



Master's degree thesis

IDR950 Team Sport Management

**Strategic work in the regional football subdivisions in
Norway**

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Preface

This master thesis marks the end of my five years as a student at Molde University College. My five years as a sport management student will be remembered as five wonderful years, and I will never forget the student period in my life.

There are several I have to thank for their contributions to this thesis. There is no room to thank everyone, but there is room to thank the most important. First, and most important of all, I have to thank my lovely wife Siri Bru Kirkeland and my gorgeous daughter Oda Kirkeland. Siri has been my biggest support in this process. Without the support of Siri, it had not been possible to carry out this thesis. Oda has made everyday life my better in every way. It's tough to write a master's thesis, so the smile from Oda waiting for me when I get home from school has been of great importance. This thesis is dedicated to my girls, Siri and Oda!

I should also like to thank Oskar Mykland. Oskar has challenged me to see football from a different perspective than earlier. Oskar can at times be critical towards the management of football clubs, and this critical vision, and this vision makes me all the eager to learn more about the administration of Norwegian football before I meet Oskar to new discussions around the dinner table. I would also like to thank Oskar for the proofreading of the thesis. I would also like to thank the rest of my wonderful family. You support me in my choices, not to mention, you putting up with all the football chat from me. Thank you very much!

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I also have to thank my informants and my supervisor Harald Dolles. The thesis could not have been completed without the help from you.

And in the end, thanks to me self! I really proud of myself, and all the effort I have put in this thesis!

Iver-André Kirkeland

Molde, 2013

Summary

The theme in this thesis is strategic work in Norwegian football. The purpose was to investigate how a strategy plan developed by the Norwegian Football Association is being implemented in Norwegian football, and the challenges faced when implementing the strategy. The research questions in this thesis are therefore:

How does Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets apply the strategy plan developed by NFF? And What are the challenges Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets are facing with implementation of the strategy plan?

The study is based on the two regional football subdivisions in Norway. The aim of this study is that the readers will gain a better insight and increased understanding of how the subdivisions in Norwegian football is working strategically, and what are the challenges they face. It was used theory on strategy in order to be able to answer this. The theory of strategy focuses on implementation of the strategy and the barriers that may arise with implementation of strategy. It was also prepared a framework of various factors that affects the implementation of strategy.

The study was conducted as a case study with the Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets as the cases. It has been performed six qualitative interviews with representatives of both subdivisions. These employees have their own special areas that they work with. The information that emerges from the informants will be discussed in relation to the theory which has been presented.

The main findings are that the subdivisions use the strategy plan actively in their work. The strategy plan is used as a superior guideline in their work, but the subdivisions are free to adapt the strategy plan to local environments. The subdivisions know the strategy plan well, and the motivation to work on it is high. There are many challenges the subdivisions are facing during implementation of the strategy, but lack of motivation and culture to participate in development initiatives organized by the subdivisions is a major challenge. There are also challenges related to communication between the subdivisions and the clubs.

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Abbreviations

NIF – Norges Idrettsforbund (Norwegian Sport Federation)

NFF – Norges Fotballforbund (Norwegian Football Federation)

AFK – Agder Fotballkrets

NRFK – Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets

FK – Fotballklubb (Football Club)

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1. Introduction

The theme in this thesis will be strategy in Norwegian football. The purpose in this thesis is to provide a better understanding of how football subdivisions work strategic in their work.

Football can be related far back in time, but the football that is played around the world today, come from 1863. In 1863 “*rugby football and association football branched off on their different courses and the Football Association in England was formed -becoming the sport's first governing body*” (FIFA, unknown year). It is from the creation of the Football Association one sees the start of football from. Today, football is spread throughout the world, and it is a world sport.

Football is the most popular sport in the world, both in terms of the number of practitioners and the public's interest. The game is the national sport number one in most of the 209 nations who are members of the International Football Federation FIFA (2013) (Pedersen, 2013).

As one can see, football is a world sport and Norway is no exception of this. Football is the biggest sport in Norway with around 365 000 members (Norges Fotballforbund, 2013). In the mid-1980s Norwegian football was opened for more professionalism. This resulted in the “*Non-amateur and professional football was introduced in Norway in the football assembly in 1984 and in 1991. From 1 of January 1993, there were clubs with accepted professional license that was the Norwegian top football*” (Goksøyr & Olstad, 2002, p. 292). Despite the fact that Norway is a small country in the world's standard, Norway has had good results in the biggest sport in the world. In the 1990s, this was the period in which Norwegian football has had the most success. This resulted in for the senior national team for men a participation in the World Cup 1994 in the United States (Pedersen, 2013), where Norway was eliminated in the group stage. In the World Cup in 1998, Norway went out in the 1/16 round, where they lost against Italy (Pedersen, 2013), and in 2000, Norway was represented in the European Championships, where they went out in the group stage (Pedersen, 2013). In addition to senior team had success, the under-21 team had good results at this time. As a result of this, Norway came in 3 place in the European Championship for under-21 teams in 1998, beating Holland in the bronze final (Flygind, 2013). On the club site of Norwegian football, Norway has been represented by two teams

in the group stage in Champions League. Rosenborg BK has participated 10 times and Molde FK has participated one time (Holm & Tvedt, 2012).

It's not just in men's football that Norway has had success. Especially in women's football, Norway has been a big nation in women football. As a result of this, Norway has won the World Cup in 1995, the European Championship in 1987 and 1993, a bronze medal in the Olympic Games in 1996, and they won the gold medal in the Olympic Games in 2000 (Pedersen, 2013). Special the victory over a big nation like United States in the Olympic Games in 2000 is something that was big for the Norwegian football.

The development of Norwegian football has moved towards more professional sports, and especially the clubs in the top division for men is currently large organizations. At the same time, the professional top football is a small part of Norwegian football. Only 2, 4 % of Norwegian football clubs is defined as top clubs, and one could therefore claim that recreational football is the biggest part of Norwegian football (Waagaard Thomassen, 2013). Since football is the biggest sport in Norway, one could say that football has an important responsibility in the society. Football is used as an integration tool (Norges Fotballforbund, 2012), as well as football has an important role in public health because of its number of participants. In that relation it is important that the work is being coordinated in a good way, and this is where NFF and the football subdivisions have an important role.

The football subdivisions are important in this work because they are the link between NFF and the clubs. The subdivisions are the ones who have the daily contact with the clubs, and therefore one could say that the subdivisions are the ones who are communication with the recreational football in Norway. Through this contact, it is important that the subdivisions are coordinating the work in a way that makes Norwegian football work together to develop the activity. The society is developing all the time and it is therefore important that the quality of the activity in football also develops. It is therefore important that Norwegian football work strategically to achieve the highest possible quality in their work. The theme in this thesis will therefore be to see how Norwegian football work strategic in their work with developing their activity. The intention in this thesis is to see how the strategies of NFF are implemented in the subdivisions. These strategies have the intention to increase the quality of the work that is being performed out among the clubs in Norway (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan,

2012, p. 4). It is therefore important to see how these strategies are implemented in Norwegian football.

1.1 Background

The reason for why this is the theme in this thesis is because it will be interesting to find out more about how the football subdivisions work strategic. If one reads about Norwegian football in the media, then the focus is most directed towards the top football. The focus can at times be much concentrated towards results and often the lack of good results (Daneshmand , 2012). Whether it is top football or recreational football, it is related to each other. The recreational football is often the start of the career to the ones that one time in the future will be the players on the national team, and therefore it can be interesting to focus towards recreational football.

At the same time it is so that the focus is often directed at player development in Norway, and what is right/wrong with it (Tv2.no/sport, 2012). It seems thus that one might skip a step in the Norwegian football pyramid. It will be important to be able to see football as a whole, and in relation to the Norwegian football pyramid, the subdivisions that are the link between NFF and the clubs should be more focused on. The theme in this thesis should provide a better understanding of how subdivisions are working strategic, because it is the subdivisions that has the job to implement the thoughts and ideas from NFF and out to the clubs. It will therefore be natural to think that the employees that are working in the subdivisions have a big influence on the quality in Norwegian football.

1.2 Research purpose and research question

The purpose of this study is to provide greater insight into how a common strategy is being implemented in various regional subdivisions in NFF. These strategies have the intention to increase the quality of the work that is being performed out among the clubs in Norway (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 4). Are the subdivisions very controlled by the NFF in the "direction" they should shape the development of players, managers and clubs, or can the subdivisions make individual adjustments to the strategy? Can the subdivisions adjust the strategy plan to their local environments? It will also be for interesting for me as a researcher to see what kind of challenges the subdivisions are facing with implementation of strategy. The reason for this is that through this one can see how

difficult it is for the subdivisions to do the work that is expressed in the strategy plan.

Therefore, the research questions will be:

- How does Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets apply the strategy plan developed by NFF?

- What are the challenges Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets are facing with implementation of the strategy plan?

1.3 Research outline

The study in this thesis will be presented through 7 chapters. In the first chapter, the introduction to the thesis is presented. In this presentation, the reader can find an introduction, the purpose of this thesis and the research question. In chapter two, the background information is presented. In the background information, the reader can find a case description of Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets. In addition, it will be presented information related to Norwegian football, and other key elements in this thesis. The purpose of chapter two is to give the reader a better understanding of what's to come in the thesis. In chapter three, the theoretical framework that will be used to answer the research questions will be presented. In chapter four, the methodology used in this study to answer the research questions will be presented. In Chapter five, the findings that emerge in the interviews are presented. These findings will form the basis for the discussion that comes in chapter six. In chapter six, the discussion of the findings will be related to the theoretical framework. In Chapter 7, there will be a summary of the findings and the research question will be answered

2. Background

2.1 Norwegian Football Federation

NFF was established in 1902. Today, NFF has over 365.000 members, almost 2000 clubs and over 28.000 teams playing about 330.000 footballs matches each year (Norges Fotballforbund, 2013). The vision to NFF is:

- *“Be among the leading nations on recreational football”*
- *“Develop high competence in all links in top football and by this make Norway competitive with the best nations”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 6).

NFF is the organization that is coordinating the football activity in Norway.

Football is the biggest voluntary organization (...) the superior framework is decided by FIFA and UEFA and the line goes further to NFF through the regional subdivisions and out to the clubs and teams with players, parents and volunteers (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 4).

In addition to being the biggest voluntary organization, NFF is also *“the biggest children- and youth organization in Norway”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). It requires a huge effort to coordinate such a big activity as football is, and it is NFF central that through the use of the subdivisions is coordinating this work. There are eighteen subdivisions in NFF. These subdivisions are divided into geographic areas, and these subdivisions are the link between NFF central and the clubs.

NFF is organized through a hierarchy. At the top level one can find the Federal assembly, then there is the Federal board, which including the President. The Federal assembly consists of 1931 clubs where everyone has the right to vote, *“The Federal assembly is the legislative powers and the federation’s highest body”* (Norges Fotballforbund, 2008). The Federal board has the responsibility for *“the management of the Association's activities within the framework established by the Federal assembly, and shall ensure that the decisions that are made by the Federal assembly are conducted”* (Norges Fotballforbund, 2008). The next step is the NFF-central administration, and after that one can find the

subdivisions. The subdivisions have the responsibility for “*the management in their region within the framework established by the Federal board and the Federal assembly*” (Norges Fotballforbund, 2008). Under the subdivisions in the hierarchy are the clubs, and one can see that the subdivision operates as a link between NFF and the clubs. The information above is based on appendix 1.

This thesis will be based specifically on two regional subdivisions in NFF. The reason for why the focus on these two subdivisions is that these are two very different subdivisions both in terms of geographical belonging, but also the way they work. Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets has been named the football subdivision of the year in 2012 (Fotball.no, 2012), and they are recognized for their work with the Quality Club project. Agder Fotballkrets is a bigger subdivision in terms of memberships and clubs, but they have not started with the Quality Club project and further. Agder Fotballkrets is the subdivision I grew up with and have most geographic belonging to. Regional subdivision in Norwegian sport is to facilitate the development of activities in the subdivisions, cooperation between clubs- and other sports and assisting their own federations at the local level (Norges Idrettsforbund og olympiske og paralympiske komitè, 2013). In Norway, regional subdivisions are responsible for administrating series from 3-division and downwards (Norges Fotballforbund, 2013, pp. §6-1, 2).

2.1.1 Agder Fotballkrets

Agder Fotballkrets (AFK) is localized in Kristiansand south in Norway, and AFK is responsible for the county of Vest Agder and Aust Agder. In Vest Agder and Aust Agder, there are about 280.000 citizens (Agder politidistrikt, 2013). In 2011, AFK had 74 clubs and a total of 1142 different teams as members of AFK (Norges Fotballforbund, 2012, p. 3). AFK has a total number of 74 clubs and about 1200 teams (Johnsen, 2013). AFK has five employees, and they have their own focus area they work on (Agder Fotballkrets - Administrasjon, 2009). In the geographical area of AFK, there is two top clubs in their region. Top football in Norway is defined as “*all national teams, Tippeligaen (premier division) Adecco League (second level in Norway) and the Toppserien (premier division for women)*” (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 22). In AFK, IK Start is the professional team. IK Start is newly promoted to Tippeligaen for 2013 season,

and has for many years been promoted or relegated to/from Tippeligaen. IK Start is localized in Kristiansand, and they have won Tippeligaen in 1978 and 1980 (IK Start, 2012). IK Start is ranked as number eight in the history table of Tippeligaen in Norwegian football's history (Norsk Internasjonal Fotballstatistikk, unknown year) and by these results we can say that IK Start is the “biggest” club in AFK. The other top club in the region is Amazon Grimstad. Amazon Grimstad is a team localized in the city of Grimstad, and they have been playing in Toppserien since 2006 (Amazonfk, unknown year).

In addition to IK Start, AFK had in 2012 four teams in the third level in Norwegian football. In 2013 there are three teams from AFK playing in the third level in Norway. Fløy FK is a team localized in Flekkerøy district in Kristiansand. Vindbjart FK is localized in Vennesla district outside of Kristiansand, and Arendal FK is localized in the city of Arendal (Altomfotball - avdeling 3, unknown year). In 2011-2012 seasons, AFK also had the team Høllen FK in the top division in Futsal (indoor football) (Altomfotball – Futsal, unknown year).

2.1.2 Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets

Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets (NRFK) is localized in Molde, North West in the middle of Norway. NRFK is responsible for the county of Nordmøre and Romsdal. In Nordmøre and Romsdal, there is about 110 000 citizens (Nordmøre og Romsdal Politidistrikt, 2009). NRFK has a total of 65 clubs and around 800 teams (Hals, 2013). NRFK has four employees, and they have their own focus area they work on (Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets - Administrasjon, 2009). In the geographical area of NRFK, there is two top clubs. Molde FK is the main top club, and Molde FK has won Tippeligaen in 2011 and 2012. (Molde FK historie 2012, 2012) (Molde FK historie 2011, 2012). Molde FK is localized in Molde, and NRFK has offices at the Aker Stadion (Molde's stadium). Molde FK is number six at the history table of Tippeligaen in Norwegian football's history (Norsk Internasjonal Fotballstatistikk, unknown year). This as well as MFK has won the championship in Tippeligaen, tells us that Molde FK is the “biggest” club in NRFK's region. The second top club in the region is Kristiansund BK. For the first time in their history, they were promoted to the second level I Norwegian football before the 2013 season (Altomfotball - avdeling 2, unknown year).

In addition to Kristiansund BK, NRFK had in 2012 three teams in the third level in Norwegian football. The other two teams from the third level are Molde FK 2 and Træff. Both of these teams are from the city of Molde, and they will be playing in the third level in 2013 as well (Altomfotball - avdeling 2, unknown year).

In NRFK, there are also two academies that cooperate with NRFK. These two academies are Aker Akademiet and NEAS akademiet (Spillerutviklingstiltak: Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets, unknown year). These two academies are being administrated by the two top clubs in NRFK`s region. Molde FK is administrating Aker Akademiet (AkerAkademiet, unknown year) and Kristiansund BK is administrating NEAS Akademiet (Kristiansund BK, unknown year). In my opinion of how football is being administrated in Norway, it`s quite special with two academies in one region. These two academies are partly responsible for initiatives for player`s development for boys. NRFK together with the academies is implementing and complete the initiatives (Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets, unknown year).

2.2 The core activity in Norwegian Football

In this thesis, the focus will be on football players, football coaches and football clubs. These three factors are in my understanding the core activity in Norwegian Football.

2.2.1 Football players

The first factor is football players. To have football activity in Norway, there has to be a certain number of players who carries out the activity on the pitch. Football players in Norway must be organized into a club to participate in matches (Norges Fotballforbund, 2013, pp. §2-1, G). One of the core factors in the activity in Norwegian football is development of players. The clubs in a region is the one who is working close together with the different talents in football, and the clubs is the ones who have the most influence on a player. The regional subdivisions in Norway are working together with the clubs and academies, where they try to identify who are the talents, and by the initiatives for the top players in their region, and then select who are the players they need to work more with. When the players have been selected, then the person, who is responsible for player`s development in a regional subdivision, organizes special training gatherings for the best players, where they can work on developing the different factors that influence football

players and give the players references on the level of the best players. The best players from these training gatherings will be sent to bigger regional training gatherings and/or national teams for young players.

Some of the work to the ones who is responsible for players development in a regional subdivision is to identify the players with the highest potential, and have a tight follow up of them (Andersen, 2013).

2.2.2 Football coaches

The second core factor in the activity in Norwegian football is the football coaches. Who is the football coach, and what are his/hers main tasks in their job? In my understanding, a football coach is someone who`s main task is to create an environment that makes the best possible conditions for athletes to develop themselves in. Coaches are important to developing football players. Based on the key role the coaches have, they are absolutely essential to the development of football players. Coaches` task is to organize the training sessions, and they are responsible for organizing their teams during matches.

2.2.3 Football Clubs in Norway

Clubs are those who are organizing teams, and teams need coaches to practice football activity. In Norway we can divide football clubs into three categories. The first category is the professional football clubs. These clubs operates as professional organizations with several employees and millions in budget per season. The professional clubs in Norway are mainly based in the Tippeligaen and Adeccoligaen. Still, most of the clubs in Norway are semi-professional clubs or volunteer based clubs. With a semi-professional club the club can have a employee who works as a general manager, or they can have some coaches and/or players who get some economical payment for their job. Still, the entire organization would not be professional, and a lot of the work will be based on volunteer work. A volunteer based club, the work at the club is all based on volunteer work. The regional subdivisions are focusing on club development, because competent leaders are decisive for a good activity (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012).

2.3 NFF's strategy plan

In 2011 NFF went through a process of developing a strategy plan for the work in the organization. The strategy plan applies to the period 2012-2015. The aim with this strategy plan is to “*sets the course for football in Norway, and is the result of a comprehensive and an involvement-process*” (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 4). The aim with the strategy plan is to be a “*direction indicator for more and better activity in all sections in the football family*” (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 4).

In the strategy plan, NFF has focus on four areas. The focus areas are fair play, international results, recruitment and leader development. The first area is fair play. With fair play, NFF sees fair play as a conception of the value work in the organization.

According to NFF, “*Fair play deals with the superior values, how we treat and associate with other humans, symbolized through fair play greeting on the football pitch*” (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). Handshake for peace is symbolic tool for fair play developed by NFF, and from 2012, handshake for peace will be introduced to all championship organized by FIFA (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012). NFF want the value of fair play to “*pervade all activities on all levels*” (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 7).

In NFF, they divide their activities in two main categories. The first category is activity values. For NFF, the aim is to build values on

- Safety, pleasure, respect and equality
- More and better activity should be conductive conceptions in the organization
- Football is an important contributor to the work with public health. The clubs are going to be collaborator for local work of public health. (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 7)

NFF want their activity to be recognized as an area where everybody experiences safety. The ones who are participating in the activity shall feel safe while they are participating in the activity. NFF also want the activity to be recognized by pleasure. To take part in the activity, shall be something that the participants bonder with joy. When participating in the football activity, the value for NFF is that everyone shall be respected equally.

The next activity in NFF is Organizational values. For NFF, the aim is that organization value shall build upon five different categories. The first category is participation and involvement. With participation and involvement, NFF want`s “*every members shall have*

equal possibilities to participate in decision-making processes” (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 8) The second category is laws. The organizational work shall be based on *“laws and rule decided by NFF”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 8). By this, the organization shall be more predictable than if the organizations don't follow some set of laws and rules. The third category is equal treatment and involvement. By this, NFF want to make sure that *“members are being treated on a fair and including way”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 8). The fourth category is openness. By this, *“organizations processes and decisions shall be open for access”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 8). The fifth and last category is feedback. NFF want to *“adjust for a good dialog and a fast response on requests”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 8).

The second focus area in the strategy plan is international results. The reason for focusing on this area is that *“the results international is the most visible end product of the work being done daily in recreational- and top football in Norway”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). To get better international results, NFF have had focus on increase the activity on the younger national teams because *“the future top players must be internationalized through matches for the national team to perform on the highest level”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). In addition to the young national teams, another tool to improve the international results has been to *“improve the quality in the domestic league”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5).

The third focus area for NFF has been recruitment. It's important for NFF to start with initiatives that are *“recruit and keep players, coaches and leaders”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). Initiatives for this can be *“different ways of playing football, differentiation on the field, and also leader- and coach's competence shall be emphasized”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). In addition to this, football shall be *“open for everyone regardless to gender, age, functional level and sexual orientation”* (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). In recruitment, the aim for NFF is to make their activity available to as many as possible. By this, they probably want to be able to develop more football talents and coaches, and this will again gain the international results.

The fourth focus area is leader development in the clubs. According to NFF,

Clubs as a foundation for activity should be developed. NFF will be conducting targeted measures to strengthen the clubs. The goal is to recruit and ensure competence and continuity on the leader's side in all our clubs (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 5). Leaders are in my understanding very important for the jobs being done in the clubs and therefore this focus area is important for NFF.

2.3.1 The Quality Club project

The Quality Club project is something that will be mentioned several times in this thesis. According to Stig Inge Bjørnebye who is in charge for development for children and youth football in NFF (Norges Fotballforbund, 2012), it is important that one *“Improve the system, (...) the main target for NFF is to increase the quality in every part of Norwegian football. (...) The Quality Club project is then entirely linked up to the strategy plan”* (Sportsdb 18, Tv2 sport, 2013). It is therefore important to provide a brief introduction to what the Quality Club project is about.

The Quality Club project is a project for Norwegian football clubs, where the meaning is to develop the clubs and club managers from team ruled clubs, to club ruled teams. The clubs that participate are divided into three different levels, based on how they meet the requirements of the project. The project emphasizes the three most central areas in Norwegian recreational football; development, education and fair play. In the project they emphasize education for leaders and club development. Through this project it is a wish that the clubs are going to get a better framework in their daily work. It's a desire that priorities in the clubs shall in collaboration with the subdivisions supply meet NFF's goals. Among the objectives of the project, it is mentioned that the quality of club operations shall improve, increase education in key areas, achieve closer cooperation between the subdivision and club, give the subdivision a stronger focus on this type of development forward and create a stronger basis for the club ruled teams and thus reduce the turnover among the Manager's in the clubs.

The information above is based on a PowerPoint that Lisbeth Rød has presented as information above the Quality Club project (Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets, 2013).

3. Theory

The purpose of this thesis is to find out more about how the subdivisions works with the strategy plan from NFF, and the challenges they are facing when implementing the strategy in their region. To start with, I have defined strategy, and then briefly explained the strategy process. With background in what is the purpose in this thesis, it has therefore been natural to use the implementation process as one of the theoretical aspects in this thesis. Furthermore, I have chosen barriers against successful implementation of the strategy as a theoretical aspect to see the challenges the subdivisions are facing in the context of theory. In the end I opted for a framework that says something about how the values in an organization can accommodate for an easier implementation of strategy in an organization. This theoretical aspect would be seen in the context of the theory.

3.1 What is Strategy?

Strategy is a well-known concept, but in the same time it`s hard to define. A definition that could describe strategy is;

Strategy addresses major initiatives, either intended or emergent, which involve managers using resources to enhance firm performance in competitive environments, on behalf of owners (Carter, Clegg, Kornberger, & Schweitzer, 2011, p. 10).

At the same time as Michael Porter has also given a little description of what the strategy is:

"The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do" (Carter, Clegg, Kornberger, & Schweitzer, 2011, p. 48).

One can claim that strategy is a tool that has the aim to plan the future and how to achieve a desired situation in the future. Based on the definitions of strategy, one can see strategy as something organizations uses to achieve the goals set by the organization, and with this plan how an organization can effectively work to achieve the goals the organization has set itself. With this as a background, one can claim that the strategic work is important for the football subdivisions.

3.2 The strategy process



Figure 1. “The Strategy Process” (Strategy highlights: Strategy-keys.com, unknown year).

When an organization is developing a new strategy, it is common for the organization to gradual working out the strategy step by step using the strategy process. In this section of the chapter, I will briefly define the various steps in the strategy process.

3.2.1 Mission and goals

In my understanding, mission should say something about the vision and business idea for the organization. To start with, an organization should have a vision. A vision should say something about the wanted future on an organization. “A vision is shaped by the organization`s leadership and therefore represents, in many cases management`s perception of the organization`s future development” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 41).

After an organization has defined their vision, it`s time to look at the business idea.

The business idea should primarily help to ensure an understanding of the purpose of the organization. It should help to provide the basis for motivation and for the allocation of its resources. Furthermore, the business idea shall establish business desired

tone and climate, and act as a point of reference for those who can identify with the company's mission into concrete goals and a translation of these objectives into strategies and activities (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 43).

Business idea is something that fits more to organizations that operates as profit-maximisers, than football organizations. Still, it is important to have an understanding of what business idea is about. Football as an activity is something that doesn't change often, usually there are only small changes in relation to rules. In the context of football organizations, business idea can be seen in relation with vision. In football organizations, a business idea may with vision present what an organization would like to achieve in the future. When an organization has developed a vision and a business idea then the next step will be to define the goals for this organization.

Goals shall provide both the foundation for and represent some of the results of analyzes of organizations' environments, and should serve as guidelines for future strategies. The organization's defined goal should clarify and operationalize the vision and the current business idea. The purpose is to show which direction they wish to move when facing important decisions situations. The goals will operationalize the organization's overall values and express what is important and what it aims at (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, pp. 45-46).

According to this thesis, goals and vision are important, because it defines what organizations are working towards in their daily work. Goals should provide everyone involved an understanding for what one wants to achieve in the future.

3.2.2 External and internal environment

The next step in the strategy process is to analyze both internal and external factors for the organization. When a strategy should be created, it's important to consider the mission and goals, and make some analysis of the internal and external environment for the organization.

3.2.2.1 External environment

The intention of an external analysis is to “*develop an understanding of opportunities which can be built upon and threats which have to be overcome or circumvented*” (Johnson & Scholes, 1997, p. 91). The reason for this analysis is to get a better understanding of the environment that an organization is operating in. In an external analysis, an organization wants to analyze different factors that says something about the context of the organization, and what impact its surroundings have and what the position of the organization in the environment it operates in (Johnson & Scholes, 1997). When an organization has done this external analysis, then the organization should have better understanding of where the organization is in relation to their environment. This external analysis must be seen in correlation to the internal analysis before making a strategy.

3.2.2.2 Internal analysis

The meaning with an internal analysis is to analyze the internal resources of an organization. The reason for this is to get a better insight of the actual resources in an organization. With internal analysis,

Strategic managers must also look within the corporation to identify internal strategic factors, which are the strengths and weaknesses that may well determine whether the firm will be able to take advantage of opportunities while avoiding threats (Hunger & Wheelen, 1995, p. 115).

In an internal analysis one want to analyze the different resources in an organization. Resources can be “*physical resources, human resources, financial resources and intangibles*” (Johnson & Scholes, 1997, p. 143). Physical resources are resources that are visible. Human resources are the resources among the people in the organization. Financial resources are resources of “*capital, managing cash, the control of debtors and creditors and the management of relationships with suppliers of money*” (Johnson & Scholes, 1997, p. 143). Intangibles are non-visible resources. A resource like this can be the culture in an organization

These analyses will together form the basis for the choice of strategy. In this thesis, it will not be emphasized much analysis focus. Anyway, these analyses are important for NFF as

an organization, in order for them to develop strategy that should be well suited to their organization. At the same time, internal analysis can be important on subdivision level in NFF. It is important that the subdivision is aware of what resources they actually have access to in their organization, before they choose their strategic direction.

3.2.3 Strategy creation

After the analysis of internal and external environment, an organization should hold more knowledge about which type of strategy they should use, based on their own strengths and weaknesses. When choosing a strategy, there are two different perspectives to choose from.

Generic strategy” deals with how an organization positions themselves to their surroundings (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 35). The second perspective is “resources based strategy”, and focuses on intern relationship in the organization, further precise those moves at an organization that gives them a superior in preference to other organizations (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 35).

After an organization has chosen which type of perspective they want to choose, they need to develop their strategy. The choice of strategy that NFF makes will be of significance for the subdivisions. This is the step in the process where NFF points out the strategic focus areas for a given period of time, and therefore it is of importance. After selecting a strategy, this strategy needs to be implemented in the various regions in NFF.

3.2.4 Implementation of strategy

After a strategy has developed based on the internal and external analyses, the strategy must be implemented in the organization.

Implementation involves that a strategy develops into action and the strategy is being operationalized. This means that it defines which activities are necessary for a strategy should become a reality (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 171).

In other words, implementation of a strategy means “*leading a process of change*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 171).

3.2.5 Performance measurement

After implementing a strategy, an organization needs to measure the results from the strategy. In performance measurement, evaluation and control is the key factors for an organization.

Evaluation and control is the phases where the management assure themselves about the strategic decisions are being satisfactory implemented, and the development adjusts within the super eminent objectives that have been decided (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 193).

In addition, control- and evaluation process is an important information source for the continuous strategic work. It's the way the different sections perform the work, their use of resources and how they are interpret the instructions, that in the end gives the intendant strategy is final form (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 193).

This process is important for an organization because it gives an organization better knowledge on how effective the strategy is. According to theory, it will be important for the subdivisions that their work is measured. By measuring the work that is being done, the subdivisions could get a confirmation of their perception of the work that is being performed. It may also be easier to make adjustments to the work that can do the work more efficiently if one measures the work that is being done.

3.3 Implementation of strategy

3.3.1 Implementation process

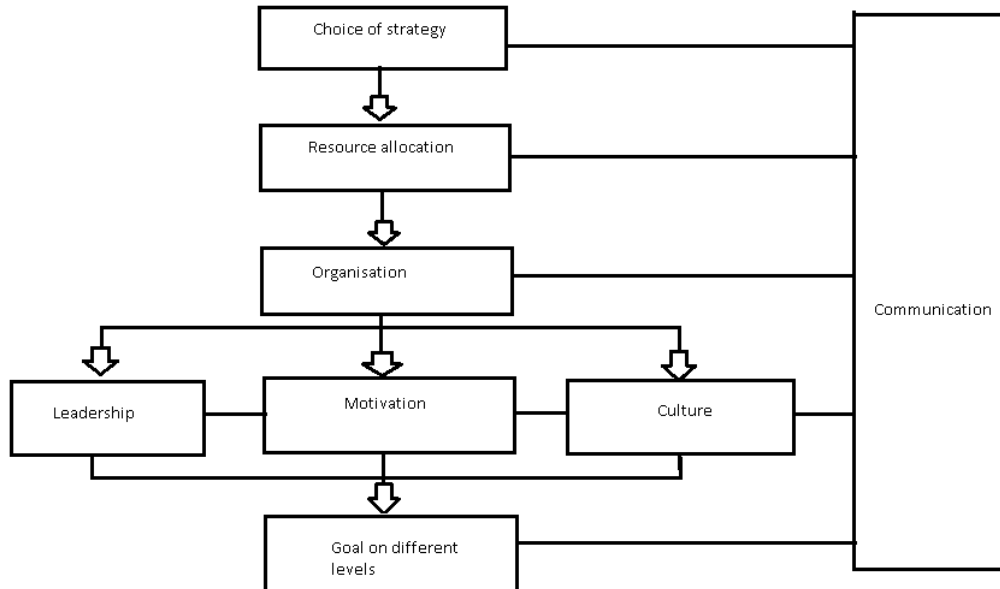


Figure 2. “Implementation process” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 182)

The implementation process is a model that is well suited to answer the first part of the research questions.

When implementing a strategy, strategic managers must consider three questions

- 1- Who are the people who will carry out the strategic plan?
- 2- What must be done?
- 3- How are they going to do what is needed? (Hunger & Wheelen, 1995, p. 221)

Independent of which approach for implementation of a strategy we use, the process will involve some specific elements must be processed in one way or another. (...) It's important to remember that the different aspects in the implementation process are mutual dependent of each other (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 181).

One of the most important tasks in connection with the implementation of the strategy is to achieve consistency between the strategy and the organization's capacity and expertise, bonus system and company culture (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 182)

The first step in the implementation process is choice of strategy. In this thesis the strategy is already been developed by NFF. Therefore the focus will be to see how the subdivisions use the strategy plan, and the goals and values in the subdivisions. *“Taking a choice that is in line with the organization's goals, matched well with the rational approach in decision process. In such cases, the strategic options are compared to organizational goals”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 166). It would therefore be necessary to use this point in theory to see in what way the subdivision utilize the strategy plan, and how the subdivisions identifies themselves with the goals and values presented in the strategy plan. Do the subdivisions have the same goal and visions?

The second step then would be resource allocation. With resource allocation,

It's essential that the allocation of resources follows the choice of strategy. If the strategy will only be formulated but not implemented by the funding's, expertise, equipment and other resources are redistributed, and by the choice of strategy involves measures are followed up, the strategy will soon end as a pure paper strategy. Resource allocation therefore set the direction for the company's operational strategy (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 182).

For the strategy to be implemented in an efficient way, it's important that the organizations allocates the resource based on the strategy. Organizations need to focus their resources on the goals presented in the strategy. It will be useful to use this part of the theory to find out more about the resources in the subdivisions. Is the resources used towards the focus areas for the organizations?

The third step in the implementation process is organization. *“Research indicates that there is a clear link between strategy, structure and efficiency. The key question will always be: Which structure to which strategy in each situation?”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 183). There are some important factors that influence the work of the organization. The most important resource is the employees. Organizing of employees will be of importance, and therefore be vital factor for a successful implementation of a strategy. For having successful implementations of a strategy, organizations internal work is of importance. An organization need to organize the workers on specific tasks and the second factor is to coordinate the work to prevent employees working with task out of their

fields. With the use of this part in the strategy, one will hopefully see more on how the subdivisions organize themselves, to in an efficient way work with the strategy that has been chosen. Do the employees have specific tasks?

After the organization, the fourth step is leadership.

To accomplish a successful implementation of a strategy, it requires a clear leadership from the company throughout the whole process. The top management and all the middle managers should take an active and visible role in the change process to include the entire organization. It's a challenge for leaders to find the balance between a clear leadership in the change process, and in the same time allowing sufficient independence at functioning level. The key personnel, who are appointed to lead the implementation superior level, must have special qualities such as technical expertise in their own area, an understanding of all functions and skill to coordinate people with very different frames of reference (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 184).

It is of importance how the leaders are behaving as a leadership above those who will take part in the work to be done. This point in theory will be used to provide insight into how the subdivisions are acting as a leadership. How visible are the subdivisions as leaders in their regions?

To make the implementation of a strategy as successful as possible, it's important that the employees are motivated for doing the work that's demanded for the new strategy. Motivation is the fourth step in the implementation process.

The leadership should try to inspire the employees and challenge them to do their best. Factors that can influence the employee's motivation can be valuing from the surroundings, social relations, responsibility, self-fulfilling (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 184).

Motivation is a key factor when one is going to make changes that a new strategy often brings. There are several factors that can be used to increase motivation. Reward systems can be tools for motivating employees. A reward system can contain physical rewards like increase of salary, gifts and so on. In addition, reward systems can also contain abstract

rewards like positive comments, bigger responsibility, more focus on personal development and so on. Another factor that is important to keep the motivation among the employees in an organization is communication. Feedback in the organization is central to keep up the motivation. Feedback should be given in a way that engages employees to keep working for a common goal. This part of the theory should be used to shed light on how the motivation is at the subdivisions. How is the motivation among the employees and the clubs to work with the strategy plan?

The fifth step in the implementation process is culture. It's important that the strategy fits to the culture in the organization. *"If the strategy don't fit to the company culture, there can arise conflicts and problems. Organizations are complex with many factors that mutual interacts with each other"* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 185). When implementing a strategy, it's important to see the broader picture, because interactions in the organizations could have an influence on other sectors in the organization. If the strategy fits the culture in a good way, the implementation of a strategy can be faster and more flexible. Culture can also gain motivation among the employees, and a strong culture could be a reason for high engagement among the employees. This part of the theory will be used to give a better understanding for the culture in the subdivisions. Is the culture among the employees and the clubs positive to new strategies?

Communication is the sixth step in the implementation process. *"Studies shows that tight vertical communication in a company would in general contributes to better performance"* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 185). A good communication system could help the coordination of the work in an organization. This kind of coordination is important to see the connection between the different activities in an organization. A communication system can also be used to inform the organization about the progress of the implementation of a strategy. Where are the organization now, compared to the goals in the strategy? In addition, *"effective communications contributes to motivate the employees"* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 186). With this part of the theory, one could hopefully gain a better understanding for how the communication is out in the subdivisions. How is the communication between the subdivisions and the clubs?

The last step in the implementation process is goals on different levels. This factor is about defining the different goals for each sector in the organization. After each sector has their

own goal, they need to define how they should reach these goals. How should they communicate these goals and how should it be coordinated out to the operational level? This part shall find out if there are defined goals on different levels in the organizations. Are there different goals on different levels in the subdivisions?

When implementing a strategy, an organization can face some barriers to how effective the implementation will be. According to the theory, one distinguishes between external barriers and internal barriers.

3.3.2 External barriers

The surroundings of an organization are *“not only an important influence with design of strategies, but they can also in some extent contribute to barriers to a successful implementation of strategies”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 187). With the use of external barriers, the aim is to gain a better understanding for the environment out in the clubs, and how this influences the subdivisions.

There are five external barriers for successful implementation of a strategy. The first factor is shortage of resources. This factor is about lack of natural resources (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 187). In the example of the regional divisions in NFF, lack of resource can be lack of players, coaches, competence and/or lack of facilities to practice the activity. If the strategy don't reflect the number of members, then it can be an ineffective strategy. As well as number of players, to reach the goals for the organization, there must be a relationship between number of players and coaches. In addition to this, there must be some places where members can perform their activity. Therefore we could perhaps say that there needs to be a clear relationship between the strategic tools and the resources an organization have for it to be an effective strategy. This factor can be of importance, because with the help of this, one could understand how the resources are out in the clubs. These resources could have an influence on the strategic work to the subdivisions. How are the resources in the clubs?

The second factor is politics. *“Organisations are dependent of the political conditions in those countries they are operating in. This relates to production, supply and sale”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 187). In the relation to football, politics can be seen as the collaboration Norwegian football has with local authorities. In Norway, the political

conditions are usually so stable, that this part of the theory should be used to give answers on how the situation on development of facilities has been in the subdivisions regions. Based on my observation from football, this collaboration is important to build facilities for the football organization. In my understanding, the local authorities often has the plots where football pitches are being build, and the local authorities are often the ones who are maintain the different football pitches. From the local authority's side, improvement of facilities can be of importance because it can arrange for easier access to training for the citizens in a geographical area. This access can again be positive for the health perspective in the region. Has the political conditions had an influence on the facilities in the subdivisions?

The third factor is attitudes to the organization in the surroundings. With attitudes we mean "*Same as with the political environments, attitudes are in constant change. Example on this could be changes in consumers' preferences or political attitudes*" (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 188). Football is a leisure activity, and therefore it is in my understanding important that the attitudes to football among the surroundings are positive. If the attitudes to football are negative, the numbers of members in the football organization can decrease. A decrease of membership can influence the income and the activity. This influence can be a barrier to implementing a strategy because of the negative development based on external attitudes to football. Related to this study, this factor shall answer how the subdivision comprehends the attitudes the surroundings have to the subdivisions. Are there positive attitudes towards the subdivisions from their surroundings?

The fourth factor is change of power. This factor is about change of leadership at the interest groups to the organization. Change of power is about "*Same as with the most of other power relationships, the attention and influence from the different groups are in constant change*" (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 188). This factor can be seen in relation to change of management in the different clubs in a geographical area. With a high level of replacement in the management at the clubs, then it could be tougher for a regional subdivision like AFK and NRFK to implement the strategy. This part of the theory should hopefully give an understanding on how the situation are among the leaders out in the clubs is. Is there a stable situation among the leaders out in the clubs?

The fifth and last factor is technology. With technology one focuses on the technological development in the field an organization is operating in. In technological factor, *“the need for transfer of knowledge between the different section of a company will increase in importance and probably be one of the big challenges in the forward”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 188). In relation to football, this factor can be seen as how the central management has focus on development of knowledge out in the clubs, and how this new knowledge is being implemented to the operational core in their organization. If the operation core don't have the knowledge to go through with the new strategic tools, then it can be an ineffective implementation of the new strategy. By the use of this part of the theory, one should see how the development of knowledge out in the clubs is in the subdivisions. How is the development of knowledge in the clubs?

3.3.3 Internal barriers

In an organization it's not only the external environment that can create barrier to implement a strategy. Internal factors can also create barriers to implement strategy, *“in many cases, internal relations are the biggest reason to problems and challenges the management is facing”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 188).

The first factor in internal barriers is lack of flexibility. In many organizations there can be internal clicks that who are not able to communicate and coordinate in a good way for the organization. The challenge with this is to *“develop an organization that is flexible enough to take advantage of new opportunities, while still maintaining a degree of stability and continuity”* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189). For an implementation of strategy to be successful, then the whole organization needs to work towards a common goal. If parts of an organization are not able to work together then the implementation can be more difficult. This part of the theory shall be used to give answers to how the subdivisions welcome new strategies. Are they all working towards a common goal?

The second factor is barred leadership. The environment that an organization is operating in will face constant changes, and because of this existing knowledge and experience can in the future not be good enough for the organization. It's important that

The implementation process also develops to a continuous learning process, where transfer and utilization of existing knowledge is an important part. I addition, the

organization must work systematically with recover external information and update the employees (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189).

In the relation of football, this factor can be of high importance. The environment won't change at high speed, but other external football organizations will probably always be looking for changes that can improve the quality of their work. Because of this, the ability to avoid barred leadership, and always keep the employees updated on what's necessary to have a high quality of the work could be of high importance to have a successful implementation of a strategy. With the use of this part of the theory, one should be able to see if the subdivisions have focus on development. Are the employees focused on developing their knowledge?

The third factor in internal barriers is narrowed-mindedness. A problem with narrowed-mindedness is "*spread of segmented and sequential way of thinking*" (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189). The challenge for the management with this factor is to "*work actively with giving different units both information and feedback in a way that focuses on each role I relation to the organization as a whole*" (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189).

This factor can be seen as a similar one to lack of flexibility. For an implementation of a strategy to be successful, the whole organization needs to work toward the common goal. As in the factor about lack of flexibility, this factor could be about avoiding clicks by seeing the organization as a whole. The challenge for the management is to give information and feedback to all of the employees in the organization. This factor can be especially important when implementing a strategy, because this implementation of a new strategy can represent some changes in the work routines for the employees. To have a successful implementation, it's important that the information and feedback works well in the organization. Are the employees in the organizations able to see the broader picture when working on their part of the strategy?

The fourth factor in internal barriers is value, style and traditions, and these three factors can also be seen as the culture in an organization. For organizations, the culture can have an influence on the implementation of a strategy. Culture can have a positive influence by

Problems and initiatives can be solved on a rather homogenous way. Especially will a certain extent of common background contribute to easier communication and higher extent of common understanding (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189)

A culture can also have a negative effect because the culture can be resistant to change. To avoid this culture, an organization can focus on “*changing the culture in correlation with the strategic priorities*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189). In relation to football, this factor could be important because football organizations are working with football activity. It could be important that the management in a football organization share the values for its activity, and by this value make the organization work towards a common goal. If the culture don't approve for change, then the implementation of a new strategy can be unsuccessful. If an organization don't approve the implementation of a new strategy, then this organization would probably don't implement the strategy in the direction that was planned in the making of a strategy. Is there a development culture in the organizations?

The fifth factor in internal barriers on implementation of a strategy is power. For an implementation of a strategy to be successful, it's important that the management in an organization develop an structure that is relative decentralized. The reason for this is that “*collaboration is vital to reach an effective process and a successful result*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 189). If the management have highly centralized structure, then the collaboration that is necessarily to achieve a successful implementation can be more difficult. In the relation to football, the daily work on central areas in a strategy is often done by someone who is not in the management of the organization. Therefore it's important that the structure in the organization is organized in a way that make collaboration between the operational core and the management as easy as possible. How is the collaboration with internal in the organization and how is the collaboration with the clubs?

The last factor on internal barriers on implementation of a strategy is lack of knowledge. If an organization and its employees face a lack of knowledge, “*then it can be difficult to implement the strategies that is required (...)*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 190). When implementing a strategy, it requires the knowledge to implement this. If the knowledge isn't there, the strategy would probably be implemented unsuccessfully. How is the knowledge among the employees?

3.3.4 7`s framework

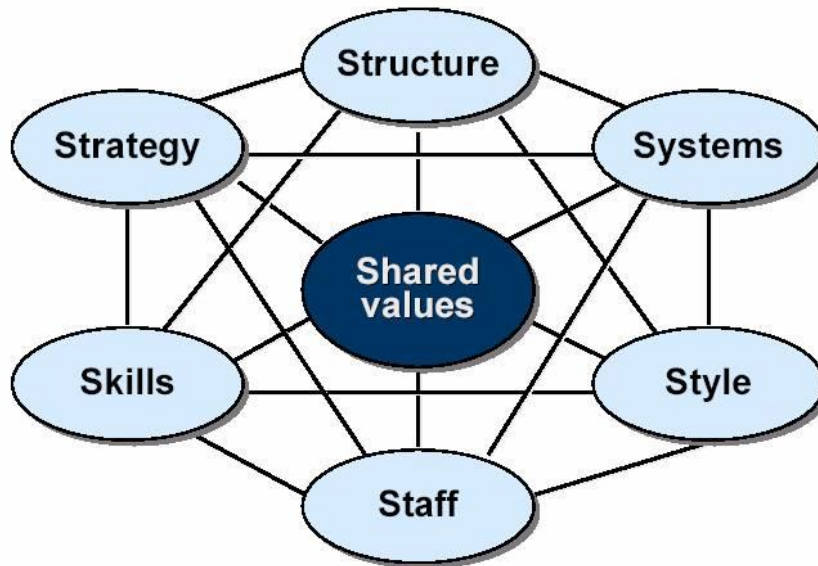


Figure 3. "7-s framework"(Vector Study, 2012).

When implementing a strategy in an organization, the "7-s framework" tells something about how difficult the implementation can be. *"Seven culture factors affect the ability to implement new strategies"* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 177). Structure is the first factor, and this factor is about the *"central problems in connection with the structuring of organizations, a division of labour and coordination"* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 177). The structure in an organization is central when implementing a strategy. If the structure is organized in a way that collaboration and coordination of work between different sections in an organization, then the implementation of strategy for the organization can be easier.

Strategy is the second factor. Strategy is *"the company's integrated vision and direction and the way it communicates and implements the vision and direction"* (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 177). This factor is relevant for the implementation of a strategy, because the strategy in an organization explains how the organizations want`s to communicate the potential new strategies. With an effective way of communicate potential new strategies could be helpful for the organization in the implementation process. If there isn`t a clear strategy on how to communicate new strategy in the organization, this could create ineffective implementations of new strategies.

The third factor is skills. Skills “*within this framework does not include this factor in the organization`s overall skills and expertise, but rather the activities that the company performs best, and it is known for*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 178). For an implementation of a strategy to be successful, there must be a correlation between the new strategy and the field where the organization feels their competence is at a high quality.

Staffs are the fourth factor. In this framework, “*employees as a resource must be managed actively, including through training, development, protection and allocation of resources*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 178). Employees are the ones who are working strategically, and they are the ones who are implementing the strategy in an organization. If the resources among the employees are not strong enough in relation to the demands in the strategy, then the implementation of the strategy can perhaps be unsuccessful.

The fifth factor is style. Style is in this framework “*the active and symbolic actions that management performs strongly influence the conduct of the organization*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 178). Style as a factor says something about which priorities the employees are making when implementing a strategy. “*Style communicates priorities stronger than words alone*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 178). We could say that style as a factor deals with how the employees are performing the work on implementation of a strategy.

The sixth factor is systems, and systems is “*all formal and informal procedures or practices administrating the company's daily work*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 178). This factor is about the system in the organization, and how the procedures and routines are. With an effective procedures and routine system, then the feedback from the work being done can be effective. If this system is working well, then it can be easier for the organization to implement the strategy.

The seventh and the last factor are shared values. Shared values is “*not formally appointed organizational goals but instead guiding concepts, values and norms that collects the organization on a common direction*” (Roos, Roos, & Von Krogh, 2010, p. 178). All this factors above set the common internal values for the organization.

If we see all these factors together in the framework, we can probably say something on how challenging there is to implement a new strategy in an organization. In the discussion, one will see if some findings from football can be related to this model.

3.3.5 7's framework in relation to internal barriers

If we see the 7's framework in relation to internal barriers, then it's clear that there is a correlation between them. The first internal barrier is lack of flexibility. In lack of flexibility, what's important for an organization is to make the organization flexible to new opportunities, while it still must maintain stability and continuity. We could see this in relation to structure and system in the 7's framework. The factor of structuring is about organizing the organization in a way that collaboration and coordination of work makes the organization effective in their work. System as a factor was about procedures and routines in the organization. With an effective procedures and routines system, then for instance the feedback could be better, and by this implementation could be more effective. With good procedures and routines in the work, then it could perhaps be easier for employees to adapt to new opportunities for the organization.

The next factor in internal barriers is barred leadership. For an organization it is important to keep updated to the changes in the environment, and also keep the employees updated on knowledge and competence. This could be seen in relation to skills and staff in the 7's framework. The factor with skills is about focusing on the fields where the organization feels they have the highest quality on the work they are performing. To keep this factor strong, it's important that an organization keep developing their organization, so they can keep their strong qualities. Staff as a factor is about the employees as a resource for an organization. In relation to barred leadership, it's important to keep the employees updated on knowledge and competence if the employees shall stay as a strong resource for the organization.

The next factor in internal barriers is narrowed-mindedness. This factor is about the management working with the organization as a whole, and not focuses on only separate parts of an organization. In relation to the 7's framework, this can be seen in relation to style, system and structure. Style as a factor was about how the employees prioritized the work. If an organization only want's the employees to focus on special parts of an organization, then the management could be seen as narrowed-mindedness. The challenge

for the management is to see the work being done on separate parts of the organization in relation to the total work of the whole organization. System is about routines and procedures. Especially, can feedback routines be seen as a tool to avoid narrowed-mindedness. With good routines on feedback, it could be easier to “see” every section of an organization, because feedback is something coming from operational core to the top management, and not only from the top management and down to the operational core. Structure is about organizing the organization in a way that collaboration and coordination between different sections in an organization is effective. If this structure works well, then it could be easier for the top management to see the organization as a whole, and not organization as several different sections.

The next factor in internal barriers is culture. This factor is about values and traditions in the organization. If we see this in relation to the 7`s framework, it would be reasonable to see this as the shared values factor in 7`s framework. If we see all the “outside” factors in the framework in relation to each other, then we could say something about the shared values in an organization. These shared values can be seen as the culture in an organization.

The next factor in internal barriers is power. This factor is about organizing the organization in a way that the power is decentralized, and by this make collaboration easier. This can be seen in relation to the structure and strategy factors in the 7`s framework. As earlier mentioned, structure is about organizing the organization in a way that collaboration and coordination of work is effective. The strategy factor in the framework is about how organizations are planning on communicating and implement its vision in the organization. Therefore this can be seen in to power as a barrier, because improper use of power can make the organization dependent of a few persons to take decisions if the power is centralized, as well as this centralization of power can make collaboration between different sections in an organization more difficult.

The last factor in internal barriers is lack of knowledge. This factor is about an organization need to have the knowledge among the employees to implement a strategy. This can be seen in relation to skills and staff factors from the framework. Skills are about focusing on the strongest field of the work to an organization and staffs are about developing the knowledge and competence among the staff.

If we see the internal barriers in relation to the 7's framework, it's clear that there is a connection between them.

4. Methodology

Methodology as a concept arises from the Greek word "methods", which means follow a specific route towards a goal (Tranøy). The aim with this chapter is to present and argue for the choices of method and research design in this study. Introductorily, I will present the research design and choice of method. Further I will present how the research-process has been, from the collection of data and to the analysis. In the end, I will present which ethical considerations, me as a researcher has had to deal with in this study.

According to Strauss and Corbin, they encourage the researcher to use their own personal and professional experiences and acquired knowledge as a positive advantage in research, to enhance theoretical sensitivity rather than obscure vision: "*if you know an area, have some experience (...) you don't tear it out of your head, you can use it*" (Strauss, *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*, 1987, p. 84) (Strauss & Corbin, *Basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*, 1990) My background from football goes over several years as a player and as a football coach. As a player I never thought anything over why we trained in what we were doing, or whether there was any common way of thinking of why we did what we did. Some years after I retired as football player, I took a role as a football coach. Experience from my role as a coach has over the years evolved to different levels in various clubs. It is interesting to see, and I have never experienced lot of focus on the guidelines in training work in football. During the study at Molde University College, I experienced that it weren't a high focus on guidelines for how clubs should be operated as well.

4.1 Research design

In research design, a researcher must show how one have proceed to collect data from the reality. The aim with research design is to in an early phase determine what and who are being surveyed, and how the survey is going to be accomplished (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010).

Social-science method it is a question about how we proceed to get the information about the social reality, and at least how this information is going to be analyzed, and what it tells us about social-science relations and processes. It is about both collecting, analyzing and interpret data, and this is a central part of empirical research (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010, p. 29)

In my understanding of social-science method, the aim is to give better understanding of the society to the people. This study can be categorized as a social-science study. According to (Walløe & Føllesdal, 2000), social-science is a scientific tradition that is engaged to get a deeper understanding of the society we live in. The aim with this study is to get a better understanding of the implementation of strategies, and the challenges with implementation in the regional subdivisions in Norwegian football. The aim with this study can give the society a better understanding of the work in Norwegian football, and therefore this can be seen as a social-science study.

4.1.1 Case studies

Case studies are a common design within social-science, and case studies is about collecting a lot of information from a few units (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010) (Thagaard, 2009). The topic for this thesis is the implementation of strategies and the challenges with the implementation in the regional subdivisions in NFF. In all, there are 18 regional subdivisions in Norway. Because of the limitation in economy and time, this thesis is limited to the regional subdivision Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets. According to (Thagaard, 2009), one must remember that when a case study deals with a bigger units like an organization, it`s the organization as a whole and not the individuals who is generating the information that represent the focus in the analysis. In this thesis, the informants who generate the information are not the one that there will be focused on. The focus will be on the organizations they are representing (AFK and NRFK). This thesis could have several directions on the research question, but the focus will be on the aspects from the management in the organizations of AFK and NRFK. Therefore, AFK and NRFK will be the two units in this case study. These units will hopefully present a better understanding of the strategic work in the regional subdivisions in NFF as an organization.

A case can be seen as a collective unit. “A *collective unit exists of more absolute units and can be a group, an organisation or a local society*” (Jacobsen, 2005, p. 91). With a case study “*a particular individual, program, or events is studied in depth for a defined period of time*” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 137). The focus will be on one case, but the information that is collected, will be collected from two subunits (AFK and NRFK), and the information will be generated by three individuals in each organization. According to (Yin, 2009), this type of study is recognized as a single case study. Casestudies are often accomplished by qualitative approaches as observations or open interviews (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010).

4.2 Choice of method – qualitative method

When deciding for which type of method one should use, the two types of method to choose between is qualitative or quantitative method (De nasjonale forskningsetiske komitèene, 2013). With qualitative methods, the aim is to go deeper into the social phenomena and have focus on meaning, while in quantitative method it is more emphasized to spread and numbers (Thagaard, 2009). In this study, the choice of method will be qualitative method. The reason for this is that in a qualitative approach we have interpretation that has the intention to “*gain new insights about a particular phenomenon*” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 136) as well as qualitative methodical approach can “*clarify an unclarified topic further and to present a nuanced description of the subject*” (Jacobsen, 2005, p. 131) With a qualitative method, I will develop my understanding for the research question. A qualitative method can give me deeper information from the informants than with a quantitative method. With my observations from internet, I haven't found any previous study on the same topic. Therefore, with this qualitative method, I can get more insight in how regional subdivisions in NFF are working with implementation of strategies and the challenges that follows with implementation of strategies. In the process of developing this research, the research question has been changed some times because of different reasons. With these changes in the research question, a qualitative method has made it easier for me to modify the questions in a direction that gives me the possibility to answer the research question.

4.3 Data Collection

In the data collection I have focused on qualitative methods and document analysis as the main source for data collection in this thesis. The document analysis from the strategy plan to NFF has been used to give me better understanding for the strategy to NFF. Also, my background from football has been a source in the data collection. I have used my experience as a football player and a football coach when choosing informants and creating questions in the interview guide.

4.3.1 Choice of informants

Choice of informants is important in this thesis. The reason for this is that the selection has big influence on the analysis of the data (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010). Qualitative studies are based on strategic selection (Thagaard, 2009). In other words, this means that the informants are chosen based on capacity or qualifications that are strategic in relation to what I'm researching and the theoretical approach in this thesis. Early in the process I needed to find out which informants could give me good data to answer the research question. The best for me would be to investigate all eighteen subdivisions, but because of the limited resources in time and economy, I needed to make a sample of the eighteen subdivisions. The selection of subdivisions in the study was not random. The selection was based on strategic selection. Strategic selection means that the researcher intentional chooses a target group (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010). In this thesis the target groups are regions Agder and Nordmøre og Romsdal. The first subdivision that stand out as a clear choice for me where NRFK. The reason for this was that they in the 2012 season won the price as the best regional subdivision in Norway (Fotball.no, 2012). Much of the reason for this is that NRFK is recognized for their work with the Quality Club project. NRFK was the first subdivision in the country that started with this project (Hals, 2013). It would require less resources to use NRFK in my research because I didn't need to travel away to interview them. AFK was the other subdivision I selected for this thesis. The main reason for that is that I 'am raised in Kristiansand and Kristiansand is the center for AFK. Most of my experience in football comes from the region AFK. Also, AFK is a bigger subdivision than NRFK, and is also located in another geographical area of Norway. In my understanding, this could give me a better understanding of the work with strategy in the regional subdivision in Norway, and by this give me better answers in correlation to my research questions.

After my selection of informants, I've started to focus on who I want to interview from AFK and NRFK. As I have mentioned in the start of the thesis, I want to focus on the "core" activity in Norwegian football. The informants needed to have a good understanding for the work being done in the regional subdivision. Therefore, I want to interview the general manager, the club developer and also the player- and coach developer in both AFK and NRFK. After that I tried to contact the ones that were responsible for this in AFK and NRFK. After several mail and phone calls the response among the informants where positive to participate in the study. None of the informants had the need for being anonymous, and therefore the informants will be named here and in the analysis. By using the names of the informants, I consider it to provide the statements a higher credibility. It will not arise information from informants that may be harmful to them, so in the context of that it didn't emerged a desire for anonymity, the informants will not be anonymous. Therefore, the informants are the following. Erik Hals as the general manager in NRFK, Lisbeth Rød as the club developer in NRFK and Stig Arild Råket as the player- and coach developer in NRFK. Those three are the ones who are representing NRFK in this thesis. Kjell Johnsen as the general manager in AFK, Yngvar Håkonsen as the club developer in AFK and Per Erik Andersen as player- and coach developer is the ones who are representing AFK in this thesis. When I where in contact with the informants, I explained to them the intention with the study. With the use of mail and phone, I agreed on individual interviews with each informant.

<u>Role</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Duration</u>
General manager and club developer	Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets	05.04.2013	1 hour and 7 minutes
Player- and trainer developer	Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets	08.04.2013	1 hour and 12 minutes
General manager and club developer	Agder Fotballkrets	11.04.2013	55 minutes
Player- and trainer developer	Agder Fotballkrets	11.04.2013	40 minutes

Table 1: Overview of interview with the informants.

During the interview it was clear that both the general managers, Lisbeth Rød and Per Erik Andersen where all very experience in the work they are performing, while both Stig Arild Råket and Yngvar Håkonsen where quite “new” in the organizations and quite “new” with the work assignments they have. This variation in experience could be positive for my study, in that way that the informants could have different views on the strategic work based on their experience. Stig Arild Råket and Yngvar Håkonsen had experience with professional football. Per Erik Andersen have coach experience at the highest level in women football in Norway. The common with them all was that football has been/are still their key hobby.

4.3.2 Document analysis

In the data collection I have also used document analysis. The reason for why I have chosen to use document analysis is that with a document analysis my understanding for Norwegian football has expired during the time I have read the strategy plan to NFF. This understanding has again helped me during the process of developing the interview guideline and during the interview with the informants. The document analysis has also helped me with more information about NFF, and this information has been presented in the background chapter.

4.3.3 The interview process

In this part of the chapter I will present the process of developing the interview guide and also the procedure with accomplishment of the interviews.

4.3.3.1 Interview guideline

The quality that is produced in an interview can be seen in correlation to the preparation of the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). For me as a researcher it is important that I'm guiding the informant into central topics to answer my research question, but not guiding the informant in a way that I'm "creating" the answers for the informant. The preparation of my interview was a dynamic process with many changes of questions and subjects. The meaning with the interview guideline (appendix 2 & 3) was to create "open" questions about central topics, but also more narrow questions based on the strategy plan to NFF. With the open questions, my intention was to let the informant focus on the points that he/she felt where important in the question. With this intention, the focus on the answers will be based on what the informant is producing and not on what I as a researcher want to produce. By this, the thesis would be less subjective from the researcher's perspective, and maintain a good balance between standardization and flexibility (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010). The more narrowed questions where more "closed" question that could answer what I thought could be challenges for the regional subdivision. My understanding of the challenges where based on the strategy plan to NFF.

The interview guideline was semi structured. Semi structured question are related to central topics, and therefore have fewer question than structured questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). With this semi structured questions, the questions where defined in advance, but the sequence in the question where decided during the interview. This structure helped me to keep the information process fluent, and questions were asked when it felt natural, and not asked according to the sequence in the interview guideline.

Basically, I created two different interview guidelines. One of the interview guidelines were created to general manager and the club developer, and this interview guideline where identical to both AFK and NRFK. The other interview guideline was created to the player- and coach developer in both AFK and NRFK, and they were identical in both the regional subdivisions.

4.3.3.2 Accomplishment of interview

The interviews were conducted over three days. This was the first time I conducted this type of interview, so it was an exciting and educational process. I started first with interviewing NRFK. It was a pleasant tone among the staff and they were very accommodating towards me as a researcher. The interviews with NRFK were carried out in NRFK premises at Aker Stadium. Bright space and room to conduct the interviews leave conditions conducive to a good implementation of the interviews. The interviews were recorded on two tape recorders to be on the safe side. I had the interview guideline with me in case I should forget the questions along the way. This where avoided and apart from a brief moment where I looked down at the sheet to see what was written down, the interviews had eye contact and two-way dialogue between me and the informants.

The interviews with AFK were made on the same day. The interviews were carried out in their premises in Sørlandsparken. Here I was greeted with the same hospitality that I met in NRFK. The tone was nice among employees, and they made me feel welcome. The interviews were conducted respectively in the offices of General Manager and player-and coach developer. Since the interview guideline is the same for both the regional subdivisions, the interviews were conducted similar to the process with NRFK. Two tape recorders were used, and the interview guideline was more like a certainty for me as the interviewer.

In the ethical aspect section in this chapter, I explain in more detail about how the interview process was in accordance with the ethical aspects.

4.4 Analysis of data

The next part in the chapter is analyzing the data that has been collected.

4.4.1 Transcription of interviews

After finished the interviews, I need to translate the interview from oral to written text material. According to (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) this procedure is required to make the interview calls available for analysis. Soon after this was done I started to reduce the interviews into written format on the computer. The reason I did this in such a short time after the interview, was because then I still had the interviews fresh in the memory and that

did the process of typing easier. When I was done with that I had 61 pages of text. Then I saved the text documents on a computer that was locked by a personal code. After that I deleted the audio recordings so these would not be misused by others.

The next step in the process for me was when to start preparing the analysis of the interviews. I read through the interviews up to multiple times, but I always had the theory in the background when I read this. After a while I figured out what data I could use for my research question using the theory. I was trying all the time to find the complete information from both subdivisions. Based on my own understanding of the topic and the work of preparation for the review of the interviews, this made it easier for me to interpret the data as the process unfolded.

4.4.2 Categorizing of data

When I'm analyzing the data there is no "definitive" on how this should be done. To get a better overview and organization of data, I categorized the data according to the level of theory they should answer. This work is important in creating a structure and overview of the interview texts I'm in position of after the interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). By structuring the data according to different levels of theory, it was easier for me to get an overview of the information of each level in theory, and in this way make it easier for me to see the big picture in the analysis.

4.5 Credibility

4.5.1 Reliability and validity

Both validity and reliability, then, reflect the degree to which we may have error in our measurements" (...) "Reliability is the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields a certain result when the entity being measured hasn't changed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 29).

It is important for me as a researcher that the material that I am presenting has a good quality. Reliability deals with the research results credibility and reliability, and discusses whether or not one can reproduce the findings of recent times by other researchers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). A challenge with this is that measuring instruments of qualitative

method often is not as “clear” as in a quantitative method. The data that emerges in a qualitative method from a conversation can be more "fuzzy" than, for instance, numbers rank that is often used frequently in quantitative method. The strengths of a qualitative method is that the way that the data are collected is often more detailed and obtained in a more open manner from the informant, than what is often the case with a quantitative method. According to (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) the researcher need to consider the reliability during the interview, in the transcription and in the analysis. During the interviews, I tried as best it could to avoid leading questions. Some issues may have been perceived as a leader, but those questions where built up under the previous answers to the informants. Otherwise, I tried all the time to ask the questions in a way that the informants gave me information that appears to be reliable and relevant in accordance with the research question in the thesis.

“The validity of a measurement instrument is the extent to which the instrument measures what is intended to measure” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 28). According to (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010), we distinguish between internal and external validity. Internal validity deals with the design and data collected allows the scientist to give an accurate conclusion about cause and effect. As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to define the validity of a qualitative research project than a quantitative research project on the basis of how we can measure the data, especially when the data is not presented in numbers (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010). On the other hand, when we speak of internal validity is asking about the method being used is investigating what we actually want to investigate, and because of this, one might argue that qualitative research can yield a valid result (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2010) (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In my understanding, this thesis has a design relevant for the research question. With the design and qualitative method as the tool to collecting the data, I mean that this thesis has an internal validity. External validity is to the extent that the results obtained and the conclusion in the study can be generalized beyond the study itself (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). As a qualitative study often includes deeper interview by few respondents, it may be difficult to generalize the findings to the rest of the surroundings due to the number of respondents (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this thesis, there are only two regional subdivisions that are the basis for my collection of data. This is a somewhat tenuous basis on which to generalize the findings. At the same time as I perceived in accordance with both the body expression, but also the response of information that many of the challenges

they had also applied to the whole football-Norway. One can therefore say that there is one measure of probability that the same challenges are appearing in other regional subdivisions as well, but it's not something one can determine "guaranteed". In order to achieve an even greater external validity, I should have interviewed about half the regional subdivisions in Norway in addition to the NFF, but on the basis of a lack of resources this was not possible.

4.6 Ethical aspects

When we are performing some kind of a study “*we must look closely at the ethical implications of what we are proposing to do*” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 101). This is a study that involves personal contact with informants, and because of this it is important to act in an ethical manner that protects the informants. In addition to this, I need to consider the ethical questions from the start of the process related to the interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Protection from harm

“*Researchers should not expose research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm*” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 101). In this study I will not claim that I have exposed the participants for any sort of physical and/or psychological harm. It does not imply any form of risk by participation, and there has been no risk out of the ordinary life that (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010) refers to as a basic rule. It has never been my intention to expose the participants for any type of offence.

Informed consent

In this study, I was depending on conducting interviews with some key persons in the regional subdivisions in NFF. Participations in a survey involve some kind of risk.

When people are intentionally recruited for participation in a research study, they should be told the nature of the study to be conducted and given the choice of either participation or not participating. Furthermore, they should be told that, if they agree to participate, they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 101).

The informants in this survey were first contacted by mail. Then I had a phone call with some of the informants. The ones I had telephone contact with got an email in posterity of the phone call. In the emails that were sent out to informants I gave an account of what the survey was and why I wanted to investigate exactly that topic which is the topic of the thesis. Then I explained the background of why I wanted to interview just their regional subdivision, and background as to why I wanted to interview exact those informants that I had been in contact with. In addition to this the informants got information that they could appear to be anonymous if it were desirable, and that I should render the information as accurate as possible. When the day of interview had come, I talked personally with the informants so they all got another update of information on the purpose of the study and the choice to be anonymous. In addition to this, all informants where asked if they had problems with me recording the interviews on a tape recorder.

None of the informants wanted to appear as anonymous as they would produce information that they could represent and, therefore, they did not see it useful to appear as anonymous. Some of the informants wanted to get some information about the way forward after the interview, and including two of the informants read over the transcript of the interview with them after their own wishes. I wanted to send this thesis it to the informants before it was published, but due to lack of time it was not possible.

Right to privacy

When performing a research study, it is important to respect the right to privacy for the participants.

Under no circumstances should a research report, either oral or written, be presented in such a way that others become aware of how a particular participant has responded or behaved (unless, of course, the participant has specifically granted permission, in writing, for this to happen) (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 102).

In this study the informants did not wanted to be anonymous, and they had no special needs for privacy. Therefore, this has not been something I have had focus on in the presentation of their information. Still, it has been important for me to render the information they released as correct as possible.

5. Findings

In this part of the thesis I want to present the findings that I have collected in the interviews. What is being presented will form the basis for my discussion that will be the basis for my answers to the research question. The research questions are as with previously mentioned 1) How does the implementation of strategy work in the regional subdivisions and 2) What challenges are the regional subdivisions facing with implementation of strategy? The findings will be presented step by step as in the implementation process, and each step will be presented first from AFK and thereby from NRFK. After I have presented all the findings related to the implementation process, I will present findings related to challenges the subdivisions are facing and success criteria's for the work to the subdivisions. These findings shall form a basis to discuss the challenges the subdivision are facing with implementation of strategy.

5.1 *The implementation process*

5.1.1 Choice of strategy

The strategy plan from NFF is something that has been prepared for a long period by the executive committee (Norges Fotballforbund - Handlingsplan, 2012, p. 4). Also, the regional subdivisions need to identify themselves with the values and goals in the strategy plan to NFF, before they are implementing this plan in their work. It is also important to point out that the *“regional subdivisions has been involved in preparation of the strategy plan, so there is nothing "revolutionary" new that are being presented to the regional subdivisions in the strategy plan”* (Rød, 2013).

5.1.1.1 Choice of strategy in AFK

When one is choosing what strategic direction one should use, then it might make sense to see what position your organization has in its surroundings. *“We are by far the biggest sport (...). We have also had cooperation and joint events with a national tournament in football and handball for handicapped people with the handball subdivision to say it like that”* (Johnsen, 2013). As we see, AFK is by far the biggest sport in the region of Agder according to Johnsen. In other words, AFK have a strong position in their region.

There is little doubt that the strategy plan is comprehensive for the regional subdivisions, certainly when we look at the number of employees they have. In AFK, they appear to be positive to the content in the strategy plan, but they have to pick and choose their areas of focus to work on with the strategy plan. They identify themselves with the values to NFF, and therefore they are in my understanding “accepting” the strategy plan.

“We use the strategy plan that has been adopted at the Federations assembly, so we have the same values and goals. But then we pick out of this strategy plan where we think we have improvement potential, and where we want to be better” (Johnsen, 2013).

We can see that AFK identify themselves with the values and goals that NFF has developed in the strategy plan, and therefore the strategy plan is something that AFK can work out of. As well as this, Johnsen says that AFK need to choose their focus areas based on the strategy plan. This supports the fact that the strategy plan is comprehensive, and therefore must regional subdivision select out their focus areas.

Yes (...) I think it's very fair to say that we focus on leadership education if we are to give priority to some of these things (...) Before Yngvar began we were very bad on educational course for leaders. When Yngvar began we had dialogue, (...) now we have had educational course for leaders (Johnsen, 2013).

Here we can see that AFK found out what where their challenges in their work, and how they chose out of the strategy plan that they needed to work with.

It has been a major development. Particularly in relation to leaders development and various meeting places also. (...) But also like that in terms of how we're working with the strategy plan. We had, an evaluation of the player and coaching development work here, and it ended the end up with that we went through the strategy plan from NFF, and ended up with our own strategy plan. We wrote down a lot of factors and criteria we should work with, and then we tried to prioritize which ones were important and which were less important (Håkonsen, 2013)

In addition, we can see that the player- and coach developer also uses the strategy plan in his way of prioritizing a focus area in his work.

We've got the inside here (head), so this really is automatic. You don't check off all the way, so you use the strategy plan thus not very much, but it sits in the "spinal cord". So it is parts of the strategy plan this here that coach development is an important bit of player development (Andersen, 2013).

Andersen is experienced in his work, so he don't uses the strategy plan on a daily basis, but as he are saying, development is an important part in his work. Therefore, you could assume that coaches' development is something that he has focused on in his work.

This is the result of the choice they made. As we can see, they have had a development in the area of management development, as well as that they have evolved in the player and coach development after an evaluation in this area. As we can see above, AFK opted-out which areas they would prioritize on the basis of what they thought was their need, and what the strategy plan said. One can therefore say that the strategy plan prepared by the NFF is a major guideline for how the regional subdivisions should work, and the regional subdivisions customize the strategy plan for their local conditions. This is supported by the following statement: *"Yes, I think it's fair to say that, but reword it a bit and say that the whole football-Norway's strategy plan is our strategy plan, but we customize it or pick out of it what we think it's important to work with in our region"* (Johnsen, 2013).

AFK has selected leadership development as their focus in the current period, *"I think it's very fair to say that we focus on leadership education"* (Johnsen, 2013).

5.1.1.2 Choice of strategy in NRFK

Before choosing a strategy, then it might be reasonable to see their position in the region they are operating in.

(...)It is clear that football is very strong throughout the County here. We have less competition with recruitment of children and adolescents in terms of other sports that are very strong. We feel it is almost so that all boys and girls are active in football at some point in the area (Hals, 2013).

We see here that football has a very strong position in the region to NRFK. There are similarities between NRFK and AFK when it comes to how they use the strategy plan from NFF. In NRFK, they also have to pick out the key points from the strategy plan that they want to focus on.

“NFF’s strategy plan is the superior plan, and we pick from there when we choose what to focus on (...) At the Board meeting, we set a few goals. We are making a budget and within the “yaw room” we set some goals” (Hals, 2013).

We can't have just as much attention to everything all the time. We prioritize a few things, and in recent years we have prioritized especially club development, player development and coach development in particular, maybe coach development over the past two or three years, especially for and perhaps increase the level of coaches, so we've had focus on that. In addition, the Fair Play always accompanies us, and that is why in order to permeate everything we do. In addition to our core product which is still the match, club development, player and coach development is our focus areas (Rød, 2013)

As we can see from the statements, NRFK can't focus on all criteria's in the strategy plan from NFF. They pick out their focus areas from the strategy plan and work with that. The focus in this period for NRFK is club development, player- and coach development. The player-and coach developer in NRFK states the following about choice of strategy

You must always select the parts, you cannot take over everything. It happened something in NFF three years ago in which they only had the focus on player development, until now to focus on player development and coach development with the challenges it brings. So in a sense you have to constantly pick out what one should prioritize what to choose from the strategy plan, perhaps the central points that are at the top and then build them slightly down. But I have to say that we have such gatherings with other player- and coach developer from all the regional subdivisions, and on the basis of the discussions we have in the evening it might help to shape what you want to influence in your own region. What NFF says is one thing, but what we are discussing in the player development, share some experiences to make you want to do something special in your own region (Råket, 2013).

It's interesting to see how Råket highlights the fact that the gatherings with other player- and coach developers have almost more influence on the strategic direction he chooses in his work than the strategy plan has. As he says, he forms the leading ideas from the strategy plan, but beyond that he forms his own way of doing it based on the gatherings with other player- and coach developers.

From the statements above we can see that NRFK also point out their focus areas, and therefore adapt the strategy plan to their local environment. This is supported by the following statement

“Yes. As I said, we are helping to create the plan through various gatherings such as club development and I participate on general manager gatherings, where the plan was subject throughout last fall” (Hals, 2013).

As we can see above, the regional subdivision will help with the preparation of strategy plan, and thus will be adapted to the needs of the regional subdivisions.

5.1.2 Resource allocation in AFK and NRFK

After the strategy is chosen, the next step will be resource allocation in the organization. We need to see the internal resources in AFK and NRFK. In order to be successful with implementation of strategy, the internal resources must be adapted to the choice of strategy. In the theory, equipment is mentioned as one type of resource. In this analysis, I have formed this equipment factor into facilities, after I see this as very relevant in this thesis.

5.1.2.1 Internal competence in AFK

But according to the amount of work per day, we are five employees. And there are too few. If we begin with ourselves, then we can turn back on it and say, "have you not volunteers", a corps that helps you. And we do have a corps, but we'd love to have more of them, and I have to be honest, at least in some areas (Johnsen, 2013).

As we can see from the statements to Johnson, they have too few employees in terms of what he wants in terms of the strategic work to be done. On the other hand, the resources

of leadership development that are AFK's main focus area are good according to Håkonsen. *“I think we are very good in terms of leadership development. We have a very good instructor corps right now and I think it is great to have people around me that I can spar with”* (Håkonsen, 2013).

It is interesting that Håkonsen who is responsible for leadership development in AFK says that resources to commit work on leadership development are good in AFK. This shows that there is accordance between the resources in AFK and the focus that AFK have prioritized based on the strategy plan to NFF.

In addition to the focus on leadership development, AFK have also focus directed at the player and coach development. Here, resources are organized in the same way as the work of leadership development. AFK has an instructor corps who works closely on the clubs.

“No, we have a corps. And it`s Yngvar who manages the administrative bit, so we have a corps that is distributed among the three zones. We run the courses divided into zones, so there's a corps out there (...) we have a corps of seven to eight instructors at least” (Andersen, 2013).

When I asked how the status is on female coaches in AFK, Andersen responded with *“Too bad (...), for it does not exist”* (Andersen, 2013).

5.1.2.2 Internal competence in NRFK

When one is going to introduce a strategy in an organization, it is important that the employees have the competence that is required to introduce the strategy. According to General Manager in NRFK, the employees have good competence on the fields they are responsible, and therefore they do most of the work themselves, but on some fields they are using external resources.

We take pretty much anything. We feel like we have such good skills, but when we have leader development courses it happens that we come up with external instructors and on the coach course we use coach competence in the top club of course, so we have a lot of external instructors (Hals, 2013).

As we see from the statement to Hals, the most of the work is performed by them, but in some areas they use external instructors. This is followed up by the club developer in NRFK with the following statement

“When we collect external instructors, then it's pretty much if we have a special theme. Then we usually bring someone in from NFF, and it has a little bit to do with name and so on. We could certainly do this even more” (Rød, 2013).

We see that external instructors are used in some fields, but on the basis of the statement to Rød they would like to use more external instructors.

The player and coach developer and his part of the work being done in NRFK it's much divided when it comes to resources.

On the coach development I do very much myself. I have a few instructors, at least in the activity leader course and we got some help from the Academy. On player development, we have very much external help and this year has been very good. We've had of the 13 people we asked, so it was one no. There were 13 people we wanted to deal with in terms of the skills and the impact they may have on player development. (...) This year, we have been very pleased with the competence we have had on the corps in player's development (Råket, 2013).

On the question on status on female coaches in NRFK, Råket responded with

“On the subdivision team we have with us two, and there's no two too many. Two freaking good coaches (...) But you see it out in club environments, it's very rare we get with us women, but as I said we are doing what we can to keep the two and perhaps bring in a third in the fall” (Råket, 2013).

As we can see, the player and coach developer do a lot of work on his on the coach development. Råket are as well emphasizing that he is very pleased with the corps by external instructors that he uses for player development.

5.1.2.3 Facilities in AFK

With facilities, I mean access to fields and/or areas where football as an activity can be put into practice. NFF wants to raise the quality of activity amongst the regional subdivisions, and a key factor for raising activity is access to facilities. According to the general manager in AFK, the situation on the facility side in the region of Agder is good.

First AFK is one of the best regional subdivisions in the country when it comes to facilities. Both artificial grass fields and community facilities like football-bin in relation to population. (...) If we see it according to the strategy plan, it is a regional construction consultant where him and me essentially have dialogue and meetings, and travel around to help clubs and districts where they have plans to build football fields. (...) On the facilities situation we are according to the strategy plan to NFF very well and far ahead (Johnsen, 2013).

As we see above AFK is well-equipped at the construction site when it comes to their activity. One could therefore argue that the access to facilities is not something that is going to prevent AFK for successful implementation of their strategic work.

5.1.2.4 Facilities in NRFK

When the subdivision is to execute their work it is dependent on the availability of facilities to facilitate that work being done in the best way.

The facility situation is good, been substantially improved over the past 10 years. For 10-11 years ago, there were two 11 is artificial grass pitches. Now there are 23 11 ' is artificial grass pitches plus 14 7 ' is artificial grass pitches. Let's say 30 units in total (should probably be 40 units), so it is a formidable increase. If we see the country as a whole, we are very well covered (...) NFF hired some regional construction consultants in 2005/2006, and it was a success factor to speed up the construction development. Then we had dedicated individuals who worked on it, and the number of fields "went straight into the air", both pitches, bin and loops. And on the basis of that, we have now reached a level where we don't have to focus so specifically on fields (Hals, 2013).

We see from the statements above that NRFK is well covered in terms of access to facilities, and that they have had a huge development in this area in recent years. The facility situation is well adapted for the work to should be done

5.1.3.1 Organization and Communications in AFK

I've merged organization and communication to a common theme in the analysis because they belong together in my understanding. The better organized an organization is, the easier the communication can be.

As previously mentioned, AFK is a subdivision with 74 clubs and just under 1200 teams. There are in other words many people who are in some way associated with AFK. One can therefore say that the organization of AFK and communications out to the clubs is an important consideration when introducing strategic grip to achieve what the organizations wants. According to the General Manager in AFK the communication with clubs works well, but by a bit restructuring in relation the Quality Club project, the communication will hopefully be even better.

I feel that we have a good dialogue with our clubs. They are not always in agreement with us, but that's because a club is a club and want to do it like this and like that, but then we say that they need to do it like this and like that, or else it will affect others. But we look like forward, and we have gone through some reorganization, and start up with the initiated Quality Club project, that's very strategically essential to get it sold in the clubs and get the clubs to "ignite" on it, that would be good (Johnsen, 2013).

Part of the reason that AFK has success with communicating out to the clubs is two-fold. The first factor that affects the communication out to the clubs is that AFK have interesting topics on the gatherings, and then the clubs spreads the “word” further. *“Based on the way I experience it, so the things that we successfully with have sown in, that we have reached out with our communications, that we have got with the rest of us who want to be in on the action, the famous "grapevine" works (...)”* (Johnsen, 2013). In addition, a part of the reason to success of communication is major work from AFK on invitations and reminders out to clubs

(...) requires quite a bit of work for the success of things. It is not enough to send out an invitation two months in advance and then it meets a lot of people. There are reminders and almost a bit like nagging as some clubs certainly perceive it as, there are lots of mails that go out of here. But its reminder, reminder and almost nagging all the way up to the same day to remind them that it's happening tonight (...) (Håkonsen, 2013).

In addition to this, AFK are using some clubs to help with communication out to the rest of the subdivision.

(...) We have also used some clubs to help us with different things. If we take the player development that we have had the most help on, then, we used the club x a lot. (...) When this NFF Quality Club project comes and we are seeing it all in context, then, is nothing more in my personal world, then, that one has various satellite clubs around where they have a good working relationship with their clubs in their area, where we come out with our corps and stuff. It is at least a dream scenario for me (Johnsen, 2013).

“In addition, we have the club development zones which should be around the District of zones and inform the clubs and so they keep up to date” (Håkonsen, 2013).

As we can see much work is required for the success of AFK`s communications out to the clubs. While it may appear that the communication on the player and coach development is less resource demanding than with the leadership development.

Now we use nearly the website only, and it works. Its mail at the start but once we start working in projects and getting started with activity are all activity plans for the zone-and subdivision groups there. When we start the activity in August/September it goes out by e-mail if there are new age classes and new people and things like that, but as soon as we have established it, all communications are on the website and it works (Andersen, 2013).

5.1.3.2 Organization and communication in NRFK

NRFK is a subdivision consisting of 65 clubs and approximately 800 teams. It is the same as with AFK, many people that in one degree or another have an association with NRFK. Therefore, it is important that the organization of the subdivision is organized in a way that makes communication out to all clubs and teams well working. According to General Manager of NRFK there are differences in the subdivision on how the communications out to the clubs are working.

(...) You can say that when I communicate info out to everyone, then there are a number of recipients where the information stops. Thus, the information does not go on. In other clubs information to those who should have happens pretty quickly, and off course we have our suspicions about the clubs in question. Also, we have these quality clubs then. There it is something quite different. We have been visiting them two/three times, so we know a lot of people and a lot of people out there know us, (...) as more clubs joining this here, this will strengthen the communication. (...) in that project there are three levels, and the level 3 which is reserved for a small number of clubs. Then there should be a certain size at the clubs and there shall be a General Manager in the clubs. But then we see for ourselves and hope that in a few years, then we get five (geographical breakdown) such clubs which have a responsibility to spread communication, initiate training forum, indeed almost such mini subdivisions simply. And those are resource clubs that accept responsibility, so it's a dream for the project (Hals, 2013)

As we can see from the statements from Hals, the communication out to members in the clubs is good some places, but less good on other areas. It is quite interesting to read that Hals emphasizes the clubs that are qualified as a quality clubs through Quality Club project has a completely different efficiency in communication than what a lot of other clubs have. This communication is a bit of culture out in the subdivision. This is supported by the following statements

(...) it goes a bit of culture, also it goes a bit on how the recipient (first recipient), how it is organized, some have their emails automatically forwarded while others have it so that these emails are not being forwarded” (Hals, 2013).

(...) It's amazing the difference. How I feel about it, is that I have a very good contact with a good number of our clubs, there are also some clubs where I feel I do not have any contact at all, the clubs that I never get any response by (...) (Rød, 2013). As we see above, the culture in some clubs makes it difficult for the subdivision to reach out with their communication.

The Player-and coach developer are also facing some challenges when it comes to communication.

There are some clubs that are easier than others. And then there are some places that are more natural to ask than others. In relation to that is bigger clubs and they are more central placed. (...) and so we have a few places in the region we are rarely out on, and it's something we might be able to take criticism on. And then there's a little opposite that there is very little initiative among the clubs around and we notice both on courses, if we ask about courses, arrange for courses such as children's football night, then there's very little going on. (...) We are in a phase in which "what can we do to enhance it in the subdivision, which is fine with the clubs we have and bring up the places where it is not quite as good" (Råket, 2013).

As we see above, Råket narrows the focus on key clubs where the communication is efficient and effective. At the same time, we see that NRFK is working to improve communication among the clubs which today there is little communication with.

5.1.4.1 Leadership in AFK

AFK is visible in their region, but according to Johnsen, they aren't that visible as they might wish. *"We are out there with the clubs or a part, we're looking at club visits regardless of the one and the other, and we wish we could have been a lot more but that's all about resources"* (Johnsen, 2013)

We are very much on the supply side. We also try to leave it up to the clubs to take the initiative, for we are so few that we can't just drive around to all of them. But I think that with the Quality Club project, we need even more out to the clubs. But then we also get to do it so we are not going to push this down to some clubs (Håkonsen, 2013).

Player- and coach developer says that “*I'm a lot out in the clubs, where we have both the theory and practice of such coach forums*” (Andersen, 2013), but because of the resources he aren't enough out in the clubs.

I just said it to the General Manager and Yngvar that they must engage a coach developer here at 40-50% position, but it's too bad. We run courses, so they are out of the system after that. That's too bad (...) It's probably a bit of prioritization and resources. I should have made it, but the time does not extend (Andersen, 2013).

What we see here is that the regional subdivision is out among the clubs, but due to lack of resources, they are not enough among the clubs. This is supported by the following statement

To put it like that, the work tasks in a regional subdivision is enormous and broad. I say it's a little joke, but I mean it really, we can actually work around the clock if we want to. And it is expected to be around on different happenings, but occasionally we have to thank no to being around at venues (Johnsen, 2013).

5.1.4.2 Leadership in NRFK

As mentioned earlier, there are many people who are involved in one degree or another with NRFK. When NRFK therefore decides to introduce some strategic steps to enhance the work being done in the subdivision, it is important that NRFK is visible externally and that follow-up to the clubs that make "all" of the work in the region are present.

“We've been extremely many club visits. A round is three visits per club per year, so this takes time and it demands a good competence. You learn something each and every time and hopefully they learn something, too. We exchange something all the time (...)” (Rød, 2013).

As we can see from the statement above, NRFK is very visible among the clubs that participate in the Quality Club project. In addition to this, NRFK has been visible this winter by aiming at children's football night. “*This winter we have put a lot of resources on child football nights, and when we do it it's something which is very resource-intensive.*

It's Stig Arild who is running these courses and he has spent enormous time on this here" (Rød, 2013).

We see here that NRFK is very visible at the two areas. In addition to this, the player- and coach developer follows up with following statement regarding where the subdivisions is visible.

We can always be more visible, but what we want with the subdivisions team gatherings are one is the influence and impetus that we give the players, but at the same time we want to facilitate that coaches are getting there. (...). The main role is get these club coaches, and then we have in recent years been very proven to get them on the coach forums, and by this feel that we have succeeded a part when we have been lying between 15-30 coaches on each initiative over the past years. I feel it's a good way of working (Råket, 2013).

At the same time, there is little follow-up of newly qualified coaches out in the clubs.

There is no follow-up thus, so I'd love to have some resources out in the clubs. What one hopes is that there are such people out in the clubs, through a coach coordinator or coach developer, and they can follow what one has learned through C-license for example (Råket, 2013)

We see that the player-and coach developer are very engaged to be visible above the coaches in the various clubs in the region, and the agenda whit that is follow up by *"For there is so that no matter how we twist and turn on it according to our activity, it is out in the club's the development is happening"* (Råket, 2013).

5.1.5.1 Motivation and culture in AFK

When one is supposed to introduce strategic changes, you are dependent that the motivation among the staff is there to do what it requires. The motivation among the employees in AFK appears to be good, and that we can see from the following statement *"In principle (...), we are changing-and solution oriented"* (Johnsen, 2013). Håkonsen follows up with

Yes, I think the changes are often for the better (...). For example now with the change with this Quality Club project, I'm looking forward just to get started. I think this is so insanely good at both for both the regional subdivision and the clubs and it will restructure both the club's daily work and our/my workday, so it pleases me just to get started (Håkonsen, 2013).

As we can see from the statements above, the staff in AFK is in principal motivated to do the work required of them in the future. Especially Håkonsen emphasizes a great motivation related to the Quality Club project that, and this the major focus of NFF and AFK for this period. The culture of an organization has an effect on the implementation of a strategy. It is important that the culture of an organization is open to strategic changes, and that the strategic changes are adapted to the culture of the organization. The statements above support that the culture among employees are positive about changes that could arise with new strategies.

Clubs in the area are very crucial in the work that shall be done. In that regard, it may be useful to see what AFK are saying about the motivation and the culture that exists out there among the clubs. On question on how the motivation among the clubs is, General Manager in AFK claims that the motivation is mixed among the clubs.

Very mixed indeed. I feel that some clubs that I talked about previous are ambulatory and doing well, they show up on the initiatives. Then you have someone who is very good at complaining because they are unhappy and they think their own club, and we invite both to meetings, but also to clubs forum and they never show up. There are some who are very good at complaining, but never show up (Johnsen, 2013).

That with clubs does not show up on the initiatives that they are invited to “*It actually happens quite often*” according to (Håkonsen, 2013).

General Manager, Johnsen, follows up this with following statement

Yes, it does, and if it's something phenomenon in Sørlandet (nickname for Agder-region), I have no idea. But they are good at talking behind backs like that. And then you have the “boys clubs” that are small and we don't expect rather none from these clubs, they just want to play football and enjoy themselves.

“They're also not interested in developing themselves. Signing up and not meet up is something that many are struggling with the whole subdivisions in Norway, as well the society today is struggling with” (Håkonsen, 2013).

The “boys clubs” are also not the most “important” clubs for AFK According to General Manager. For AFK is more important that *“(…) the major and key clubs in both Aust- and Vest-Agder, and they are also the most important for us that they are attending”* (Johnsen, 2013).

“I believe that the motivation is higher than ever, but as I say the desire don` t match with the reality. You get to a point where the desire to win football games is bigger than development, and it is very natural” (Andersen, 2013), and on the question on the culture to develop themselves is like the motivation, good, answers Andersen *“Yes, I do”* (Andersen, 2013).

5.1.5.2 Motivation and culture in NRFK

Motivation and culture among the employees is important to introduce new strategic changes. Employees must be motivated to introduce change and there has to be a culture that doesn't work against the new changes. On the matter of motivation among employees was in attendance to do what the strategy plan says, then General Manager of NRFK claims following *“Yes, I feel that (...) we do not disagree with what's in there (...) We may need to prioritize even narrower we, the danger is that we put forward the strategy plan and aiming for everything”* (Hals, 2013).

We see here that Hals says that he thinks the staff is motivated to do what is required, and that they agree with the content of the strategy plan. At the same time, Hals also emphasizes that NRFK are a subdivision with limited resources need to prioritize some areas and not pursue the full strategy plan.

“(…) and then I got the opportunity in 2009 to apply for the position in the subdivision, and I don` t regret that” (Råket, 2013). As we see from the statement here, Råket doesn` t regret that he applied for the job in NRFK. On the basis of his presence at the interview, I

interpreted it that Råket is very motivated to do the job he has in the loop. At the same time, Hals and Rød elaborate the meaning Quality Club project has had on the motivation and culture among the employees of NRFK.

And the Quality Club project (...) it came in the nick of time. (...) It came at a crucial time, certainly for me. I got a motivation, and it lifted me quite a few notches this project, and it was a totally different work situation, with much more outward activity, much more out there among the clubs, much more gatherings. I know 100% more in football now than I did three years ago, even though I felt I knew terribly many then also (Hals, 2013).

(...) It came, after all, the sort of time when it had been focusing on development of football club of Norway, but we had already had a few years club development with Sunnmøre (...) for 3 years ago, I worked on a project in NFF, I came back here and then it was what should I do here, and I started with club development (...). Club developments are we constantly working with, but in a different way. So, we started this here and brought together a number of people, (...). I certainly feel that I can't lie down. We're on some central club development gatherings, I, Stig Arild and Erik, so we are constantly pushed and measured in terms of how it is here and how it is elsewhere, what do we do, what we don't, so we do not feel that lean us backwards (Rød, 2013).

We see that the culture among the employees in NRFK is geared towards development. The Quality Club project was established has been an important motivator, and that this project will enable the staff in the subdivision, “never can say them happy”, so they're in a culture where they are constantly working to get better.

At the same time that the statements above are saying little about the motivation and culture among the employees in NRFK it is important that we know something about motivation and culture among the clubs. As previously mentioned by Råket, it is out in the clubs the work is done on a daily basis. Therefore, it is interesting to see what the subdivision is saying about motivation amongst the clubs.

Certainly those who have participated to date in the project now have been really motivated. I don't quite know how to answer that, but I have a strong feeling that it's them who run the best today, the ones who have the most in order, there are those who have

already been performing and it is perhaps easiest to sign up when you feel like you have some oversight. In a club where there are very much flow, it is very difficult to say, "We're going to do that here as well, we don't have time for that here". So, the motivation among those who have been with has been very high and it only increases while they stay on. There are a few clubs that should have been on, but which have not found their place in the (...) (Rød, 2013).

(...)We have a two/three clubs that have started up, but for various reasons have fallen off, but around 80-90% of the clubs that started with this is still with us. I am very impressed by the skill and enthusiasm in the clubs, it is a formidable amount of work that is added to the clubs (...) (Hals, 2013).

When I asked them about a reward system for the clubs that fulfill the demands in this project, Hals said this

You get supplied with targeted and individual expertise, you get a collection of physical evidence such as flags, pins, the ability to use the logo of the quality club to what you may want, and that is really what is in this here. And the effect of it being someone other than yourself who have said that you are good at something, the effect of being seen is much larger than I nearly had dreamed of. The pride of being able to wear the badge, it is so great that there are perhaps some of the things that have puzzled me or touched me the most. How great the effect of being seen, that someone from the outside have said that you are good (Hals, 2013).

We see that the motivations among the clubs are high, at least among the clubs who have participated/participates in the Quality Club project. According to player-and coach developer in NRFK, the motivation for coach development could be better, but on players development there are some clubs that have good motivation in their work.

Perhaps it might be better on the coach development section. And we might have put up a run in the federation that we might get too few on courses, that maybe it is too extensive. I understand that one would want to pick up the most possible on course. I think personally that we could perhaps have been better to get us even more through the smaller courses, because as soon as they read the 72 hours that is now, with the society it has

become hard to get many on the courses (...). Player development there is some clubs that are very good and have very good people to develop the players on. It may well be that some people are too eager if one considers the one and two players simultaneously. But I find that a lot of positive, very much positive. A large number of dedicated coaches and a lot of sensible non-pusher coaches that don't push too much, but facilitate for the players (Råket, 2013).

We see from the statement from Råket, that the situation at player and coach development is much the same as on the club's development. They lack some motivation and culture on development on coach development, while the player development there is pretty much good motivation and a good culture to engage in this work.

5.1.6.1 Goals in AFK

As mentioned in the choice of strategy, AFK has chosen some areas to focus on in their work.

“We use the strategy plan that has been adopted at the Federations assembly, so we have the same values and goals. But then we pick out of this strategy plan where we think we have improvement potential, and where we want to be better” (Johnsen, 2013)

We see that AFK has set itself the goal to become better at educating leaders.

Yes (...) I think it's very fair to say that we focus on leadership education if we are to give priority to some of these things (...) Before Yngvar began we were very bad on educational course for leaders. When Yngvar began we had dialogue, (...) now we have had educational course for leaders (Johnsen, 2013)

We see that the development has grown tremendously with the focus they have had, as well as AFK have evaluated their work on the player and coach development.

It has been a major development. Particularly in relation to leaders development and various meeting places also. (...) But also like that in terms of how we're working with the strategy plan. We had, an evaluation of the player and coaching development work here, and it ended the end up with that we went through the strategy plan from NFF, and

ended up with our own strategy plan. We wrote down a lot of factors and criteria we should work with, and then we tried to prioritize which ones were important and which were less important (Håkonsen, 2013)

We see from the evaluation to AFK, that this has made coach development is an important part of player development.

“So it is a part of the strategy plan this that coach development is an important bit of player development. (...) For anyone who are coaches in children's football should certainly have the first part the course in UEFA C-license” (Andersen, 2013)

5.1.6.2 Goals in NRFK

The way I interpreted the interview with Hals and Rød, the evaluation on the basis of the Quality Club project is how many clubs that conduct the various levels in the project.

“The aim is that x-number clubs shall through 1, 2 and 3 level there, and as a result, there will be other areas, we also need to prioritize. When we make demands to the clubs we must deliver in accordance with these requirements” (Hals, 2013). As we see from the statement to the General Manager in NRFK, we see the work they are doing is aimed at Quality Club project, and as I have understood it the evaluation of the work is seen in relation to the Quality Club project. On player and coach development the goal is concentrated against children’s football and football coaches.

Our priority has been the children's football, and it's not player development in that way. It goes with the recruitment and good activity in children's football in a way which in turn can help to improve the activity and larger width, and for that reason you have player development. (...) As said 2012 and 2013 then there is children's football, 2013 – 2014 we want to have more focus on the youth football coaches. It goes on to greater activity. In the children's football is it to get away the result focus and perhaps create what the equality and differentiation principle is the central points of the children's football. So it depends how we manage to get them to understand this, for there are many eager coaches. So in a sense you have to get the clubs to come to the meetings and not the club coaches. Is it a club coach we may have to do the same next year, but if a club leader appear he can in a way affect next year and the year after there again (Råket, 2013).

5.2 Challenges and success criteria's with implementation of strategy

In this section, I have chosen to merge the barriers against implementation of strategy for what I see as challenges during implementation of the strategy.

5.2.1 Challenges in AFK

When asked what AFK perceive as the biggest challenges on implementation of strategy, AFK responded with the following

The time pressure to people. It's to get people involved in the initiatives that we host. It's getting people to prioritize it to get enough people on the measures we host (...). It seems it might be the biggest challenge. We have gotten bigger and bigger competition now football. It happens something everywhere. The kids have options everywhere, and parents are busy with work. I have the impression that the amount of voluntary work is becoming less and less of as well. Parents have a lot of money and would rather pay their way out of it (Håkonsen, 2013).

According to the General Manager of AFK, they also have a challenge with the clubs in the region.

(...) We have a challenge when it comes to our clubs. We use the Web, and Yngvar with facebook, then we inform the 74 clubs. So we experience that the person who is the recipient of the mail from NFF or AFK is not forwarding in its own system, and that's a challenge. We cannot communicate with 1187 coaches, officials and parents contact from here. There may be a challenge, in that someone from your own club would like to take part in various initiatives, but they have not heard anything about it, and they haven't looked at the website, or facebook (Johnsen, 2013).

Håkonsen highlights that those working in the clubs have very much to do, so the subdivision must point out the importance of the information sent out.

It's a bit of our challenges as well, but we can't choose what to prioritize. We need to work with clubs to try to say that it is important what we are doing, but they're sitting in

their own club and they have 1000's of important thing too. I submit my courses to those where it is important with everything else, how important it is that this is forwarded, it is quite heavy matter that there (Håkonsen, 2013).

On the question about these challenges with the clubs could be the result of the culture in the clubs, Johnsen and Håkonsen came with following statements

Some clubs on the management site are very engaged about it, they are online all the time. So can one use the example of club X, where the Manager and the Board have said that this is important to us and this is a priority for us. Now they are participating in leadership education, and they shall be in arenas where the subdivisions invite to. They're usually with two, three and four people to these initiatives. While other clubs are probably much of what Yngvar described, in that they have only themselves, the time pressure and organizing the one and the other, and maybe we'll have a challenge in that people are prioritizing away something (Johnsen, 2013).

So it's not going to get away from the challenge, it is the staff turnover as it is, that it is so frequent, that managers do not sit very long. Thereby there is a good replacement, and then disappears the information with those who also goes out. You then have all the time to make sure the new ones are just as up to date, and it is a challenge that too (Håkonsen, 2013).

“Yes, I feel so” (Johnsen, 2013), is Johnsen`s perception that it is easier to get out the information among the clubs who have hired a General Manager. Player and coach developer in AFK also faces some challenges in its work.

No, the biggest challenges are ... Practical it is this here with the capacity. We have a model that works very well. There is great enthusiasm to get into the model. The practical challenges are to pick out the best and have good processes on the selection bit you can say, when to enter and when new subdivision groups should be taken out. (...). I find the girl as a challenge. There are far too few and small environments in relation to development (Andersen, 2013).

Above we see the challenges Andersen experience on player development. In addition to this, Andersen is experiencing some challenges on coach development.

The biggest challenge is to get the coaches on courses in general. I'm from Oslo, and I think it's harder here really. I don't know why, and it may well be something with what we've done well, but I find it hard to get participants for courses. It is on upwards this also actually, but it's probably the biggest challenge to get them in, get them on course, such as the first children's football course. (...) I have great appreciation for the priority of time, but then I really think clubs need to encourage coaches to cut out a training with their team and rather go on the course, there are 4 nights for such a course. So that's the biggest challenge, to get coaches in courses (Andersen, 2013).

As we can see, there are various challenges for the player and coach developer in AFK.

5.2.2 Challenges in NRFK

Yes, we can say that when it came to the Quality Club project when we launched it, we was a bit ahead of our time, so we found out we had to have an appliance that acted like this. Then we diminished a committee that we did not have before. This was as a consequence of the focus on the Quality Club project. There sits the dedicated people who have received it "into the skin now", as Rød as the administrative leader. The committee plus the two of us are operating the project forward. And it requires quite a lot of effort and commitment from us, and it requires a rather large commitment from the clubs. And certainly if there is commitment from both sides, it will be a success and we feel that it has been (Hals, 2013).

We see that the Quality Club project requires much from those who work with it. In addition to this, Rød emphasize that this could not have been conducted without external help.

But in addition to that, we had to have some people who wanted to be in on this here and an appliance, so we had to have the resources for this cost quite a bit. On the project here we have an external collaborator named Sparebanken Møre, and which has been absolutely necessary to bring accomplish this here (...). It costs money. But taken together, it's that we found the right person who wanted to be in on this here and that's the

key here. If you haven't had it would have been finished already. We've been at extremely many club visits. Such a round is three visits per club per year, so this here takes time and it takes a good competence (...). Take the coach development for example. (...) We have to try to add a little plan for how we want this, and this winter here we have focused on children football nights, and when we do it then it is something which is very resource-intensive. It's Stig Arild who is running these courses and he has applied hugely with time on this here. And it is clear, then it may be other things that must give way little of the focus because we are, after all, only a few people who work here (Rød, 2013).

Now we have seen some of the challenges associated with the Quality Club project. There are also challenges related to the work of player and coach development.

One of the challenges has been to bring in the understanding I would like them (the coaches) to work on. As mentioned, the way I want them to work on is very radical, where you're thinking only on an individual basis (...). (...) but through the fact that a work on an individual basis, they have an easier for understanding the game and makes it easier to get by one on one, for example, or two against one with the understanding. Understanding is a challenge (Råket, 2013).

Thus one sees that it is a challenge for Råket to get the coaches to work on the basis of his thoughts. Then I followed the issue of the culture in some of the clubs can be contradictory to the thoughts of Råket.

Both yes and no. There is improvement in some clubs but then it pops up problems in other clubs. But it pops up some types that you are unable to change the mindset of and they answer for itself on its own terms, at the same time they're very results-oriented on player development. Then there's in some club environment idea "in our time we did it like that", but then it is incredibly important to update itself (...) (Råket, 2013).

We see that in some clubs they might not have the will to adapt their work to Råket's desire, thus it can be a challenge to get them to work in the way NRRFK want.

I think the selection is there and it is going to be there, don't think one can do much with it. One must influence through subdivision team gatherings, getting them to take part in discussion forums, it is putting forward a sketch and a thought, go out to practice it and

then take the discussion in the hope that there will be changes in behavior among the clubs (Råket, 2013).

As we see above, Råket need to select out some clubs to focus on, but the most important is to get clubs to participate in initiatives arranged by NRFK.

5.2.3 Success criteria´s in AFK

In order to get a better understanding of the implementation work in the subdivisions one would have to also review the success criteria with implementation of strategy after looking at the challenges with implementing strategy.

Based on how I experience it, the things we have been successfully with, we have sown in, that we have reached with our communications, that we have got with the rest of us who want to be in on the initiatives, the famous “grapevine” works, we hit on the theme and what we intend to do, I feel (Johnsen, 2013).

(...) requires quite a bit of work for the success of things. It is not enough to send out an invitation two months in advance and then lot of people appear. There are reminders and almost a bit like nagging like some clubs certainly perceive it as, there are lots of e-mails that go out of here. But its reminder, reminder and almost all the way up to the same day to remind them that it's happening tonight. But clearly the club general managers they are over their heads in the works that they have so much to do (Håkonsen, 2013).

Both Johnsen and Håkonsen confirmed that it is important the way the initiatives are being sold in to the clubs have an influence on the success of implementation, “Yes” (Johnsen, 2013).

5.2.4 Success criteria's in NRFK

I think now that we succeed in those areas we have managed to sell our product in a way that makes it seem interesting and exciting for those who receive this, and it is yet another of the success criteria for the Quality Club project. We're not going out and forcing clubs to join it and there's the clubs themselves who come to us and say they want to be participating, and there's a very big difference. And all the clubs that are participating for now at least, they want to stay in. This is something new and exciting, and it is the success criteria number 1 (Hals, 2013).

And all the clubs involved, they are their own project managers. It is not we who are project managers for all the clubs, it is themselves, but we have a plan for how it should be done (...) in some areas we may well succeed. We are just like everyone else. Some areas we succeed very well and others not so well we succeed. But we certainly have a lot of expertise here. We do not quit here, either, so there is a lot of knowledge here that maybe some other subdivisions have a lot of personnel changes, and it may be too much replacements so that you don't have the continuity, in which case one would have to start over. I think we're good at that. Also, I feel that we have relatively good credibility among our clubs (Rød, 2013).

To follow up on this with credibility, Hals said that

Yes, and when the subdivisions in middle-Norway (Sogn og Fjordane, Sunnmøre, Nordmøre og Romsdal and Trøndelag) was a group, and then we made a survey, and without that I should boast too much, we came very well out of the survey when it came to the reputation and credibility. This, with expertise, we came out well and we scored highest of these subdivisions in middle-Norway. And I believe, the continuity among us who are here, we are confident in what we're up to (Hals, 2013).

According to Råket, the following criteria's is attributed to the successful implementation of the strategy the following

When it comes to the boy's side we have some good vintages now with MFK that has been working well with over time. The players have gotten early references on what is

happening outside our own region both nationally and internationally. There have been good teams and good environment in which pull each other up. I imagine over time that this is very positive, that there are many people who have the same intention. Other reasons why we succeed are good club organization and Akerakademiet must have their share of credit, too. When they started in 2007 we had no one on the national team. (...) Now we see over time that we have very many of the different year groups and it derives from good development over time in the academy, I suppose. There are a lot of positive. And that was one of the intentions as well. The intention was to bring together the best players to weekly gatherings, but at the same time they wanted through these gatherings to get the club coaches in to observe. When you see the very youngest who are up there now, so it's a 20-40 parents who observe these trainings. (...) It's not just about collecting the best, but it's also about driving coach development in this environment as well. Thus, we are positive to this (Råket, 2013).

Above we see some of the reasons why the subdivision has succeeded on player development, coach development and there are the following reasons why they succeed

It's a sort of coach development when you have these coach forums, which you receive with the multitude of coaches and where you might get an awareness of differences in the clubs. So it has been very positive in the two cities in our region, in relation to training (...). We have succeeded with the C-license in our subdivision, and also, we have succeeded in that we have been educated many on UEFA B and A in recent years, through we had a top club that have taken huge responsibility. They have a large number of employees who have a need for that competence. (...) We have also succeeded in relation to the C-license through two great supervisors in Kristiansund and Aker Akademiet here in Molde that has done a fantastic job, and in relation to it with recruitment of people, but also in relation to the accomplishment. It's been good sessions (Råket, 2013).

6. Discussion

6.1 The implementation process

I had expected that the subdivisions used the strategy plan in their work. I expected that the subdivisions could not adapt the strategy plan to their local conditions. At the same time I expected that the subdivisions could have challenges associated with communicating with clubs. I expected that the subdivisions would imply that it is a challenge in that they are few employees in terms of workloads. I had also expected that competency among the staff was good

The first part we need to focus on is the choice of strategy. As mentioned in the theory chapter, the focus will be on the goals and values in the subdivisions. One must also see how they are using the

In the statements we can see that both subdivisions have a strong position in their geographic regions. It appears also that both subdivisions uses the strategy plan as a superior guide in their work, and on the basis of this plan, they select out their focus areas. One could therefore argue that the strategy plan is adapted to local conditions in both subdivisions. AFK has also prepared a special plan for the work with the player and coach development that is based on the strategy plan to NFF. One might also argue in that with both subdivisions using the strategy plan as a superior guide in their work, that the subdivisions identify themselves with the goals and values of NFF.

This is also reflected in the statements. One sees that AFK have high focus on leadership development, while NRFK have high focus on club development and especially coach development. It is also by NRFK emphasized that the gatherings with other regions have an impact on the choice of focus in the work being done. It is also said that the strategy plan is very well entrenched among the employees, and this may be because the subdivisions are helping to develop the strategy plan as it is expressed in the statements. My understanding of the choice of strategy in football subdivisions is based mainly on that the subdivisions must use the strategy plan from NFF. In the context of the statements that were presented, this is to some extent correct. As mentioned in the statements, they use the strategy plan from NFF, but with room for local adaptation of the plan. It turns out that the subdivisions are more “free” to adapt the strategy plan for own use, than my understanding

of this was from the start. According to the theory, it is pointed out that the choice of strategy must reflect the organizational goals. As said, the strategy plan is developed by NFF centrally, and then it's up to the subdivisions how they use the strategy plan. It's mentioned in the statements that the subdivisions identifies themselves with the values and goals that are presented in the strategy plan, and this is according to the theory a basic premise when selecting a strategy. One could therefore say that both subdivisions have the same goals and visions as the ones presented in the strategy plan. Both subdivisions emphasize leadership development as a focus area in their work. This can be seen in the context of the theory in the sense that both subdivisions have chosen their way with focus area that fits well with the organization's goals. For NFF as an organization, leadership development through clubs development is a key area of focus in their work, and this we find in the choice of strategy in both of the subdivisions. After one have looked at choice of strategy, it would be interesting to see how the organization allocates the resources to the choice of strategy.

Resource allocation

The first thing that is apparent when one reads statements that are submitted on resource allocation, one can see that both subdivisions are doing a lot of work by themselves but that they rely on an instructor corps to conduct everything. From the statements, one can understand that AFK have too few employees according to what the General Manager wants. There are also too few employees in NRFK and this is probably a lot of the reason why both the subdivisions accentuates the use of instructors in their work. At the same time it's interesting to see that NRFK highlights that they could happily used external instructors even more on leadership development. Although they are few employees, by looking into the statements, the competence among employees is good. According to AFK the competence on leadership development is very good. This competence can be a resource according to the theory. This type of competence can be seen as an expertise, and therefore this could have a positive influence on implementation of strategy. A resource may be in accordance with the theory be equipment. In this context, one can see that access to pitches as equipment. Both subdivisions say in their statements that they are very well developed on the facilities, and therefore the physical resource that is needed in the strategic work is there. The subdivisions points out the importance of regional construction consultant in the development of facilities in their regions.

I expected that the subdivisions would imply that it is a challenge in that they are few employees in terms of workloads. I had anyway expected that competency among the staff was good, and this is something that is confirmed in the statements. This competence can be seen in relation to the factor on staff in the 7-s framework. This competence as well as the use of external instructors can be seen as allocation of resources into the focus areas that has been chosen in the strategy. Since they are so few employees, the subdivisions are dependent to their instructors, but one can see that it can be a challenge to get enough instructors. Especially on the player and coach development in AFK it was a challenge to get instructors, and I had not expected that NRFK should have almost twice as many instructors in this field in relation to AFK. Perhaps this could relate back to the attitudes has towards the subdivisions. It could appear that NRFK has a higher value among their clubs, than what AFK has. As mentioned in the findings, NRFK has a high trustworthiness among their clubs. This can again influence the motivation from persons in the clubs to involve as instructors for the subdivisions. I was expecting that it could be a challenge with facilities in the subdivisions, but looking at the statements this is not the situation in AFK and NRFK.

In theory, it emerges that how one allocates resources affect how the implementation will be. According to the theory, it is important that resources are used on the focus areas that the organization has pointed out. Both subdivisions have high focus on leadership development, and in the light of the theory, they use their resources in this area. We see that NRFK uses external instructors on leadership development. In the context of the theory, one could argue that the external instructors are in position of a form for expertise, and therefore, this is a resource for subdivisions. NRFK uses a lot of resources on its Quality Club project, and AFK have spent much time on leadership development. Among other things, the subdivisions have in recent years hired their own people in charge of club development. This hiring of people with responsibility of club development can be seen in relation to the 7-s framework. The first we see is that there has been a change in structure, and this is in accordance to the factor on structure. Then we see that this type of structure can be seen in relation to the factor on strategy. In relation to this factor, one could claim that this new structure is the way to communicate the strategic direction the subdivisions want to move in.

The subdivisions have had development on the facilities the recent years, and this can be seen as a resource in relation to equipment. For making it possible for the player and coach developer to work with developing players and coaches, the subdivisions need to have access to facilities around in their region. On the development of facilities it is apparent that there has been an allocation of resources from NFF central with them hiring construction consultants with regional responsibility. This can be seen in relation to the structure factor in the framework. With the hiring of construction consultants, the can be seen as a new way of structuring the organization, and this will again help the subdivisions to develop new facilities. With the information on resource allocation and facilities one can claim that both subdivisions have focused their resources both internally and through the use of external resources on focus areas themselves have chosen. One could therefore claim that the resources are used towards the focus areas in the organization. Thus the common mindset will continue from the NFF central to the selection of NFF's strategy in the subdivisions, and now, resource allocation to those areas as aimed to focus on. After looking at how the organization allocates resources, it will be interesting to see how the organizing of the organization and communication functions in the subdivisions.

Organization and communication

One can see that the dialogue between AFK and the clubs is good but that there is not always agreement between the subdivision and the clubs about what should be done. There has also been reorganization and by the Quality Club project, the communication will be better. One sees in NRFK that communications with the quality club are very good, but communication with other clubs are not always as good. The information stops at some clubs, according to NRFK. According to NRFK, it goes a bit of the culture with communication among clubs. It also appeared the fact that it is natural for NRFK to prioritize certain clubs in player development, while the communication in player development in AFK works well by the use of the homepage on the internet. AFK argues that the reason why they have success of communication in those areas they do, is due to a lot of work with follow-up the invitations to initiatives presented by AFK. Both subdivisions are hoping for in the future that through the Quality Club project, it will develop clubs that have a responsibility for their geographic area.

By looking at the statements, one can see that communication is much divided. It seems that the communication could be successful in those areas where the clubs themselves are interested in what is communicated from the subdivisions. On the basis of the statements, one will see that there is a lot of work in order to succeed in their communications, both through reminders in AFK and Quality Club project in NRFK. At the same time, one sees the importance the Quality Club project has for the communication in the subdivisions. This may be because the subdivisions are at many club visits, and therefore, it can be attached to a closer relationship with the clubs. It emerges that communication on player development is something that works well in AFK. There, they communicate through the homepage of AFK on the internet, and one can therefore see the current players for those teams will be outreach to information from AFK, so this works well.

According to the theory on organization, it is important that there is a connection between strategy and structure. As mentioned earlier, the leadership development through the Quality Club project is a priority area in the subdivisions. The structure with hiring an employee that has the responsibility for club development can be related to the theory, in that way that there is a relation between strategy and structure. Therefore one could say that the subdivisions have divided the employees into specific tasks. A look at the statements from NRFK that already have the Quality Club project, it is desirable in the future to bring out an arrangement in which level 3 clubs have a responsibility that turns them into a link between the subdivision and the rest of the clubs in a specific part of the region. This type of arrangement is also something that AFK wants in the future, but they have already had help from club x to some of their work. This can also be seen in relation to the theory on organization. It seems that the subdivisions are working towards a future organizing that is a little different than what it is now, as we see in the statements. This can also be seen in relation to the factor on structure in the 7-s framework. This way of new structure in the future can make it easier for the subdivisions to coordinate the strategic work with the help of the level 3 quality clubs.

One sees in the light of the theory that it is desirable in the future to pursue the organizational structure by using some clubs as a help in the work that the subdivisions does. AFK has divided their region into different zones, and this can be seen as a structure that fits the strategy that the subdivision has opted out. There are two factors that are important in the theory, and the first one goes that the employees must have their own

special work assignments. As previously mentioned, one can see that both subdivisions have one employee that works with club development. It will, therefore, in the context of theory be clear that both subdivisions have structured the work in a way that makes the staff in this area have their own job tasks. Both subdivisions have clear responsibilities to their employees, and therefore, it can be seen that the subdivisions has structured themselves after the strategy they've chosen.

In theory, it emerges that communications can provide better performance. With the help of a close communication, there may be an effective communication and this can motivate the staff. In the statements it emerges that the communication is good with some clubs in the region, while with other clubs there are less good communication. In the light of the theory, it seems that the clubs that are better on communication with the subdivisions is also the clubs where the motivation efforts are at a high level. Among other things, NRFK highlights that clubs who participate in the Quality Club project there is good communication with, and these are the clubs that have voluntarily signed up for this project. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that there is a certain amount of motivation among those participating clubs. One sees also that NRFK are at several club visits in a year and because of this there have been developed deeper relationships with clubs and, therefore, the communication between the subdivision and the club can be at a closer level. This accords well with the theory on communication, in that there is a tight communication between the subdivision, and specially the clubs that participates on the Quality Club project. One could claim that based on this findings the communication in the future can increase when more clubs have been participating in the Quality Club project. Now that we have discussed organizing and structure, and how the communication works, it will be interesting to see how the subdivisions behave as a leadership in their region.

Leadership

One sees that both subdivisions are out visiting the clubs, but it seems that NRFK is more out among the clubs as of now. This is mainly due to the Quality Club project that NRFK has in progress, while AFK argues that the club visits will increase when they start with the Quality Club project. It is promoted also by AFK that they are on the supply side above the clubs, but it's up to the clubs themselves to take the initiative. This is as previously mentioned how it is done in the Quality Club project. One sees that due to lack of resources, AFK can't take part on all the happenings that they are invited to attend. One

can see that the player and coach developers in the subdivisions are often out among the clubs. It is promoted also by NRFK that they've had a focus on children's football last winter, and this is a very resource-intensive work that is carried out by the player and coach developer in NRFK on his own. In NRFK, the coaches are invited to coach's forum in conjunction with the player initiatives, and this is a way of being visible above the club coaches. In both of the subdivisions, one sees that from the statements there is little follow up to the coaches and this is a challenge for the subdivisions. AFK emphasizes the desire to hire a coach supervisor, whereas in NRFK it's pointed out the importance of having coach coordinators out in clubs.

A look at the statements one can see that there is a difference between the subdivisions in the visibility they have out in the region. The difference is probably much that NRFK has been working on the Quality Club project for a while, while AFK are due to start up in the fall. Both subdivisions are struggling with following up the coaches in the clubs, and they have different wishes about how this should be solved. One sees also that NRFK has chosen a form of organizational structure that invites the coaches on the subdivision initiatives for the players. This way of organizing is highly related to the structure factor in the 7-s framework. By this way of organizing this, the subdivision could be more visible on a resource-efficient way in terms of whether NRFK where visiting clubs all the time. This organizing in the subdivision could improve the communication with the coaches both in terms of how they work, but also in terms of how NRFK would like them to work. To begin with, one can see according to the theory that the subdivisions have employees with expertise in their areas. Through this expertise, one can claim that the employees have good understanding on their work on the field, as well as one can argue that this competency and understanding among employees can make it easier to coordinate the work. See these statements in light of the theory, the subdivisions appear to be evident on what they want to achieve.

Through the Quality Club project it is as previously mentioned distinct requirements for clubs, and one can therefore argue that management in the subdivisions in this case appears to be evident above the clubs. It also appears that according to the theory, the leaders should take an active and visible role in the introduction of strategic grip. According to the statements, one can see that NRFK is active and visible in the Quality Club project through the club visits. AFK is a visible above clubs, through forums and

courses. Through this, one could claim that the subdivisions appear to be evident in its leadership above parts of the clubs. By this kind of leadership, the subdivisions can be seen to be clear above the clubs on what they would like to be the focus of the work being done. At the same time, it may be construed as if the subdivisions do not have an equally active and visible role above all clubs. As previously mentioned, it is the clubs themselves who must take the initiative to participate in these initiatives from the subdivisions. Other clubs who do not choose to participate in these initiatives, they may see the subdivisions as not active and visible in the same extent as the clubs in the quality project clubs. This could perhaps be a big challenge for the subdivisions in the future. As mentioned earlier, the subdivisions is active in the sense that they are sending out lots of information, but it can seem as if the culture of some clubs don't bother to do something about the invitations from the subdivisions.

On player development, the subdivisions are perhaps even more active and visible. This is due to the player and coach developers have clear initiatives through, among others, subdivisions teams and coach courses. On these initiatives arranged by the subdivisions, the subdivisions are visible above the players and coaches, also with the help from the instructors. According to the theory of leadership, it is important that key personnel have expertise at their field. It will be natural to see the instructors as expertise in certain fields, and this is also the reason why they are instructors.

Still, it's been mentioned that the subdivision cannot have as close contact with everyone, and therefore they must focus on some clubs and environments. Then it could be perceived among the clubs that they don't are being prioritized with the subdivisions not being very visible and active above them. Both subdivisions have a distinct challenge according to their visibility and how active they are above the coaches. NRFK's solution is by inviting the coaches into forums in connection with the initiatives for players around the subdivision teams. In light of the theory it can be seen as NRFK is trying to appear to be active and visible above club coaches, but it can also be seen as NRFK here is trying to act as a clear leadership, but also allow individual adaptation through discussions among club coaches. As mentioned in the statements, there are some club environments that work in a way that is not the way the subdivision want them to work on. It will be a challenge for the subdivisions of how they should act on how to deal with these kinds of club environments. All I all, the subdivisions can be seen to be visible above some parts of the clubs, but it

could be a challenge to be visible in every part in the region. Because of this challenge to be visible above all clubs, the subdivisions are focusing on some certain clubs as we will see in the next part.

Now we have seen how the subdivisions act as leaders in their regions, and it would therefore be interesting to see how the motivation and culture is among the employees and the clubs in the regions.

Motivation and culture

One can see by looking at the statements that both subdivisions are experiencing that the motivation for the work to be done is positive. In particular, they emphasize the motivation to begin with the Quality Club project in AFK, and the importance the project have had in NRFK. On the other hand, it is experience that there is very varied motivation among the clubs. Some clubs are very interesting on participating on the initiatives from the subdivision, while at other clubs there is experienced little motivation. Among other things, it is pointed out that the clubs that participate in the Quality Club project is really motivated, and motivation rises as the project progresses.

It is highlighted that especially in AFK there is a problem in that many sign up on initiatives but don't show up. There are clubs that exist only because football it's fun, and thus do not have the developmental focus. Therefore, focus to the subdivisions is on the major clubs and key clubs in the region, and it is essential that these clubs are participating on the various initiatives. One sees a slight difference on the subdivisions when it comes to motivation to engage in player and coach development. AFK is mentioned that the motivation is higher than ever and this motivation may affect the focus of the coaches during matches. In NRFK, it's emphasized that motivation on the coach's development could be improved, and there is a problem with getting coaches to participate on the courses. When one look at the culture among employees, one can see that in AFK they are change and solution-oriented, and the focus is that change are often for the better. One can see that in NRFK they feel that they can't "relax" and be satisfied with the situation today. They are constantly evaluated on their work at gatherings, and they are therefore pushed forward in their work. It appears, therefore, as a distinct development culture in the subdivision. Among the clubs it appears that based on the statements, there is a positive

culture in many of the clubs to engage in player and coach development, but that the focus can be tied too much to the individual players. At the same time, it stands out from NRFK that there is much positivity and many dedicated people working on player development. According to the theory, the leadership should motivate the employees to do their best. In this context, the leadership will be the employees in the subdivisions, and the staff will be the ones with tasks out in the clubs. Both subdivisions appear to be very motivated to the work they are doing, and especially the motivation towards the Quality Club project is high. In the light of the theory, then it may be seen as the motivation of the employees is high because of the responsibility they have in their own region. Having responsibility for something is being highlighted as a motivator in theory, and as previously mentioned, the subdivisions are in the position to change the strategy plan and adapt it to their own local environments.

It is mentioned that the subdivisions presents their work on gatherings, and in that regard, their work will be evaluated by other subdivisions. If the work is good, this can achieve recognition in their field and this may, according to the theory, be a motivator. One could therefore say that the motivation among the employees in the subdivisions is at a high level. Still, the motivation among the clubs is more varied. Some clubs are not very motivated to take part in the initiatives arranged by the subdivisions. This may be due to a lack of development-oriented culture in the clubs. It may be the case that not all clubs have development of their organization as a high prioritized area in the club. Therefore, it may be the case that the strategy the subdivisions has selected does not match with those clubs. In the light of the theory, it is highlighted that the strategy the subdivisions choose should match the culture of the organization. The clubs who have a good motivation for their work is the clubs that is development-oriented, and one could then argue that it is a cultural difference among clubs in the region. One can see it in the context of the theory, that there is variability among attitudes toward the initiatives by the subdivisions, and this affects the motivation among the clubs. These attitudes may also describe the “challenge” the subdivisions are experiencing by clubs signing up to initiatives, but don’t turn up.

On player and coach development one can see that the motivation is high. Particularly in player development, this can be described in the context of the theory that one can achieve greater recognition among the surroundings by performing well on player development. This desire for recognition among the surroundings can also be a factor that explains why

some coaches may focus more on individual players and the result, rather than focusing on the entire group of players and development instead of result. At the same time, it may be that there are a lot of players who want to be the best, and in light of the theory it can be seen as a motivator for the players in that they want to self-fulfill themselves. This can increase the motivation for the coaches by having a group that holds this kind of motivation, and one would imagine that this should make it easier to get coaches on education courses arranged by the subdivisions. By coaches attending such courses, they can develop new social relations and achieve higher knowledge, which in turn can provide increased self-realization. This corresponds well with the theory, but probably the coaches have little time to participate on these initiatives, as presented in the statements. It can be seen returning to the culture among the coaches. The attitudes of education through courses organized by the subdivisions may not be good enough, and therefore, these courses could not be prioritized.

At the same time looking at the statements, it appear as the culture of the subdivisions is good, in the sense that they are positive to changes and that they are constantly working to develop themselves. Include that the attitudes toward change is positive, it seems as if the culture of the subdivisions is strong, and this may in turn be a motivator for the employees. As mentioned, there is among the clubs often a positive culture for development. At the same time there are so many different clubs in the subdivisions, that there will be some clubs that the culture in the club do not match the strategy to the subdivision. It can then be a “conflict” between the subdivision and the club. As mentioned earlier, there are certain clubs that are almost or completely absent, and in the context of the theory this could develop a lack of relationships between the subdivision and the club, and this prevent the strategic work of the subdivision. One could say that the culture in the subdivisions is positive to new strategies, but there is a challenge with culture among the clubs. It appears that there are some clubs that don't have a culture that reflect the choice of strategy.

Goals on different levels

Now we must see goals on different levels in the subdivisions. As previously mentioned, the subdivisions identify themselves with the strategy plan from NFF. Therefore, it is natural that the subdivisions have some of the same goals as NFF, and this one sees in the statements from AFK. At the same time, one sees in the statements that there are a lot of similarities between AFK and NRFK. AFK focuses on leadership development, for they had a potential for improvement on that area. The goals of AFK have therefore been to improve the competence to the leaders in the clubs, and this is done through educational courses for leaders in the clubs. NRFK focuses very much on the Quality Club project that they are as previously mentioned, the first subdivision in Norway that have been doing this project for a few years. The goal of NRFK have therefore been to get x number of clubs through the various levels of the Quality Club project. In addition, one can see that both subdivisions are focusing on coach development, because this is important for improving player development. As shown by the statements of NRFK, there has been a focus on improving the activity of children's football through courses for coaches who belong to this segment. This is supported by AFK by their desire for courses in the UEFA C-license for coaches in children's football.

One sees from the statements that the subdivisions have different goals in their organizations. Essentially there are goals related to education of leaders and player- and coaches. According to the theory, it is important to define different goals at different levels in the organization. As it appears in the statements, it is perceived that the goals are broken down to different parts of the work of the subdivisions. The subdivisions are very clear on how they want to achieve these goals, and this accord with the theory. In theory, it is submitted that the organization must be clear on how to achieve the different goals, and based on the statements one can see that courses of leaders and coaches are the subdivisions way of achieving these goals. It appears that these courses are used to communicate the goals of the subdivision out to course participants, and on the basis of this, the goals of the subdivisions should be implemented the daily work out in the region. One could therefore say that the subdivisions has different goals on different levels in the organization, based on goals on leadership development and goals on coach development that will influence player development.

6.2 Challenges with implementation of strategy

In the first part of this subchapter, one will have to see the challenges in relation to theory on external barriers. After that, one will see the challenges in relation to theory on internal barriers.

I expected that the challenges of implementing the strategy are based on lack of resources and the engagement from clubs to involve themselves in the subdivisions initiatives.

We see from the statements to AFK that lack of time is a major challenge for the subdivisions and its work. In addition to this there is a challenge of getting the information out in the clubs. With background in Håkonsen's statement that there is a challenge to get clubs to prioritize the initiatives that AFK offers. This is followed up by Johnsen's statement that some clubs are very good at prioritizing initiatives from the subdivisions, while other clubs don't prioritize the initiatives from AFK. The turnover among the leaders in the clubs is also mentioned as a challenge, and this is because the knowledge among the leaders disappears with the exchanges. We also see that it's easier for the subdivision to get out the information among the clubs who have a General Manager hired. On player development it is a challenge for player and coach developer that there is lack of capacity and that there are too few and small environments for girls. In addition to this, it's a challenge to get people to participate on coach courses.

In NRFK there are some challenges related to the Quality Club project. In connection with the Quality Club project we can see that it is very resource demanding for both the subdivisions and the clubs. If the subdivision and the clubs don't have commitment to this, there will be no success. Rød highlights that this project costs very much, one must have the resources to implement this. NRFK has an outside sponsor who has been absolutely essential in order to carry out this project. It is also a challenge for the subdivisions by the fact that this project takes a lot of time for the employees, and therefore other things cannot be prioritized. For player and coach developer it's a challenge to implement his wishes about how the coaches will perform their work out in the clubs, and that in some clubs there are a lack of adaptability to the wishes to the subdivision. At the same time it is also a challenge to be visible enough among the clubs in the region, and therefore the focus will be centered on the key clubs.

External barriers

We see from the statements from NRFK that there is a challenge in lack of resources. According to the theory, an external barrier to implementation of strategy can be lack of resources. This barrier can have a major impact on the work being done with the implementation of the strategy. According to the theory, there must be a link between the strategic grasp from the organization and the resources that exist in the organization. It appears in the findings that there can be a challenge in lack of resources among the coaches. According to the purpose of this part of the external barriers that were expressed in the theory, one could say that this lack of resources has a negative impact on the implementation of the strategy.

We see in the statements that turnover among the leaders of the clubs is something that affects the resources in a club. As stated, it disappears expertise from the management in clubs with the turnover. Then the subdivision again has to deal with the new leaders who might not possess the knowledge that former managers had. This can be seen in relation to the theory. This change of power among the clubs might affect the relationship between club and subdivision. The relationship can be “tested” when there is a high turnover among the leaders in the clubs. According to the theory about external barriers, it is mentioned that change of power among the leaders of the clubs have an impact on the implementation of strategy. This turnover could make it more difficult to implement the strategy among the clubs, because of the subdivisions could deal with new leaders that need time to gain the knowledge that is required to take part in the strategic work. With this unstable situation among the leaders in many of the clubs, one could say that this has a negative influence on implementation of strategy.

One can also see that the supply of facilities can be a challenge for the work to be done. Both subdivisions highlights that the supply of facilities is good, but at the same time there is claimed from Andersen, that some of the biggest challenge he face in his work, is the lack of access to the facilities. First, one could say that with this good access on facilities, the external barriers on politics are not a barrier for these subdivisions. It appears based on the statements, that the situation on facilities is good. But in the same time, it seems strange that there is such a different opinion of a question within the subdivision. Based on

the statements, it is not the same at NRFK. Perhaps the collaboration between clubs and local authorities works better in NRFK than what it does in AFK. Perhaps it is large number of facilities in AFK, but the attitude from clubs and local authorities who have the right of use of these facilities is not as cooperative as to the same extent in NRFK? According to the theory about external barriers, this difference in perception of facilities could be seen in relation to the attitudes to NRFK in their surroundings. Perhaps it can be seen that NRFK have a higher standing among their environment than what AFK has based on the statements on findings, and this is affecting the supply of facility. The access on facilities can according to the theory about external barriers be seen in the context of politics. One can see from the statements that it seems like the situation on facilities have a positive influence on implementation of strategy.

Economy is also a resource that is a challenge. This lack of economic resource in the clubs, have an influence on the one who is the leaders in the clubs. Most of the clubs are run on a voluntary basis, and both subdivisions highlights that a future with “satellite clubs” can make it easier to reach out with information. The way I interpret from my own experience, and supported off the AFK, it is still the case that there is a lot of volunteering among the leadership in the clubs, in which case there is a major challenge in information. According to AFK, the information flows better in clubs with a fulltime General Manager. If clubs had the financial resources to have a General Manager on fulltime, then perhaps the information from the subdivision and out to the members of the clubs could become even more efficient and effective. Information from the subdivisions can be seen in relation to the factor on structure in the framework. These challenges with getting information out can be seen in a way that there is some challenges related to structuring of the organization, as mentioned in the framework.

The next challenge that is rolled up into statements is to get clubs to participate on the initiatives that the subdivisions invite to. The clubs are an integral part of the work being done in Norwegian football, and therefore the development of clubs is a key to succeed in the development of Norwegian football. It is mentioned that information out to the clubs is something that's a challenge. It seems for me that some clubs do not prioritize the information that is sent out from the subdivisions. One might argue that the attitudes among the clubs towards the subdivision are not always desirable, and this is as earlier mentioned one factor in external barriers. According to the theory, this is a key factor that

may be a barrier for the implementation of the strategy. Still, one would have to point out that the largest majority of clubs are positive to their subdivision. As I see it, the challenge is that the clubs and those with tasks in the clubs don't have time to prioritize the initiatives that the subdivision sets forth. It could therefore be a major obstacle for the subdivisions to drive the development efforts that are desired if they don't get the clubs to participate on these initiatives. This obstacle can be seen in relation to the theory on external barriers. One of the factors in external barriers is technology, and this factor is about developing knowledge in the clubs. As we see in the theory, it is an important factor that the subdivisions as a central management focuses on how to develop knowledge in their region, and in which I perceive this may be a challenge in the future. This can be seen in relation to the factor on skills in the framework. If the clubs don't participate on initiatives that is arranged by the subdivisions, it can be difficult to develop the skills to the leaders in the clubs, as mentioned in the framework.

As seen in the findings, some statements claim that the priority is given to the big and central clubs in the regions. It is also emphasized the importance of the Quality Club project as something that will provide good development among the clubs. What is interesting is what are the subdivisions doing with the clubs that currently does not have plans to participate in such a project? I perceive that the opinions about the subdivision among these clubs will not develop into a positive attitude if the subdivisions do not focus on these clubs due to a lack of willingness to participate in the Quality Club project. The way I see it, maybe these clubs are the ones who need the help from the subdivision. Now we have been through the external barriers that influence the work for the subdivisions, and now one has to see which internal barriers influence the subdivisions in their work.

Internal barriers

Internal, I had the perception that the challenges of implementation of strategy lay in the lack of resources, the culture in the organization and getting everyone to pull in the same direction. I consider resources as a very central part when one is supposed to implement a strategy. There must be finances to carry out what one wants, and that one must have enough expertise among employees and the equipment that is required. See one of the statements, as we see from AFK that they are too few employees on the basis of what is

desired by the General Manager. At the same time, it is so that both subdivisions accentuate the instructor corps that they have. As I understand it then, this provides the ability to implement the strategic steps they wish to introduce. Culture is something that is important when one is supposed to introduce strategic grip. As previously mentioned, strategy involves change. In relation to the theory, it's important that the entire organization works toward the same direction, while an organizational culture can have both positive and negative impact on the implementation of the strategy, as stated in the theory. A look at the statements from AFK, we can see that they are very positive to changes, and the culture there is change and solution-oriented. A look at NRFK, one can see that the entire organization emphasizes a positive attitude towards the Quality Club project, and its importance this has had for their organization. If we see this in the context of the theory, this presents itself as positive cultures in both organizations. One could therefore argue that the cultures are positive in the sense that it seems as if both subdivisions are working very homogenous inside their organizations and this accords with the theory. This culture can be seen in relation to the internal barriers theory. This culture that one can find in the subdivisions is as we can see a culture that are positive to changes and has focus on development. In relation to internal barriers, both subdivisions are flexible to changes, in that sense that they are positive to this. This accords well with the theory on internal barriers. In addition to this, the focus on development also fits well into the theory on internal barriers. At the same time, it must be pointed out that these are two relatively small organizations when one looks at the number of employees.

The challenge is to get the clubs to participate on the initiatives arranged by the subdivisions. As mentioned earlier, it appears to be in some clubs in both subdivisions a culture that don't prioritize the initiatives from the subdivisions. Therefore, one might argue that these are clubs which consists of a negative culture, which implies according to the theory that they do not adapt to the changes that the subdivisions would prefer. Resistance to change is high and therefore this could be a challenge for the subdivisions. One advantage of these subdivisions is as previously mentioned it seems as the organizations are very homogeneous in the work being done. This is in my understanding because both organizations the employees work very closely on each other. This can be seen in relation the factor on structure that is presented in the framework. With this close way of working between the employees, it can be easier to implement as mentioned in the strategy.

One can see from the structure of the organizations that power is decentralized into clear tasks. According to the theory, the power structure in an organization has an impact on implementation work. This is also something that I got the impression of during the interviews, and one can say that this form of decentralization is making implementation work easier. When the structure is centralized in the way as now, it could be easier for the organization to spread its way of thinking out in the organization. As mentioned in the statements, there are many gatherings for the employees in the subdivisions. During these assemblies where they discuss the way they work in accordance with the strategy plan, one may see these gatherings as something that follows up the wishes from NFF central and how it works out in the regions of Norway. According to the theory, one can argue that the organizations working to avoid a narrow vision, in that one through discussions within the organizations and also these gatherings are something that produces a common mindset that will be used in the organization. These gatherings can also be seen as something that can increase the knowledge among the employees, and this is something that is mentioned as an internal barrier. These gatherings are used as a place where one constantly develop their work based on discussions with other regions. This type of gatherings can be seen as something used as avoiding barred leadership, as mentioned in the theory. It has also been presented in the statements that there is cooperation with the neighbor regions in several areas, and according to the theory this is something that could be used to keep the organization in a learning process. With this focus on increasing the knowledge, one can see this in relation to the framework. This can be seen in relation to the factor on staff in the framework. These gatherings are something that can be used to strengthen the resources among the employees, and this can as mentioned the framework make it easier to implement a strategy.

One can also see from the statements from AFK that there is a feedback from course participants on the leadership courses and up to the General Manager. In NRFK they are already well under way with the Quality Club project it's a clear feedback from clubs and up to those who works with the Quality Club project. In addition, there is a close dialogue between the player- and coach developers, and the clubs. With this as a background, one might claim that the feedback is well functioning among some part of the organizations. It appears that the through the feedback and close relation with some clubs on player and coach development that the cooperation between the clubs and the subdivisions is good.

According to the theory, it is therefore natural to say that organizations have a good cooperation with some clubs, and this is also one of the factors in the internal barriers. This can also be seen in relation to the factor on structure in the framework.

6.3 Reasons for success with implementation of strategy

To get a good understanding for the strategic work the subdivisions are working with, one must see why the subdivisions have succeeded in those areas they have succeeded.

As we see in the statements, it is mentioned that the way the subdivision “sells in” in their products has an influence on how successful implementation of the strategy is. It is mentioned by AFK that it requires a lot of resources to follow up on the invitations sent out to clubs in order for them to participate in activities. Among other things, it is highlighted that the Quality Club project is sold in a way that has made the project into something new and exciting, and that has been a success criterion. In addition, as mentioned that the clubs themselves are their own project managers in the Quality Club project, which stands out as an important factor for why the project has been a success. If the subdivisions had forced the clubs to participate it might not have been the success that it is now. It is mentioned that knowledge, continuity and credibility are key factors for NRFK that make them experiences success in their work. A survey shows that NRFK has a good reputation and high credibility among their clubs, and this is important.

In player development it is mentioned that there a good environment for player development in the top club is essential for the success of player development. Among other things, the top club in NRFK has had many participating on UEFA A and B license, and this leads to increased knowledge in the environment. Good club organization is also mentioned as a success criterion for player development, and this organization may have close ties to the Quality Club project. Aker academy has been a key factor in player development efforts in NRFK. Through the academy, the subdivisions have a meeting place for the best players, as well as they continuous are performing coaching development at the academy. In that regard, there is mentioned that a coach forum is an important source of success with player development.

One can see a few of these criteria for success in view of theory. The way initiatives are being sold in to the clubs, can be seen in the context of the communication from the

subdivision out to the clubs. It appears that it is of vital importance that the subdivisions initiatives are sold in the right way. It is mentioned that it requires a lot of follow-up work of the invitations that are sent out to the clubs, and it could therefore be seen as communication between subdivisions and the clubs. This is why as mentioned in the theory, it is very important for the strategic work that there is good communication between subdivision and the clubs.

In the Quality Club project it is being pointed out that it is of significance that the clubs are their own project managers in the project, and therefore one can see that clubs have these responsibilities in the context of theory. According to the theory of motivation, it is being pointed out that responsibility and recognition are important motivators. When the clubs are acting as their own project managers, then it is their responsibility to meet the requirements of the project, which in turn can give them greater recognition. It is also mentioned that the knowledge, continuity and credibility are key factors that have an impact on how successful the subdivision is with implementation of strategy. Knowledge and continuity can be seen in the context of the resources in the subdivision. As stated in the theory, it is important that the subdivisions have the resources required for a successful implementation of the strategy. Good knowledge and high continuity can be seen in the context of internal resources. In addition, one can see the credibility the subdivisions have among the clubs in the region in context of the theory. According to external barriers in theory, it is mentioned that attitudes towards the organization in the external environment as a key factor in the implementation of the strategy. By a good credibility among the clubs, it may be easier for the subdivisions to get clubs to participate on initiatives arranged by the subdivisions, due to the high credibility they have. On player development, it is mentioned that the environment of player development in the top club in the region is an important source of how good the player development is. Also, Aker academy has had a good impact on player development in NRFK. This type of environment some parts of the region can be seen in the context in theory about culture in an organization. As mentioned in the statements, it is an environment that's very development orientated in MFK, and this can be seen as a development-oriented culture. Aker academy is a meeting place for the best players, as well as it is coach development there. One can therefore argue that according to the theory, Aker academy is a form of organization that helps the players and coaches have a meeting place where there is a development oriented culture both for players and coaches. Club organization is also

mentioned as a key factor for successful implementation of strategy, and this club organization may be a consequence of the Quality Club project. This organizing means that the club as the theory says is organized in a way that facilitates for a successful implementation of strategy.

6.4 The “new” 7-s framework

It emerges in the discussion that there are few of the factors that are presented in the 7-s framework is being mentioned as important in the context of the implementation of strategy. The only factor mentioned by several times, is structure. Strategy and skills is being mentioned, but not to the extent that it can be viewed as crucial factors in connection with the implementation of strategy in football. It would therefore be natural to form a new framework of factors affecting implementation efforts toward football, and these factors are based on the findings and the analysis that has been done.

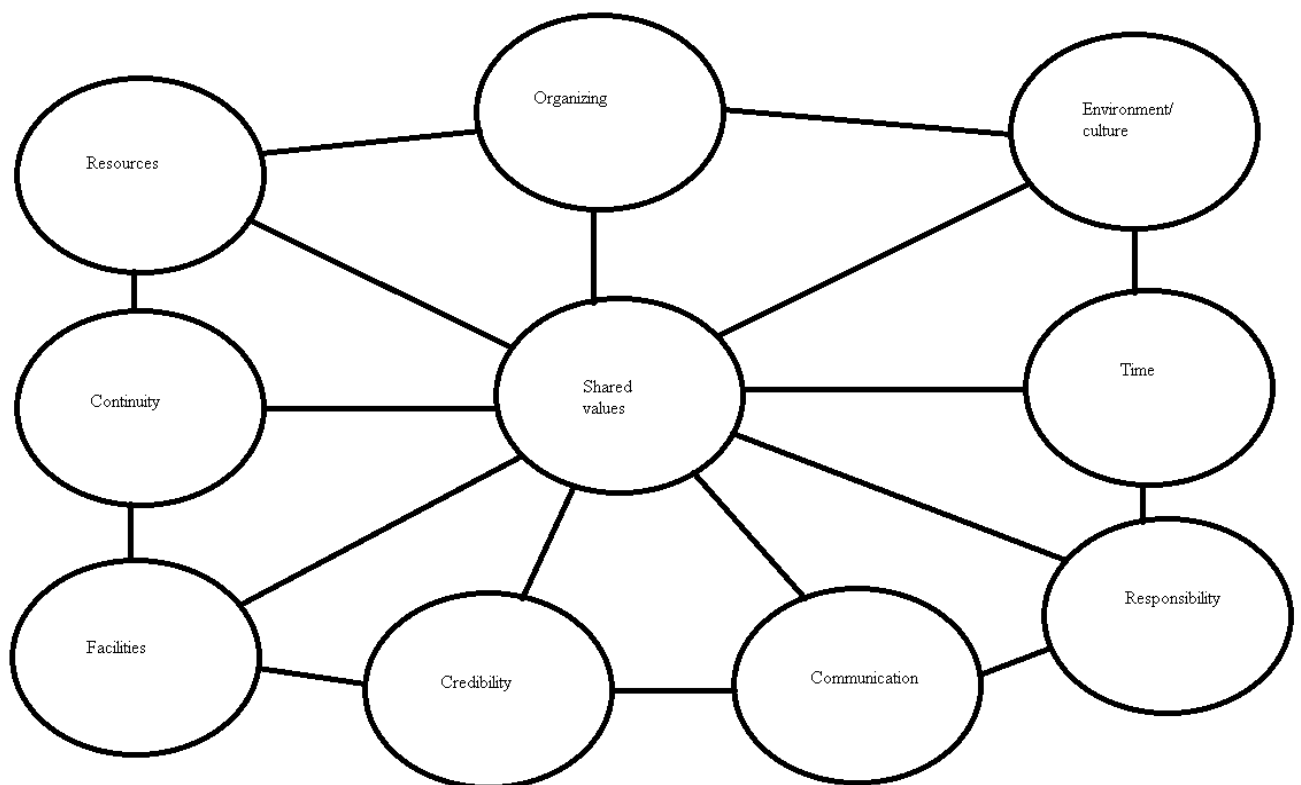


Figure 4 “The 10 factor framework”

As we can see, the new framework contains 10 contributing factors that all affect how one can assume that the implementation of a strategy will be. The first factor is organizing. This one relates to the structure factor in the 7-s framework, but has a new name in this framework. It emerges that the organization has a significant impact on implementation. It

is as previously mentioned a large number of people that in different degrees have an association with the football subdivisions. It is therefore important for the subdivisions to have a structure that makes it as easy as possible to reach out to the whole region. This is where the desires of the “satellite clubs” which are the level 3 clubs in the Quality Club project are coming from. This type of future organizing can be seen as an organizational grip to easier reach out to the whole region. It appears also that an organizing with clubs have an organizing structure that implies a General Manager has big impact.

The second factor that's important will be resources. As mentioned previously, it is important that the subdivisions have the resources that are required for carry out the strategic changes. In this framework, resources will involve competences and finances. It is important that the subdivisions have the finances needed to introduce new strategies. For subdivisions it is important that the competence among the employees has a high quality, and the economy is so good that they can afford to have enough staff, as well as the economy is good enough to use external instructors.

The third factor is continuity. It is important that there is continuity in both the subdivisions and among the clubs. Continuity can allow knowledge and experience being developed into a resource for the management within the subdivisions, and this is something that can have a huge impact on implementation efforts. It is emphasized that particular continuity within the subdivisions could make more people seeing the subdivisions as a “serious” actor. Continuity in the clubs can have an impact on the subdivisions in that way that they don't have to deal with new people in the clubs on a regular basis, and that this continuity means that the subdivisions do not have to spend time training new persons.

The fourth factor is facilities. It is important that the subdivisions have supply of up-to-date on the facilities. This applies everything from technology to modern football fields. This factor is especially of importance for the player and coach development. It is important that player and coach developers have access to facilities that can make them perform their work in the best possible way. It appears also that it is important that the subdivisions have access to the facilities, and it is not so that the facilities are there, but the subdivisions do not have access to them.

The fifth factor is credibility. This factor can be related to continuity. It emerges that credibility has an impact on how the clubs are dealing with the subdivisions. If the continuity of the subdivisions is good, it may also be that credibility is good. This credibility could have an impact in the sense that it is easier for the subdivisions to get clubs to “accept” wishes that the subdivisions brings to them.

The sixth factor is communication. This factor is related to organization. In order for the subdivisions to succeed in implementing the strategy, it is important that there is a close and good communication between the subdivisions and the clubs. It is also important that there is close and good communication between the employees and instructors. The organization by the introduction of the Quality Club project will be something that can improve communication between the subdivisions and the clubs.

The seventh factor is responsibility. Getting the clubs to participate in the strategic work to be done is a key component for the successful implementation of the strategy. One sees that the subdivisions emphasize the fact that themselves helped to influence the strategy plan is something that could motivate them. The same one can see in the clubs in the Quality Club project also. It is important that the clubs have responsibility in the strategic work to keep them motivated enough to complete the work that is required. If the clubs will be “enforced” work without that they even feel responsibility, this could affect their own motivation, and this can complicate the strategic work.

The eighth factor is time. As it emerges, it does require a lot of time. Strategic work can be time-consuming, and both the subdivisions and the clubs have to be patient when they are working on a strategic work. New strategies may involve changes in everyday life for both the subdivisions and the clubs. It is therefore important that patient is in the work before judging if the new initiatives are a success or not.

The ninth factor is environment and culture. It seems that it is of importance that the subdivisions and the clubs have an environment that is development-oriented, and a culture that is positive to new changes. In particular, it may arise in some environments a “resistance” against new changes. In other words, there is not an environment with a culture that is development-oriented. Should the subdivisions be successful in implementing new strategies, these strategies must first be implemented in the

subdivisions, before it is being implemented out in the clubs. It is therefore important that both subdivisions and clubs are prepared to arrange to new strategies.

The tenth and last factor means that if all these nine factors are put together into one, then the value of this factor will be of such importance that it can say a lot about how easy it will be for a football organization to implement a new strategy in their organization. All of these nine factors have an impact on the entire organization, and for every factor that is not “fulfilled”, the more difficult it will be for the organization to succeed in implementation of a new strategy.

7. Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to provide more insight into how Norwegian football work strategic. With the use of theory on strategy implementation and barriers when implementing strategy, I have tried to answer the following research questions:

“How does Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets apply the strategy plan developed by NFF”?

“What are the challenges Agder Fotballkrets and Nordmøre og Romsdal Fotballkrets are facing with implementation of the strategy plan”?

To start with, one can see how AFK and NRFK are using the strategy plan.

In the analysis, one can see that the subdivisions have self-determination to customize the strategy plan for their local conditions. Both subdivisions say that the strategy plan is a superior guide for their work, but they are adapting this plan to their local conditions. The subdivisions also provide that the resources are good. Among other things, they have good facilities in their regions, and skills among the staff are good. It is emphasized that the use of instructors is of great importance to this competency. The subdivisions do not have many employees, and therefore it is often used instructors with expertise in certain areas. In the findings one can see that communication from the subdivisions and out to the clubs is working well with some clubs, but this communication is very resource-intensive for the subdivision. This communication is important to the subdivisions for the reason that they should be visible for the clubs. The subdivisions acts as visible leadership above the clubs that are taking part in the Quality Club project and among the clubs taking part in the initiatives as the subdivisions are organizing. Through this visible leadership, the subdivisions are working on affecting the clubs into the focus areas that emerge in the strategy plan. In the analysis one can see that both subdivisions express motivation to focus on the work in the strategy plan. This motivation one can find left in the analysis that addresses the culture that exists in the subdivisions. Both subdivisions appear to be positive to new strategies, and hold a development-oriented culture. Among the clubs, the motivation and culture is a little divided, but those clubs that participate in the Quality Club project is emerging as clubs with high motivation and culture for development. In

addition, one will see that both subdivisions define goals in various areas in their organizations, and that these objectives are based on the strategy plan.

One sees that the subdivisions are using the strategy plan as a superior guide for their work, and this plan is adapted to their local conditions. The focus areas that are presented in the strategy plan will form the framework for how the subdivisions shall work. It appears that the strategy plan is the tool that the subdivisions are using in their work, but it is adapted to their needs. One can therefore say that the subdivisions employ the strategy plan close in their work, and what emerges in the strategy plan is of great importance to the work being done in the subdivisions.

Now as one has seen the summary on how AFK and NRFK are using the strategy plan, one must see a summary of the challenges that the subdivisions are facing.

It emerges in the analysis that the subdivisions have several challenges that affect how the successful the strategic work is. It emerges in the analysis that there is a major challenge for the subdivisions to get clubs to participate on the initiatives organized by the subdivisions. A reason for this can be that people don't have time to participate, but it can also be caused by motivation and culture out in the clubs. It may seem as many clubs are not motivated or have a culture that is development-oriented, and therefore they do not participate in the initiatives arranged by the subdivisions. This lack of participation on initiatives could also have a connection with communication. It is pointed out that communication is a challenge for the subdivisions. It's hard to reach out with information to all the clubs, but this could also be due to the culture that is in some clubs. In some clubs, the information from the subdivision does not go further out to the members in the clubs. It is also a challenge for the subdivisions to be visible enough above the clubs. Because of few resources, the focus is on some big clubs that can be seen as key clubs, and therefore, the subdivisions could appear to be "invisible" among the clubs that are not a priority. It appears that the subdivisions are visible above the clubs who are motivated to work on development, while the clubs that may not have this motivation and culture are not a priority. It could be that there are those clubs who need this visibility most of all that don't see the subdivisions as visible. These small resources that the subdivisions are in possession of, makes the subdivisions dependent of external instructors in some areas. One sees that it can be a challenge for the subdivisions to at all-time have access to sufficient expertise among staff and instructors. The economy out in the clubs is also a challenge for the subdivisions. The weak economy makes some clubs have only one employee on a daily

basis, while many clubs still operates on voluntary basis. This could be accomplice in that there is a high turnover of leaders in the clubs, and this could lead to a lack of continuity and stability in the clubs. In addition, as mentioned in AFK, there is a challenge with access to facilities. AFK has many facilities in the subdivision, but it emerges that there is a challenge to get access to the facilities when there is initiatives on player's development.

One sees that there are many challenges for the subdivisions with implementing a strategy. In summary, the main challenges are lack of time among the clubs and this may result in low participation on initiatives arranged by the subdivisions. This may be related to challenges with communication between the subdivisions and the clubs. In addition, there is little continuity in among the leaders in the clubs, and challenges related to the lack of motivation and culture amongst the clubs.

7.1 What can be done to improve the strategic work?

The initiatives with the Quality Club project is positive and it can have an important influence on Norwegian football in the future. It's hard to make any exact initiative of what can be done to improve the work of implementing the strategy in the future. What is important however is that it must on developing the culture in the clubs. One must change the culture of some clubs to be more focused towards development

A licensing system may be something that can be used. A licensing system may involve that clubs must be represented on the x-number of initiatives such as, for example, leader and/or club development. It may also be the case that x- % of the coaches in a club must have been participating in coaches courses. The problem with Norwegian football is that there are different motives to operate a club. Therefore, such license system could have a grading system that can rate the clubs by number of members and perhaps the sporting level. There should be different demands graded after how big the clubs are. Through this, it should be possible to "catch up" those clubs which are of importance to the community.

It will be incredibly important for the clubs that they evolve into organizations that have general managers employed. Then it will be easier for the subdivisions to reach out with initiatives, and it can be set more stringent requirements for the clubs. This may be part of the licensing system. The licensing system that is propose can be seen as very similar to

the quality Club Project that has already been established. The difference lies in the fact that the clubs in such a system is qualified to engage in the activity. The challenge of such a system is that Norwegian clubs rarely have good economics, so how one can “punish” clubs who do not receive license can be a challenge. A financial penalty can be fatal for the clubs. Perhaps a penalty in such a license system could be that clubs who fail to comply with the licenses are not allowed to compete at a certain level on teams from the age of 14 years and up to the senior teams.

The licensing system is something that is very similar to the Quality Club project, but there is something clubs must undergo in order to become certified. Maybe this could be an initiative that over time can develop Norwegian football further. It's hard to come up with concrete initiatives that can improve the current situation. As it is now, the Quality Club project is a very good initiative, but it is a said volunteered to take part or not. It can therefore take long time to get the clubs with lack of motivation and culture to engage in development work. Perhaps one could create a level below the first level in the Quality Club project that is adapted to clubs with small resources and perhaps not a development-oriented culture. This could make it easier for those clubs to take part in the Quality Club project, if the demands to the clubs are smaller than in the different levels in the Quality Club project.

7.2 Further research

During the process of this research it has appeared more thoughts on future research. Something that could have been a further research based on this thesis, is researching how the clubs comprehends the work of implementing the strategy is working. In this thesis, it has been given a better insight into how the subdivisions work strategic, but how are the clubs working in comparison to the strategy plan that exist now? It could have been interesting to get a better insight into this subject in relation to the clubs view of it. Another research project that could have been interesting based on this thesis, is to compare the strategic work being done at the subdivisions level in another sport. In relation to Norway, it could have been interesting to compare football with, for example, handball or skiing. These are both big sports in Norway, and therefore they can be compared to football. Are there any similarities and differences between the sports? Do the sports have something to learn from each other?

The last thought of further research which appeared in this process is to compare the strategic work being done in Norwegian football against other countries. It could have been interesting, comparing Norwegian football to countries that have been more professionalized in the work. In Norway, there are few resources and as earlier mentioned, much of the work is carried out by volunteers. It could therefore be interesting to compare to countries that are more professionalized. Are there any similarities and differences between the countries? Do the countries have something to learn from each other?

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Appendix 2: Interview guideline player and coach developer

Intervjuguide Spiller- og trenerutvikler

Informasjon

- Bakgrunn og formålet med temaet for samtalen
- Forklare hva intervjuet skal brukes til og forklare taushetsplikt og anonymitet
- Er det noen spørsmål?
- Greit med opptak? Samtykke
- Starte opptak

Generelle spørsmål om spiller- og trenerutvikling:

- Kan du fortelle litt om din erfaring med fotball/arbeid i kretsen? Hvilken erfaring fra fotball har du?
- Hvor lenge jobbet som spillerutvikler- og trenerutvikler?
- På hvilken måte brukes handlingsplanen til NFF i ditt daglige arbeid som spiller- og trenerutvikler?
- Hvilke mål har kretsen satt for spiller- og trenerutvikling?
- Hvordan er ressursene i kretsen i henhold til hvordan dere ønsker å bedrive spiller- og trenerutvikling?
 - Innhente ekstern hjelp?
- Organiseringen av kretsen, hvordan fungerer den i utviklingsarbeidet, men henhold til kommunikasjon mellom krets og klubber?
- Hvilken rolle har kretsen i spiller- og trenerutvikling? Hvor synlige er kretsen? Hvor tett er oppfølgingen underveis?
- Hvordan oppfatter du motivasjonen blant klubbene til å jobbe målrettet spiller- og trenerutvikling?
 - Hvordan er utviklingskulturen i kretsen på spiller- og trenersiden? Er klubbene mottakelige for dette, eller oppleves det en motstand/giddeløshet/småkonger?
 - Har prestasjonene til toppklubben «flaggskipet» noe å si for utviklingskulturen blant spillerne/klubbene i regionen?
- Hvordan evaluerer dere arbeidet deres på spiller- og trenerutvikling?
- Hva mener du er de største utfordringene du møter i arbeidet som spillerutvikler?
 - Ressurser – Ressurser i klubbene gode nok til å nå målene?
 - Anlegg

- Motstand – Små «kongedømmer»
 - Kommunikasjon/organisasjonsstruktur
- Hva mener du er de største grunnene til dere lykkes i arbeidet med spillerutvikler?
 - Ressurser
 - Anlegg
 - Samarbeid – Samarbeid mellom klubber/andre kretser
 - Kommunikasjon/organisasjonsstruktur
- Hva mener du er de største utfordringene du møter i arbeidet som trenerutvikler?
 - Ressurser – Ressurser i klubbene gode nok til å nå målene?
 - Anlegg
 - Motstand – Små «kongedømmer»
 - Kommunikasjon/organisasjonsstruktur
- Hva mener du er de største grunnene til dere lykkes i arbeidet med trenerutvikling?
 - Ressurser
 - Anlegg
 - Samarbeid – Samarbeid mellom klubber/andre kretser
 - Kommunikasjon/organisasjonsstruktur

Spillerutvikling 13-21 år

- Et av hovedmålene til NFF er å legge til rette for, påvirke og følge opp at de beste spillerne i alderen 13-21 år får en kamphverdag for å rekruttere til de aldersbestemte landslag og toppfotball. For å gjøre dette fremhever NFF at det er viktig å utvikle samarbeidet mellom krets og toppklubb. Hvordan fungerer dette samarbeidet i deres krets?
- Et av virkemidlene på spillerutvikling i dette alderstrinnet er å forankre en lokal modell for spillerutvikling mellom krets og toppklubb. Foreligger dette i kretsen?
 - Kan det oppstå en konflikt mellom hva NFF ønsker og hva den lokale toppklubben ønsker? Hvem lytter kretsen til?

Trenerutvikling

- Oppfatter du trenerutdanningen som tilbys i regi av NFF som et godt nok tilbud?

- Hvordan er oppfølgingen av trenere som er ferdig utdannet?
Trenerveileder.
- Målet til NFF er at alle klubber skal ha minimum en trener med UEFA B-lisens. I løpet av de to-tre siste årene, hvor mange fra kretsen har gjennomført UEFA B-lisens kurs?
 - Har dere noen oversikt over hvor mange klubber som har minst en trener med UEFA B-lisens?
- NFF ønsker å øke andelen kvinnelige trenere. Et virkemiddel for å gjøre det er å tilby rene jentekurs på UEFA B-lisens. Hva gjør dere for å rekruttere flere kvinnelige trenere?
- Hvordan er utdanningen av keepertrenere i kretsen?

Oppsummering

- Oppsummere funnene
- Har jeg forstått deg riktig?
- Noe du vil legge til?
- Takke for meg

Appendix 3: interview guideline General Manager and Club developer

Intervjuguide DL

Informasjon

- Bakgrunn og formålet med temaet for samtalen
- Forklare hva intervjuet skal brukes til og forklare taushetsplikt og anonymitet
- Er det noen spørsmål?
- Greit med opptak? Samtykke
- Starte opptak

Generelle spørsmål om Kretsen:

- Kan du fortelle litt om din erfaring med fotball/arbeid i kretsen? Hvilke posisjoner/verv har du/har hatt?
- Kan du innledningsvis fortelle litt om kretsen? Hvor mange ansatte? Antall klubber og medlemmer?
- Hvordan er tilgangen på anlegg i kretsen?
- Hvilken posisjon oppfatter du at kretsen har i området?
- Hvilke verdier, mål og formål har kretsen?
 - Gjenspeiles deres verdier, mål og formål det samme hos NFF?
- Hvordan jobbere dere i kretsen for å oppnå de målene dere har satt dere?
- I handlingsplanen fra NFF, er det mange områder som NFF ønsker å bli bedre på. Kan du forklare litt mer om prosessen fra dere får handlingsplanen og frem til den iverksettes?
 - Tilpasses handlingsplanen til lokale forhold?
 - Hva oppfatter du som de største utfordringene ved iverksettelse av ny strategi?
 - Ressurser
 - Anlegg
 - Motstand
 - Kommunikasjon/organisasjonsstruktur
 - Hva oppfatter du er den viktigste grunnen til at dere lykkes med iverksettelse av ny strategi?
 - Ressurser
 - Anlegg
 - Samarbeid

- Kommunikasjon/organisasjonsstruktur
- Hovedprioriteringene til NFF i handlingsplanen er Fair Play, Internasjonale resultater (toppspillerutvikling), rekruttering og lederutvikling. Er dette prioriteringen dere jobber ut ifra selv, eller har dere tilpasset prioriterte områder til dere selv?
 - Hvis ja, hvorfor har dere prioritert annerledes?
- Når jeg leser handlingsplanen til NFF, oppfatter jeg den som relativt omfattende. Hvordan er ressursene i kretsen i forhold til prioriteringene i handlingsplanen?
- Når handlingsplanen skal iverksettes, hvordan passer organiseringen av kretsen i henhold til det arbeidet dere ønsker å gjøre?
 - Brukes det eksterne ressurser med «ekspertise» på enkelte områder i utviklingsarbeidet?
 - Egne spesialområder for de ansatte?
 - Er de ansatte motiverte for å gjennomføre endringer som en ny strategi medbringer?
 - Er det en «kultur» for å hele tiden jobbe mot å bli bedre blant de ansatte, eller hender det at en er fornøyd med nåværende situasjon?

Klubb og lederutvikling

- Kan du fortelle litt om hvordan kretsen jobber med klubbutvikling?
- NFF ønsker å innføre «klubben som sjef» som et virkemiddel for klubbutvikling. Dere er anerkjent for kvalitetsklubbssystemet deres. Kan du kort forklare forskjellen på disse?
 - Hvordan har dette systemet blitt mottatt blant klubbene? Opplever du klubbene som motiverte for å delta i dette systemet?
 - Hvordan oppfatter du kulturen blant klubbene for å utvikle seg selv?
 - Hvor mange klubber har deltatt i dette prosjektet?
 - Møter dere noen utfordringer ved å iverksette dette systemet?
- Finnes det noen form for belønningssystem for klubber som leverer gode resultater i klubbutvikling?
 - Hvis ja, Hvilke goder får klubbene ved belønning?
- Innen klubbutvikling så ønsker NFF å gi et tilbud til funksjonshemmede. Hvordan er status på dette arbeidet i kretsen? Gjøres det noen spesielle grep for å utbedre dette tilbudet?

- NFF er opptatt av lederutvikling i handlingsplanen. Blant annet fremhever NFF deres nye lederkursstige. Kan du kort fortelle litt om hva dette går utpå?
- Hvordan foregår lederutdanningen i kretsen?
 - Har dere hatt mange ledere på NFFs lederkurs?
 - Gjøres det noen grep for å rekruttere ungdommer til lederverv i klubbene?
 - NFF ønsker å utvikle flere kvinnelige ledere. Gjøres det noen grep på dette i kretsen?

Oppsummering

- Oppsummere funnene
- Har jeg forstått deg riktig?
- Noe du vil legge til?
- Takke for meg