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generation b  
BE THE **CHANGE**

# Driving Bottom-Up Change

A Comparative Case Study of Generation B at Bühler AG  
Master's Thesis in Management and Economics of Innovation

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Cover:

The logo and slogan of the movement “Generation B” at Bühler AG, explained further in section 1.2.1.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the light of new change management strategies being used by large multinational firms, this study seeks to investigate a new movement which was recently founded in a Swiss industrial firm. The study makes suggestions for how this movement can assist the company in its change management, while comparing it to change management methods of other large multinational firms.

Three research questions were present in this study: how a bottom-up change movement can diffuse into all parts of an organization (i), how can a bottom-up change movement assist its organization in the top-down execution of transformational projects (ii), and what value can be generated from creating alliances with similar movements in other companies (iii).

Using a grounded theory approach, 45 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Bühler employees, 8 semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of academia or independent organizations, and 16 interviews were conducted with senior/executive members of large multinational firms. Results were coded using qualitative analysis software, and then presented to the reader.

The investigated movement was identified as a hybrid grassroots innovation movement in the form of an employee volunteering program. In addition, the movement contributes to succession planning, and fosters bottom-up cultural change by empowering young employees to voice their ideas, establishing a global network, bringing in new perspectives, and transforming the company.

The movement could better diffuse itself throughout the company by inclusively communicating with all relevant stakeholders, by defining and communicating a clear vision, by strategically addressing middle managers to get their buy-in, and by empowering employees to collaboratively drive change.

The movement was found to have the potential to act as a bottom-up provider of explorative activities and implementation projects to assist transformational change, and suggestions were made with regards to how.

Key benefits from entering an alliance of similar movements were found to be knowledge sharing, learning skills and capabilities from each other, scaling collective impact of the alliance's collective vision, and attaining the internal benefits (increased employee motivation, skill development, employee satisfaction) and external benefits (increased corporate reputation, profitability, stakeholder engagement) of social alliances.

**Keywords:** Change management, movement, top-down, bottom-up, transformation, grassroots innovation, employee volunteering, hybrid, alliance.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

The concept of change management is argued to be “crucial to any organisation in order to survive and succeed” in today’s competitive environment (Todnem By, 2005). Traditional ways to change strategies have included ordering change top-down, or bubbling incremental changes bottom-up (Gutzwiller, 2018). One method that companies recently started using to approach change management is grassroots innovations, defined as “networks of activists and organisations generating novel bottom-up solutions for sustainable development” (Seyfang and Smith, 2007). Today, it appears that companies experiment with even more novel ways to drive change, going as far as hybrid solutions of various established concepts. This study seeks to investigate a new movement at the Swiss company Bühler AG, called Generation B, and identify how it can assist the company in its change management.

## 1.2. Bühler AG

Bühler AG (henceforth Bühler) is a multinational Swiss technology company for solutions in food, feed, and advanced materials (Bühler AG, 2020). The firm was founded in 1860 and initially produced rolls used to grind grain in roller mills (Bühler AG, 2006). Today Bühler has about 13,000 employees worldwide, and a turnover of 3.2 billion CHF in 2019 (Bühler AG, 2020). It is headquartered in Uzwil, Switzerland (Bühler AG, 2020). Recently, a new movement evolved within Bühler, called Generation B.

### 1.2.1. The history of Generation B

In September 2016, Bühler’s executive management sent six young employees to the One Young World Summit. One Young World is a global forum for young leaders (About us, n.d.), and holds annual summits that brings together over 2000 delegates from over 190 companies and countries with the purpose to accelerate social impact (One Young World, n.d.). This was the first time Bühler was represented at this forum.

Having returned inspired from this event, the group of six employees were encouraged by two members of executive management to pitch something meaningful that they wished to bring to the company. The pitch, which took place December 2016, included a concept that was approved, and later became known as Generation B (henceforth GenB). The “B” in GenB stands for their slogan: “be the change”.

The concept of GenB was initially to create a place to connect, discuss new ideas, inspire employees, and foster a fun working environment. This concept has since evolved several times, most notably with the introduction of a global lead for GenB in February 2019, where key focus areas were to become a sounding board for management, connect people and bridge gaps, and drive change. The focus of GenB changed once more in March 2020 when a new global lead of GenB took over. The new focus areas became protecting the environment, challenging employees, and shaping the company. Throughout the duration of this study, the focus has been adapted once again: to engage and motivate employees, build an attractive and diverse workspace, protect the climate and develop society by enabling hundreds of global initiatives, and shaping the future of Bühler.

The GenB movement launched at Bühler in April 2017, and was marked by a global kick-off event that included Switzerland (headquarters) and six other Bühler locations: in the US, UK, India, China, Brazil, and South Africa. Together, these seven locations were the start of GenB, with most engagement occurring at the headquarters, and regional task forces present in the remaining locations.

GenB was quickly noticed by the remainder of executive management, and was invited to be a part of various panel discussions. GenB was also invited to hold presentations at strategically significant Bühler events, both internal and external ones. In April 2017, GenB was invited to present at an event which gathered about 100 of the top managers/executives in the company. GenB now has a standing invitation to this event, including an increased time to present. GenB also attended and inspired companies at external events, for example at the largest biennial chocolate conference Chocovision, which is organized by long-time Bühler customer Barry Callebaut. GenB also supported selecting and sending Bühler delegates to the annual One Young World Summit, with the purpose of kickstarting or renewing employees' motivation to make a difference through GenB.

There is a general understanding that any employees who organized or engaged in GenB activities were doing so on their free time, as it did not count toward their worktime. The reasoning behind this was to make sure it remains an employee initiative and not a project. GenB is not intended to be managed by anyone other than its members. Even though GenB reports to two members of executive management, it is not told by them what to do, and has freedom of action within generous but reasonable boundaries.

GenB initially attempted to pioneer international job rotation, as well as strategy and knowledge sharing sessions within Bühler. As GenB evolved, it continued to experiment with new initiatives, not all of which withstood the test of time. Today, GenB has achieved a relatively stable platform of activities that it organizes. New ideas are continuously presented and tested, and it is likely that GenB's platform of activities will continue evolving in the future.

The most common activities are event series on various themes, including Ted-style inspirational lunch presentations, strategy explanation presentations starring various members of executive management, and experience sharing sessions starring stories from a nominated inspirational employee. Meanwhile, the most prominent initiatives include reducing single-use plastic in the offices, sourcing certain office supplies from more sustainable materials, and assisting certain company initiatives. Examples of assisting company initiatives included helping keep the workplace clean and tidy during the coronavirus outbreak, and assisting in certain environmental initiatives like reducing water consumption in Bühler's site in India.

Today, GenB defines itself as a "global network of passionate ambassadors driving projects under their own initiative". GenB consists of 560 members, which is defined as employees who are subscribed to the GenB mailing list. 37% of these members are female, which is significantly higher than the 17% share of female employees of Bühler worldwide (Bühler AG, 2020). Worth noting is that 263 of these members are stationed at the company headquarters in Uzwil.

Aside from company headquarters, GenB has ten locations worldwide with at least ten GenB members present.

As GenB grew, a dedicated work-time position as a global lead of GenB was negotiated with executive management. In February 2019, an employee from the HR department volunteered to take on this position for a year, after which a management trainee took over in March 2020. GenB has also taken the lead over certain spin-off projects, the most notable of which have been an annual event series entitled climate week, and a strategic project involving the CO2-equivalent quantification of Bühler’s entire value chain. These projects have been assigned as worktime for the employees involved.

GenB had to create a management structure to cope with the complexity of its initiatives and size, as seen in Figure 1.1. There is a lead for company headquarters, which coordinates its actions through four main categories: events, initiatives, engagement, and communication. The events lead oversees locally and virtually organized events. The initiatives lead is in charge of longer-term initiatives such as reducing single-use plastic in the offices. The engagement lead oversees monitoring employee engagement in GenB, for example by recording and managing statistics of attendees at events. The communications lead oversees regular e-mail news and event updates to GenB members, as well as maintaining similar information on a dedicated GenB page in Bühler’s intranet. There are also several regional leads in different Bühler locations worldwide, which manage local events and engagement. Worth noting is that all holders of top positions in GenB (except the GenB sponsors) are of a young age, generally below 30 years old. Additionally, when not accounting for regional leads, most of these have recently been or are management trainees and are at least 50% female. Management trainees at Bühler are young highly-achieving professionals at the start of their career who attend the 3 year long rotational management trainee program, in which they get exposure to challenging assignments.

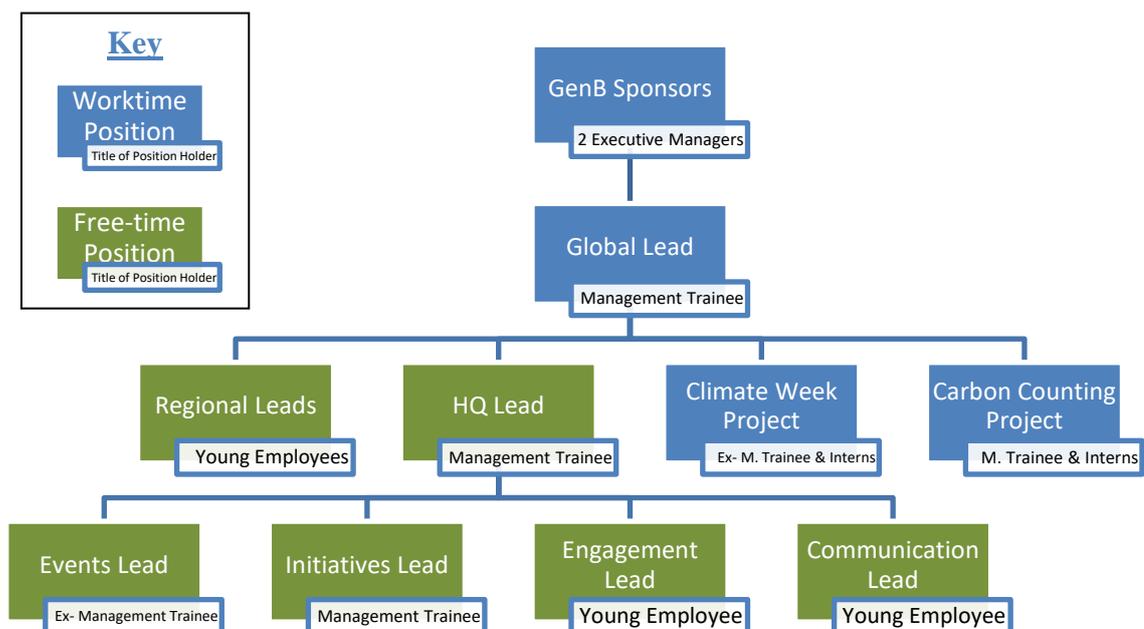


Figure 1.1: Organizational chart of GenB

## **1.2.2. The case of Generation B**

GenB is constantly evolving, and one key topic in the future is engaging all parts of Bühler, so that employees are aware of their opportunities to drive impact through GenB. An example of this may be creating a local initiative within the company to reduce waste. Even though GenB is spread over several locations worldwide, it does not span all regions of the company, nor does it span all functions and departments of each region. For example, one of the difficult employee groups to reach are factory workers, whom GenB has made multiple attempts to engage.

Executive management also consider the possibility for GenB to assist in driving transformational projects, because GenB has access to a global network of engaged employees. These employees could efficiently propagate change and embed new skills throughout Bühler.

Furthermore, GenB is also considering various alliances with other large companies which have a movement similar to GenB. Such an alliance could have the resources to drive large global projects and scale impact, using competencies from each participating company. It could also increase Bühler's publicity and B2B relations.

## **1.3. Aim**

This study aims to investigate the new bottom-up movement GenB that drives change at Bühler. It does so by identifying how GenB can assist the company in its change management, while comparing it to change management methods of other large multinational firms. By first investigating GenB's purpose and development at Bühler, the concept of GenB can be closer defined within the context of academia. It can then be benchmarked against how other firms drive change and answer key questions from management about GenB's future potential. These answers will hopefully have relevance to similar movements in other companies.

## **1.4. Objectives**

Based on the future that employees and management envision in GenB, three research questions are outlined below:

**RQ1:** How can a bottom-up change movement diffuse into all parts of an organization?

**RQ2:** How can a bottom-up change movement assist its organization in the top-down execution of transformational projects?

**RQ3:** What value can a bottom-up change movement generate from creating alliances with similar movements in other companies?

## **1.5. Relevance to Research**

Current publications can be argued to mainly focus on how single concepts affect change in organizations. However, reality has shown that companies generally undertake a complex of initiatives to achieve change. This study appreciates the complexity of a bottom-up change movement such as GenB and acknowledges that its functions span multiple fields of research.

Hybrid bottom-up change movements have not yet been significantly explored within academia. This study attempts to bridge multiple fields of research within change management, organizational psychology, and the formation of alliances. In doing so, an attempt is made at describing a new form of organizing for bottom-up change (GenB), finding its closest resemblance within current academic contexts, and suggesting practical use cases for leveraging its value. Meanwhile, Bühler's interest in this study suggests that there is demand from industry in this area of research.

## **1.6. Research Design**

This study uses grounded theory, which is a set of inductive strategies for conducting “rigorous qualitative research” (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2007). The study starts by investigating a certain topic, the case of GenB, and gradually builds a theoretical framework based on what is found to be relevant to research. The relationships identified between theory and qualitative interviews is used to formulate suggestions for answering the research questions.

Primary data was first gathered through a pre-study consisting of qualitative interviews with employees of various functions at Bühler, which allow for a better understanding of the company and the surrounding environment (Moran and Brightman, 2000). Next, a qualitative questionnaire was formulated based on the research questions. The questionnaire was adapted into three editions based on if the respondent was a Bühler employee, if they were an employee from another company, or if they were a member of academia or an independent organization (see appendices in sections 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 respectively). The three editions of the questionnaire were validated before use by the thesis supervisor, and also by a junior and an executive employee at Bühler.

The theoretical framework was constructed alongside the interview process, using some helpful research hints from the interviewed members of academia. The three groups of qualitative interviews were later coded using the software tool “NVivo 12”, by categorizing responses into themes which could be aggregated and listed in the thesis.

Lastly, data gathered from the theoretical framework and qualitative interviews was synthesized and compiled into the analysis and discussion.

## **1.7. Delimitations**

To address three relatively varied research questions, the theoretical framework has been structured to produce an overview of relevant key terms, theories, and concepts pertaining to the research questions. It is meant to give the reader an understanding of the main factors of organizational change that one should be aware of, as opposed to discussing the nuances of each concept in detail. A more in-depth analyses of the roles of concepts identified in this study is suggested for further research.

GenB is a multifaceted movement with several roles within Bühler. This report will focus on the role GenB can play as a bottom-up change agent for the company. Consequently, GenB will be studied as a bottom-up movement. The study focuses on how GenB can be diffused throughout the organization to become an integral part of the company, how it can be used to

assist management in the execution of transformational projects, and the value it can bring to Bühler if creating alliances with similar bottom-up movements in other companies. The details of GenB's history, structure, actions, and events will not be studied, unless considered relevant for answering the research questions.

Analysis delimitations are also necessary for the comparative interviews between Bühler employees, external employees, and members of academia and independent organizations. Interviews were conducted with individuals generally attending high level positions in their organizations. Consideration was taken to respondents' generally limited time that they could offer this study. This limits the detail of information possible to receive from each respondent, and it is likely that important information could have been omitted by mistake or on purpose for confidentiality purposes. In addition, the comparative nature of this study yielded many interviews. As a result, in-depth analyses of participating organizations' structure, organization, and initiatives were not considered appropriate nor possible given the time frame of the study. Instead, information gained from respondents is treated as the only knowledge of the organization and its activities, except for annual reports (if available) and official websites of an organization. It should be noted that although annual reports and official websites provided an overview of key facts and figures for each organization, they provided little additional knowledge to the studied topic. Meanwhile, Bühler has requested that names of their employees and exact job-titles be anonymized. The exception to job-title anonymization is management trainees, which is a more general title, as such employees exist in substantial numbers and perform various functions.

## **1.8. Societal, Ethical, and Ecological Aspects**

When carrying out research, societal, ethical, and ecological aspects have been considered.

Socially, one must be aware of interpretive bias when carrying out interviews, which can either "produce sound judgements or systematic error" (Kaptchuk, 2003). The location of Bühler and the various cultural backgrounds of respondents must be considered. These could influence how companies or respondents express themselves. Therefore, care must be taken to understand the meaning that the respondent wants to convey, even though this may be different from the words or behaviour the author is accustomed to.

Ethically, care was taken to ensure the overall meaning of primary and secondary sources is conveyed accurately and as intended by the source.

Ecologically, care was taken to minimize harm to the environment. Due to the social nature of this thesis, negative effects on the environment were mostly limited to reducing unnecessary travel and paper printing. The unfolding of a global virus pandemic during this study completely limited travel outside the location of the Bühler headquarters. All interviews were either conducted locally at Bühler headquarters or via video/audio conversations online or over the phone.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Change in Organizations**

Organizations currently exist in an ever-changing environment (Huy & Mintzberg, 2003). As a result, organizations are pressured to adapt by implementing changes in their “strategy, structure, process, and culture” (Armenakis, Harris, Mossholder, 1993). However, when “over 60% of all change projects are considered to fail” (Burnes, 2004), it becomes clear that accomplishing change is challenging.

#### **2.1.1. Organizational change vs. corporate transformation**

Ashkenas (2015) clarified that there is a difference between the terms “change” and “transformation”. According to Ashkenas, change management focuses on “executing a well-defined shift in the way things work”, while Thomas and Hardy (2011) define organizational change as “an outcome of the dynamics of both power and resistance”. Meanwhile, corporate transformation is a “portfolio of initiatives” that aim to “reinvent the organization and discover a new or revised business model based on a vision for the future” (2015). When comparing to the ways of organizational change mentioned Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993), it would seem organizational change can be considered a change in organizational processes and structure, but not strategy and culture. This is supported by Lewis (2011), who similarly describes organizational change as a concept involving the evolution of an organization’s structures and processes. Meanwhile, Blumenthal and Haspeslagh (1994) argue that for a change to be considered a corporate transformation, the “majority of individuals in an organization must change their behaviour”, thus referring to a cultural change. Similarly, Lewis (1994) uses transformative change as a synonym for culture change. Culture, in turn, was defined by Schein (1990) as “a property of groups, and can be thought of as the accumulated learning that a given group has acquired during its history”. Consequently, this study defines organizational change as the modification of structures or processes within an organization. In contrast, this study defines corporate transformation as a set of organizational changes intending to alter the strategy or culture of an organization, consequently affecting the organization’s structures and processes. This study will continue by focusing on the aspects of transformational change, as this is considered most relevant to the case study.

#### **2.1.2. Why corporate transformations fail**

Kotter summarizes eight key reasons for why corporate transformations fail and how to overcome them, as seen in Table 2.1 (1995). These reasons arguably occur during either the preparation, execution, or finalization stages in the change project. These three stages all have at least one of Kotter’s reasons for transformational failure. Consequently, it seems that transformation projects can fail at any stage. The theoretical framework will continue by elaborating on key concepts that inhibit change, and how to overcome them.

Table 2.1: Reasons corporate transformations fail (Kotter, 1995)

#	Reasons Corporate Transformations Fail	Steps for Successful Transformation
1	Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency	Establishing a sense of urgency
2	Not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition	Forming a powerful guiding coalition
3	Lacking a vision	Creating a vision
4	Undercommunicating the vision by a factor of ten	Communicating the vision
5	Not removing obstacles to the new vision	Empowering others to act on the vision
6	Not systematically planning for and creating short-term wins	Planning for and creating short-term wins
7	Declaring victory too soon	Consolidating improvements and continuing producing change
8	Not anchoring changes in the corporation's culture	Institutionalizing new approaches

## 2.2. How to Prepare for Change in Organizations

Using inspiration from Kotter's reasons for transformational change (1995), this section will discuss how to prepare for change in organizations, and speculate on how to avoid key problems.

Gutzwiller (2018) argues that the ease of change in organizations is dependent on three factors: dissatisfaction of employees over the current situation, a reasonable process for change, and a clear vision of what needs to change. If any of these factors are not fulfilled, then Gutzwiller argues that the ease of change will tend towards impossibility (2018). This is similar to Kotter's first three reasons for organizational failure: lack of a sense of urgency, lack of a group with power to change, and lack of vision (1995). The underlying cause for these three reasons is worth investigation.

Zorn, Christensen, and Cheney (1999, as cited in Lewis 2011) have described that change has become a "managerial fashion", where many firms undertake "change for change's sake". If this is true, managers undertaking change in corporations would not necessarily have personal commitment and belief in their actions, which could arguably lead to any of Kotter's first three reasons for transformational failure (1995).

Furthermore, Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) discuss the concept of an organization's readiness for change, and provide a framework for conceptualization. Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) claim that readiness for change is dependent on the message for change, which consists of an explanation for the need for change and the belief that affected parts of

the organization are capable of change. Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) also claim that the efficacy of the message is dependent on the receivers view of the sender (i.e. credibility of the change agent), strategies that are used to influence the receivers (active participation, persuasive communication, and management of external information), as well as the interpersonal and social group dynamics that the receiver is in.

Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) continue by defining a typology of situations depending on an organization’s readiness for a certain change, and the “urgency of the change”. These situations, depicted in Table 2.2, also provide managers with a set of actions to overcome each situation. All situations had in common that they required persuasive communication. In addition, when in a situation of low urgency, active participation and use of external information was required to persuade the organization to undergo change. Finally, when in a situation of low readiness, high credibility of the change agent is crucial.

*Table 2.2: Typology of behaviour to drive change based on the situation (Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder 1993)*

	<b>Low Readiness for Change</b>	<b>High Readiness for Change</b>
<b>Low Urgency for Change</b>	Aggressive	Maintenance
<b>High Urgency for Change</b>	Crisis	Quick Response

### **2.2.1. The role of leadership on organizational change**

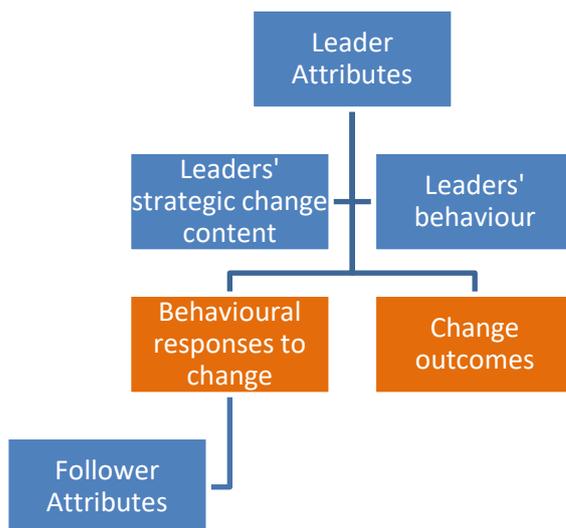
Conger (1998) highlights that today’s new generation of leaders have “little tolerance for unquestioned authority”. According to Gill (2003), change does not only require management, but also “effective leadership [in order] to be successfully introduced and sustained”. As such, leadership is an important topic in organizational change. It has historically been important to distinguish management from leadership (Kotterman, 2006). Leadership is more about creating a vision, communicating it, and inspiring others, often to significant changes (Kotterman, 2006). Meanwhile, management is more about planning, control, organization, and maintaining predictability (Kotterman, 2006). Kotterman (2006) summarizes the key differences by stating that “in a nutshell, management is tactical and all about coping with the here and now while leadership is strategic and primarily about coping with the future”.

Moran and Brightman (2000) argue that leaders face the leadership paradox, which they explain as aligning their firm to the current environment and ensuring stability for employees, all the while having to promote change in anticipation of the future environment. Moran and Brightman (2000) suggest five characteristics of effective change leaders, described here. They believe that leaders frame change so that both organizational results and effects on the individual are clear. They also create a supportive atmosphere in which to test the change, and through experimentation improve it. Change leaders also lead by example, and champion the change by leading it to success, while learning from failure. Finally, change leaders can network across

the organization “to explain the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the change” to close the gap of scepticism towards the change.

Conger (1998) refers to persuasion as “the language of business leadership”, and outlines four steps in order to successfully persuade others of change: establishing credibility for oneself, framing the change so that all affected parties see its benefit, providing evidence of benefit using rhetoric and compelling success stories, and communicating in a way that shows emotional commitment and connects to the emotions of the receiving party. Furthermore, Conger (1998) underlines that persuasion is a method of negotiation and learning as opposed to a one-time sales pitch, that takes time and iterations to achieve.

In a review of empirical studies, Oreg and Berson (2019) suggest a model connecting leadership with organizational change and its outcomes (see Figure 2.1). The model suggests that change outcomes and behavioral responses to change are dependent on the type of change the leader proposes and the leadership style used to accompany the suggestion, which depends on the leader’s attributes. Additionally, follower attributes will influence behavioural responses to change, i.e. follower resistance.



*Figure 2.1: Connecting leaders and followers to organizational change (Oreg and Berson, 2019)*

Oreg and Berson (2019) believe that when multiple leaders share the same vision, the likelihood of the desired changes to occur is increased. Thus, in a company where every member of the executive board is regarded as a leader, a shared vision between them increases the chance of positive change in a company. Furthermore, if executive board members would involve other employees regarded as leaders (e.g. business unit heads) in the same vision, then this further increases the chance of positive change. This reaffirms the important role of middle managers (and informal company leaders in general) in the change process, and that they must buy-into and believe in the proposed change for it to succeed.

### 2.2.2. The role of empowerment on organizational change

Conger and Kanungo (1988) touch upon the relevance of empowerment as a tool for leaders to decrease their employees feeling powerless during times of organizational change. They suggest that the empowerment process occurs in five steps, as shown in Figure 2.2.

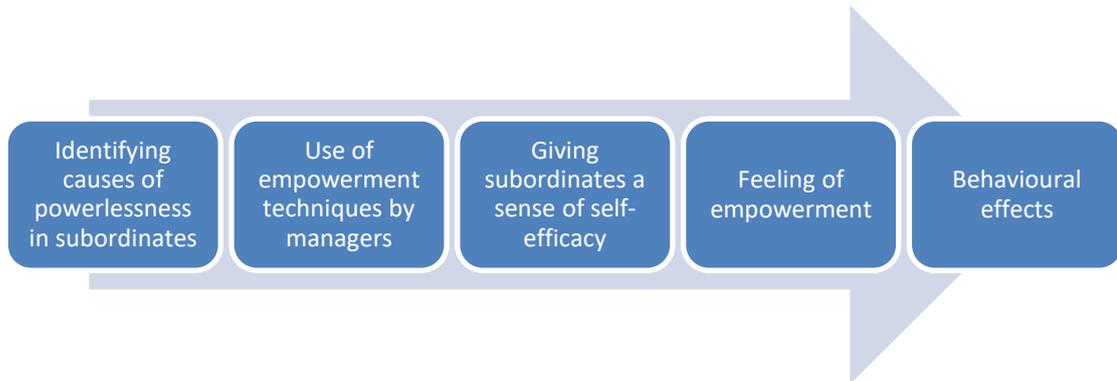


Figure 2.2: Five steps of the empowerment process (Conger and Kanungo, 1988)

Argyris (1998) states that empowerment is achieved from internal commitment, which he describes as a participatory approach, in the sense that the employee decides on the goals they have and how to achieve them. Argyris (1998) compares internal commitment to external commitment, in which goals are defined and controlled by management. Walumbwa et al. (2018) similarly state that employee commitment is likely to increase because of the employees' own view of their self-worth and capabilities, as well as management supporting the employees and fostering teamwork, referred to as servant leadership. Morin et al. (2016) also linked employees' psychological empowerment to the existence of support from their managers.

## 2.3. Resistance to Change in Organizations

Del Val and Fuentes (2003) define resistance from two viewpoints, as a phenomenon obstructing and slowing down the change process, or as an activity which preserves the status quo. This section will discuss some key reasons for resistance to change, and ways to overcome them.

### 2.3.1. Reasons for resistance

According to Moran and Brightman (2000), "every change initiative...sets in motion a cycle of resisting change, recognizing the need for change, agreement as to the type of change required, and finally development of implementation strategies". Kanter (2012) provides a list of factors contributing to resistance to change, and suggest ways to "strategize around them", shown in Table 2.3. In a literature review and empirical study, del Val and Fuentes (2003) rank 19 reasons for resistance in companies by their importance, the most important of which are summarized in Table 2.4. Comparing Table 2.3 to Table 2.4, the former focuses on reasons for resistance from the perspective of the affected individual, while the latter views resistance from the perspective of a company.

Table 2.3: *Reasons for resistance (Kanter, 2012)*

Reasons for resistance	Suggestions to overcome
Loss of control	Invite affected stakeholders into the planning
Excess uncertainty (fearing the unknown)	Compelling vision and clear steps to change
Surprising sudden change	Hint to employees of upcoming change
Habitual routines	Minimize unnecessary change
Loss of face due to belief in old routine	Clarify that external factors force new changes
Obsolescence of own competence	Provide training and support systems
More work	Reward employees appropriately
Negative effects on other stakeholders	Account for distant stakeholders
Lingering resentment	Address resentment before initiating change
Threat of job loss or investment cuts	Be honest, transparent, fast, and fair

Table 2.4: *Top reasons for resistance (del Val and Fuentes, 2003)*

1. Deep-rooted values
2. Gap in capabilities
3. Departmental politics
4. Low external motivation
5. Incommensurable beliefs
6. Different interests among employees and management
7. Communication barriers
8. Organizational silence

Meanwhile, Strebel (1996) argues that resistance is formed when contractual obligations, cultural norms, mutual commitment and reciprocal expectations between employees and their employer are not revised during an organizational change. According to Strebel (1996), not revising those factors meant that employees would not adapt their behaviour to the changing environment.

Morrison and Milliken (2000) pointed out that resistance can also occur in silence, for example when opposing employees do not feel it is safe to voice their opinions. The use of multiple languages in a multinational company can also be considered as a factor of resistance. Languages tend to shape organizational change processes and affect the costs involved in communication (Luo and Shenkar, 2006), which could include implementation time.

### 2.3.2. Overcoming resistance

Resistance has historically been viewed as a problem which needs to be overcome (Mabin, Forgeson, and Green, 2001). In more recent years, however, resistance has also been viewed

as an opportunity to leverage value for an organization (Waddell and Sohal, 1998; Fosfuri and Rønne, 2009), for example using the theory of constraints to iteratively identify the largest cause of resistance and addressing its root cause (Mabin, Forgeson, and Green, 2001; Kuruvilla, 2017). Mabin, Forgeson, and Green (2001) posit that the value in dealing with resistance lies in enabling a successful change implementation by communicating with colleagues to identify sources of resistance and collectively testing change strategies. Whether it is seen as a problem or an opportunity to leverage value, resistance seems to be a concept that needs to be addressed to achieve change.

Gartenberg, Prat, and Serafeim (2019) investigated the link between corporate purpose and financial performance. They found that a meaningful purpose did not on its own deliver increased financial performance, nor did the feeling of camaraderie at the workplace. However, an increase in financial performance was present when meaningful purpose was combined with a high level of managerial clarity about expectations and the steps moving forward. The study continued by highlighting that this association is only seen when purpose and clarity was driven by middle managers. This could suggest that buy-in of middle managers is instrumental for accomplishing not only financial performance, but the change that is associated with it. Thus, when dealing with resistance, this could be a key target group to address.

Dettmer (1998) presented a model based on the theory of constraints in which there are six excuses for resisting to change (see first column of Table 2.5), which Mabin, Forgeson, and Green (2001) refer to as layers of resistance. Mabin, Forgeson, and Green (2001) posit that each layer must be addressed sequentially when trying to implement change. Using various tools from the theory of constraints, Mabin, Forgeson, and Green (2001) ultimately suggest addressing each layer through open communication with all affected parties and reaching consensus on the way forward.

*Table 2.5: Layers of resistance and how to overcome them (Dettmer, 1998; Mabin, Forgeson, and Green, 2001)*

<b>Layers of resistance</b>	<b>How to gain buy-in</b>
<b>1. Not recognizing the existence of a problem</b>	Openly addressing each layer with all affected parties and achieving consensus through communication.
<b>2. Not believing that the outcome is possible to change</b>	
<b>3. Not believing in the efficacy of the proposed solution</b>	
<b>4. Believing the proposed solution will create more problems than it solves</b>	
<b>5. Believing too many obstacles stand in the way of implementing the solution</b>	
<b>6. Not believing that key people will support the idea</b>	

Coch and French (1948) claimed that management could affect or completely remove employees' resistance to change by using group meetings to communicate the need for change and involve employees in planning the change. This was supported by a longitudinal psychological study by Morin et al. (2015), which showed that employees' commitment to change increased when top-down communication existed to justify the change, and when managers empowered

their employees to oversee the change implementation. Similarly, Lamm and Gordon (2010) found that “psychological empowerment is significantly related to behavioural support for organizational change”, and as such suggest that employees be given “partial ownership for the change, to reinforce their feelings of empowerment”. Lines (2004) also suggest a “strong positive relationship between [employee] participation and goal achievement and organizational commitment, and a strong negative relationship with resistance”.

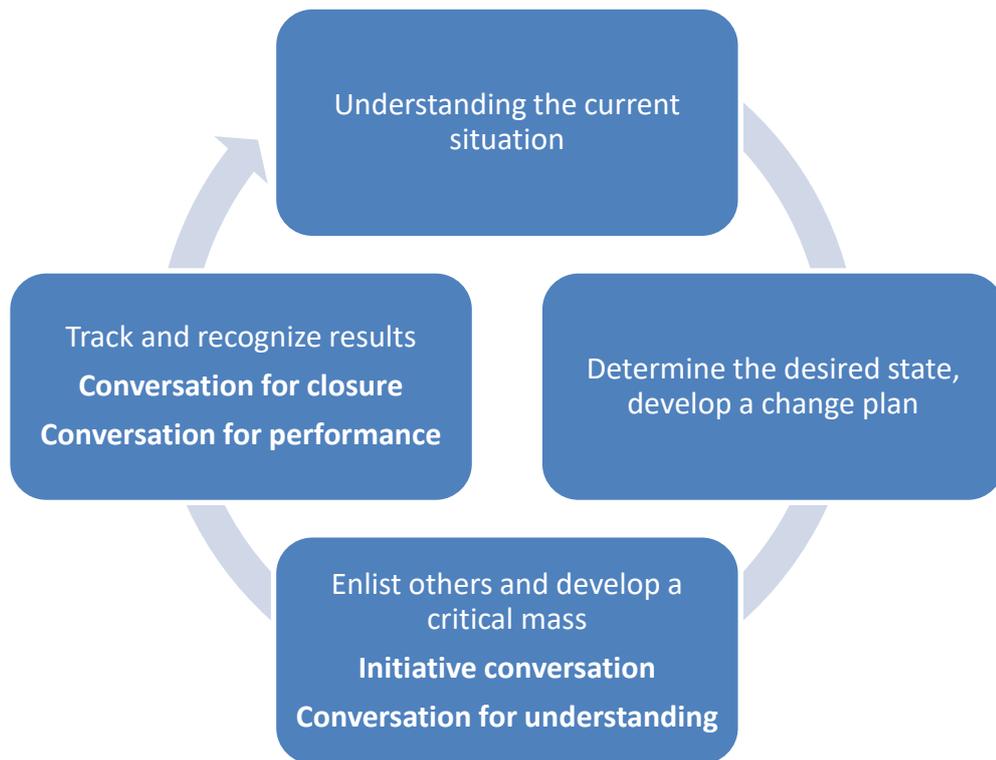
Furthermore, Battilana and Casciaro (2013) suggest that a change agent’s network of connections, specifically their strong ties to influential members of an organization, allow them to drive change more efficiently. According to Battilana and Casciaro (2013), strong personal ties with influential members who have mixed feelings towards the change can generally be convinced of the change. In contrast, members with strong resistance to the change can be convinced if the change does not significantly oppose institutional organizational norms (Battilana and Casciaro 2013).

## **2.4. The Process of Change Management**

This section will illustrate change management using a structural approach and a communicative approach in a change cycle, and then discusses some sources of change, as well as two major change strategies used today.

According to Moran and Brightman (2000), “change management is the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers”. They illustrate this process using the change management cycle, depicted in Figure 2.3.

To understand the current situation, Moran and Brightman (2000) believe that a change leader should communicate with employees of different areas of the firm, appreciate the surrounding environment of the company, and gauge the leaders own commitment to a change initiative. In the second step of the cycle, the change leader should synthesize a change plan based on the information gained from employees and considering their opinions of how change should occur. The vision (or desired state) should be “in clear, concrete terms that everyone can understand”, and the leader should also present a “practical, step-by-step plan for accomplishing the change” (Moran and Brightman 2000). This enables a deeper level of understanding and belief in the change’s efficacy when it is presented. In the third step of the cycle, Moran and Brightman (2000) recommend finding people to support the change, who are willing to try it as an experiment. As more and more people are enlisted, the experiment will allow employees to correct any issues they find, while building a critical mass of employees loyal to this change. Continually communicating with employees and finding those who help market the change with the leader prevents the risk of reverting to the state before the change. In the final step of the change cycle, the leader should “create specific performance targets and measures”, which makes the change tangible, allows tracking results leading to a sense of progress, encourages more resistant employees to follow suit, and make sure the change is held in place after the change process.



*Figure 2.3: Moran and Brightman's (2000) change management cycle paired with Ford and Ford's (1995) four types of communication in bold*

Ford and Ford (1995) argue that change occurs in the context of communication, and that an intentional change is brought about through intentional communication. Similarly, Lewis (2011) states that “communication plays a critical role” in the change process. As Moran and Brightman (2000) point out, “managing change is about managing people”, and “the three most powerful drivers of work behaviour” are purpose (reason for doing), identity (view of own role at work), and mastery (level of adaptation to work environment). It can be argued that Ford and Ford (1995) address these behavioural drivers by presenting four types of communication that should occur at different stages of the change process. However, they note that communication, like change (Moran and Brightman, 2000), rarely happens linearly, making jumps between communication types possible. Examples of jumps include change suggestions which fail to gain traction (jumping to closure) or change suggestions that need revision (jumping backwards). The communication types, explained below, are also appended to the change management cycle in Figure 2.3 based on the authors synthesis of these theories.

Initiative conversation can most simply be described as a call for action (Ford and Ford, 1995). This conversation needs to be followed by another one that contributes to understanding. A conversation for understanding occurs by explaining the reason for change, getting a certain level of involvement and support, specifying envisioned goals that measure change progress, and allowing others to interpret necessary actions. After that, a conversation for performance allows a leader to suggest tangible tasks which contribute to reaching the envisioned goals. Lastly, the conversation for closure summarizes what has been done, why the change has reached its finish line, acknowledges actions, failures, learnings, and results, and explains the

new opportunities this change has enabled. Ford and Ford (1995) stress the importance of celebrating completion to elicit a sense of closure in the participating parties.

### **2.4.1.Sources of change: organizational ambidexterity and exploration vs. exploitation**

According to Moran and Brightman (2000), change can occur top-down as well as bottom-up. When it occurs top-down, it provides “vision and structure”, while bottom-up change encourages participation and generated support (Moran and Brightman, 2000). They also argue that change is a result of combined effort top-down and bottom-up, also mentioned by Mom, Van den Bosch, and Volberda (2007), who recommend synthesizing these efforts.

In the context of organizations, March (1991) describes exploration as actions that find and generate new knowledge through inter alia experimentation, discovery, and innovation. Meanwhile, March (1991) describes exploitation as actions which make (better) use of current knowledge through for example refinement, production, and execution. March (1991) proposed that a balance in both exploration and exploitation activity in firms is important for its long-term survival. When testing this proposition as a hypothesis, He and Wong (2004) concluded that there the imbalance of firms’ exploration and exploitation activities had a negative correlation with the firms’ sales growth. Uotila et al. (2009) expand upon this notion by showing that there exists an optimal balance between exploration and exploitation activities, the details of which depend on the firm’s environment.

Mom, Van Den Bosch, and Volberda (2007) interestingly note that middle managers, when confronted with new knowledge, tend to resort to exploitation activities when the knowledge is received top-down, while they resort to exploration activities when the knowledge is received bottom-up. Thus, there would seem to be an optimal level of knowledge flow to middle managers from top-down and bottom-up sources, such that the middle manager engages in an optimal combination of exploration and exploitation activities. This is supported by He and Wong (2004), who refer to firms which undertake a suitable balance of exploration and exploitation activities as ambidextrous organizations.

### **2.4.2.Change strategies**

Gutzwiller (2018) summarizes two basic change strategies referred to as bold strokes and long marches. Bold strokes are triggered top-down, involve a high level of control, and generally occur quickly. Results from bold strokes are seen quickly, while the key instruments used to accomplish it involve the company strategy and structure. In contrast, long marches are triggered through bottom-up initiatives, involve a low level of control, and occur slowly. Results from long marches are usually not seen clearly at first, but in the end involves a sustainable change in behaviour. Key instruments used to accomplish long marches are company processes, skills, and culture. Gutzwiller (2018) also distinguishes between the mechanics and psychology of change, where the former involves processes, and the latter involves values. In this sense, bold strokes involve more radical changes to the mechanics of the firm, while long marches involve more incremental changes to firm psychology, potentially also involving mechanics through incremental process optimization (e.g. six sigma).

Pedersen and Dalum (2004) define radical innovation as a “major change that represents a new technological paradigm”, whereas incremental innovation is “gradual and cumulative”, involving “only small changes in technology, organisations, processes, products or services”. Comparing these definitions with Gutzwiller’s (2018) change strategies, bold strokes seem to be more appropriate for radical innovation, while long marches involve incremental innovation.

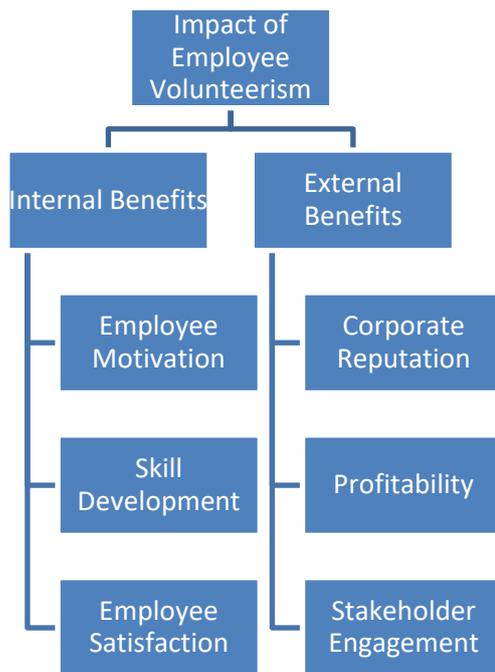
## **2.5. Finding Resemblance for Generation B in Academia**

In pursuit of identifying GenB within academia, numerous topics presented below will serve as a basis for further reasoning in section 5.1.

### **2.5.1. Employee volunteerism**

According to Rodell (2013), employee volunteerism, also referred to as corporate volunteering by Grant (2012), is the act of “giving time or skills during a planned activity for a volunteer group or organization”. In a later publication, Rodell et al. (2016) emphasize the act of giving time for a planned activity and specify the recipient of the volunteering activities to be an external party.

Grant (2012) suggests that corporate volunteering can enrich jobs which are otherwise depleted of meaning. Meanwhile, Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder (2016) found that employee volunteerism is often linked to the corporate social responsibility strategy of the company. They also provide a framework of the impact of corporate volunteerism on the company’s corporate social responsibility, seen in Figure 2.4. They cite key benefits of employee volunteerism internally to be increased motivation, skill development, and satisfaction at work. Meanwhile, key external benefits include an improved reputation, higher profitability, and better engagement with stakeholders. It can be argued that all the cited internal benefits for the company can also serve as direct benefits for the employee. Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder (2016) suggest that existing employee volunteer programs can improve themselves by clearly stating goals and following up with status reports on achieved progress, while operating in a way that seeks to achieve both the internal and external benefits in Figure 2.4.



*Figure 2.4: Benefits of employee volunteerism (Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder, 2016)*

Grant (2012) highlights the importance of internal incentives as opposed to external incentives in employee volunteerism. Internal incentives, also referred to as intrinsic motivation, is when an individual does not receive “apparent rewards except the activity itself”, such as personal satisfaction or enjoyment (Deci, 1971). In contrast, extrinsic motivation occurs when activities are performed in exchange for external purposes such as money or approval (Deci, 1972).

Grube and Piliavin (2000) confirmed that an increased employee perception of being forced to volunteer, also called mandatory volunteerism, simultaneously increased employee desire to quit. Even though external social and organizational pressure was linked to increased volunteer hours (Grube and Piliavin, 2000), Grant (2012) elaborates upon this concept by proposing that an employee is more likely to repeatedly volunteer long-term if they are not pressured to do so by their external environment. Meanwhile, Booth, Park, and Glomb (2009) found that time spent in employee-supported volunteer programs related positively to benefits, including skill development, from doing so.

To start an employee volunteer program, Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder (2016) propose that a company should “assess employees’ volunteer interests, specific needs within the local community, and the organization’s goals”. Next, companies are recommended to secure support for the employee volunteer program from their top management. They should also “develop program policies that involve employees at all levels of the organization”, and devise metrics to regularly assess if the program is achieving its goals. Finally, successes should be celebrated with all employees (Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder, 2016), and be communicated internally as well as externally (Points of Light Corporate Institute, 2013).

Wunderer (2001) discusses the term co-intrapreneurship, referring to it as an incremental support system enabling employees of all levels and functions to engage in collaborative innovation. He believes that such an approach using continuous improvement would enhance the work experience of the employee with entrepreneurial challenges, as well as provide benefits to multiple stakeholder groups. However, he warns that co-intrapreneurship requires great dedication and effort from executive management to drive and support it.

### **2.5.2. Global talent management and succession planning**

Schuler, Jackson, and Tarique (2011) refer to global talent management as the systematic use of HR policies to manage global talent, specifically “location and relocation management, planning and forecasting, staffing (which includes attracting, selecting, retaining, reducing and removing), training and developing, and evaluating employees”, while accounting for firm strategies, workforce concerns, and regulations. In the context of family-owned businesses, Sharma, Chrisman and Chua (2003) refer to succession planning as a deliberate process of passing management control to another family member. Rothwell (2010) defines succession planning and management as “the process that helps ensure the stability of the tenure of personnel”, by ensuring “continued effective performance of an organization” through the “development, replacement, and strategic application of key people over time”.

Global talent management and succession planning have previously been discussed together in research papers (McDonnell et al., 2010; Groves, 2007). McDonnell et al. (2010) argue that firms who systematically identify, manage, and develop their talent have an advantage over those firms that do not. The reasoning for this was that firms will be able to accurately identify when to use internal talent, and when to source it from outside the firm. Groves (2007) argues that firms should ideally combine succession planning with leadership development to prepare future leaders of the firm. To do this, he proposes several suggestions, including that the firm develops its mentorship network, especially with high-potential employees. He also suggests creating “organization-wide forums” with a supportive cultural environment where high-potentials can engage with executive management, get challenged, and be evaluated for their abilities.

### **2.5.3. Social movements and grassroots innovation movements**

Social movements, unlike grassroots innovation, have not yet been extensively explored within the context of industrial firms. However, both terms arguably bear a certain metaphorical value in discussing formations of groups of people to elicit change.

According to Diani (1992), a social movement consists of three components: a “network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations [i], engaged in political or cultural conflicts [ii], on the basis of shared collective identities [iii]”. Diani (1992) posits that social movements have gained interest in research because of their connections to protests. In contrast, Seyfang and Smith (2007) define grassroots innovations as “networks of activists and organisations generating novel bottom-up solutions for sustainable development” based on the needs of local communities. Fressoli et. al. (2014) have a similar definition, adding that grassroots innovations involve movements as well as networks, and can have the purpose of creating innovation processes and knowledge. Finally, Smith, Fressoli, and

Thomas define grassroots innovation movements as “people and organisations...who engage the grassroots in innovation processes in their ideas from the outset, and put local knowledge and communities in the lead in the framing of a collaborative innovation activity” (2014).

The definitions of social movements and grassroots innovation seem to possess significantly overlapping characteristics, where a group of people join forces to lobby for or drive change. However, key differences seem to lie in that the binding effect of social movements is the conflict generated by groups of individuals that are unhappy with a certain aspect of the status quo, while individuals engaging in grassroots innovation do so to generate knowledge rather than conflict.

When engaging in grassroots innovation, Fressoli et. al. (2014) highlight the importance of focusing on the process of such activity as much as on its outcomes. Maximizing interaction and number of participating individuals increases the efficacy of idea generation. Engagement and empowerment should be a fundamental policy for new forms of collaboration to occur. In a case study, Seyfang and Haxeltine (2012) suggested that for a movement of the grassroots innovation type to diffuse itself beyond its niche in the organization, it should foster its connections with individuals holding power and resources. Grassroots innovation movements should also manage participants expectations by engaging them in events with tangible effects and actions. Solely engaging participants in awareness-raising events risks losing those hopeful to do something concrete. Finally, a focus of collective actionable change should be present.

## **2.6. Alliances: Risks and Opportunities**

This section aims to find theoretical grounding for the benefits and risks that could be prevalent if GenB formed alliances with similar movements in other companies. It will also be used to discuss the type of alliance that would be formed as a result, and what role GenB would have in it.

Alliances have in a general sense been referred to as “dyadic exchanges” (Gulati, 1998). Several branches of alliances have been studied in the academic context, including strategic alliances, social alliances, and learning alliances. Strategic alliances are defined by Gulati (1998) as “voluntary arrangements between firms involving exchange, sharing, or codevelopment of products, technologies, or services”. Sakarya et. al. (2012) defines social alliances as “voluntary collaborations between business and social enterprises addressing social problems too complex to be solved by unilateral organizational action”. Khanna, Gulati, and Nohria (1998) refer to learning alliances as associations of partners with the primary objective to learn from each other. Each form of alliance focuses on its own purpose, with the common denominator of cooperation between organizations. Although all forms of alliances are worth investigating, this study will mostly focus on social alliances, due to the voluntary and social nature of GenB.

Khanna, Gulati, and Nohria (1998) argue that the logic behind firm behaviour in learning alliances has to do with firms private and common benefits. Private benefits are considered learnings from a partner that a firm can directly apply to its operations, while common benefits refer to learnings attained only through collective cooperation within the alliance. Thus, the degree of investments into a learning alliance by each partner firm depends on the combination of the

private and common benefits it receives. As such, learning alliances contain both cooperative and competitive aspects between partners, largely reminiscent of game theory. Khanna, Gulati, and Nohria (1998) believe these aspects should be addressed by partners beforehand to maximize collective gain and minimize unilateral opportunism.

An example of concern in cross-industrial strategic alliances is the protection of a firm's proprietary information (Kale, Singh, and Perlmutter, 2000). Kale, Singh, and Perlmutter (2000) highlight the importance of building relational capital, which they define as a "level of mutual trust, respect, and friendship that arises out of close interaction at the individual level between alliance partners". Building relational capital through close communication and open and constructive conflict solving is considered a key approach to foster mutual learning within a strategic alliance despite concerns over confidentiality. Kale, Singh, and Perlmutter (2000) also recommend leveraging relational knowledge gained from past experiences in alliances if these exist.

In a study of the effects of employee volunteering in a social alliance, Liu and Ko (2011) found that significant benefits occur for both the firm and the non-profit organization. Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright (2004) argue that social alliances can both "contribute to solving pressing social problems and to fulfilling important strategic objectives for companies and non-profits". In terms of benefits for the firm, Liu and Ko's (2011) findings largely coincided with the benefits of employee volunteering for the firm as mentioned by Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder (2016) in Figure 2.4. They also mentioned that such benefits typically do not arise in corporate social responsibility strategy, which focuses more on the external perception of the company. Meanwhile, benefits for the non-profit organization include financial contributions, and the synergy of sharing skills and resources. Liu and Ko (2011) suggest making use of employee volunteers as an asset which also reduces their labour costs. They argue for a decentralized management approach to make best use of local knowledge and empowering employees to make their own decisions. When considering with what social cause to partner with, Kim, Sung, and Lee (2012) found that consumers care more about what a company does as a result of a partnership, rather than with whom they partner.

Although social alliances can generate great value for organizations, it is not a simple task to do so (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004). Liu and Ko (2011) recommend that firms ensure that the non-profit organizations have "the relevant facilities and environment" to support and make maximum use of employee volunteers. Jamali and Keshishian (2009) warn that alliances often lack "depth and breadth", thus serving more as a "symbolic or instrumental" venture than a collaborative one. Examples included vaguely defined goals, sporadic communication, and low levels of engagement. The reason for this was argued to be that the alliance still met the minimum expectations formed from the start, which were initially set very low. Jamali and Keshishian (2009) thus recommend that partnerships should identify common goals, specify relationships, negotiate expectations, and foster cooperation through mutual learning and engagement. Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright (2004) argue that managers need to be mindful of problems which will inevitably arise in social alliances and know how to tackle them. They also suggest a model for assessing nine dimensions of fit between a company and a non-profit organization (see Table 2.6), arguing that these contribute to alliance success.

*Table 2.6: Dimensions of fit recommended for succeeding in social alliances (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004)*

<b>Dimension of fit</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Mission</b>	Do the missions of all parties align?
<b>Resource</b>	Do the parties complement each other's resources?
<b>Management</b>	Are there strong personal bonds between party leaders?
<b>Work Force</b>	Do employees find the cause of the non-profit engaging?
<b>Target Market</b>	Will partnership lead to an improved image towards customers?
<b>Product/Cause</b>	Do points of similarity exist between the product and the cause?
<b>Cultural</b>	Are the organizational cultures of all parties compatible?
<b>Cycle</b>	Do the work schedules of all parties permit enough time for collaboration?
<b>Evaluation</b>	Is there potential for a mutually shared perception of success?

Sakarya et. al. (2012) found that businesses and social enterprises generally measure outcome differently. Businesses tend to focus on operational gains while social enterprises focus on social impact. Additionally, Sakarya et. al. (2012) argues that businesses are incentivised to join social alliances to legitimize their organization for others, while social enterprises are incentivized by their financial dependence on organizations. Such differences are argued to be useful to be aware of in partnership negotiations.

## 3. EMPIRICAL DATA

### 3.1. Primary Sources

Semi-structured interviews were used in this study almost exclusively, because they allow the interviewer to ask a set of pre-written questions, while letting the interview “unfold in a conversational manner offering participants the chance to explore issues they feel are important” (Longhurst, 2003). Although focus groups of 6-12 respondents is considered usual (Longhurst, 2003), this study generally surpassed this amount to gain a broader understanding of the studied concept.

A semi-structured interview pre-study was first conducted within Bühler to get a better understanding of the company and GenB. Thereafter, a semi-structured interview questionnaire was formulated based on the aim of the study. The questions in this questionnaire were adapted to three respondent target groups: Bühler employees, employees of external companies, and members of academia and independent organizations. The purpose of the adaptation was to gain the most knowledge based on each respondent groups’ area of expertise: Bühler, other external companies, or academic knowledge and knowledge specific to independent organizations.

Worth mentioning is that all information gathered from interviews with primary sources in this study have been anonymized for the reader. The reason for this is partly because respondents often shared sensitive or personal opinions that they would not publicly mention. Even though publicly citing respondents would lead to a more transparently referenced study, it would also risk censoring much of the information. It could also increase the risk of respondent withdrawal from the study, which would distort the reality portrayed. Therefore, it was decided that information provided by respondents would not be referenced.

Except for the pre-study interviews, respondents’ interviews were recorded after their expressed permission, or alternatively notes were taken. The interviews were later transcribed by recording relevant notes pertaining to each question in the questionnaire. This method of transcription ensured that irrelevant information could easily be discarded, and that information from the respondent could be accurately grouped to the right question, regardless of which question the respondent was answering. The answers were then anonymously aggregated per question in the software tool “NVivo 12”, while preserving each group of respondents: Bühler employees, employees of external companies, and members of academia or external organizations. For each question, responses were grouped (coded) into categories/themes of answers. An answer by one respondent could be coded into several categories but could not be counted more than once per category. These categories of responses were then ordered by the count of how many times they were mentioned. The categories were later summarized in the results found in section 4. Examples from certain categories considered relevant for the study were mentioned. In the case of respondent withdrawal, the respondent’s answers could easily be selected as a group and be uncoded, consequently removing them from the study.

### 3.1.1. Interviewed respondents from Bühler for pre-study

To gain first-hand understanding of the company and GenB, a pre-study was conducted. 28 Bühler employees participated in a semi-structured interview lasting 30-60 min depending on their time availability (Table 3.1). Notes were taken during the interview, and the insights enabled a well-rounded understanding of GenB and Bühler for the author, especially between different stakeholders. The pre-study became the main source of information for the Bühler and GenB case description in section 1.2. This allowed a more strategic approach to be formulated when attempting to gather information for the purpose of this study. Five employees from Table 3.1 who had the closest connections to GenB were interviewed again in order to establish an accurate timeline of events and achievements for GenB (see Table 3.2).

Additionally, four guided factory tours totalling about six hours took place around different parts of the Bühler Uzwil location. These tours provided some insight into the different working styles of factory and office employees. During some of these tours, a total of 12 factory workers were chosen at random and asked if they have heard of GenB. Only their answers were recorded in the form of a tally.

*Table 3.1: Interviewed respondents from Bühler for pre-study.*

#	Interview Time (min)	#	Interview Time (min)
<b>1</b>	60	<b>15</b>	30
<b>2</b>	60	<b>16</b>	45
<b>3</b>	60	<b>17</b>	30
<b>4</b>	60	<b>18</b>	30
<b>5</b>	60	<b>19</b>	45
<b>6</b>	60	<b>20</b>	40
<b>7</b>	60	<b>21</b>	30
<b>8</b>	40	<b>22</b>	45
<b>9</b>	60	<b>23</b>	45
<b>10</b>	45	<b>24</b>	30
<b>11</b>	60	<b>25</b>	30
<b>12</b>	60	<b>26</b>	30
<b>13</b>	30	<b>27</b>	60
<b>14</b>	45	<b>28</b>	30

*Table 3.2: Respondents from Table 3.1 which were interviewed a second time for GenB timeline*

#	Interview Time (min)
<b>1</b>	60
<b>2</b>	45
<b>3</b>	50
<b>4</b>	60
<b>5</b>	60

### 3.1.2. Interviewed respondents from Bühler

Respondents from Bühler were chosen based on their knowledge of upper-management practices and/or their connection to GenB. In total 12 respondents were contacted for an interview, and all of them accepted (Table 3.3). Seven of these respondents had previously been interviewed during the pre-study, of which five had been interviewed twice in the pre-study. However, this did not affect the interview procedure. One respondent declined recording of the interview, and in this case detailed notes were taken, and were of high quality for use in the study.

*Table 3.3: Interviewed respondents from Bühler*

#	Position	Interview Time (min)
1	Executive manager	30
2	Executive manager	41
3	Executive manager	55
4	Senior manager	39
5	Management Trainee	33
6	Management Trainee	55
7	Management Trainee	53
8	Management Trainee	27
9	Young Employee	42
10	Young Employee	36
11	Young Employee	46
12	Young Employee	57

### 3.1.3. Interviewed respondents from academia and independent organizations

Respondents from academia in the areas of change management were interviewed for their broader knowledge of management practices in their field of research. 12 people were contacted for an interview, of which eight respondents accepted (Table 3.4). Of these, six were from academia, and two were members of independent organizations, who were interviewed for their knowledge and experience in working together with partner organizations to achieve organizational change.

*Table 3.4: Interviewed respondents from academia and independent organizations*

#	Name	University (organization in bold)	Interview Time (min)
1	Prof. Dr. Tobias Fredberg	Chalmers	71
2	Prof. Dr. Martin Sköld	Chalmers	36
3	Prof. Dr. Hans Björnsson	Chalmers	23
4	Dr. Jennifer Sparr	ETH Zurich	53
5	Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller	University of St. Gallen/ ETH Zurich	45
6	Prof. Dr. Rouven Kanitz	LMU Munich	27
7	Kate Robertson	<b>One Young World</b>	47
8	Federico Merlo	<b>World Business Council for Sustainable Development</b>	26

### **3.1.4. Interviewed respondents from management of external companies**

Respondents representing external companies were chosen based on their knowledge of upper-management practices, and connection to HR related functions. The intent was to maximise the probability that the respondent was aware of company change practices and employee-related programs to drive change. A total of 26 people were contacted for an interview, of which 17 accepted to participate in a voice interview (Table 3.5). One participant withdrew from the study post-interview and was also removed from the list. One respondent declined recording of the interview, and in this case detailed notes were taken, and were of high quality for use in the study. Company data provided below is based on annual reports from year 2018, and in the event of annual reports spanning multiple years, from 2018-2019. Annual reports have not been referenced for confidentiality.

Table 3.5: Interviewed respondents from management of external companies

#	Position	Company Description	Group Turnover (BSEK)* **	Number of Employees ('000) **	HQ Location	Interview Time (min)
1	Ex- Head of Global Development Customs & Trade	Vehicle, equipment, and engine manufacturer.	400	100	Sweden	40
2	CTO	Producer of ball bearings and rotation solutions.	90	40	Sweden	61
3	Head of Diversity & Inclusion	Manufacturer of chocolate and cocoa products.	70	12	Switzerland	57
4	Project Coordinator	"	"	"	"	52
5	VP HR – Head of Learning & Development HQ	Construction work tools and solutions provider.	60	30	Liechtenstein	51
6	SVP Technology Office & CTO	Producer of premium forest, garden, and construction products.	40	10	Sweden	50
7	Executive VP	Solutions provider for heat transfer, fluid separation and handling.	40	20	Sweden	45
8	SVP Group Talent, Transformation & Engagement	Technology and engineering group.	30	10	Switzerland	36
9	CEO	Global provider of climate solutions, element, and stoves.	20	20	Sweden	60
10	Group Head of Learning & Development	Producer of interior kitchen solutions.	20	9	Switzerland	26
11	VP Organisational & People Development	Producer of products and solutions within aviation, space, and defence.	20	9	Switzerland	35
12	Head of HR Training & Development	Producer of fastening systems and components.	20	10	Switzerland	20
13	Group HR Project Leader	Supplier of systems for fiber spinning.	10	5	Switzerland	58
14	CEO of Swedish Division	Concrete manufacturer.	7	2	Sweden	41
15	Global Training & Development Manager	Producer of compressor systems and solutions.	6	2	Switzerland	37
16	Head of Personnel	Regional bank.	4	0.8	Switzerland	39

\* Where applicable, the turnover has been converted into SEK according to the exchange rate 1 CHF = 10 SEK.

\*\* These values have been rounded to their greatest place value to maintain a certain degree of anonymity, unless requested to be more specific.

## **4. RESULTS**

This section summarizes answers from the three groups of interviews conducted: of Bühler employees, of employees in external organizations, and of members of academia/independent organizations. In sections 4.2-4.4, the coded results from respondents are presented. Parentheses containing numbers are used to denote how many respondents provided answers of a certain theme. It is worth noting that not all respondents answered each question in the questionnaire due to time constraints. Tables showing how many respondents answered each question per respondent group are shown in appendix 4.

### **4.1. Bühler Pre-Study Interviews**

Aside from the information in section 1.2, the pre-study interviews at Bühler also raised some important contextual points, the most relevant of which are explained below.

Of the 12 interviewed factory employees, 11 said they had not heard of GenB, whereas one had heard of it and provided an incorrect definition.

The interviews raised some important points among employees and GenB members alike. These included language barriers that prevented factory employees at the headquarters from joining predominantly English-spoken GenB events. Additionally, factory employees for the most part did not have access to their own work computer, and for that reason could not see the majority of GenB news which was spread through the company's intranet. GenB events were also mostly held in one of Bühler's newest buildings called the CUBIC. The CUBIC is a new building with a business-casual dress code because customers often visited this area. This lead factory employees to question if they can appear there in their factory-styled work clothes. Some employees mentioned that upon GenB's foundation, initial invitations were sent out to all employees under 30, and that although GenB is welcome for everyone, this affected the perception of GenB in employees aged 30 years or older.

These interviews spanned several departments within the company headquarters, including a regional location in London. It was identified that the headquarters had four types of employees: factory, office, executive employees, as well as employees based in the CUBIC. From the interviews, a conceptual correlation was drawn regarding the general approval and knowledge of GenB among these types of employees. It was noticed that knowledge and approval of GenB increased with the position of employees in the company, as depicted in Figure 4.1.

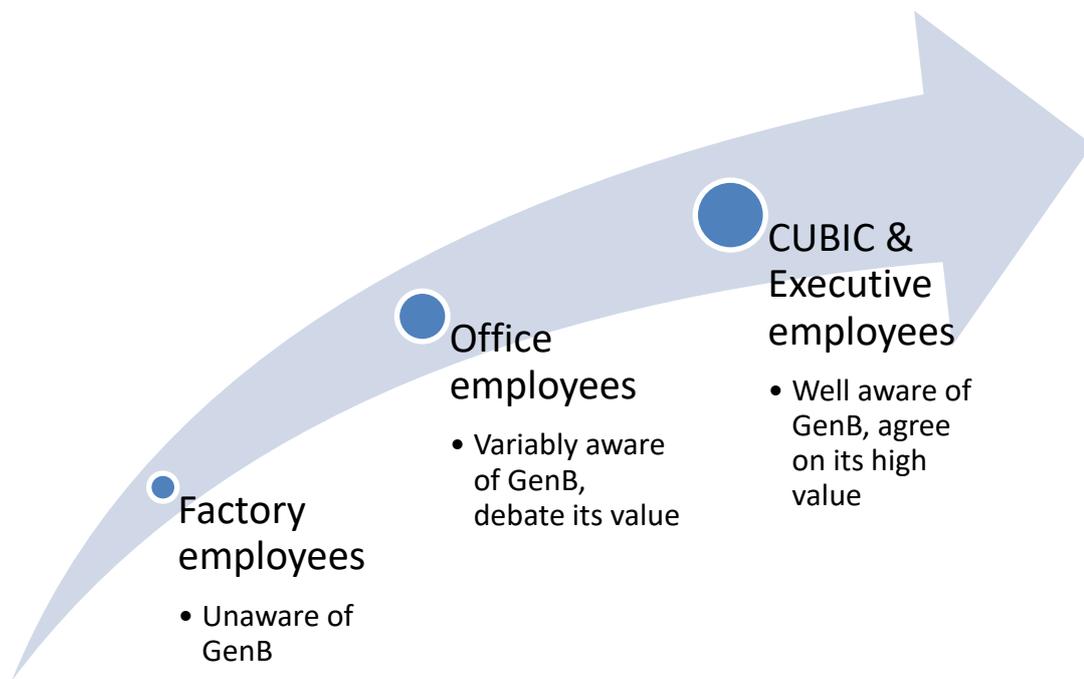


Figure 4.1: Generalized awareness and approval of GenB by position of Bühler employee.

## 4.2. Bühler Interviews

### 4.2.1. Respondents on their feelings towards GenB

All respondents reported positive adjectives when describing their feelings for GenB (12). Common keywords used among respondents include “energy, pride, excitement, passionate, happy, cool”. One respondent mentioned feeling upset that there are still employees who dislike GenB. Similarly, another respondent mentioned the feeling of having to be “careful” of how they describe GenB to different groups of people, since not all employees liked GenB.

### 4.2.2. Respondents on the idea behind starting GenB

The most protruding ideas behind starting GenB were to empower young employees to voice their ideas (7), to enable bottom-up change (6), to establish a global network (4), to bring in new perspectives (4) and to transform the company (3). Other answers included to create a sounding board (1), to prepare Bühler for the young generation of leaders (1), and to tackle the United Nations global sustainable development goals (1).

### 4.2.3. Respondents on Bühler’s support of GenB

Most respondents reported Bühler’s support to mostly take on a verbal nature (9), through the presence of senior management at events and their promotion mouth-to-mouth. Most respondents also recalled GenB getting an official yearly budget (7) and a dedicated employee (7) for leading the movement. To a less common degree, employees mentioned GenB appearing in the company newsletter (2), via internal email communication (2), on LinkedIn (1), in the company intranet (1), and in the annual report (1).

#### **4.2.4.Respondents on the historical achievements of GenB**

Most respondents claimed GenB has achieved a global network which connects employees (8). Meanwhile, several employees have claimed that GenB has evolved into a mechanism for driving bottom-up change (4) and has influenced Bühler with its various organized events (4). Some employees believe that GenB has managed to engage employees more (3) and getting the support of management (3). Additionally, some stated that the mission of GenB and the company are well aligned (2), and that GenB has achieved diversity in its members (1).

#### **4.2.5.Respondents on their perceived value of GenB**

A sense of community was the most prominently perceived value of GenB (6), followed by increased employee motivation (5) and as a driver of transformational change (5). GenB has been mentioned to hold management accountable (4), foster new perspectives and ideas (4), as well as promote a positive company brand image (3). GenB has also been said to promote company values at Bühler (3), challenge employees (3), build bridges across generations and locations (2), and foster bottom-up communication (2).

#### **4.2.6.Respondents on risks of GenB**

The most mentioned risk was GenB becoming a movement perceived as exclusive to young people which isolates itself from the rest of the company's employees (7). Other risks mentioned were for GenB to lose its freedom to the control of management (4), or to lose time on fruitless projects (3). A specifically mentioned concern was for employees to get so engaged in GenB that they start ignoring their routine work (3) and/or line managers (2). Other risks include GenB accidentally harming the external image of the company (2), losing momentum of employee engagement (1), getting discontinued (1), sending out an inconsistent message (1), and remaining too centralized at the company headquarters (1).

#### **4.2.7.Respondents on their perceived goals of GenB**

Most respondents mentioned the goals of GenB are to engage all parts of the organization (7) and focus on sustainability (7). Additionally, several respondents mentioned GenB aiming to become a sounding board (5) and aiding in transformational projects (4). Other mentioned goals include connecting employees and bridging geographical and locational silos (3), increasing the number of organized events (2), creating an alliance of inter-organizational movements similar to GenB (1), personal learning (1), driving change (1). One respondent claimed that GenB did not have any goals (1).

#### **4.2.8.Respondents on how Bühler reaches all its functions to implement change**

The key themes voiced by respondents was that change occurs top-down (10) using communication (9). Other mentioned strategies include networked communication amongst employees (2), following up on change (2), and having certain projects for bottom-up change (1), specifically the Innovation Challenge, which is a yearly pitch of innovative ideas within Bühler.

#### **4.2.9. Respondents on the effectiveness of Bühler's methods to drive change**

Respondents generally considered Bühler to have effective methods to drive change (7). Some respondents said that the effectiveness of Bühler's methods depends on the change they are trying to carry out (3), citing that it also depends on the middle managers efficiency and the amount of time given for change to occur.

Respondents added that the main qualities that Bühler requires when driving change is persistence of the message it communicates (6), a mixture of hierarchical and networked communication (2), and external pressure (1). Meanwhile, things respondents cited as lowering method efficiency are hierarchy levels (3), decisions formed by top management where employees also want to be involved (1), and several consecutive changes which overlap each other and cause low predictability in the top-down message (1).

#### **4.2.10. Respondents on barriers for GenB in gaining visibility and approval, and how to overcome them**

The top cited barrier for GenB was mentioned to be the difference in appreciation of GenB from employees who are not members of GenB (8). Some respondents mentioned a barrier in employees understanding GenB's mission (3) and not having the possibility to attend GenB events due to lack of manager permission and time zone issues (3). Further responses included that GenB does not have a global reach with its events (1), that it is a group of too like-minded people who don't spend enough time on getting the buy-in of other employee groups (1), that GenB can be perceived as a cool group from the outside looking in (1), and that language barriers of many employees prohibit them from attending GenB events (1).

To overcome the aforementioned barriers, most respondents suggested for GenB to have clearer and more inclusive communication (9), which includes advertising directly to different employee groups like factory workers, and communicating a clear message so that employees understand what is in it for them and the company. Several respondents mentioned it important to get buy-in from key employees (5), specifically middle management, for the rest of the employees to follow. GenB should also branch out to the rest of the company through events which appeal to the common interests of all employees (5). Also mentioned was the need to demonstrate persistence of the GenB message to signal to employees that GenB is something permanent (1). One member of executive management said it was up to GenB to find ways to overcome these barriers themselves and did not wish to intervene in this process.

#### **4.2.11. Respondents on the potential of GenB to bridge functional silos and generational gaps**

All respondents believed that GenB has the potential to bridge functional silos and generational gaps (12), of which two claimed that GenB is doing so already. When asked how, responses included by uniting employee groups through common interests and a singular vision (5) and supporting emerging regional ambassadors to foster international growth (3). Other ideas included asking employees for their views on how to shape the company (2), identifying a target

audience for GenB and then focusing its value proposition to this audience (2), and organizing events that employees find meaningful (2).

#### **4.2.12. Respondents on how Bühler carries out corporate transformation projects relating to sustainability, challenging employees, and shaping the company**

Most respondents said that Bühler carries out these kinds of changes top-down (8). Half of the respondents mentioned that communication was significant to raise awareness and motivate new changes (6). Several respondents mentioned the prevalence of bottom-up change (5) and/or KPI tracking (4) as means to follow up on change processes. Other methods mentioned were aligning with employees to get them to buy-in on the change (2), using GenB as a part of carrying out change (2), training employees in the change (1), and using interns to implement change (1).

#### **4.2.13. Respondents on the potential of utilizing GenB in transformational projects**

All respondents believed there was potential to use GenB to aid in transformational projects (12). When asked how, suggestions included contributing with bottom-up views (6), influencing by leveraging the GenB network (5), and empowering employees (3).

#### **4.2.14. Respondents on if GenB is ready to aid in transformational projects**

Most respondents said GenB was ready to aid in transformational projects (11), of which two said this was already occurring. One respondent answered that it depends on which change it should aid, specifically mentioning technical change projects as out of bounds for GenB.

When asked what makes GenB ready, respondents mentioned GenB employees' engagement (6), the carbon counting project GenB is spearheading (4), the presence of full support from top management (2), that GenB has a good structure (2) and alignment with company goals (2). One respondent explicitly stated that GenB would not be ready if it does not gain acceptance from within the company (1).

#### **4.2.15. Respondents on what is required for GenB to effectively assist in transformational projects**

For GenB to effectively assist in transformational projects, respondents referenced the need to establish credibility (5) and a compelling mission to get the buy-in of surrounding employees (5). Furthermore, respondents mentioned the need for a wider network of participants and volunteers (4), the need for freedom to act from management (3), commitment to GenB (3), and the possibility to develop any key capabilities which turn out to be necessary (3).

#### **4.2.16. Respondents on the idea of GenB partnering with similar alliances in other companies**

All respondents said the idea of inter-organizational partnership with similar movements like GenB is one that should be realized (12), of which two stated that it has already been done. The

key reasons for alliance partnership were considered to be knowledge sharing (8), a need for cooperation to achieve change (5) and scale impact (4), as well as becoming a role model in the industry (3).

The key topics for such an alliance to address were listed to be sustainability (8), expansion of internal and external GenB networks (7), knowledge sharing (5), employee engagement (3), innovation (3), learning (2), corporate values (2), and digitalization (1). One respondent believed the topics to address should be decided by the participating partner companies.

Respondents mentioned that key opportunities for such alliances were to scale impact on industry (6), changing and shaping their own companies (4), improving the company image (4), and knowledge sharing (4). Meanwhile, respondents recalled key risks as getting slowed down by partner companies (6), leakage of confidential information (4), not seeing results from the alliance (3), and the alliance becoming too difficult to manage (3).

### **4.3. Interviews With Academia**

#### **4.3.1. Respondents on differences and similarities of GenB with other companies**

All respondents saw connections between GenB and previous initiatives in other companies (6). The similarities seen between GenB and other initiatives included the organization of young employees for idea generation (1), the perceived exclusivity of GenB to high-potential employees (1), the creation of a complementary career ladder beside the regular HR process (1), GenB's focus on corporate social responsibility (1), internal volunteering programs (1), incremental bottom-up initiatives (1), and ambidextrous companies (1). References to specific initiatives that reminded respondents of GenB included hackathons, high-potential programs, and the "Work Out Loud" movement.

Meanwhile, key differences of GenB with other initiatives were considered to be that GenB has multiple purposes whereas initiatives usually only have one (1), that GenB drives change both internally and externally instead of focusing on one (1), the ability to network within the company (1), the complete alignment of GenB goals with the company goals (1), the almost exclusive use of young employees (1), the harmony of GenB with the company structure as opposed to a separate establishment (1), and the content that GenB has (1).

#### **4.3.2. Respondents on the benefits and drawbacks in movements like GenB**

Key benefits respondents saw in movements like GenB included more engaged employees (2), getting a view into the new generation (2), building networks (1), learning (1), and increasing company reputation (1).

Meanwhile, key drawbacks were that the creation of such a movement fosters high expectations of positive change, and this can backfire if management does not allow change to happen (4). Respondents also mentioned that considering GenB work as free-time risks decreased commitment because "then it's a hobby" (2). It also risks burning out employees according to one reference, who cited Google's discontinuation of their work policy which allocated 20% of

employees' worktime to own projects. It turned out that managers still expected their employees to cramp a full work week into their 80% work allotment. Other drawbacks mentioned were the exclusion of employees whose life situation/work schedule does not permit them to attend GenB events (1), and employees spending too much time on GenB and thus neglecting work (1). Respondents also mentioned that there may be a lack of diversity due to members mostly stemming from the HR department and the management trainee programme (1), that top-managements approval is still required in order to really drive change (1), as well as the risk of management instrumentalizing GenB for own purposes (1), and a difficulty to align GenB communication between generations (1).

#### **4.3.3. Respondents on how companies should implement change internally**

All respondents mentioned partly or wholly the process of management starting with a vision, then communicating it top-down, getting the buy-in of employees, and then implementing the change in a bottom-up fashion (6). Other processes mentioned were listening to peripheral bottom-up improvements for innovation (2), constant communication of a clear message throughout the company (2) and using cross-functional teams for implementation (1).

When asked if these methods are effective, most respondents answered that it depends (4), while one said it is effective (1). One respondent said that the ease of change of a method is determinable as a function of dissatisfaction over the current situation, a clear vision of what needs to change, and a reasonable process for change, explaining that if one of the factors is not met, the change will tend to be much harder (1). Other respondents mentioned the difficulty to define effectiveness thus making only long-term measurement possible (1). This difficulty could also make measurement impossible due to a lack of baseline comparison (1). One respondent cited that sometimes there is no alternative other than to change, thus making the discussion of effectiveness trivial (1).

#### **4.3.4. Respondents on companies' barriers to diffusing an initiative internally**

The most mentioned barrier is employees fear of change because of not understanding the effect of the change on the company, the employees, and themselves (2). Other barriers mentioned were lack of management support (1), and difficulty to change employee routines (1).

Several solutions were suggested to overcome the barriers to diffusing change. The importance of communicating success stories were highlighted (3), as well as a clear purpose statement (2). Furthermore, the direct value that the initiative provides to the company should be shown (2), management must be willing to change in order to accommodate the suggested initiative (2), long-term commitment to the initiative should be shown (2), and a representative batch of company employees should be involved in the change facilitation (2).

#### **4.3.5. Respondents on bridging generational and locational gaps within the company**

Barriers which prevent the bridging of generational and locational gaps were mentioned to be an incentive system which fosters silos (2), lack of communication (1), and hierarchy (1). To bridge gaps, respondents generally suggested cross-functional teams (4), but also modifying the incentive system to promote interaction across silos (3) and the establishment of good communication methods (2). Other suggestions included reducing hierarchy (1), using a youth organization (1), allocating time to cross-functional interaction (1), and creating a common touchpoint between groups of employees (1).

#### **4.3.6. Respondents on how most companies carry out corporate transformation projects relating to sustainability, challenging employees, and shaping the company**

Top-down communication of a clear strategy was the most popular answer (3), followed by involving and educating employees (2). Other mentioned strategies were top-down delegation and bottom-up implementation (1), while one respondent said that these sorts of corporate transformation projects do not change the way with which the company adds value to its customers, and thus any transformation occurring in this regard are incremental processes (1).

The effectivity of such projects was mentioned by one respondent to depend on the leadership of top management (1). Meanwhile, the drawbacks of such transformational projects were stated to be that they are slow (1), and that they often are a front for greenwashing techniques by companies who do not actually want to change (1).

#### **4.3.7. Respondents on alliances of GenB-like movements between companies**

Four respondents mentioned not having seen alliances of movements similar to GenB between companies (4), whereas one respondent did and compared them to ecosystem alliances (1). When asked which topics would be appropriate for such alliances to address, responses included social issues (1), innovation (1), business (1), and topics that share all participating companies' visions (1). The main opportunities of such alliances were identified to be finding new solutions (3), knowledge sharing (2), and building networks (1). Key risks in such alliances included the risk of leaking confidential information (3) and wasting time and money without results (1).

#### **4.3.8. Respondents on appropriate literature on this topic**

Respondents suggested a mixture of authors, publications, and keywords, which are summarized in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Literature and keywords suggested by members of academia

<b>Authors/Publications/Keywords</b>	
Jay Conger	Change management
Andreas Werr	Corporate volunteering
Ranjay Gulati	Corporate social responsibility
Boris Groysberg (“Chasing Stars”)	Participation
Pete Guinderod (“Leading With Digital Worlds”)	Holacracy
Henry Mintzberg (“Top-down delivery vs. strategy”, “Top-down”, “Bottom-up”)	Cross-functional teams
Clark and Wheelwright (“1992 Organizational Culture”)	Ambidextrous organization
“Fast Company” (Magazine)	Exploration exploitation
Fulmer, R. M., Stumpf, S. A., & Bleak, J. (2009). The strategic development of high potential leaders.	Top-down
McDonnell, A., Lamare, R., Gunnigle, P., & Lavelle, J. (2010). Developing tomorrow’s leaders—Evidence of global talent management in multinational enterprises.	Bottom-up
Employee volunteering overview: Rodell et al. 2016	Skunkworks
CSR & corporate volunteering: Cycyota et al. 2016	Work out loud movement
Corporate volunteering & participation: Grant, 2012	Social movements
High-involvement work practices: Rana, 2015	Organizational change
Change-drivers and the change process: Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010	Emergent change
Leadership and change: Oreg & Berson, 2019	Emergent strategy
Strategy	Leadership

#### **4.4. Interviews With Management of External Companies**

In these interviews, two respondents were representing the same company. To avoid overrepresentation, these respondents' individual answers were merged as the answer of one respondent. This ensured that all valuable information is still preserved, while not overrepresenting the company's opinions.

##### **4.4.1. Respondents on how they engage young employees in decision making and guiding company development**

The most prominent way of engaging young employees was through employee development or trainee programs (6). Several companies mentioned having similar programmes aimed for employees above 30 years of age (3). Some firms mentioned not engaging young employees in tailored activities (4), while others promoted them to engage in their bottom-up networks (2) and gave them high responsibilities at an early stage of their career (2). Other ways of engagement were encouraging young employees to take initiative themselves (1) and giving them a position in sounding boards (1). One respondent mentioned that their company holds bi-annual evaluation rounds at executive level to identify and promote young high-potentials. Another respondent spoke about handing out a scholarship during a yearly company summit, where a high-performing young candidate gets to hold a speech about their work. Meanwhile, one respondent mentioned holding regular open innovation competitions together with a local university, where the winner receives funding for their idea and can work on it at the company.

##### **4.4.2. Respondents on possession of a global communication network for bottom-up change**

Four respondents recalled having a global communication network for bottom-up change (4), in comparison to 11 employees who could not recall one. All these four respondents mentioned that their networks are led with the help of global ambassadors (4). In addition, one respondent mentioned the use of a dedicated employee as a main coordinator, and using a digital communication product (Google+ for enterprises) to aid communication within the network (1).

##### **4.4.3. Respondents on how their companies implement change**

Most respondents mentioned the usage of top-down cascading when implementing change (14), and many also mentioned involving employees at some stage, either for idea generation or for executing the implementation (12). Multiple respondents mentioned that the company tries to get buy-in of their employees for changes suggested (4). Other methods are to organize task groups of middle managers responsible for change implementation (4), use digital channels for communication of the change (4), or even train employees in the change (4). Certain companies mentioned having a defined change methodology (3), for example Kotter's eight steps for change model. Town-hall meetings (2) and networking tactics (2) have also been mentioned, as have repetitive communication of the change (1), organization of events (1), creating a sense of urgency for change (1), and following-up on change (1). One respondent mentioned using management by visuals, where new ideas had to be shown instead of presented. When asked how effective their change methods were, respondents either replied yes (6) or that it depends (5).

Respondents considered that the benefits of their change methods were that they allow tracking the change process through software (3), that the methods are easy to understand and follow (2), and that it engaged their employees (2). Other benefits included that all employees were aware of the company strategy (1), the presence of a contact list to employees who could answer questions about the change (1), the preservation of local intrapreneurship (1), and allowing the change to initially be voluntary until most issues are fixed (1).

Respondents considered the drawbacks of their change methods to be that they sometimes get lost in translation (6), that resistance occurs (3), that too many changes occur (2), that more work on changes always can be done (2), and that the company focuses more on the change process rather than on engaging people (2). Other drawbacks mentioned were that a change can be bold, and as such require the presence of bold personalities to drive change (1), and that change happens slowly (1).

#### **4.4.4. Respondents on overcoming barriers preventing diffusion of a GenB movement at their company**

Few respondents explicitly mentioned the presence of barriers but focused instead on how to overcome them. Two barriers mentioned were the difficulty to motivate most employees (1), and the presence of segmentation within the company based on who is a part of GenB (1).

To overcome barriers, respondents said that GenB would need support from management (5), communicate a clear and united vision and message to employees (5), clarify to employees why GenB is necessary (4), and involve employees in discussions (2). Other answers included making GenB attractive and fun (1), making it easy for employees to participate (1), to accept that some employees will always remain negative to GenB (1), highlight the low cost of GenB (1), and focus on inclusive marketing to employees (1).

#### **4.4.5. Respondents regarding difficulties bridging generational and locational gaps**

Respondents generally mentioned having problems bridging generations and/or locations (9). Top problems included age differences during communication (4), difficulties bridging silo communication (4), and a divide between the office and factory working style (1). A variety of ideas were presented to overcome these problems, including communicating to inform and involve employees (3), integrating cross-functional teams (2), setting up steering committees containing some EB members (1), advertising on message boards for factory employees (1), promoting a cultural framework for communication (1), forming geographical hubs for interaction (1), reorganizing the company into a functional organization instead of a country-based one (1), and formulating a clearer bottom-line responsibility for business units to incentivize them to work together with the rest of the company (1).

#### **4.4.6. Respondents on how their company carries out corporate transformation projects relating to sustainability, challenging employees, and shaping the company**

The most mentioned method was using global task-forces top-down (4), followed by top-down internal and external communication of the change (3), and involving employees in the change implementation (3). Other methods mentioned were treating these transformations the same way as they implement other changes (3), treating them as projects (2), or by setting targets and monitoring KPIs (2). One respondent said these transformations do not take place at their firm (1).

When asked how effective these transformation projects were, two respondents said they were effective. The top benefits for these transformation projects were said to be a higher level of sustainability (3), higher employee engagement (2), lower costs (1), a maintained understanding for change (1), and an improved brand image to customers (1). The main drawbacks were considered to be that progress can take longer than expected (3), there was a risk of overworking employees (1), that not all customers want to pay a price premium for sustainability (1), that new drawbacks are found after the transformation (1), and that there are not enough transformation projects (1).

#### **4.4.7. Respondents on having a GenB-like movement at their company**

Respondents generally said they believed a GenB movement at their company would be useful (8), while some said it might be useful (2). When asked how such a movement would be useful to them, respondents replied that it would unite employees (3), promote knowledge-sharing (3), increase employee engagement (2), lead to proactive problem solving (1) and quicker change implementation (1). One respondent said they would not have an age recommendation for GenB members if implementing it, while another said that a more focused aim is required to make it work at the company.

#### **4.4.8. Respondents on partnering with similar movements if they possessed a GenB movement**

Respondents generally reacted positively to partnering with similar GenB movements of other organizations (7), while some were unsure (4). Respondents believed that such a cooperation would lead to increased cooperation (2), knowledge sharing (2), and impact (1). When asked which topics would be relevant for such an alliance to address, responses included sustainability (4), digitalization (4), work environment (2), company culture (1), HR topics (1), and crisis management (1). Two respondents believed there were many topics that could be addressed and did not mention any (2). The main opportunities in such an alliance of movements were thought to be knowledge sharing (3), new ideas and solutions (3), and scaling impact (1). Meanwhile the main risks seen in such alliances were leakage of confidential information (7) and cooperations that either do not work well (2) or implement solutions detrimental to their own company (1). One respondent feared that employees could use this alliance as an opportunity to switch companies, leading to the risk of losing employees to other firms (1).

#### **4.4.9. Respondents on their company's movements similar to GenB**

Five companies were considered to have movements similar to GenB at Bühler. Respondents representing these companies were asked additional questions.

All respondents replied with positive emotions when asked how they feel about their movement, of which one respondent also felt disappointed that the movement at their company might get discontinued due to a change in management.

The purpose of the movements were identified to be empowering employees (2), developing future leaders (1), driving change in the company (1), and adapting the company to the values of the future generation (1).

The main value respondents saw in their movements were employee engagement (2), increased company recruiting image (1), employee retention (1), raised awareness of understanding for change (1), and increased knowledge about the new generation of employees (1).

The main risks of the movements were identified to be that the movement becomes elitist and creates separation between members of the movement and the rest of the employees (1), as well as if ambassadors for driving the movement couldn't be recruited (1). Two respondents saw no risks in the movement (2).

The main goals of the movements were to reach certain levels of engagement and sustainability (1), to develop employee skills (1), and to create a concept of a millennials dream employer (1). Respondents felt these goals were progressing well (3).

## 5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section starts off by finding the resemblance of GenB within academic concepts, based on the case description, theoretical framework, and results data. After having defined GenB, suggested answers for each research question are formulated.

### 5.1. Defining Generation B

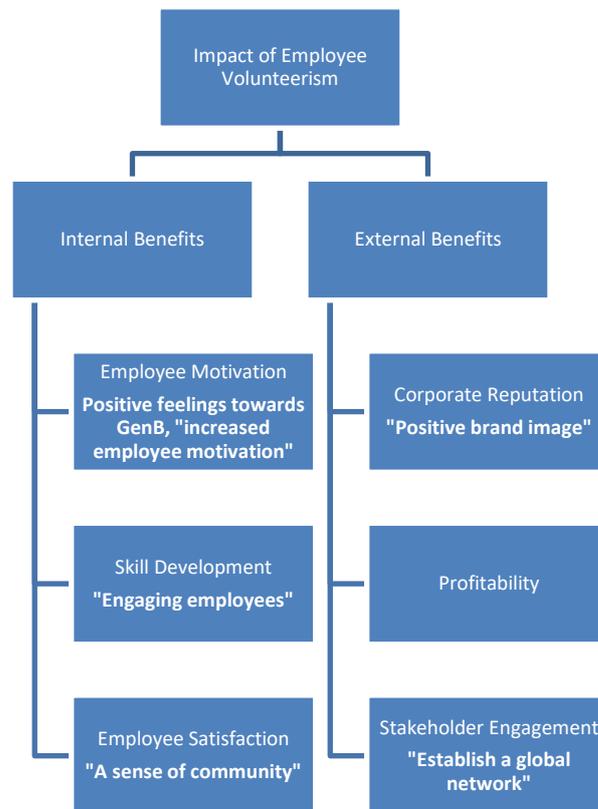
Throughout this study, it has been difficult to pinpoint GenB as one concept, because it had various responsibilities both within Bühler and externally as well. To address the research questions, there must first be an interpretation of GenB. This section aims to synthesize information from Bühler's background in section 1.2, the theoretical framework in sections 2.1.1, 2.4.1, 2.5, and Bühler employees' responses in section 4.2.

It is first important to understand if the diffusion of GenB will accomplish an organizational change or a transformation. To do this, the actions, value, and future directions of GenB will be summarized. They will then be assessed if they lead to a change in Bühler's process or structure (organizational change), or strategy and culture (transformational change).

Based on section 1.2.1, GenB currently focuses on engaging and motivating employees (i), building an attractive and diverse workspace (ii), protecting the climate (iii) and developing society by enabling hundreds of global initiatives (iv). However, one can reason whether it would be correct to characterize these focus areas as relating to processes, structure, strategy, or culture. The reason for this is that GenB is an entity within Bühler, and as such one can argue that it has its own strategy of how to add (tangible or intangible) value to the firm. Consequently, these focus areas could inherently be considered strategies for GenB to create value in Bühler, as opposed to changing Bühler's strategy. However, as Bühler employees mentioned, GenB creates a sense of community and increases employee motivation (section 4.2.5). These values are tied to emotions, which arguably result from learning new ways and reasons for working together. This result is very close to Schein's (1990) definition of culture. From this one may argue that GenB fosters a bottom-up cultural change which empowers young employees to voice their ideas, enables bottom-up change, establishes a global network, brings in new perspectives, and eventually transforms the company (section 4.2.2).

It is also worth comparing GenB to similar concepts within academia. Section 2.5 touched upon employee volunteerism, global talent management and succession planning, as well as social movements and grassroots innovation. Comparing GenB (section 1.2.1) to employee volunteerism, employees do indeed "give their time and skills during a planned activity for a volunteer group", as per Rodell's (2013) definition of employee volunteerism. However, one may argue the extent to which the volunteer group is an external party, as Rodell et. al. had highlighted (2016). In order to make an argument either for or against this, the impact of GenB based off of the Bühler employee interviews (section 4.2) will be compared to the benefits of employee volunteerism, found in Figure 2.4. As can be seen in the comparison visualized in Figure 5.1, Bühler employees have listed most of the benefits that employee volunteerism provides. The only benefit not mentioned explicitly was profitability. One reason for this could include that GenB is a strategic initiative, and currently does not add easily calculated value to products produced by Bühler. On the other hand, one could argue that the internal benefits of

employee volunteerism lead to increased profitability due to the skills learned and increased employee motivation. GenB arguably found a way to capitalize on employees' enthusiasm, and not turn away ambitious employees who wish to drive change. Therefore, while profitability has not directly been mentioned, it is argued that profitability is indirectly positively affected by all other benefits resulting from GenB. GenB also fulfils Wunderer's (2001) definition of co-intrapreneurship, since GenB establishes a global network that "bridges locational and generational gaps" to drive change. Consequently, with all the benefits of GenB matching those of employee volunteerism and co-intrapreneurship, GenB can be considered an employee volunteer program, albeit a special one due to its positioning inside the company as opposed to an external entity. Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder's recommendations for running an employee volunteer program could thus be applied to GenB.



*Figure 5.1: Benefits of employee volunteerism (Cycyota, Ferrante, and Schroeder, 2016) with appropriate references to impact of GenB in bold*

When comparing GenB to global talent management and succession planning, there are prominent differences. Global talent management is concerned with managing employees, employee staffing tasks, training and development, and evaluation (Schuler, Jackson, and Tarique, 2011). As previously mentioned, one could argue that GenB enables skill development, however it is difficult to find grounds for any of the other responsibilities of global talent management. However, one academic respondent mentioned that GenB serves as a career ladder complementing the regular HR process (section 4.3.1), likely because of the networking factor allowing employees of various functions to meet. Although true, such a function in itself is difficult to argue as an entire global talent management system.

With regards to succession planning, a different argument is presented. Succession planning refers to ensuring “the stability of tenure of personnel” (Rothwell, 2010). One could argue, similarly to one external respondent in section 4.4.9, that GenB-like movements lead to employee retention. This seems to be a logical argument, indirectly confirmed by Grant (2012) who claims that employees are likely to repeatedly volunteer long-term if not pressured by the external environment (section 2.5.1). Since most GenB activities are regarded as free time (section 1.2.1), one can argue that employees are not pressured by others to take part in it. Thus, one can argue that although GenB cannot be considered a global talent management system, it could have the potential to assist in succession planning.

Lastly, when comparing GenB to social movements and grassroots innovation, there are both differences and similarities. As mentioned in section 2.5.3, a social movement consists of three components: a “network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations [i], engaged in political or cultural conflicts [ii], on the basis of shared collective identities [iii]”. As described in this section previously, GenB’s networking value across the company and with external partners certainly has resemblance to component (i) of a social movement. However, component (ii) is not reflected in GenB. Although GenB can be argued to engage in culture change, there has been little, if any, mention of engagement in conflicts within Bühler or external partners. On the contrary, GenB has been mentioned to have alignment with company goals (section 4.2.14), which is supported through one of the research questions highlighting GenB’s willingness to assist Bühler’s executive management in achieving its goals. With regards to component (iii) of a social movement, one can certainly argue that GenB members share a collective identity to drive change, albeit in a way that assists the company and external partners. In contrast, grassroots innovation movements differ from social movements specifically with regards to component (ii), which instead of conflict engages in knowledge creation through novel bottom-up solutions that are sought after by the surrounding community. This links well with Bühler employees’ view that GenB fosters new perspectives and ideas (section 4.2.5). As a result, GenB is considered a grassroots innovation movement.

Summarizing this section, GenB can be defined as a hybrid grassroots innovation movement in the form of an employee volunteering program, which through constructive means contributes to succession planning and fosters bottom-up cultural change by empowering young employees to voice their ideas, establishing a global network, bringing in new perspectives, and transforming the company.

## **5.2. How Can a Bottom-Up Change Movement Diffuse Into All Parts of an Organization?**

Based on the interviews with Bühler employees (section 4.2.8), members of academia (section 4.3.3), and external companies (section 4.4.3), it was made clear that top-down cascading of change through communication is the most common way to bring about change. A prominent second step to the cascading of change was involving employees in various constellations to implement change. This can be compared to Gutzwiller’s bold strokes mentioned in section 2.4.2, which are then followed through employee-led long marches. The fact that GenB is a bottom-up movement suggests that it will have to follow the change strategy of long marches,

and gradually diffuse throughout the organization. A natural starting point for attempting to diffuse change would seem to be Figure 2.3, which depicts the change management cycle paired with the four types of communication.

One should be aware that Bühler employees stated the top barrier preventing GenB's diffusion to be a difference in appreciation of GenB between members and non-members (section 4.2.10), which can be considered employee resistance from non-members. Figure 4.1 visualizes three employee categories together with their levels of resistance. Factory employees are not yet aware of GenB and therefore cannot yet resist anything, while office employees actively debate for and against GenB. Reiterating Moran and Brightman (2000) in section 2.3.1, "every change initiative...sets in motion a cycle of resisting change, recognizing the need for change, agreement as to the type of change required, and finally development of implementation strategies". Meanwhile, section 2.3.2 highlights the necessity of open, constructive, and inclusive communication with all relevant stakeholders in order to overcome resistance. This is supported as a top suggestion for overcoming resistance by Bühler employees (section 4.2.10), and is an often occurring topic throughout section 2. There should be awareness of the top reasons for why employees resist change (Table 2.3) and the top reasons for resistance within organizations (Table 2.4). The conceptualized six layers of resistance (Table 2.5) can be used as a mental aid in formulating a more detailed order in which to communicate and get buy-in for change, when trying gather a critical mass of change proponents.

GenB can be argued to have significant potential to overcome resistance within the company. The main reason for this argument is the presence of support from upper management, but also the presence of over 500 united proponents for GenB: its members (section 1.2.1). Thus, one may argue that GenB has already reached a critical mass of change proponents, and the institutionalization of GenB's organizational chart (Figure 1.1) serves as evidence for this. In section 4.2.10, Bühler employees mention that it is important to get the buy-in of middle managers, due to their leadership roles and high influence in their individual areas of work. Gartenberg, Prat, and Serafeim's (2019) study in section 2.3.2 also highlight the importance of middle managers, and their fundamental role in driving change. Thus, one can argue that middle managers should be the next target group of increased dialogue to diffuse GenB throughout Bühler. The middle managers, can in turn champion the diffusion of GenB by raising awareness in their subordinates.

One should not underestimate the importance of leadership in organizational change. GenB has throughout this study been identified as a movement with several areas of focus which have often changed historically (section 1.2.1). If GenB aims to lead a culture change within Bühler, it should keep in mind Kotter's (1995) reasons for transformational failure (Table 2.1). One of the most important elements for corporate transformation is a clear and consistent vision, as confirmed by Gutzwiller (2018) in section 2.2, by Bühler employees (section 4.2.10), external companies (section 4.4.4), and members of academia (4.3.4). Based on section 2.2.1, a leader should be able to frame change so that both organizational results and effects on the individual are clear, and in doing so persuade others for change. Although this study did not find evidence for the contrary occurring, it is suggested that GenB leaders should also unanimously live the

change by example. GenB can, should, and has made use of empowerment as a leadership tool to engage ambitious individuals in the change process (section 4.2.2).

In summary, a hybrid grassroots innovation movement and employee volunteering program can better diffuse itself throughout a company by inclusively communicating with all relevant stakeholders, by defining and communicating a clear vision, by strategically addressing middle managers to get their buy-in, and by empowering employees to collaboratively drive change.

### **5.3. How Can A Bottom-Up Change Movement Assist Its Organization in the Top-Down Execution of Transformational Projects?**

To answer this research question, it is necessary to review the concepts of exploration and exploitation and middle managers from section 2.4.1. This section argued that when the flow of knowledge was top-down, then middle managers resorted to exploitation activities, whereas bottom-up knowledge lead to exploration activities. Firstly, this highlights the importance of the middle managers' role in the process of coordinating exploration and exploitation activities. It could also exemplify how top-down communication meets bottom-up implementation, as mentioned by Bühler employees (section 4.2.8), members of academia (section 4.3.3), and external companies (section 4.4.3). A good balance of top-down and bottom-up makes an organization ambidextrous and correlates with increased sales growth (section 2.4.1). By using its communication network with executive management, GenB could fit into the ambidextrous process as an assisting platform for bottom-up implementation and exploration. It can do so by aligning its initiatives with executive management's transformation projects, and in doing so, driving implementation projects which are of assistance. This is in line with Bühler respondents' perceived value of GenB as a driver for transformational change (section 4.2.5), and their unanimous belief of the potential of utilizing GenB in transformational projects (section 4.2.13). Several external companies act similarly: after driving transformational change top-down, they involve their employees in the implementation (section 4.4.6), albeit without the use of a GenB movement.

Bühler employees are generally convinced that GenB is ready to aid in transformational projects, citing GenB's high employee engagement as a reason for being ready (section 4.2.14). Another reason GenB was mentioned to be ready was its engagement in the carbon counting project, which was a successful strategic project with separate resources which attached to GenB's organization (sections 1.2.1, 4.2.14).

In order for GenB to effectively assist in transformational projects, Bühler employees mentioned the need for GenB to establish credibility, a compelling mission to get buy-in from surrounding employees, and a wider network of participants and volunteers (section 4.2.15). These criteria are reminiscent to those needed for GenB diffusion in section 5.2. Thus, one may argue that the establishment of GenB as transformational assistance to executive management is dependent on the diffusion of GenB throughout Bühler. In contrast, one could also argue the opposite, that the assistance of GenB in strategic projects such as the carbon counting project establishes credibility among employees. This argument is based on Bühler employees mentioning the carbon counting project as an example of GenB's credibility (section 4.2.14). Re-

ardless of the direction of the relationship between GenB diffusion and assistance in transformational projects, one may argue that a compelling mission requires clear communication of GenB's role within Bühler. This will in turn assist in increasing credibility. Meanwhile, the interviews did not reveal that GenB had a defined role within Bühler's transformation process. As such one may argue that a role needs to be defined in order to show employees that top management believes in the potential of GenB to assist in transformational projects. As mentioned in section 2.2.2, support from management is likely to increase employee commitment.

In summary, a hybrid grassroots innovation movement and employee volunteering program has potential to act as a bottom-up provider of explorative activities and implementation projects. It can do this by communicating with executive management and aligning its actions with existing corporate transformation projects. However, it is argued that the movement needs to ensure a defined role in the transformation process to establish greater credibility and commitment from employees. Lastly, the movement can use its platform of motivated and engaged individuals to champion the implementation of strategically important change projects.

#### **5.4. What Value Can a Bottom-Up Change Movement Generate From Creating Alliances With Similar Movements in Other Companies?**

To derive the value that can arise from an alliance with movements similar to GenB (hereafter shortened to GenB alliance), it is important to distinguish the type of alliance that is described. Section 2.6 covered three forms of alliances: strategic, social, and learning alliances. This section will first conceptualize the type of alliance that would be formed, compare it to the three alliances mentioned, and then identify the alliance type that most resembles reality. After that, a SWOT analysis for the value derived from such an alliance will be constructed.

All three alliances from section 2.6 have in common that they are voluntary collaborations between organizations, which is assumed applicable to GenB according to section 1.2.1. However, the alliances differ with regards to the kind of organizations that are present in an alliance. Strategic alliances assume collaborations between firms, while social alliances consist of collaboration between businesses and social enterprises. Lastly, learning alliances simply reference collaborations between partners, making no specific distinction for the kinds of partners involved. This leads to the question of whether one would one classify GenB as a business (because it is a part of Bühler) or as a social enterprise (acting as a separate entity from Bühler) in an alliance.

As mentioned in section 5.1, GenB can be defined as a hybrid grassroots innovation movement in the form of an employee volunteering program. On one hand, the benefits of GenB were stated by Bühler employees to be knowledge sharing and cooperation to achieve larger change (section 4.2.16), and this was echoed in interviews with external companies (section 4.4.8). Bühler employees also said that key topics for the alliance should be sustainability, expansion of internal and external GenB networks, and knowledge sharing (section 4.2.16), of which the sustainability topic was echoed by external company respondents (section 4.4.8). The high prevalence of knowledge sharing suggests an interest in learning, since a company would gen-

erally benefit much more from hearing other companies share their knowledge than from sharing their own. A learning alliance is defined as a collaboration between partners with the primary purpose of learning (Khanna, Gulati, and Nohria, 1998). Although it is not possible to ascertain that learning will be the primary goal, it is likely that it will be one of the shared primary goals. As such, one can establish that a learning alliance will be present in a GenB alliance.

When comparing the purposes of strategic and social alliances to the opportunities of a GenB alliance and the key topics to address as suggested by respondents, differences and similarities become more apparent. Whereas strategic alliances involve “exchange, sharing, or codevelopment of products, technologies, or services” (Gulati, 1998), social alliances address “social problems too complex to be solved by unilateral organizational action” (Sakarya et. al., 2012). Here, GenB’s interest in cooperation to achieve greater change (section 4.2.16), and the lack of mentioning any development of products, technologies, or services, lead to the conclusion that a GenB alliance would be of a predominantly social nature. Although one could argue that cooperation to achieve greater change will inherently involve co-development of certain concepts, such as the alliance itself, it is difficult to argue it leading to a tangible product, technology, or service that could be sold, which seems to be Gulati’s implied definition of strategic alliances (1998). It is easier to argue that the GenB alliance will lead to new learnings which can both be applied in one’s own company, and that can also be used to create concepts that solve social problems. Consequently, a GenB alliance is considered to consist of a hybrid social and learning alliance with a mutual goal of learning and solving social problems.

A GenB alliance can be argued to benefit both the participating companies and society on an individual and collective level. Meanwhile, the typical for-profit and non-profit combination of partners that typically define a social alliance is consciously overlooked when defining a GenB alliance. The reason for doing so is that GenB can be argued to be a non-profit acting in the interests of (and financed by) a for-profit organization. As a result, GenB is likely a hybrid of these two concepts. Therefore, a GenB alliance will similarly consist of hybrid for-profit/non-profit partnerships which are argued to satisfy the criterion for a social alliance.

#### **5.4.1. SWOT analysis**

A SWOT analysis is visualized in Figure 5.2, and will be explained further in this section. Most external respondents said having a GenB-like movement at their company would be useful (section 4.4.7). Consequently, one could argue that Bühler is an attractive partner when attempting to form a GenB alliance due to the potential of external partners to learn from Bühler. In addition, the earlier discussed motivation and cohesiveness of GenB members gives it a strong ground from which to drive a GenB alliance initiative. However, as two members of academia pointed out, not counting this type of work towards worktime risks generating decreased commitment, which may negatively affect the outcomes (section 4.3.2). This is in line with Jamali and Keshishian’s (2009) warning of facing low levels of engagement between partners within alliances (section 2.6). The opportunities for scaling learning, knowledge sharing, and scaling impact have previously been summarized from the discussion in section 5.4, and are based on Bühler and external respondents’ views on the potential benefits and key topics to discuss in a GenB alliance. An additional factor in the opportunities is gaining all the

internal and external benefits of a social alliance as mentioned by Liu and Ko's (2011), which largely coincide with those for employee volunteering in Figure 2.4. Meanwhile, key threats as mentioned by Bühler employees (section 4.2.16), academic members (section 4.3.7), and external companies (section 4.4.8) alike, was the risk of leaking confidential information and that cooperations will not work well. This is in line with Kale, Singh, and Perlmutter's (2000) concern of protecting a firm's proprietary information, and Jamali and Keshishian's (2009) concerns that alliances become more of a symbol than a collaborative platform, as mentioned in section 2.6.



*Figure 5.2: SWOT analysis of a potential alliance between movements similar to GenB*

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This study sought to investigate a new movement at Bühler and identify how it can assist the company in its change management, while comparing it to change management methods of other large multinational firms. Key research questions included how a bottom-up change movement can diffuse into all parts of an organization (i), how it can assist its organization in the top-down execution of transformational projects (ii), and what value can be generated from creating alliances with similar movements in other companies (iii). Using a grounded theory approach, 45 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Bühler employees, 8 semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of academia or independent organizations, and 16 interviews were conducted with senior/executive members of large multinational firms.

It was found that GenB is a hybrid grassroots innovation movement in the form of an employee volunteering program, which through constructive means contributes to succession planning and fosters bottom-up cultural change by empowering young employees to voice their ideas, establishing a global network, bringing in new perspectives, and transforming the company.

When answering the first research question, it was found that a hybrid grassroots innovation movement and employee volunteering program can better diffuse itself throughout a company by inclusively communicating with all relevant stakeholders, by defining and communicating a clear vision, by strategically addressing middle managers to get their buy-in, and by empowering employees to collaboratively drive change.

When answering the second research question, it was found that a hybrid grassroots innovation movement and employee volunteering program has potential to act as a bottom-up provider of explorative activities and implementation projects. It can do this by communicating with executive management and aligning its actions with existing corporate transformation projects. However, it is argued that the movement needs to ensure a defined role in the transformation process to establish greater credibility and commitment from employees. Lastly, the movement can use its platform of motivated and engaged individuals to champion the implementation of strategically important change projects.

When answering the third research question, it was found that key opportunities in an alliance of several hybrid grassroots innovation movements and employee volunteering programs were knowledge sharing and learning skills and capabilities from each other, scaling collective impact of the alliance's collective vision, and attain the internal benefits (employee motivation, skill development, employee satisfaction) and external benefits (corporate reputation, profitability, stakeholder engagement) of social alliances.

### **6.1. Limitations**

Attempts have been made to compare this movement with how other companies drive change, and how members of academia and external organizations view the concept of GenB. Even so, one should be aware that this study is focused on one specific case, and this limits the possibility to generalize it to the activities of other companies. In addition, the focus on large multinational companies limit the potential applicability of this study to firms of significantly different sizes, such as start-up firms or conglomerate firms. Meanwhile, the focus of this study has been

on firms from Sweden, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein. One should be aware that practices of firms based in other countries can differ significantly due to national culture, and as such conclusions made from this study are further limited in its generalizability. Furthermore, several other factors such as company culture, organizational structure, and other factors may limit the generalizability of this study to other firms.

The qualitative interviews have overall produced a wide range of answers. Even though care was taken to organize them as objectively as possible, one must consider the impact of interpretive biases on the selective transcription and coding of the results, as well as the analysis and respective conclusions made. In addition, this study focused on making use of the most popular answers from respondents when building answers. One should be aware that the absolute truth may lie in a minority of opinions. As a result, important aspects could have been disregarded at the stage of results, and/or analysis and discussion of the findings.

This study focused more on interweaving the fields of change management, organizational psychology, and alliances. As a result, the theoretical framework was more focused on covering a breadth of concepts at the expense of a certain amount of theoretical depth. This could result in certain important theoretical concepts being overlooked, thus affecting the theoretical reasoning presented in this study. Attempts were made to minimize such oversights by interviewing specialists on the topics studied within academia, to get suggestions from them on what concepts and publications are most important to cover.

With key limitations described, the author still believes this study to have a solid enough theoretical and empirical basis to be both a relevant and valid contribution to academia, and calls for further research to be conducted.

## **6.2. Call for Further Research**

The findings from this study are meant to serve as a guiding light in the relatively unexplored topic of hybrid bottom-up change movements, identify their closest resemblance within academic context, and suggest practical use cases for leveraging its value. Specifically, this study identified and discussed hybrid grassroots innovation movements and employee engagement programs that aim to drive change within firms. It is suspected that hybrid organizational entities such as GenB will gain in popularity in the near future. Several respondents from external organizations expressed their admiration for and willingness to learn from GenB. This study demonstrated that organizations are experimenting with methods that drive change and increase employee engagement and motivation. Companies will likely continue experimenting with fostering a supportive culture and network within the firm, in order to address change and fulfil corporate ambitions of renewal for the future. The author suggests that further research be conducted, especially through case studies, in order to identify new organizational practices that are currently evolving and attach them to existing or new bodies of literature.

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## **8. APPENDICES**

### **8.1. Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Bühler employees**

Questions were prioritized due to limited interview time. Questions marked in purple font were asked if time permitted.

#### **Background**

- 0.1 When you hear GenB, what emotions do you feel?
- 0.2 What was the idea behind starting GenB?
- 0.3 What support is GenB officially given from Bühler (in writing)?
- 0.4 What is the history of this idea?
- 0.5 Can you see value in GenB? If so, which? Short term, long term?
- 0.6 Can you see any risks in GenB? If so, which?
- 0.7 Are there any current goals set for GenB? If so, which are they, and how are these progressing?

#### **Research Question 1**

- 1.1 When implementing a change, how does Bühler reach all of its functions?
- 1.2 Do you consider this/these method(s) effective? With what does this method(s) succeed/fail?
- 1.3 One of GenB's challenges is gaining visibility and approval across all functions within the Bühler organization. What barriers do you see can prevent this? Do you have any thoughts on how GenB can overcome this?
- 1.4 Do you believe GenB can bridge generations and locations together into one movement? If so, do you have ideas how?

#### **Research Question 2**

- 2.1 How does Bühler carry out corporate transformation projects relating to sustainability, challenging employees, and shaping the company?
- 2.2 Does utilizing GenB in transformational projects have potential? If so, how?
- 2.3 Is GenB is ready to aid in transformational projects? Why, why not?
- 2.4 What is required for GenB to effectively assist in transformational projects? Please describe?

### Research Question 3

- 3.1 Do you think GenB should partner/create an alliance with GenB-like movements in other companies? Why, why not?
- 3.2 Which particular topics might make sense for the alliance to address? List a few!
- 3.3 Do you see any opportunities in such alliances? Can you specify?
- 3.4 Do you see any risks in such alliances? If so which ones?

### 8.2. Appendix 2: Questionnaire for external companies

Questions were prioritized due to limited interview time. Questions marked in purple font were asked if time permitted.

#### Background

*Brief description of Generation B at Bühler.*

A: Ask following questions:

- A.1. What does your company do to engage young employees in decision making, and guiding the development of the company?
- A.2. Does your company have a global communication network for bottom-up change?
- A.3. If so, how does your company lead this network?

B: IF GenB-like movement exists, ask following questions, otherwise skip and go to 1.1.

- B.1. When you hear [movement], what emotions do you feel?
- B.2. What was the idea behind starting [movement]?
- B.3. What is the history of this idea?
- B.4. Can you see value in [movement]? If so, which?
- B.5. Can you see any risks in [movement]? If so, which?
- B.6. Are there any current goals set for [movement]? If so, how are these progressing?

### Research Question 1

- 1.1 When implementing a change, how does your company reach all of its functions?
- 1.2 Are this/these method(s) effective? Benefits, drawbacks?
- 1.3 One of GenB's challenges is gaining visibility and approval across all functions within the Bühler organization. What barriers do you see can prevent this in your own company? How do you overcome these barriers?

1.4 Does your company have difficulties bridging generations and locations together into one movement due to locational and functional silos? If so, how does your company tackle these difficulties?

1.5 Which companies do you consider a benchmark in bottom-up change with the use of young employees similar to GenB?

## **Research Question 2**

2.1 How does your company carry out corporate transformation projects relating to:

- a. sustainability,
- b. challenging employees and
- c. shaping the company?

2.2 How effective are these projects?

2.3 What benefits do these projects bring to the company?

2.4 What drawbacks do these projects have?

## **Research Question 3**

3.1 Do you think your company would benefit from a movement like GenB? If so, how?

3.2 Would your company in that case seek to partner/create an alliance with GenB-like movements in other companies? Why, why not?

3.3 Which particular topics might make sense for the alliance to address? List a few!

3.4 Do you see any opportunities in such alliances? If yes, which?

3.5 Do you see any risks in such alliances?

## **Conclusion**

4.1 Who else could I interview for my thesis?

## **8.3. Appendix 3: Questionnaire for members of academia and independent organizations**

Questions were prioritized due to limited interview time.

### **Background**

*Giving a brief description of Generation B at Bühler. Asked them to answer based both on personal and academic opinion, and when applicable, reference authors/articles that relate to each question.*

0.1 Given your experience in academia, does GenB remind you of something that has previously been done in other companies? Please elaborate, including differences and similarities. Research? Papers? Books?

0.2 What benefits/drawbacks can you see in a movement like GenB?

### **Research Question 1**

1.1 When implementing a change, how should companies reach all of their own functions?

1.2 Are this/these methods effective?

1.3 If a company has challenges to gain visibility and approval across all functions within the organization, how has this previously been handled according to academia? What barriers typically prevent this?

1.4 If a company would like to bring generations and locations together into one movement due to locational and functional silos, what previous attempts have been made in other companies to do so? Papers? Research?

1.5 Which companies do you consider a benchmark in bottom-up change with the use of young employees similar to GenB?

### **Research Question 2**

2.1 How do most companies carry out corporate transformation projects relating to:

- a. sustainability,
- b. challenging employees, and
- c. shaping the company?

2.2 How effective are these? Projects?

2.3 What benefits do these have?

2.4 What drawbacks do these have?

### **Research Question 3**

3.1 Has academia ever witnessed an alliance of GenB-like movements between companies? Please elaborate.

3.2 Which particular topics might make sense for the alliance to address? List a few!

3.3 Are there any opportunities in such alliances?

3.4 Are there any risks in such alliances?

### **Conclusion**

4.1 Given our discussion topics today, do you have any advice on what literature I should take a closer look at to learn more from academia?

4.2 Who else could I interview for my thesis?

#### 8.4. Appendix 4: Number of Respondents Answering Each Question in the Questionnaire

This appendix depicts the three categories of interviewed employees, and how many of the total respondents answered each question. If a respondent only stated that they did not know or asked to skip the question, these responses count towards not having answered the question. Answers relating to recommending other respondents or academic titles have been removed due to difficulty accurately compiling these responses.

*Table 8.1: Number of Bühler respondents who answered each question in the questionnaire (12 in total)*

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Number of Answers</b>
0.1	12
0.2	10
0.3	12
0.4	12
0.5	12
0.6	12
0.7	11
1.1	12
1.2	11
1.3	11
1.4	12
2.1	12
2.2	12
2.3	12
2.4	12
3.1	12
3.2	12
3.3	12
3.4	12
4.1	12
4.2	12
4.3	12
4.4	12
4.5	12
4.6	12

*Table 8.2: Number of respondents from academia and independent organizations who answered each question in the questionnaire (8 in total)*

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Number of Answers</b>
<b>0.1</b>	8
<b>0.2</b>	8
<b>1.1</b>	8
<b>1.2</b>	5
<b>1.3</b>	6
<b>1.4</b>	8
<b>1.5</b>	6
<b>2.1</b>	6
<b>2.2</b>	2
<b>2.3</b>	1
<b>2.4</b>	2
<b>3.1</b>	5
<b>3.2</b>	3
<b>3.3</b>	3
<b>3.4</b>	3

*Table 8.3: Number of respondents from external organizations who answered each question in the questionnaire (16 in total)*

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Number of Answers</b>
<b>A.1</b>	15
<b>A.2</b>	16
<b>A.3</b>	6
<b>B.1</b>	5
<b>B.2</b>	3
<b>B.3</b>	5
<b>B.4</b>	5
<b>B.5</b>	4
<b>B.6</b>	4
<b>1.1</b>	16
<b>1.2</b>	16
<b>1.3</b>	13
<b>1.4</b>	12
<b>1.5</b>	4
<b>2.1</b>	13
<b>2.2</b>	4
<b>2.3</b>	5
<b>2.4</b>	6
<b>3.1</b>	10
<b>3.2</b>	11
<b>3.3</b>	10
<b>3.4</b>	7
<b>3.5</b>	10

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