte CV der bliver ansat, det er oftest den som har de rette sociale egenskaber, altså de rette kompetencer til at kunne begå sig. (...) Det helt centrale er at få personer der ligesom passer ind i virksomheden” (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 81

“Det der med at lytte og spørge ind og involvere, og ikke bare sidde og træffe beslutninger, det er nogle af de egenskaber som absolut er i høj kurs, og som man efterspørger når man skal have topledere. Man har virkelig ikke råd til at medarbejderne løber skrigende bort” (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011).

No. 82

“De gode folk, det er jo tit dem der sådan bliver drevet af og har en indre ild, og derfor søger de også tit de stillinger (...) Altså en der driver og drives af sig selv, som ikke behøver at have nogen til at skubbe sig i gang” (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 83

“Det der med drivet. At have sulten. Det der med man gerne vil noget, man er ikke sådan én der skal skubbes, man har bare en naturlig lyst til at blive bedre, gøre tingene bedre, løfte nogle tunge opgaver, der er bare sådan en motor der brænder inde i én” (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 84

“Det er meget, meget få topledere jeg har mødt, som ikke bruger minimum 50 timer om ugen på deres arbejde. Og dem der siger det, de taler ikke sandt. Man forventer virkelig det er en hårdtarbejdende direktør, uanset om det er en mand eller en kvinde” (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011).

No. 85

"Jeg tror, at de kvinder som har valgt at blive topdirektører, de har truffet et meget, meget bevidst valg, og de har nogle afsavn – ligesom at mændene jo har afsavn – der er noget de må slippe" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011).

No. 86

"Jeg har den holdning, at de folk der kun interesserer sig for work/life-balance, de er måske ikke de rigtige folk. For vi vil jo gerne have at de prioriterer arbejdet højest. Altså det lyder jo helt forkert, men vi skal jo sikre os at det er folk som ikke arbejder for at gå hjem klokken 3, men at det er folk som virkelig gerne vil ind og gøre en forskel" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 87

"Jeg tror at for Hr. og Fru. Danmark, for at bruge det begreb, der tror jeg det er svært at gennemskue hvad en direktør er; de tror at det er sådan et eller andet Matador-agtigt. Og sådan er det slet ikke. Generelt så er alle chefer meget fornuftige og behagelige mennesker, altså der er slet ikke noget Matador-agtigt over dem. (...) Og det fede er, at de dygtigste, dygtigste mennesker, de bedste af de bedste, de er ligeglade med at bo i Rungsted. De bor sgu' gerne i Brønshøj eller Greve Strand, det er ikke den status der betyder noget for dem" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 88

"Man kan godt have børn og være topleder samtidig, man skal bare organisere sig lidt anderledes, og så har man børnene på en anden måde end når man er den der henter og den der bringer altid" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011).

No. 89

"Det der bliver kommunikeret ud til kandidaterne, det er jo det der skal til for at få dem ind i stillingen (...). Det er farligt og begynde at kommunikere ud at det her er super hyggeligt. Nogle gange er det faktisk bedre at kommunikere det modsatte ud og sige, at det her, det er det sværeste job, fordi så får man nemlig tændt på de rigtige knapper – og de rigtige mennesker. Hvis man virkelig understreger udfordringerne og det svære i jobbet, så søger de mennesker der kan klare det. Oftest" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 90

"Der er ikke andet at sige end, hvis man skal helt op, så skal man sørge for at man er dækket af, sådan at man ikke har den [hjemlige] rolle 100 procent. Og det gør man med ekstra hjælp derhjemme så man kan koncentrere sig om kvalitetstid sammen med sine børn når man kommer hjem" (Susanne Becker Mikkelsen, Partner, Flensby & Partners, June 6, 2011).

No. 91

"De folk som kommer i betragtning til lederstillinger, det er oftest folk hvor de bare er skruet sammen sådan, at de kan sgu' godt lide at arbejde. De kan godt lide at arbejde 60 timer om ugen, det gør slet ikke ondt på dem. Selvfølgelig er det hårdt, men det falder dem helt naturligt. (...) Man snakker nærmest aldrig om timer" (Anders Peter Kierbye Johansen, Senior Consultant, Lisberg, July 15, 2011).

No. 92

"Opgavens karakter er mangeartet, det er ikke bare én ting man skal gå og lave, der er masser af forskellige ting man kan involvere sig i, og det synes jeg er sjovt, det synes jeg er spændende, jeg kan godt lide at arbejde med – det er sådan lidt kliche-agtigt – men det der med at arbejde med mennesker og arbejde gennem mennesker, få ting til at lykkes, få organismen til at spille" (Lars Guldberg Bang, Business Unit Executive and Country Manager of IBM Software Group, August 15, 2011).

No. 93

"(...) det er jo sjovt at være topleder fordi man rykker op på det der strategiske niveau og man får den der boldbane der er større og muligheden for at øve indflydelse og flyttet nogle ting på en anden måde, og det er da rigtig, rigtig sjovt" (Charlotte Münter, Managing Director, the Agency for Governmental Management, August 18, 2011).

No. 94

"Så en fortælling om topledelse det er at vi skal gøre klar til at topledere er ikke sådan nogle karate-sparkende matcho-people, altså det er langt mere i bløde værdier, og det er langt mere den menneskelige indsigt og forståelse, empati og omsorg som skal være udslagsgivende og styrende for hvordan og hvorledes organisationer... at de holder sammen og hænger sammen og har noget godt sammenhængskraft til at være steder som der skal skabe vores velstand i fremtiden" (Alfred Josefsen, Managing Director, Irma, June 30, 2011).

No. 95

"Vi skal måske prøve at tale mere om hvad er det der er spændende ved at være top leder" (Jørgen Bardenfleth, Managing Director, Microsoft Denmark, August 15, 2011).

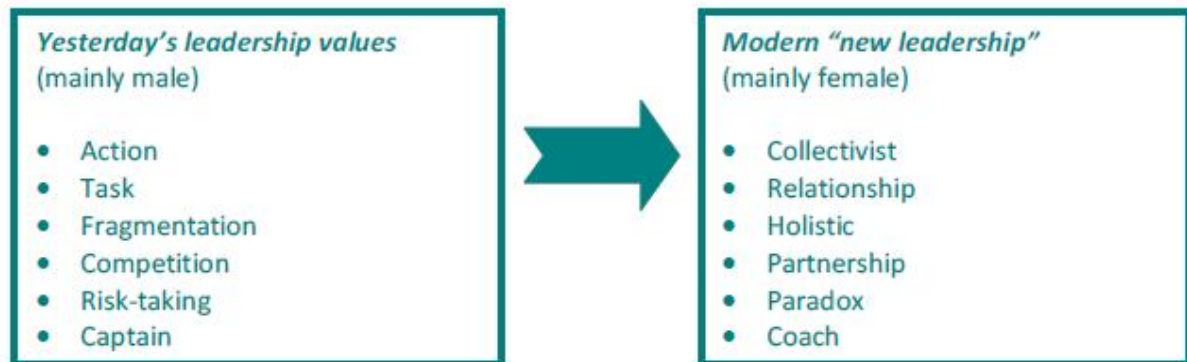
Appendix 7: Model of Economism and Humanism

Source: Pirson & Lawrence (2010), 555

Paradigm	Economism	Humanism
Individual level		
Model	Homo oeconomicus	Zoon politikon
Motivation	Two drive motivated Drive to acquire Drive to defend	Four drive motivated Drive to acquire Drive to bond Drive to comprehend Drive to defend
Goal	Maximization of utility	Balance of interests
Disposition	Transactional	Relational
View of other	Means to an end	Means and end
Organizational level		
Organization	Nexus of contracts	Social community
Governance	Shareholder oriented	Stakeholder oriented
Model in management theory	Agent	Steward
Leadership style	Transactional	Transformational
Goal setting	Command and control based	Discourse based
Goal	Profit maximization	Financial, social, and environmental sustainability
Incentives	Geared to 1st and 2nd need (Maslow) Drive to acquire Drive to defend	Geared to 3rd 4th order needs (Maslow) Drive to acquire Drive to bond Drive to comprehend Drive to defend
Culture	Mechanistic	Organic
Time frame	Short term	Long term
System level		
State orientation to business	Laissez faire	Subsidiary actor
State-managerial responsibility	Financial value creation	Supporting a balanced society

Appendix 8: Model of Modern 'New Leadership' vs. Yesterday's Leadership Values

Source: Cook & Rothwell (2000)



Appendix 9: Items for the BSRI

Source: Bem (1974), 156

ITEMS ON THE MASCULINITY, FEMININITY, AND SOCIAL DESIRABILITY SCALES OF THE BSRI

Masculine Items	Feminine Items	Neutral Items
Acts as a leader	Affectionate	Adaptable
Aggressive	Cheerful	Conceited
Ambitious	Childlike	Conscientious
Analytical	Compassionate	Conventional
Assertive	Does not use harsh language	Friendly
Athletic	Eager to soothe hurt feelings	Happy
Competitive	Feminine	Helpful
Defends own beliefs	Flatterable	Inefficient
Dominant	Gentle	Jealous
Forceful	Gullible	Likable
Has leadership abilities	Loves children	Moody
Independent	Loyal	Reliable
Individualistic	Sensitive to the needs of others	Secretive
Makes decisions easily	Shy	Sincere
Masculine	Soft spoken	Solemn
Self-reliant	Sympathetic	Tactful
Self-sufficient	Tender	Theatrical
String personality	Understanding	Truthful
Willing to take a stand	Warm	Unpredictable
Willing to take risks	Yielding	Unsystematic

Appendix 10: Feature Article

Published in *Berlingske*, December 19, 2011

<http://www.b.dk/politiko/hvis-topledelse-var-et-koen-var-det-tvekoen>



Der er sagt og skrevet meget om (top)ledelse og køn. Om det ene køn batter mere på bundlinjen end det andet. Om medarbejderne har præferencer for »hende« eller »ham«. Om mændene vil kvinderne. Om kvinderne vil toppen. Om vi har brug for kvindelige værdier på direktionsgangen. Om køn skal betyde mindre, end det gør i dag. Eller om vi skal anerkende, at der er forskelle.

Kalenderen viste den 31. oktober 2011. Verdens befolkning rundede 7 milliarder mennesker, og DJØF havde inviteret til netværksmøde i indre København. »Bryd vanetænkningen om køn og ledelse«, hed det sig. Et tiltrængt pust til en debat, der efterhånden synes at være ved at begrave sig selv i en grøft af håbløse udsigter. Det skulle imidlertid vise sig at blive dagen, hvor DJØF blev ramt af en kvote-tsunami af dimensioner. Som to karriereorienterede studerende sad vi målløse og i den grad foruroligede tilbage. Tre stive timer i selskab med gammel vanetænkning om køn og ledelse. Tre timer i selskab med kvinder, der mest af alt havde travlt med at tilsøle deres eget køn med endnu mere af »det er så synd for os kvinder, for mændene har det lettere«. Måske har nogle mænd det lettere. Nogle har det lige så svært eller sværere. I bund og grund er vi ligeglade. Lad os dog bruge tiden på at tage debatten om topledelse skridtet videre end diskussionen af, hvorvidt kvinder er underlagt andre og mere krævende præmisser end mænd. Diskussionen er interessant, for der er ingen tvivl om, at man ved at få flere kvinder på banen, ville få en langt større pulje af kvalificerede kandidater at vælge imellem. Vi tror bare ikke, at den diskussion rykker ved noget som helst, den skaber kun yderligere polarisering. Det lader desværre til, at ligestillingsdiskussionen har valgt at slå lejr på hver side af kønsgrænsen. Lad os i stedet tale om de kompetencer og krav, der tilsammen udgør topledelse anno 2011 – på både godt og ondt.

Topledelse handler ikke om køn! Det handler om vilje.

For godt og vel syv måneder siden begyndte vi vores speciale om »Mænd i topledelse«. Udgangspunktet har været ti mænd, der for øjeblikket sidder som administrerende direktører,

koncerndirektører eller tilsvarende i offentligt regi – fra en række større offentlige og private danske virksomheder. Vi har desuden fået et indspark fra to kvindelige topledere. Målet med vores speciale har været at sætte fokus på det, der efter vores mening burde være det helt centrale spørgsmål i den nuværende debat: Hvad er præmissen for topledelse anno 2011?

Til trods for den stigende »feminisering« af ledelseslitteraturen hævdes det stadig, at toppen af dansk erhvervsliv er en formummet mandeloge, der networker på whiskeybæltets golfbaner, bevidst blokerer direktionstolen med »de gamle drenge« og spænder ben for de røde stiletter. Mænd er aggressive, konkurrencelystne og ambitiøse. Kvinder er omsorgsfulde og medfølelse. Listen af stereotype forestillinger om mænd og kvinder er lang. Det er tankevækkende, at vi endnu ikke er blevet i stand til at se bort fra de gamle kønsstereotyper, der maler topledere op som cigarrygende matador-mænd. Vi er af den opfattelse, at den nuværende debat om topledelse trænger til et nyt perspektiv.

12 topledere har vist os, at topledelse anno 2011 ikke kan defineres som enten mand/maskulin eller kvinde/feminin. Topledelse handler om at træffe et meget bevidst valg; at vælge karrieren til og noget andet fra. En topleder har ikke en arbejdsuge på 37 timer. En topleder henter ikke børnene hver dag i børnehaven eller står klar med hjemmebak til legekammeraterne. Og en topleder må nedprioritere tid med venner og tid til hobbyer. Til gengæld spiller topledere på en langt større boldbane. En topleder har stor indflydelse på sin arbejdsdag, og på hvilke opgaver han/hun vælger at engagere sig i. En topleder har mulighed for at sætte et fodaftryk og påvirke den verden, han/hun agerer i. 12 topledere har understreget, at topledelse ikke handler om at vælge familien eller privatlivet fra. Man kan godt være en god forælder og have et top-job på samme tid. Det handler blot om at strukturere dagligdagen anderledes end flertallet i dagens Danmark.

Når alt kommer til alt, så handler topledelse om at batte på bundlinjen. Man skal have forretningsforståelse og kunne skabe forretningsresultater – mand som kvinde. Topledelse handler om at have en indre indflydelsesspire, en indre ild der brænder for at omsætte idéer til handling og gøre en forskel. Og topledelse handler om at være passioneret nysgerrig efter hele tiden at ville vide en anelse mere, gøre det bedre end før, og gøre det anderledes end i går. Man skal ville topledelse, og man skal have ambitionen.

Toplederen anno 2011 skal også evne at kunne sætte det rette hold og tiltrække de dygtigste medarbejdere. God ledelse er at placere nogle fyrtårne og trække folk i den rigtige retning. Den moderne topleder må være forstående, medfølelse og samarbejdsorienteret, og som en topleder sagde, så er de fleste i en situation, hvor tingene kun lykkes som team. Men mest af alt, så handler topledelse om at være sig selv. Maskulin, feminin – eller noget midt i mellem.

Hvis topledelse var et køn var det tvekønnet!

12 topledere er ikke i tvivl: Topledelse handler ikke om køn! Det er vores klare konklusion, at den danske mandlige topleder i almindelighed besidder en stor mængde egenskaber, der traditionelt set tilskrives kvinder, og at mandlige topledere i høj grad adopterer kvindelige værdier i deres ledelsesstil, ligesom også kvindelige topledere besidder en række omvendte kønsstereotypiske egenskaber. Danske topledere forventes at kunne balancere og administrere feminine såvel som maskuline kompetencer og gøre brug af begge dele på en naturlig og oprigtig måde.

Så lad os stoppe med at diskutere hvad mænd kan, hvad kvinder kan, hvad mænd ikke kan og hvad kvinder kunne være bedre til at kunne. Tiden er kommet, hvor vi skal gøre op med

vanetænkningen. Lad os i kønsteoretikeren Judith Butler's ånd skabe lidt »kønsballade« og konfrontere den traditionelle antagelse om, at mænd er maskuline, og at kvinder er feminine. At være topleder er ikke noget man *er* eller *har* på grund af sit køn. Topledelse er noget man *gør*, noget man *vælger*, og noget man *tilegner* sig. Vi tror ikke på, at gode lederegenskaber er særligt knyttet til *enten* kvinder eller mænd. Det egentlige mål må derfor være at forstå topledelsens køn som noget, der kan gå på tværs; at topledelsens kvaliteter er tvekønnede, om man vil.

Den nuværende debat er modnet. Det er på tide at gøre op med forestillingen om topledere som karatesparkende machomænd. Fri os fra en stædig fastholden af den polariserede debat om maskuline mænd og feminine kvinder. Drop den stereotype kønssuppe, som dufter så velkendt og smager af *plejer*. Vi skal i stedet have en nuanceret fortælling om de mænd og kvinder, der magter magten. Lad os begynde at tale om, hvad topledelse handler om, og hvilke forudsætninger den kræver. Lad os rette fokus mod et mere nuanceret billede af topledelse og brande topstillinger som det, de virkelig er – en attraktiv plads i toppen af hierarkiet. Lad os tiltrække mulige kandidater frem for at skubbe dem op på toppen. Når medierne såvel som den akademiske litteratur fortsat taler topledelse i form af mand/kvinde, maskulin/feminin, så undlader vi at skabe en konstruktiv og ærlig debat om, hvad topledelse er, og hvorfor det er, at topledelse er spændende, udfordrende og sjovt.

Spaltepladsen må kunne bruges bedre!