


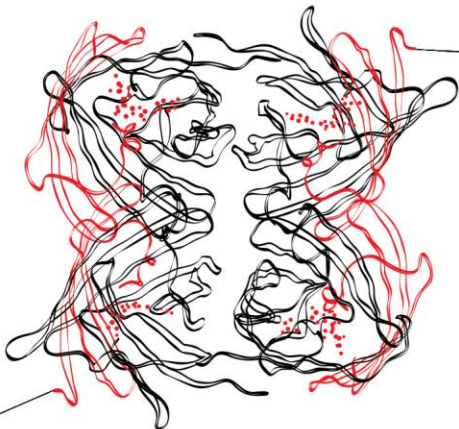
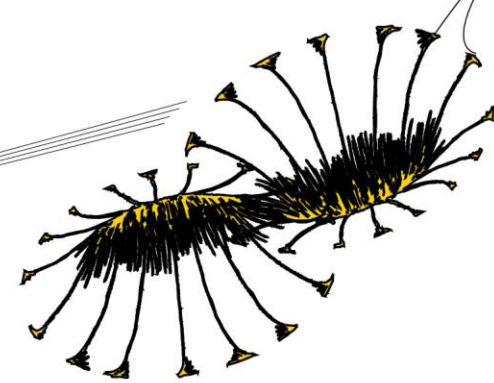


DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEES' TRUST IN THEIR DAILY SUPERVISORS

"Leaders can no longer trust in power; instead, they rely on the power of trust"
- Charles Green -



Master thesis
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MASTER THESIS

Determinants of employees' trust in their daily supervisors

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Preface

After ten months working on my Master thesis it is finally time to finish my second study. It was a long road to take, with some obstacles and concentration problems but also with many inspiring moments and determination to do this research. I am very glad that one year ago, when I was biking on a mini vacation with my parents I finally knew what I wanted to research for my Master thesis. The subject I chose is, for me, still one of the most interesting topics within the field of internal communication and I am glad that I had the opportunity to add some new things within the research field of trust in leadership with this study.

These 2,5 years on University added many positive things to get ready to take the next step into the 'working life', becoming more independent living far from home, learning to think more theoretical and most of all to concentrate on the goals that are set and work for it every day. Looking back this time past by so quick that I even am a little sad that 'school life' is really over now but I am looking forward to new opportunities and things that will come in the future.

I would like to thank my supervisors, Ardion Beldad and Sabrina Hegner for their support, feedback on my work and critical thinking so that I can be very satisfied with the final result of my thesis.

Furthermore I cannot thank my mom, dad and brother enough for their support throughout these 10 months and also for their support during this 2,5 year on University. They always believed in me finishing this Master even when I had doubts myself. Their support, feedback, long conversations, faith, help and love made it a lot easier to stay focused on the goal I wanted to reach.

At last, I would also like to thank my, at first classmate but now very good friend Debbie for all the days we sat together in the Ravelijn working on our thesis. Supporting each other, giving each other pep talks, listening to each others' concerns and having so much fun to make the hard work a little easier. Without her motivation and dedication this Master thesis was still not finished.

Now it is time to say, what I want to say for a long time already: **"I made it!"**

Casmira Wortel
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Abstract

This research focuses on the different determinants that could positively influence the trust of employees' in their daily supervisors. Current trust literature mostly focuses on trust of customers in organizations. Whereas this research is about trust within organizations, namely trust in daily supervisors. There are already many researcher who identified one or several determinants in their studies that have a positive influence on employees' trust towards their supervisors but not all together in one research. This research gives a comprehensive overview of possible determinants that are influential on employees' trust. Thereby is focused on if some determinants are more important than others when all determinants are put into one research.

Out of the trust literature three categories of influencing trust determinants can be defined; (1) Context-based determinants, which includes all determinants that can be influenced by a situation an employee or supervisor is in. The context-based determinants in this research are: relationship length, participation in decision making, value congruence and contact frequency. (2) Trustee-based determinants, includes all determinants that have to do with the daily supervisor, the person to be trusted. Competence, availability, consistency, information quality, information quantity and transparency belong to this category. The last category (3) Trustor-based determinants have to do with the trusting party, in this research employees are the persons who trust or distrust their daily supervisor. The only determinant in this category is propensity to trust. Hypotheses were formed to find out if the different determinants have a positive influence on employees' trust in their daily supervisors.

An online questionnaire was distributed via social media networks and the network of the researcher in the Netherlands. Snowball sampling was used to get as many respondents as possible. A total response of 210 completely filled in surveys was realized.

To analyze the data Cronbachs alpha was measured, which showed that all measured constructs are reliable. Furthermore single- and multiple regression analyses were performed. It was expected that all constructs would have a positive significance in the single regression since all used determinants are researched before with positive results. However in this research, availability and information quantity were not confirmed as significant. After this, a multiple regression analysis was performed to find out if some determinants are, according to employees more important than others for trusting daily supervisors. Next to availability and information quantity, in the multiple regression it turned out that contact frequency was not confirmed to have a positive effect on employees trust in their daily supervisors as well. Value congruence and information quality were only confirmed on a .05 significance level. Whereas the other determinants (participation in decision making, competence, consistency, relationship length, transparency and propensity to trust) were al confirmed at a .01 significance. Participation in decision making, competence and consistency showed the strongest significant score. These determinants are valued as more important than the other determinants by the respondents of this research.

Daily supervisors and managers can become aware of the importance of some trustee determinants that employees value as important for trusting their supervisor. Giving these determinants enough attention in practical work situations could lead to increased trust of employees in their daily supervisors. For other researchers this research summarizes and defines, in one overview, which determinants are important instead of various different articles were only one or a few determinants are discussed. This is also a research that can be performed in different countries and more specific situations as, a specific organization or working sector so that one can find out if this gives different results in the importance of the determinants.

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1 Introduction

Trust is important in all parts of social life. It binds friendships (Gibbons, 2004), facilitates bargaining and negotiations (Olekalns & Smith, 2005), reduces transaction costs in exchanges (Bharadwaj & Matsuno, 2006), and could even resolve international political conflicts (Kelman, 2005). This means that trust is needed in different elements of life.

One of the places where trust also can be formed is the organizations people work for. Employees can develop trust relationships with co workers, their supervisors and/or higher management. According to Sheppard and Sherman (1998) trust is important for the establishment and maintenance of effective relationships. Fisher and Brown (1988) add to this that trust is seen as an important element for good working relationships. Developing employees' trust is an important element in organizations, in which supervisors play a role. Zhang et al. (2008) states about the importance of supervisors: "middle managers are in a pivotal position in organizations. They are responsible for accomplishing organizational goals by interpreting and implementing organizational strategies, facilitating change, creating effective working environments, ensuring smooth running of operations, building teams and motivating subordinates" (Zhang et al., 2008, p. 112). The task of supervisors to motivate employees and form teams has to do with building good work relationships, which is necessary in organizations and trusting each other. The importance of internal trust, trust within organizations (Zhang et al., 2008) is clear to many scholars and it is a growing field of research. Although many facets are already researched there is still more to research so that more comprehensive models can be made.

Research into internal trust often highlights only one or a few determinants that could influence trust and/or trust relationships (Driscoll, 1978; Ferris et al., 2009; Rawlins, 2006). The most common used trust determinants in research are those of trustworthiness; ability, benevolence and integrity (Butler, 1991; Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). These studies mostly compare three different elements of measuring trust to find answers to their research question or they approach trust in leadership through a specific lens (Whitener et al., 1998). There is not that much research that gives an overview of determinants that can influence employees trust in their leader without focusing on a specific context or determinant. Also, less research is done without using ability, benevolence and integrity as starting point of trust research. A broader overview of influencing trust determinants can be made when this goes beyond ability, benevolence and integrity. These are very general concepts where several determinants are placed in.

This study provides an overview of determinants that could influence employees' trust in their daily supervisors. It gives more insight into the determinants that are most important for employees to have a trusting work relationship with their daily supervisor. Using as much determinants as possible in this research is something that is not performed often yet, therefore it could give more insight in which determinants could be more influential than others when a group of determinants is tested together. The used method to provide an overview of determinants that could influence trust in daily supervisors is a survey. The purpose of the research is to give a more complete overview of determinants that can influence the trust level of employees in their daily supervisors. The following research question is formulated to explore this:

"What are the determinants of influence employees' trust in their daily supervisors?"

2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework will give in depth information about the concepts; trust in general, trust in leadership and the determinants that will be tested in this research.

2.1 Introduction

As mentioned in chapter one, trust is a concept that is involved in many different ways in daily- and work life. Because trust is applicable in many different contexts, researchers developed different definitions of trust so that it fits their research context. Burke et al. (2007) separated trust in three sub categories; (1) trust as a trait (2) trust as an emergent state, and (3) trust as a process. Gillespie (2003) focuses on the differences between affective, behavioral and cognitive trust, whereas Rousseau et al. (1998) and Serva, Fuller and Mayer (2005) highlight the willingness to be vulnerable in their definitions of trust. Other definitions focus more on the willingness to take risks in trusting others (Sheppard & Sherman, 1998; Whitener et al., 1998 and Zand, 1972). Other researchers find it important that trust definitions involve benevolent behavior in a relationship between different parties (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; McAllister, 1995; McKnight et al., 1998). This enumeration shows that most scholars only focus on one element or side of trust in their definition because it fits their research area best. One of the few researchers that formulated a broader definition of trust is that of Mayer et al. (1995).

2.2 Trust

The trust definition of Mayer et al. (1995) is a common used one. They state: *“trust is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party”* (p. 712). The focus in this definition is on vulnerability. According to Mayer et al. (1995) vulnerability means taking risk or the willingness to take risk. Being vulnerable means that the people involved could lose something that is important to them. The form of taking risk is different in every situation but the amount of trust in the other party could affect the level of risk taking (Mayer et al., 1995). Thus, people can influence each other in their amount of risk taking or being vulnerable towards each other, which could influence the level of trust. Mayer et al. (1995) emphasizes on the context in which risk is to be taken. Namely, although the trust level stays the same, contextual factors as available alternatives, balance of power in the relationship, perceptions of risk level and involved stakes could determine the consequences of trusting the other party.

The importance of trust comes back in different kinds of research. Fisher and Brown (1988) state that trust is an important element for a good working relationship. Sheppard and Sherman (1998) agree on this and state that trust is important for the establishment and maintenance of effective relationships. Trust is involved in different things, which have to do with relationships, leadership theories and developing or maintaining effective relationships with trust involved (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Development of general trust

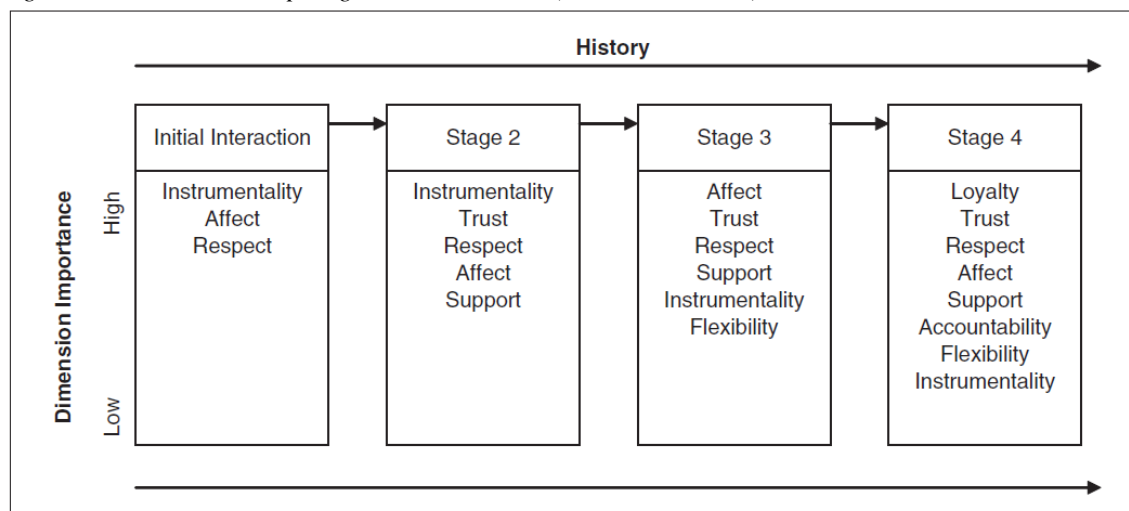
Ferris et al. (2009) considers building a good working relationship in the form of different stages people go through. In every stage of relationship development new dimension can enter because of met and unmet expectations and the situation both trusting parties are in. These stages for building a relationship could be used for any kind of relationship including that of employees and their daily supervisors. When employees and daily supervisors walk through all stages a high quality relationship is formed.

It starts with the first contact moment, which can develop towards a longer, stable relationship. The stage of the first contact means that both parties are searching for

information that could confirm a potential relationship. Expectations for the quality of the relationship in the future are formed. Perceived similarity, respect and affect dimensions are important in forming the expectations of both parties in the weeks or months after the first contact (Liden, Erdogan & Bauer, 2006; Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993). After the first contact, the second step is creating empathy, support and negotiate about role identities. This is done by further exploration of the formulated expectations in the first stage and by evaluating how individuals like each other in terms of trust and respect. Trust can say something about the expectations both parties have of each other for the future. Respect is formed based on positive judgments on past exchanges of both parties. In the third stage both parties need to show flexibility because external influences as career switch or individual changes could affect the work relationship. Flexibility refers to how both parties deal with conflicting issues, how they process information towards each other and how disagreements are handled. This shows if the individuals are able to think or act different from what they are used to (Ferris et al., 2009). The last stage means consolidating the relationship in terms of mutual accountability, maintaining the formed role identities and staying loyal and committed (Frink & Klimoski, 1998; Frink et al., 2008). Both individuals are able to back each other up when this is necessary and both individuals follow the same directions to reach their common goals.

Figure 1 shows that the importance of the different dimensions can change during the different stages and new dimensions can enter. These changes occur when for instance expectations are met or not, when expectations are not met it becomes hard to create a high-quality relationship with the other party involved. The figure also shows that trust is an important dimension in three out of the four stages. The degree of importance stays stable in all stages.

Figure 1: Work relationship stages and dimensions (Ferris et al. 2009).



It is clear that relationships could develop through several stages but passing these stages will not guarantee a lasting trust relationship. Trust relationships between individuals can emerge for a long or short period of time and will not stay the same over time (Bluedorn & Jaussie, 2008). Therefore time is important in building trust relationships as Dirks and Ferrin (2002) found that trust expands over time. Although they found this result they could not state that time on its own is a direct predictor of trust. This does not mean that it is not important at all because other researchers agree that relationships develop over time and that trust is an important factor in relationships (Bluedorn & Jaussie, 2008; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Pratt & Dirks, 2007). Bluedorn and Jaussie (2008) state that distance, next to time, could have an influence on trust relationships. Distance refers to the closeness or separation in space,

time, perceptions and attitudes of the involved parties in the relationship (Ferris et al., 2009). To keep relationships productive, objective and effective it is necessary to balance mostly perceptions and attitudes rather than space and time. This is because discipline and guidance can be given better under these conditions, especially when the trust relationship is between supervisors and employees (Napier and Ferris, 1993).

2.3 Trust in leadership

From the previous section it becomes clear that trust relationships emerge among people and different elements are involved to create high quality trust relationships. When looking at organizations, co-workers could develop relationships with each other but leaders of an organization need to develop relationships with their employees as well.

When looking at leadership literature, researchers agree on the fact that leaders in organizations cannot do everything alone. Leaders are in a certain way dependent on responsive employees to create collective activity (Hollander and Offerman, 1990). The role of employees is mostly seen as passive but this is not always the case. Although leaders have more influence, employees can be influential as well. The process of leadership can be influenced by the perceptions and expectations of the employee and how employees respond towards a leader. Situational elements as the nature of the tasks, history, availability of resources and quality of the leader-member relationship as well as leader characteristics as its perceived competences, motivation and personality characteristics that are in line with that of employees could have an effect on a leader-member trust relationship (Hollander & Offerman, 1990). How effective leadership is depends in a certain way on reciprocity and power sharing. This means that the leader is aware of the fact that abuse of power could damage the trust relationship with employees.

Within an organization there are different kind of leaders. In literature a distinction between direct- and organizational leaders is made. Direct leaders have a direct connection with employees whereas organizational leaders are working on a strategic level. One can say that direct leaders are more able to create a trust relationship with employees because they are closer in time and distance than organizational leaders. These are important elements in building trust relationships (Bluedorn and Jaussie, 2008); Dirks and Ferrin, 2002). Therefore, in this research the focus will be on direct leaders, which in this research will be named daily supervisors.

A theory where the relationship between leaders and employees is highlighted is leader-member exchange theory (LMX). LMX theory states that daily supervisors can treat individual employees in different ways (Duchon, Green & Taber, 1986). In-groups are employees who have a close relationship with their daily supervisor. This close relationship could result in higher performance, more job responsibility and a high quality relationship involving trust. Whereas employees that belong to the out-group, work with more distance from their daily supervisor. The amount of distance towards the daily supervisor is important because it says something about how daily supervisors process information and evaluate members (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002). Belonging to the out-group could result in less benefits for the employee and a low quality relationship involving less trust (Liden & Graen, 1980). Brower, Schoorman and Tan (2000) state that high LMX relationships need to be based on mutual trust and loyalty. To create this trust relationship with employees Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe (2003) find it important that a daily supervisor shows concern for the well being of the employee, value their work and help them with career development. This shows employees the goodwill of the daily supervisor and they will be willing to reciprocate this positive attitude of the daily supervisor. According to Mayer et al. (1995) it is not always necessary to have mutual trust between leaders and employees.

Leaders could trust their employees but employees at the same time could not have that same amount of trust in their leader. This does not always have to damage their relationship but it says something about the quality of the relationship between leader and employee.

2.4 Determinants influencing employees' trust in daily supervisors

Until now, different elements have been mentioned that could influence trust relationships between employees and daily supervisors. For the categorization of different determinants that can influence trust in daily supervisors trustworthiness can be used. Dirks and Skarlicki (2009) define trustworthiness as actions of daily supervisors which are important for leader-member relationships wherein employees can be vulnerable. These actions are used by employees to evaluate how trustworthy their daily supervisor is (Mayer et al, 1995). A high quality trust relationship is likely to develop when employees find their daily supervisor trustworthy (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2009). The three elements of trustworthiness distinguished in literature are: (1) Ability, which means being influential and having the skills/competences to be trusted by others (Mayer et al., 1995), (2) Benevolence, which means the willingness to do good to someone else and it could suggest a kind of attachment between trustee and trustor (Mayer et al., 1995) and (3) Integrity, which means following the kind of principles someone asks for in a trusting relationship. It has to do with the past actions of a supervisor, credible information from third parties and if there is consistency in what a daily supervisor says and what he or she does (Mayer et al., 1995).

These elements of trustworthiness are broad formulated, which does not allow researchers to come up with very specific elements that help in building trust relationships. To generate more specific information about influencing determinants for trust in daily supervisors another categorization than that of trustworthiness is chosen in this research. The trust determinants that could influence employees' trust in daily supervisors are distinguished into context-based determinants, trustee determinants and trustor determinants.

2.4.1 Context-based determinants

Some things in a leader-member relationship can be influenced by the context or situation a leader, member or organization is in. Context-based determinants are totally or partly influenced by the context or situation trustor and trustee are in.

Relationship length

According to Lewicki and Bunker (1996) trust increases when supervisors and employees have a relationship of long duration. The length of the leader-member relationship could be an indicator of trust because the level of knowledge about each other and familiarity with each other increases during a longer relationship. Next to this Coulter and Coulter (2002) suggest that through ongoing interaction parties in a relationship learn about each other. They also agree with Lewicki and Bunker that relationship length could increase trust and they add to this that earlier in a relationship people do not know what to expect from the other party because of a lack of information and knowledge about the other person. In sum, the interaction history of daily supervisors and employees could increase knowledge, information and expectations. In a relationship of longer duration it is likely that these indicators can be elaborated more and therefore could increase the level of trust in the daily supervisors.

Hypothesis 1: A relationship of long duration between employees and daily supervisors positively influences employees' trust in the daily supervisor.

Participation in decision making

Discroll (1978) states that involvement of employees' in the decision making process could positively influence trust in daily supervisors. This does not directly mean that employees have all decision power. It could also mean that a daily supervisor considers the ideas and arguments of its employees or creates the opportunity to voice their opinions. Sometimes due to a lack of consensus or time it is necessary that daily supervisors make the overall decision. In this case employees must trust their supervisor in a certain way so that they agree with the made decision. If daily supervisors have not created a trusting environment with employees, lack of cooperation with decisions, unwillingness to share information and sabotage of future decision processes may be the result (Whitener, 1998). Next to this being part of the decision making process or being listened to gives employees the opportunity to have some control over activities, reduce risks and increase the chance that favorable decisions of individual employees are made. Trust of employees in their daily supervisor could also be increased by their participation in decision making because employees see this as a form of social reward. Being rewarded by a daily supervisor, employees could develop trust in their daily supervisor. This shows approval, respect and trust from a daily supervisor in his/her employees. Employees in their turn feel valued, which could lead to reciprocating their trust (Whitener, 1998).

Hypothesis 2: Employees' participation in decision making positively influences employees' trust in their daily supervisor.

Value congruence

Value congruence is defined in this research as a relationship between employees and daily supervisors based on common perceptions and/or values and having in common characteristics with each other. Ferris et al. (2009) state that personal characteristics and experiences could create a certain way of interacting between two parties, which could influence their trust relationship. Ferris et al. (2009) also stated that only with congruence can both parties in a relationship find satisfaction and value outcomes forthcoming. This could mean that individual employees are attracted to the vision and values of their daily supervisor (Howell, 1988) and they want to be part of something larger than only themselves (Shamir et al., 1993). A trust relationship based on common perceptions could decrease misunderstandings and could increase exchange of information and a common vision (Bauwmeister & Leary, 1995). Napier and Ferris (1993) summarize this by stating that it is important to balance perceptions and attitudes so that trust relationships are productive, objective and effective. This means that when daily supervisors and employees have mostly in common perceptions and/or values this could strengthen their relationship, which could result in increased trust (Ferris et al., 2009).

Hypothesis 3: Employees' perceptions of congruence between their values and the values of their supervisors positively influences employees' trust in the daily supervisor.

Contact frequency

Emerson (1962) and Smircich and Morgan (1982) state that the frequency of daily supervisors and employees interacting with each other builds a good relationship. Baumeister and Leary (1995) agree by saying that individuals always search for frequent positive interaction experiences. Without frequent contact relatedness is mostly unsatisfying for interacting parties. Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) state that the person who is frequently involved in the interaction process is likely to be trusted. Thereby, strong interaction between parties results in trusting one another. "Frequent and close social interactions permit actors to know one

another, to share important information, and to create a common point of view” (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998, p. 465). Thus, it could be that frequent contact between daily supervisors and employees reinforces their trust relationship.

Hypothesis 4: Frequent leader-member contact positively influences employees’ trust in the daily supervisor.

2.4.2 Trustee determinants

A trustee is the party to be trusted (Driscoll, 1978). In this research the daily supervisor is the party to be trusted. In this section all determinants that have to do with daily supervisors are described. This category is formed because the daily supervisor has influence on the trust determinants that belong to this category.

Competence

Competence is about being influential and having the skills and the ability to be trusted by others (Mayer et al., 1995). In the article of Sherwood and DePaolo (2005) is stated that employees value competence as a very important antecedent of trust. When employees do not find that their daily supervisor has the right skills to fulfill the role of being a daily supervisor it is not likely that a trusting relationship emerges. Employees will decide whether or not they are willing to be vulnerable towards their daily supervisor. If employees do not believe in the competences of their supervisors, employees’ support is unlikely and risks will increase. “The greater the confidence in the manager’s competence, the more likely the worker will choose to be influenced by the manager” (Sherwood & DePaolo, 2005, p. 68). This means that the trust of employees in their daily supervisors is influenced by if they find that their daily supervisor is competent in being a supervisor.

Hypothesis 5: A positive employee perception of the daily supervisors’ competences positively influences employees’ trust in the daily supervisor.

Availability

With availability is meant the physical presence of a daily supervisor when employees need it at the work place. Different researchers as Butler (1991); Jennings (1971); Krippendorff (1980) and Weber (1985) found evidence that availability of daily supervisors is a predictor of trust in leadership. Antonakis & Atwater (2002) state that the distance between employees and their daily supervisors says something about how supervisors process information and evaluate their employees. When daily supervisors are around employees often this could create feelings of trust towards the daily supervisor because he or she can evaluate the situation and is around when employees need this. In their turn employees can evaluate the daily supervisor as well when he or she is around often which could lead to a high quality trust relationship because predictability increases and vulnerability decreases.

Hypothesis 6: Availability of daily supervisors positively influences employees’ trust in the daily supervisor.

Consistency

Burke et al. (2007) and Mayer et al. (1995) describe consistency as what a daily supervisor says and does has to be similar in a kind of way. It is about the consistency between words and actions. Consistency has also to do with predicting the behavior of daily supervisors by employees. Because of consistent behavior by daily supervisors in various situations and over time employees become willing to take risks because they have an idea of how their daily

supervisor reacts in certain situations (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Thus, consistent behavior of daily supervisors could influence the trust relationship of a daily supervisor and its employees.

Hypothesis 7: Consistent behavior of daily supervisors positively influences employees' trust in their daily supervisor.

Information quality

Communication and information sharing is an important element in trust relationships because providing information by daily supervisors gives employees the opportunity to develop trust. Quality of information and communication from daily supervisors towards employees is specified in terms of accuracy, timeliness and usefulness. When information is received in time, is accurate and it is useful for employees this leads to trusting their daily supervisors more (Thomas et al., 2009). Furthermore the vulnerability of employees could be reduced when information is on time accurate and informative for employees. This could lead to higher levels of trust in the daily supervisor as well (Thomas et al., 2009; Whitener et al., 1998).

Hypothesis 8: High quality information shared with employees positively influences employees' trust in the daily supervisor.

Information quantity

Information quantity is the extent to which employees perceive that they receive enough information from their daily supervisors. Getting enough information from the daily supervisor could lead to reduction of employees' vulnerability which makes them more willing to rely on their daily supervisor (Whitener et al., 1998). It is shown that focusing on increased information flow and reducing uncertainty among employees leads to more satisfied and trusting employees when it comes to information quantity (Hargie, Tourish & Wilson, 2002).

Hypothesis 9: Receiving enough information from daily supervisors positively influences employees' trust in the daily supervisor.

Transparency

Transparency is a broad concept, which is defined differently by researchers. For this research the article of Rawlins (2006) is used. Transparency means that information or actions are deliberately revealed instead of hiding them, this is important for building a trust relationship between employees and daily supervisors. The aim of transparency is to truthfully communicate reality towards employees. For acting transparent trust is needed, because daily supervisors cannot ensure that the given information will be used or interpreted by employees as they intended it. This means that there need to be a willingness to be vulnerable and daily supervisors must trust their employees. This vulnerability and trust of daily supervisors towards employees could lead to reciprocating behavior. Employees in their turn trust their daily supervisors because they are transparent and show vulnerability (Rawlins, 2006).

Hypothesis 10: Transparent information sharing from the daily supervisor positively influences employees' trust in the daily supervisor.

2.4.3 Trustor determinants

The trustor is the trusting party. In this research employees of an organization or a specific team are called trustors. They make a decision to trust or distrust their daily supervisor. This is the perspective of the employee, which means that the daily supervisor (trustee) has no or little influence on trustor determinants.

Propensity to trust

Propensity to trust is about the willingness of individuals to trust others in their surroundings. In general individuals differ in their willingness to trust others. One person is very willing to trust everybody where others need affirmation before trusting others (Tan and Lim, 2009). The decision to trust a daily supervisor is based on individual differences of the involved parties within the interpersonal relationship. Each employee weights the given information by their daily supervisor different, which is formed by their willingness to trust others in general (Whitener et al., 1998). Therefore it is likely that employees with high propensity to trust other people are willing to trust their daily supervisor as well, than employees with lower propensity to trust.

Hypothesis 11: Employees with high trust propensity are inclined to trust their daily supervisor.

3 Method

In this chapter information will be given about the used method for the conducted research.

3.1 Procedure

The hypotheses formulated in the theoretical framework were tested using an online survey conducted in the Netherlands. An online survey was used for this research because the goal was to reach as many respondents as possible. The final online survey was pre-tested with five different people, who are between 25 and 60 years old, two men, three women, working for governmental and commercial organizations between the three and forty years. They checked the formulation of the different statements, if the statements were understandable and formulated in a proper way. With the input of these people the survey was revised and ready for distribution.

The survey was distributed online via different online networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Snowball sampling was used to forward the online survey within specific social media working groups and organizations. For example, personal e-mails were sent to employees from a few different organizations out of the researchers network so that they could distribute the survey to employees of their organizations. Also people forwarded the survey via their social networks. Because the target group of the research only included Dutch people, the survey was translated from English into Dutch so that it was easier for respondents to fill in the survey without misunderstandings.

The requirements for participating in the online survey were that respondents are working, that they are dealing with a supervisor at their work and that respondents work in the Netherlands. The focus of this research was on testing as many trust determinants as possible, therefore the target group was limited to only Dutch employees to limit the scope of the research. With a broader research population cultural differences of countries should be taken into account during the evaluation of the data. That is another type of research and not the aim of this research therefore this was not included. Furthermore there were no limitations according to working region, specific work sectors or type of organization within the Netherlands.

3.2 Respondents

A total of 343 respondents started the online survey. Two hundred ten of the total respondents provided useful data. With useful data is meant that all questions of the online survey were completed by the respondent.

Of the 210 respondents, 62% of the respondents were women. The average years working with their current daily supervisor is 3.3 years (SD=3.37). Fifty percent of the respondents are working fulltime. The majority of the respondents is highly educated, their organizations are mostly located in the Dutch province 'Noord-Holland' (41%) and the majority of the organization respondents work for belong to the commercial sector. Out of all respondents the average years working for their current organization is 8.7 years (SD=9.18). In table 1 a detailed overview of all demographic information can be found.

Table 1: Demographic information of the survey respondents

Variable	Frequency	Mean / SD	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	79		37.6
Female	131		62.4
<i>Education</i>			
LBO/MAVO/VMBO	4		1.9

MBO	29	13.8
HAVO	16	7.6
VWO	6	2.9
HBO	86	41.0
WO	69	32.9
<i>Years working with supervisor</i>		M=3.33 SD=3.37
<i>Employment</i>		
Fulltime working	105	50.0
Parttime working	105	50.0
<i>Working sector</i>		
Financial	38	18.1
Commercial	42	20.0
Catering	8	3.8
Retail	19	9.0
Healthcare	28	13.3
Government	30	14.3
Transport & Logistics	3	1.4
Education	21	10.0
Business services	8	3.8
Others	13	6.2
<i>Years working for org.</i>		M=8.71 SD=9.18
<i>Location organization</i>		
Friesland	2	1.0
Groningen	3	1.4
Noord - Holland	86	41.0
Zuid - Holland	14	6.7
Flevoland	2	1.0
Utrecht	39	18.6
Drenthe	1	.50
Overijssel	31	14.8
Gelderland	14	6.7
Noord - Brabant	2	1.0
Limburg	3	1.4
Others	13	6.2
<i>Team size of employees under daily supervisor</i>		
0 – 10 employees	53	25.2
11 – 20 employees	64	30.5
21 – 30 employees	25	11.9
31 or more employees	68	32.4
Total	210	100%

3.3 Measurement

Every construct in the online survey was measured with statements using a five point Likert scale. Using the Likert scale 1 meant ‘totally disagree’ and 5 ‘totally agree’. Almost all statements used to measure the different determinants are from existing scales used by other researchers. In some cases it was necessary to reformulate the statements of the existing scale in order to make it fit into the context of the current research. Items used by different researchers within the measurement of one construct needed to be used sometimes because not all items of one researcher fit the context or definition of that one construct. In the coming paragraphs detailed information about the survey items will be given. The last paragraph, 3.3.4 will give an overview of the performed reliability test.

3.3.1 Context-based determinants

Relationship length

For relationship length three items were in the survey to measure the construct. Since no existing items could be found for this construct, the researcher formulated its own items based on the literature mentioned in the theoretical framework (page 15). The formulated items were: *‘My daily supervisor and I have worked together for a long time already’*, *‘my daily supervisor and I are used to the way we work together’* and *‘my relationship with my daily supervisor has been unproblematic’*.

Participation in decision making

Five items were used to measure the construct participation in decision making. The items came from two researchers. To let the items fit in the context of the research they were reformulated. An example of used items from Clark and Payne (1997): *‘My daily supervisor values my ideas and opinions’* and *‘my daily supervisor is sincere in the attempt to meet my point of view about the job’*. From Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois and Callan (2004) *‘My daily supervisor allows me to provide input on work related decisions’* was used.

Value congruence

For value congruence five items were used to measure the construct. Some items needed to be reformulated to let them fit into the context of research. Examples of used items are: *‘I see similarities in my own perceptions and that of my daily supervisor’*, *‘I think my daily supervisor and I share common values’* (Becker, Billings, Eveleth, and Gilbert, 1996). One item from Jung, Dong and Avolio (2000) was used: *‘I really support the core values of my daily supervisor’*.

Contact frequency

Contact frequency was measured by three items, which was the least items that was used to measure a construct. One item came from McAllister (1995): *‘My daily supervisor frequently initiates work-related interaction with me’*. The other two items: *‘My daily supervisor and I have frequent contact’* and *‘I am satisfied with the contact frequency with my daily supervisor’* were formulated by the researcher.

3.3.2 Trustee based determinants

Competence

For the construct competence four items were used. Rawlins (2006) used in his research items as: *“My daily supervisor has the expertise to do his/her job well”* and *“my daily supervisor is competent in supervising his/her team”*, which were also usable for the current research. McAllister (1995) had a valuable item as well: *“My daily supervisor approaches his/her job with professionalism”*. These items were used to measure the whole construct of competence.

Availability

Availability was measured by items that were originally formulated by the researcher. There were no items from other researchers found that fit in the current research. Four items were used for availability, for example: *"My daily supervisor is available when I need him/her"* and *"I can reach my daily supervisor when I need him/her"*.

Consistency

Consistency was measured using items from two different researchers, four items were used. One item of Simons (2002) was used: *"My daily supervisor fulfills his/her promises"*. Other used items were: *"I can rely on my daily supervisor and the promises he/she makes"* and *"my daily supervisor does not mislead me in any way"* (Rawlins, 2006).

Information quality

The construct information quality was measured by seven different items. This is the most number of items that was used to measure a construct. The used items came from two researchers who looked deeper into information quality in their research. An example of items used from Rawlins (2006) are: *'My daily supervisor provides information on time to me'*, *'my daily supervisor provides complete information to me'* and *'my daily supervisor provides understandable information to me'*. From Bordia et al. (2004) the following item was used: *'My daily supervisor provides useful information to me'*.

Information quantity

For information quantity the study of Roberts and O'Reilly (1974) was useful. All four items to measure the construct came from their study 'Measuring organizational communication': *"My daily supervisor shares information with me regularly"*, *"I know what is going on in the organization because of my daily supervisor"* and *"my daily supervisor shares the right amount of information with me"* are examples of the used items in this research.

Transparency

The used items to measure transparency are five items. The items needed to be rephrased partly so that they were usable for the current research. To measure the construct items of Rawlins' (2006) research 'Measuring the relationship between organizational transparency and trust' were used. Examples are: *"My daily supervisor does not hold important information from me"*, *"my daily supervisor freely admits when he/she has made mistakes"* and *"my daily supervisor often leaves out important details in the information he/she provides to me"*.

3.3.3 Trustor based determinant

Propensity to trust

Propensity to trust was measured by four items out of the research of Gefen and Straub (2004). Items to measure propensity to trust used in the current research were: *"I generally trust other people"* and *"I feel that people are generally reliable"*.

3.3.4 Reliability of all items

The measured Cronbach's alpha in table 2 indicates that the used constructs are reliable. With the highest reliability score for 'competence' ($\alpha=.91$) and the lowest score of $\alpha=.69$ for 'relationship length'.

Table 2: Reliability used research constructs

Construct	Cronbach's α	Mean (SD)	N items
Relationship length	.69	3.79 (.83)	2*
Participation in decision making	.86	3.65 (.80)	5
Value congruence	.85	3.26 (.73)	5
Contact frequency	.79	3.28 (.82)	3
Competence	.91	3.69 (.90)	4
Availability	.79	3.56 (.76)	4
Consistency	.87	3.65 (.78)	4
Information quality	.88	3.54 (.66)	7
Information quantity	.78	3.31 (.81)	3*
Transparency	.73	2.37 (.62)	5
Propensity to trust	.88	3.57 (.67)	4
Trust in daily supervisor	.88	3.54 (.77)	6

*one item deleted for a higher Cronbach's α .

4 Results

In chapter four the results of the performed research are presented. This chapter is split in two sections. Paragraph 4.1 gives the results of the preliminary interviews, followed by paragraph 4.2 and 4.3 that show the results of the single and multiple regression analysis.

4.1 Preliminary interviews

Before the decision was made for a specific research design five short interviews were held with different respondents that are all working with a daily supervisor. This was done so that the researcher could find out if the determinants mentioned in literature are comparable to what employees of organizations find important in trusting their daily supervisors. The interviewees were working for different organizations as the retail sector, healthcare institutions and commercial organizations. They were working between two and ten years for the same middle sized or large sized organization. In the appendix on page 42 more information about the different interviewees can be found. Furthermore the researcher could find out if interviewing was the right method to use for this research during these interviews. Examples of questions that were asked during the interviews are:

1. *What do you like about the work relationship with your daily supervisor?*
2. *To what extent does trust play a role in your work relationship?*
3. *What contributes to trust in your daily supervisor?*
4. *What would break trust in your daily supervisor?*

During the interviews the researcher found out that interviewing was not the ideal method to use for this research. Too many determinants were involved to let them all pass in the interview. Also, the respondents seemed to have difficulties with the term ‘trust’, which they found somewhat abstract, something that they deal with unconscious mostly. It was hard to explain things about this topic in words within a direct interview.

Out of the interviews became clear that there was some overlap in what the interviewees mentioned as important elements in trusting their daily supervisors and what was mentioned in literature. A short overview of important interview outcomes is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Overview interview results

<i>Trust determinants</i>	<i>Improvement</i>	<i>Breaking trust</i>	<i>Organizational effect</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long relationship(1) • Back up from direct supervisor in tough situations(1) • Willingness to help / flexibility of the daily supervisor(3) • Open communication(2) • Keeping made promises/ appointments(1) • Professionalism(3) • Sincerity(1) • Informal relationship with daily supervisor (2) • Consistency of daily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better alignment between employee and daily supervisor(2) • More visibility of daily supervisor(2) • Insight in daily work of daily supervisor/ insight in when the daily supervisor is at the office(1) • Take identified problems of employees seriously and try to find 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the daily supervisor does not handle information of employees in a discrete way(3) • Gossiping(1) • Not being honest(1) • Professionalism(1) • Not showing understanding for private situations(1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being motivated and willing to do extra tasks(4)

supervisor(1)	solutions(4)
• Showing under-standing for private situations(2)	• Managers and daily supervisors following the same rules(1)
• Showing interest/ appreciation for the work of employees(2)	

**The number behind each statement indicates the frequency of interviewees mentioning this statement.*

4.2 Single regression analysis

To analyze the results of this research the categories (context-based-, trustee- and trustor determinants) out of the theoretical framework in paragraph 2.3 are used. First a separate regression analysis was performed for each category. After this the three categories with all items were put in one regression analysis separated in blocks to see if there are changes in regression scores when all categories are analyzed apart or together. Table 4 until 6 shows the regression of the different constructs measured by a single regression analysis.

All items except for availability and information quantity have a significant relationship (either on a 0.05 or 0.01 level) with the dependent construct trust when they are measured separately. It was expected that all items would have a positive relationship with trust because of the information from other research about the individual topics.

Table 4: Single regression context-based determinants

<i>Model</i>	<i>Construct</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>
					.67
1	(constant)	.14	0.17		
	Relationship length	0.30	0.05	.32**	
	Participation DM	0.28	0.06	.29**	
	Value congruence	0.26	0.06	.24**	
	Contact frequency	0.13	0.05	.14**	

**significant at the level of 0.05 **significant at the level of 0.01.*

Table 5: Single regression trustee determinants

<i>Model</i>	<i>Construct</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>
					.72
1	(constant)	1.07	0.38		
	Competence	0.24	0.04	.27**	
	Availability	0.05	0.05	.05	
	Consistency	0.28	0.06	.28**	
	Information quality	0.21	0.08	.18**	
	Information quantity	0.05	0.06	.05	
	Transparency	-0.21	0.07	-.17**	

**significant at the level of 0.05 **significant at the level of 0.01.*

Table 6: Single regression trustor determinant

<i>Model</i>	<i>Construct</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>
					.02
1	(constant)	2.95	0.28		
	Propensity trust	0.16	0.08	.14*	

**significant at the level of 0.05 **significant at the level of 0.01.*

4.3 Multiple regression analysis

For the overall regression analysis, the three categories (context-based-, trustee- and trustor determinants) were put into separate blocks according to their importance as trust indicator. For this analysis, hierarchical regression analysis was performed. Context-based determinants were entered in the first block and is thereby considered as the most important category in this research. In the literature it is stated that most relationships develop over time. Which means that the context a relationship is in may have an influence on employees trust in their daily supervisors. Therefore, context-based determinants are considered as important. The determinants that belong to context-based are: (1) Relationship length, (2) Participation in decision making, (3) Value congruence and (4) Contact frequency. The second important category is formed by trustee determinants, this category has to do with the characteristics of the daily supervisor. A daily supervisor has mostly control over these characteristics, which could be important when it turns out that these trustee determinants influence employees trust. Determinants which belong in the 'trustee' category are: (5) Competence, (6) Availability, (7) Consistency, (8) Information quality, (9) Information quantity and (10) Transparency. Daily supervisors have the least influence on trustor determinants because these have to do with the trusting party, the employee. The determinant that belongs in the 'trustor' category is: (11) Propensity to trust.

When one looks into the adjusted R squares of the different blocks it rises from .67 in block one, to .78 in block two and ends with an adjusted R square of .79 in the third block. This means that, when all constructs are measured together 79% of the variance for trust can be explained by the determinants used in this research in comparison with trust in daily supervisors. Table 7 gives overall information about the multiple regression analysis.

4.3.1 Hypotheses

In total 11 hypotheses were tested as mentioned in the above paragraph. Hypothesis one (relationship length), Hypothesis two (participation in decision making), hypothesis three (value congruence), hypothesis five (competence), hypothesis seven (consistency), hypothesis eight (information quality), hypothesis ten (transparency) and hypothesis eleven (propensity to trust) were all confirmed by the outcomes of the multiple regression analysis. Out of the confirmed hypotheses one can say that participation in decision making, competence and consistency are valued by employees as determinants having the most positive impact on a trust relationship with daily supervisors. The hypotheses about contact frequency, availability and information quantity were not confirmed by the results of this research. Employees do not value these determinants as positively influencing their trust in daily supervisors.

Table 7: Multiple regression analysis

Model	Construct	B	SE B	Beta	Adjusted R ² (change)
1	(constant)	.14	0.17		.67 (.67)
	Relationship length	0.30	0.05	.32**	
	Participation DM	0.28	0.06	.29**	
	Value congruence	0.26	0.06	.24**	
	Contact frequency	0.13	0.05	.14**	
2	(constant)	0.45	0.36		.78 (.10)
	Relationship length	0.11	0.05	.11*	
	Participation DM	0.18	0.06	.19**	
	Value congruence	0.13	0.05	.12*	
	Contact frequency	0.05	0.05	.05	
	Competence	0.18	0.04	.21**	
	Availability	0.01	0.05	.01	
	Consistency	0.16	0.06	.16**	
	Information quality	0.18	0.07	.15**	
	Information quantity	-0.05	0.06	-.05	
	Transparency	-0.15	0.06	-.12*	
3	(constant)	0.10	0.37		.79 (.01)
	Relationship length	0.12	0.05	.13**	
	Participation DM	0.16	0.06	.17**	
	Value congruence	0.13	0.05	.12*	
	Contact frequency	0.07	0.05	.07	
	Competence	0.18	0.04	.21**	
	Availability	-0.00	0.05	-.00	
	Consistency	0.19	0.06	.19**	
	Information quality	0.15	0.07	.13*	
	Information quantity	-0.05	0.05	-.06	
	Transparency	-0.15	0.06	-.12*	
	Propensity trust	0.12	0.04	.11**	

*significant at the level of 0.05 **significant at the level of 0.01.

5 Discussion

The current research has the potential to contribute understanding for the different determinants that could positively influence trust of employees in their daily supervisors. This is shown by a comprehensive overview of all researched determinants. Thereby the aim was to find out if determinants become more or less important when they are tested separately or together. As expected, the majority of the researched determinants have a positive influence on employees' trust in their daily supervisors.

This comprehensive overview shows that when all independent variables are tested in the same research, some determinants are valued as more important than others by employees of different organizations with different daily supervisors. For instance, value congruence and information quality became less important as more determinants are involved. An explanation for this may be that employees find it important to have common interests or perceptions with their daily supervisors so that they have a good relationship in a certain way and they want to receive accurate, on time and the right information from their daily supervisors. But they find it even more important that their daily supervisor performs his/her job well, in a consistent way with eye for employees and their opinions.

(1) Competence, (2) participation in decision making and (3) consistency can be seen as the determinants that employees, in this research, value as most important for trusting their daily supervisors. As mentioned in the theoretical framework employees need to have faith in the competences and expertise of their daily supervisors in order to be able to trust them. It is obvious that without confidence in the leadership skills of a daily supervisor, it becomes hard for employees to develop a trusting relationship. A part of leadership skills is to involve employees, where possible, in the process of decision making or the opportunity for employees to voice opinions about certain topics. Discroll (1978) and Whitener (1998) believe that when supervisors only value their own opinion and not those of the employees, employees will feel a lack of respect and trust from their daily supervisor. This could result in less trusting behavior of employees towards their supervisors. However this reciprocating effect is important for building trust. When employees feel and see that their daily supervisor cares or takes their opinion into consideration, employees are likely to reciprocate this behavior (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Therefore a daily supervisor should keep in mind that participation in decision making or voicing opinions is important for building trust relationships with employees. An explanation for the importance of consistent behavior of a daily supervisor is that the predictability of supervisors' actions can become higher and this creates distinctness. It shows employees that a daily supervisor is consistent in what he/she says and eventually does. This behavior will be reciprocated by the employees as well and that is what makes them trust each other.

Two of the three most important trust determinants are trustee determinants (consistency and competence) which might mean that trusting daily supervisors becomes successful when daily supervisors act in a certain way, such as being consistent which helps to build a trusting relationship. Thereby daily supervisors could influence these determinants because it has to do with their own behavior and skills. This means that any kind of daily supervisor could develop high quality trust relationships with its employees because one can work on these important personal characteristics for building trust. With participation in decision making this is more difficult because the context or situation a supervisor is in could also influence this determinant.

Although different researchers stated that frequent contact between leaders and employees could create relatedness and more information sharing, which should increase trust (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Emerson, 1962 and Smirchich & Morgan, 1982) and availability should also strengthen a relationship between employees and daily supervisors (Butler, 1991; Jennings, 1971; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1985) the direct relationship of trust in daily

supervisors and contact frequency and availability is not found in this research. In the literature these determinants are mostly mentioned together with other predictors as creating common points of view with a daily supervisor, which could be increased by frequent contact and availability of a daily supervisor. This creation of common points of view is, in this study, researched by the determinant value congruence, which does confirm a positive influence on employees trust in daily supervisors. Therefore contact frequency and availability may not be direct predictors of trust in daily supervisors. These determinants are also somewhat overlapping and it could be that respondents interpret these determinants not totally as how it was formulated by the researcher. The interpretation could be seen in different perspectives, for instance availability and contact frequency are not that important anymore because today's society is more individualistic. Today's online environment could also be an explanation for the fact that contact frequency and availability are no longer that important for trust relationships.

Next to contract frequency and availability, information quantity is not confirmed by the research results. Hargie et al. (2002) and Whitener et al. (1998) stated that increased information flows and getting enough information from a daily supervisor reduces the vulnerability of employees and could increase their satisfaction and trust. Despite the fact that this is stated, the line in spreading information towards employees between too less or too much information is often thin. Because of this thin line in what is satisfactory for employees in the amount of information they receive it could be hard for a daily supervisor to increase the direct trust level of employees. Thereby, generally thinking it is likely that quality of information is more important than quantity because this shows that a daily supervisor can give employees useful information. This is also confirmed by the research of Thomas et al., (2009) where information quality leads to trust in supervisors whereas information quantity did not. When a supervisor gives a lot of information but the given information is not useful, accurate or on time there is no added value of the large amount of information an employee receives. In this research it is confirmed that information quality is important for employees in trusting their daily supervisor which strengthens this explanation.

5.1 Practical implications

The results of this research can be useful for organizations and their leaders, managing teams and daily involvement with employees. Knowledge about influential determinants on employees trust could help supervisors and leaders to be aware of what is important for employees to build high quality trust relationships. The overview of more determinants researched in one study gives benefits so that supervisors can prioritize and analyze which determinants employees in their team may find important for a trusting relationship.

Supervisors and leaders could use the results of the current research in different practical ways. (1) Supervisors could evaluate their own performance towards their employees using the determinants as a starting point. This will give supervisors insight in what kind of actions they can take to develop a trusting relationship with employees. (2) When supervisors notice that the relationship with one or more employees is not on a trusting level, the determinants of this research can help to find out what the cause is for the lack of trust and what can be done to fix this. (3) For starting supervisors it could be a helping hand to know, which determinants are of importance for a trusting relationship between an employee and supervisor. A starting supervisor then knows what is important for building trust relationships with employees. (4) Whereas daily supervisor could use this research to evaluate how they use the different determinants in building trust relationships. Higher management might use this research as well as criteria to evaluate their middle managers performance in building trust relationships with employees.

The advice for daily supervisors according the results of this research is that consistent behavior and participation in decision making is important. This means that daily supervisors need to be aware of the fact that consistency is important, that they should know how to act and that they know what his/her employees find consistent behavior. Therefore daily supervisors should pay attention that what they say to their employees and their actual behavior is in line with each other. Next to this employees like to be involved in processes where decisions are made because it makes them feel rewarded. Daily supervisors should know and explain to employees when they can be part of decisions and when it is necessary that the daily supervisor makes decisions for employees. To do this an organization needs to be aware that they select daily supervisors that have the ability and skills to perform the job of a daily supervisor in a proper way. From the results it became clear that employees find it important that their daily supervisors have the right competences and skills to be a daily supervisor. Thus, the advice towards organizations is to be selective, that a daily supervisor is able to perform its job well and has the skills to show consistent behavior with eye for his/her employees.

Next to paying attention to the most important trust determinants it is important that daily supervisors find the balance in using the different trust determinants. This means that next to consistency, participation in decision making and competences it is also important that daily supervisors sent accurate, on time and useful information towards their employees in a transparent way. When those different determinants are balanced by the daily supervisor the maximum result should be reached. There are also determinants where supervisors have less influence on, such as the length of a relationship and propensity to trust. Supervisors need to be aware of these determinants as well so that they can explain or figure out why their trust relationship with some employees is different from others.

5.2 Theoretical implications

This research helped in putting the important determinants that could influence employees trust in daily supervisors together in one research. For other researchers this is beneficial because this research summarizes different articles where only a few determinants are researched or discussed. Next to this, the current research can be used by other researchers as a starting point for new research. Researchers could use the same survey structure to find out if a specific organization, a specific group of employees from one organization or sector find the same determinants important for building a trust relationship with daily supervisors. Furthermore researchers from other countries could use the same format in their country to see if the determinants that are important in the Netherlands for trust relationships are the same in other countries.

5.3 Future research directions

Trust research in the field of corporate communication is mostly concentrated on external customers and/or trust in organizations. This research focused on the trust within organizations where still more research can be done. The aim of the current research was to bring together as many influential trust determinants. And to find out if employees find that some determinants in relation to others are more important in a trusting relationship with their daily supervisor. Because the focus was on testing all these determinants in one survey with as much respondents possible, a convenient sample was used. The respondents filled in the survey on a particular moment, which could influence the given answers. For instance, when a respondent overall has a decent relationship with his/her supervisor, but this respondent had a negative incident with his/her daily supervisor recently this could influence the given answers in the survey. This research should be done several times to find out if, over time, the significant determinants are always important. Next to this, it is important that this research

will be done more often so that general statements can be made for a larger population in the Netherlands. Since this research only focused on one country it could also be interesting to perform this research in different countries so that it can be compared if cultural differences play a role in trust relationships between employees and supervisors.

Another option to look deeper into comparing these determinants is to use the demographic information in the analysis. It could be interesting to find out if employees from organizations out of different sectors, with different team size, different locations in the Netherlands differ in the determinants they find important for a trusting relationship. With demographic information involved the results become more specific and more details about specific groups of respondents can be explained. This may be beneficial for organizations and daily supervisors that use this research to improve trust relationships between employees and supervisors in their own organization. Furthermore it is beneficial when specific groups as man, woman, parttime and fulltime jobs are highlighted in the research so that supervisors can filter which information is necessary for their own situation instead of a general research.

6 Conclusion

In sum, it can be said that the most important determinants, according to the respondents of this research are the competences of a daily supervisor, the possibility to participate in decision making processes and consistency of a daily supervisor. A relationship of long duration with a daily supervisor, the quality of information sent by the daily supervisor, value congruence, transparency and propensity to trust are also determinants that could increase employees' trust in daily supervisors. These mentioned determinants are more important for trusting daily supervisors than the amount of information employees receive from their daily supervisor, the contact frequency between employees and supervisors and the availability of the daily supervisor. In this research these three determinants are not positively influencing the trust relationships between employees and daily supervisors.

This shows that there is a difference in the importance of different determinants that are all tested in previous research as elements that could positively influence the trust in daily supervisors. To develop or maintain trust relationships between employees and daily supervisors it is important to take all researched determinants into account.

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Appendix

Online survey Dutch

Bedankt dat u wilt deelnemen aan dit onderzoek.

Ik ben Casmira Wortel master student Communication Studies aan de Universiteit Twente. Voor het behalen van mijn Master degree doe ik onderzoek naar het vertrouwen van medewerkers in hun directe leidinggevende, waar deze enquête ook over zal gaan.

Voor het invullen van deze enquête is het vereist dat u op uw werk te maken heeft met een directe leidinggevende. Wanneer u tijdens uw werk niet te maken heeft met een directe leidinggevende valt u buiten de doelgroep van dit onderzoek en is het de bedoeling dat u deze vragenlijst niet invult.

De gegevens uit deze enquête zullen anoniem verwerkt worden en uitsluitend voor dit onderzoek gebruikt worden. Het is de bedoeling dat u alle vragen invult. Het invullen zal ongeveer 10 minuten duren.

Heeft u een directe leidinggevende? Ja / Nee

U krijgt hierna in verschillende categorieën een aantal stellingen voorgelegd die betrekking hebben op uw directe leidinggevende. Geef aan in hoeverre u het oneens of eens bent met de getoonde stellingen.

1= helemaal oneens 2 3 4 5 = helemaal mee eens

Competenties

- Mijn directe leidinggevende heeft de expertise om zijn/haar functie goed uit te voeren.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende is bekwaam/competent om zijn/haar team aan te sturen.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende heeft het vermogen om wat hij/zij zegt ook uit te voeren. (*Rawlins, 2006*)
- Mijn directe leidinggevende pakt zijn/haar functie op een professionele manier aan. (*McAllister, 1995*)

Werkrelatie

- Ik werk al voor langere tijd samen met mijn directe leidinggevende.
- Ik ben gewend aan de manier waarop ik met mijn directe leidinggevende samenwerk.
- De werkrelatie met mijn directe leidinggevende verloopt probleemloos.

Beschikbaarheid

- Mijn directe leidinggevende is beschikbaar wanneer ik hem/haar nodig heb.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende is er wanneer ik oplossingen voor werkgerelateerde problemen nodig heb. (*Clark & Payne, 1997*)
- Ik zie mijn directe leidinggevende niet zo vaak als dat ik zou willen.
- Ik kan mijn directe leidinggevende bereiken wanneer ik hem/haar nodig heb.

Consistentie

- Mijn directe leidinggevende komt zijn/haar beloftes na. (*Simons, 2002*)
- Ik kan vertrouwen op de beloftes die mijn directe leidinggevende maakt (*Rawlins, 2006*)
- Mijn directe leidinggevende misleid mij op geen enkele manier. (*Rawlins, 2006*)
- Ik weet wat ik van mijn directe leidinggevende kan verwachten tijdens het werk.

Kwaliteit van informatie verstrekking

- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van gedetailleerde informatie.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende zorgt ervoor dat ik informatie op tijd ontvang.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van complete informatie.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van informatie die begrijpelijk is voor mij.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van accurate informatie.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van betrouwbare informatie.
All (Rawlins, 2006)
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van nuttige informatie. (*Bordia et al., 2004*)

Informatie hoeveelheid

- Ik weet wat er speelt in de organisatie vanwege mijn directe leidinggevende
- Mijn directe leidinggevende deelt regelmatig informatie met mij.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende deelt de juiste hoeveelheid aan informatie met mij.
- Het voelt alsof ik meer informatie ontvang van mijn directe leidinggevende dan ik efficiënt kan gebruiken. (*Roberts & O'reilly, 1974*)

Transparantie

- Mijn directe leidinggevende houdt geen belangrijke informatie voor mij achter.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende geeft toe wanneer hij/zij fouten heeft gemaakt.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij maar gedeeltelijk van werkgerelateerde informatie.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende laat belangrijke details achter wegen in de informatie die ik krijg.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voorziet mij van informatie die opzettelijk moeilijk te begrijpen is. (*all Rawlins, 2009*)

Betrokkenheid bij besluitvorming

- Mijn directe leidinggevende laat het toe dat ik een bijdrage lever m.b.t. werkgerelateerde beslissingen. (*Bordia et al., 2004*)
- Mijn directe leidinggevende vraagt mijn input voordat belangrijke beslissingen genomen worden.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende toont interesse in mij.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende waardeert mijn ideeën en mening.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende is oprecht in het meenemen van mijn ideeën over het werk. (*Clark & Payne, 1997*)

Overeenkomstige waarden

- Ik zie overeenkomsten in mijn eigen beleving en die van mijn directe leidinggevende.
- Ik denk dat mijn directe leidinggevende en ik dezelfde waarden hebben.
- Ik vind het belangrijk om dezelfde beleving en/of waarden als mijn directe leidinggevende te hebben.
- Mijn betrokkenheid met mijn directe leidinggevende is vooral gebaseerd op de gelijke waarden die we hebben. (*Becker et al., 1996*)
- Ik steun de waarden van mijn directe leidinggevende. (*Jung, Dong & Avolio, 2000*)

Contact frequentie

- Mijn directe leidinggevende en ik hebben veelvuldig contact.
- Ik ben tevreden met het aantal contact momenten dat ik heb met mijn directe leidinggevende.
- Mijn directe leidinggevende zoekt vaak contact met mij over werkgerelateerde zaken. (*McAllister, 1995*)

Mate van algemeen vertrouwen

- Over het algemeen vertrouw ik anderen.
- Over het algemeen reken ik op andere mensen.
- Ik denk dat mensen over het algemeen te vertrouwen zijn.

- Ik denk dat mensen over het algemeen betrouwbaar zijn. (*Gefen & Straub, 2004*)

Vertrouwen in directe leidinggevende

- Ik vertrouw erop dat mijn directe leidinggevende zich om mij bekommert. (*Rawlins, 2006*)
- Mijn directe leidinggevende is te vertrouwen. (*Thomas, Zolin & Hartman, 2009*)
- De prestaties van mijn directe leidinggevende voldoen altijd aan mijn verwachtingen. (*Garbarion & Johnson, 1999*)
- Ik geloof dat de motieven en intenties van mijn directe leidinggevende goed zijn. (*Robinson & Rousseau, 1994*)
- Mijn directe leidinggevende voert zijn/haar functie uit op de manier hoe ik dat ook graag zie. (*McAllister, 1995*)
- Ik ben er niet helemaal zeker van dat ik mijn directe leidinggevende helemaal vertrouw. (*Robinson & Rousseau, 1994*)

Wat is uw geslacht?

- Man
- Vrouw

Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

- Geen onderwijs / Basisonderwijs
- Lager onderwijs (LBO/MAVO/VMBO)
- Middelbaar beroepsonderwijs (MBO)
- HAVO
- VWO
- HBO
- Universiteit of hoger

Ik werk..

- Parttime (minder dan 36 uur per week)
- Fulltime (36 uur of meer dan 36 uur per week)

Hoeveel jaar werkt u momenteel samen met uw directe leidinggevende?

In welke plaats is de organisatie waarvoor u werkt gevestigd?

Voor wat voor een soort organisatie bent u werkzaam?

- Financiële sector
- Commerciële sector
- Horeca
- Detail handel
- Gezondheidszorg
- Overheid
- Transport & logistiek
- Onderwijs
- Anders; namelijk:

Hoelang werkt u momenteel voor uw huidige organisatie?

Uit hoeveel medewerkers bestaat het team dat wordt aangestuurd door uw directe leidinggevende?

- 0 tot 10 medewerkers
- 11 tot 20 medewerkers
- 21 tot 30 medewerkers
- 31 medewerkers of meer

Heeft u nog opmerkingen over de ingevulde vragenlijst of wilt u op de hoogte worden gebracht van de resultaten van het onderzoek laat uw opmerkingen en/of e-mail adres hier achter.

Interview outcomes

Trust determinants

- Long relationship (1)
- Back up from direct supervisor in tough situations (1)
- Willingness to help / flexibility of the direct supervisor (3)
- Open communication (2)
- Keeping made promises/appointments (1)
- Professionalism (3)
- Sincerity (1)
- Informal relationship with direct supervisor (2)
- Consistency of direct supervisor (1)
- Showing understanding for private situations (2)
- Showing interest/appreciation for the work the employees do (2)

Improvement

- Better alignment between employee and direct supervisor (2)
- More visibility of the direct supervisor (2)
- Insight in daily work of the direct supervisor/ insight in when the direct supervisor is at the office (1)
- Take identified problems of employees seriously and try to find solutions (4)
- Managers and direct supervisors follow the same rules (1)

Breaking trust

- When the direct supervisor does not handle information of the employee in a discrete way (3)
- Gossiping (1)
- Not being honest (1)
- Professionalism (1)
- Not showing understanding for private situations (1)

Organizational effect trust

- Being motivated and willing to do extra tasks (4)

Interview 1

Commercial organization, market research, around 40 employees.

Direct supervisor is a senior researcher, every research team in the department has its own direct supervisor. Above him there is a manager of the research department.

Interviewee works half a year together with the direct supervisor and 2,5 years with the manager of the research department.

- Direct supervisor gives the interviewee freedom in work and the direct supervisor is approachable.
- Direct supervisor is not always at the office but this is not disturbing for the interviewee.
- Direct supervisor is not that well with planning and she is not always capable of making reachable deals with new clients (low prices or less hours than is possible in the implementation). More intensive communication with the interviewee about the feasibility of new contracts would improve the relationship according the interviewee. (“This does not decrease my trust because I will not be punished for this, it is her problem if a project is not profitable”).
- “If I have problems that I want to discuss I would not go directly to my direct supervisor because she is not that much at the office and because I don’t know her that long. I will discuss this with other colleagues or the overall manager of the research department because I know them a lot longer. There is more personal contact with these colleagues than with my direct supervisor, therefore I trust them more because I know what they can do for me and what I can do for them.” The extent of trusting the direct supervisor of the interviewee is now fifty fifty because he finds that the years of working together is too short to really state that he trusts his direct supervisor. Thereby he has not been in situations yet where he needed the help of his direct supervisor that much. This is important for the interviewee to say something about trust.
- Gaining trust means for the interviewee having a good relationship where one not only have to talk about work but other things outside the work environment can be discussed as well. Gaining trust means also that the direct supervisor backs the employee up when there are problems with clients.
- Trust could be broken according the interviewee when the interviewee tells his direct supervisor personal or important information but the direct supervisor does not handle this information properly and other colleagues know about this information afterwards. Trust can also be damaged when the direct supervisor contacts the client behind the back of the interviewee, because the interviewee is the leader of the projects.
- Trusting the direct supervisor means for the interviewee that he is willing to do something extra when the direct supervisor asks this.

Interview 2

“sociale werkplaats” where disabled people work, around 20 employees at one location. The whole organization behind the “sociale werkplaats” has a lot more employees because there are different locations.

Direct supervisor is the team leader, interviewee works 2,5 year together with this direct supervisor.

- The interviewee finds it hard to say something positive about the relationship with her direct supervisor. She finds that her supervisors tries to help in her own way as much as possible. The direct supervisor tries to please everyone for instance when people ask for a day off. But thereby the direct supervisors misses the overview that maybe too many people have a day off at the same time.
- The direct supervisor is according the interviewee not often at their location, she has not that much interest in what the practical work is about, she has little empathy and the interviewee thinks she should not be a team leader. The interviewee finds it hard to talk with her direct supervisor about problems coming from the work floor but also private problems cannot be discussed that easily with the direct supervisor. Next to this the interviewee states: “I have no idea what my direct supervisor is doing all day”. The interviewee only discusses things that happen at the work floor her direct supervisor needs to know. Next to this the direct supervisor is not very strict in meetings, she likes to please everyone but according the interviewee a direct supervisor also needs to give directions and rules. The interviewee finds it also important to know a bit more about when the direct supervisor is at the location so that important things can be discussed.
- Trust is according the interviewee very important in a work relationship with the direct supervisor. Trusting each other means telling each other more, open communication and a pleasant atmosphere and less superficial contact.
- Gaining trust means keeping made promises and appointments, professionalism; when the interviewee has a question or problem the direct supervisor needs to be able to solve it or give right answers or does something about it. Sincerity is also important.
- An example how trust can break is: the interviewee needed some days off for personal family reasons therefore she called her direct supervisor. The direct supervisor was very curt in the conversation and a few days later in front of all the other employees and disabled workers the supervisor asked the interviewee which days she needed off. This was an example where the interviewee lost trust in her direct supervisor because this was not information everybody needed to hear. Next to this when the interviewee has problems with the disabled workers she needs to solve with the direct supervisor, the direct supervisor not always has the answers and she is not capable of doing something extra to find the answers for the problems the interviewee has.
- These issues related to the direct supervisor causes that the interviewee becomes easier and less motivated to do her work and this is what happens in the whole team of the interviewee. Next to this the interviewee is less willing to discuss problems that have to do with other employees as well. Example: the catering employee that makes the food for the employees and the disabled people is not very keen on serving fresh food for lunch. This is something that all employees have said to the direct supervisor in the past year but there is still nothing changed and the interviewee has no trust at all that it will change eventually. Therefore she will not discuss this point with her direct supervisor anymore which means she holds it back and this cause more irritation and the interviewee cannot be open and honest at work.
- Gossiping is also something that could break trust in a direct leader. Also the view your colleagues have about the direct supervisor is influencing the way the interviewee trust her direct supervisor.

Interview 3

Commercial organization, event branch, around 100 employees.

Direct supervisor is called operation manager, interviewee works 2 years together with the direct supervisor. Trusting the direct supervisor in a number: 7,5.

- Positive about the relationship is that the interviewee has a good connection with the direct supervisor, work problems but also fun moments within or outside work can be discussed with the direct supervisor and the work atmosphere is pleasant. Thereby the interviewee finds the hierarchy in the organization good, due to this the interviewee knows who to discuss problems with.
- Improved could be the chaotic way of running the organization sometimes. The interviewee states that the direct supervisor sometimes ask too much of the employees when problems according the planning need to be fixed. The direct supervisor wants the employee to make decisions they don't have the qualifications for. This decision responsibility is according the interviewee a task of the direct supervisor.
- Trust is important for the interviewee in the work relationship. When the direct supervisor is willing to take into account the personal circumstances of the employee this improves trust as well as being understanding in particular situations. Trust also comes from having a good time at work with the whole team. Next to this the interviewee appreciates it when the direct supervisor takes care of the things employees need during work.
- Trust can be broken when direct supervisors are talking behind the back of an employee. Example: the direct supervisor told an employee that he/she is doing well at work but eventually this employee has to leave the organization. Honesty is very important in trusting the direct supervisor.
- Trusting the direct supervisor means that the interviewee is willing to help the direct supervisor. For instance when it is very busy and they have too much work to do. When the direct supervisor shows that he/she is willing to do extra things for the interviewee it also means that the interviewee is willing to do something extra for the direct supervisor.

Interview 4

Retail, around 60 stores.

Interviewee works 8 years together with the store manager and two years with the department supervisor. Both have influence on the work of the interviewee.

- The relationship with the supervisor is strictly about the tasks that need to be done and the supervisor is not always there because of different working hours.
- Positive about the working relationship is the flexibility of the supervisor, it is possible to arrange things with her last minute. On the other hand the supervisor is according the interviewee very stressed once in a while and therefore the interviewee keeps mostly her distance.
- Things that can be improved are that the manager needs to communicate more often with his supervisors. Sometimes the manager gives employees the permission to do certain things or have a day off but this is not communicated to the direct supervisor, which lead to unclear situations. Next to this the interviewee says that it sometimes looks like the direct supervisor overrules the manager, this leads to chaotic situations at work and the good atmosphere disappears. Employees are not satisfied and motivated anymore, the excitement to work for the organization decreases.
- The interviewee says that for her it is not trust that is important but respect that leads to doing more for the organization. Examples: implemented rules only last for 2 weeks, planning's that change last minute. The interviewee is already aware of the fact that things will not be as they are told to be.
- The trust level of the interviewee is 30 or 40%. This is because the manager and supervisor had many conversations with the employees about what can be done better at the work floor but it is

not implemented very often or for a longer time period. The supervisor that is currently working makes all the rules instead of the manager and according the interviewee this is not how it is supposed to be because this supervisor as mood swings sometimes. When another supervisor made these rules she would accept it more. Example: once there was a supervisor that was clear in explaining why things need to be done in a certain way, was very friendly towards employees, had a good connection with customers and listened to what employees had on their mind, which lead to respect for this supervisor. The current direct supervisor is not that much at the work floor according the interviewee this shows a lack of interest for the employees. "She things she has everything under control but that's not true at all."

- The interviewee lost respect for the direct supervisor because she got very angry in the middle of the store. When talking about the manager it is the other way around, the manager is often too soft and everything is oke but this leads sometimes to situations that too many employees have a day off and the employees that are working feel the consequences.
- Being clear, consistent, communicate well and showing interest for employees is important for a good direct supervisor according the interviewee.
- Less respect leads to less motivation at work and only doing what needs to be done.

Interview 5

Hospital, around 40/50 employees on the department.

Interviewee works 5 years together with this direct supervisor.

- The interviewee has a good working relationship with the direct supervisor because the interviewee knows how her supervisor works , what she is capable of and she is willing to help.
- The direct supervisor runs short in showing interest for what happens at the work floor and how employees are doing. The direct supervisor does not always show understanding for the hard work employees put in. Because the direct supervisor is not that much at the location she thinks everything is going fine but she does not see how much effort the employees put in.
- An example of what can be done better is that when the interviewee goes to her direct supervisor with complains about the fact that the planner gave her insufficient working hours. The direct supervisor says that she cannot do anything about it. According the interviewee the direct supervisor needs to help in this situation.
- Trust is important according the interviewee, when trusting the direct supervisor it is easier to discuss private problems that could influence work. On a scale from one to ten the interviewee trusts her direct supervisor with an 8. An example of the interviewee which increased trust in her direct supervisor: the interviewee asked her direct supervisor if it was possible to be excluded from night shifts because of private reasons. The direct supervisor was very willing to help in this situation and immediately excluded her from the night shifts. For the interviewee it means a lot that in this situation there was understanding from her direct supervisor, which leads to more trust. This positive example weights according the interview more than the negative example particularly because it is about private issues and the interviewee finds it very nice and important that her supervisor handles this in a proper way.
- Something that could break trust according the interviewee is when the direct supervisor does not handle the information she gives in a proper and safe way. When other colleagues get to know about this private conversation with the direct supervisor this would damage the trust relationship. According the interviewee it is very important that private issues that could have negative effects on functioning well at work, can be discussed with the direct supervisor. It is not necessary for her to have a very close relationship with the direct supervisor.
- When the relationship between leader and member is based on trust the interviewee says she is more willing to do extra tasks for the direct supervisor. For example: when the direct supervisor calls her that a colleague is ill and she needs another hand the interviewee would probably say yes because the direct supervisor helped her in tough situations as well.

Interview questions

Describe the organization you work for	Beschrijf de organisatie waar je voor werkt
What kind of work do you do there?	Waar bestaan je werkzaamheden binnen de organisatie uit?
How many people work for the organization?	Hoeveel mensen werken er voor de organisatie?
How long have you been working in this organization?	Hoelang werk je voor deze organisatie?
Do you have a direct supervisor? <i>Describe the work of your direct supervisor</i>	Heb je een directe leidinggevende? <i>Beschrijf de werkzaamheden van je directe leidinggevende</i>
How long have you been working together?	Hoelang werk je met deze directe leidinggevende?
Describe the relationship with your direct supervisor	Beschrijf de relatie met je directe leidinggevende
What do you like about your working relationship with your direct supervisor?	Wat vindt je prettig aan de werk relatie die je hebt met je directe leidinggevende?
What are things that could be improved regarding this working relationship?	Wat zou er aan de werk relatie met je directe leidinggevende verbeterd kunnen worden?
To what extent does trust play a role in this working relationship?	In welke mate speelt vertrouwen een rol in de werk relatie met je directe leidinggevende?
To what extent do you trust your direct supervisor? <i>(On a scale from 1 to 10 or percentage)</i>	In welke mate vertrouw jij je directe leidinggevende? <i>(op een schaal van 1 tot 10 of een percentage)</i>
What contributes to trust in your direct supervisor?	Wat leidt tot vertrouwen in je directe leidinggevende?
Can you think of a specific situation in which you were convinced that you could trust your direct supervisor?	Kan je een voorbeeld noemen van een specifieke situatie waarin je ervan overtuigd was dat je je directe leidinggevende kan vertrouwen? (Kan je een voorbeeld noemen van een specifieke situatie waarin je je directe leidinggevende niet vertrouwd?)
What would break your trust in your direct supervisor?	Wat kan het vertrouwen in je directe leidinggevende schaden?
How does your trust or distrust in your direct supervisor influence you as an employee of the organization?	Hoe beïnvloed het vertrouwen of wantrouwen in je directe leidinggevende jou als medewerker van de organisatie?