

## The challenges of teamwork in Geographically Distributed Teams (GDTs)



*A Case study at the Court of Overijssel*

**Master thesis Business Administration for the track:  
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## **Abstract**

Nowadays, Geographically Distributed Teams (GDTs) are increasingly being used, with team-members and managers operating at a distance. In these teams, face-to-face communication is alternated with virtual communication, among the team-members and among team-member and manager. These types of teams offer different kind of advantages for companies and organizations compared to traditional face-to-face teams. However, there are certain challenges that these kind of teams face. In literature there appears to be attention for these challenges, but not specifically from the perspective of teamwork in GDTs. With attention being paid to the challenges that team-members and managers experience within teamwork in GDTs. The current study focusses on this, addressing the following research question: what challenges do team-members and managers experience with the teamwork in GDTs? This question is answered by interviewing 14 team-members and 5 managers of different GDTs at one organization, namely the court of Overijssel. By using semi-structured interviews, the collected data is coded. The coding shows that team-members experience low visibility of the managers as the main challenge. This leads to little personal attention for the team-members from the managers side and work-related problems for the team-members, which is experienced as challenging for the team-members within teamwork in GDTs. The team-members also experience challenges within teamwork in GDTs by the different cultures that are present in the GDT. In addition, team-members see it as a challenge within teamwork in GDTs that there is a lack of cooperation between different GDTs of the organization. Finally, the team-members experience a challenge within teamwork in GDTs by the inefficient use of new technologies. Managers experience it as a challenge within teamwork in GDTs that more is required from them, in the sense of more time and effort to manage the GDT. The managers, just like the team-members, also notice that the different cultures that are present within the GDT are challenging for the teamwork. This study looks at the challenges that team-members and managers experience with teamwork in GDT, leading to challenges that pop-out at this study that are comparable to existing literature and challenges that differ from existing literature. The perspective from the team-members and managers also plays a distinctive role here. In this way, the current study contributes to the existing literature related to challenges that GDTs face.

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## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, work-teams operate in a more fluid, dynamic, and complex environment compared to the past. These teams change and adapt regularly, operate with looser boundaries, and there is a higher change of geographic dispersion (Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cohen, 2012). Compared to the traditional work-teams the work-teams now experience more competing demands, a higher change of heterogeneous composition, and more reliance on technology. These changes are stimulated by environmental and competitive demands, leading to the emergence of new kinds of teams in organizational life (Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cohen, 2012 ; Maynard, Mathieu, Rapp, & Gilson, 2012). These teams are called virtual teams (VTs) or geographically distributed teams (GDTs). When defining these kind of teams, it appears that different definitions are used for VTs in the literature (Gilson, Maynard, Jones Young, Vartiainen, & Hakonen, 2015). Partly due to the lack of clarity surrounding the concept of VTs, this study further explores the concept of GDTs. The definition of GDTs creates less discussion and fits in the current study. The concept of GDTs refers to teams in which members reside in different cities, countries, or continents (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). GDTs, like collocated teams, are groups of individuals who work together interdependently to accomplish organisational tasks (Hinds & McGrath, 2006).

The prevalence of GDTs is increasingly common in the changing circumstances, with approximately 60% of all employees working in these kind of teams (Martins, Gilson, & Maynard, 2004). In addition, due to the current situation regarding Covid-19, companies and organizations are more forced to use teams that work together and are managed at distance (Caligiuri, De Cieri, Minbaeva, Verbeke, & Zimmermann, 2020). In GDTs companies and organizations try to make use of distributed expertise, expand the market reach, offer employees flexibility, and reduce real estate costs (O'Leary & Mortensen, 2010 ; Gilson, Maynard, Jones Young, Vartiainen, & Hakonen, 2015). In addition to these advantages related to GDTs, it is indicated in the literature that GDTs face certain challenges (Hill & Bartol, 2016). These challenges arise because employees, in the form of team-members and managers, have to work as a team interdependently across distances (Mark, 2000). Leading to more miscommunications and misunderstandings, more problems with the sharing of information and providing of feedback, and more difficulty in the development of a shared team identity (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). It turns out that in practice these challenges ensure that the possible advantages of GDTs are not optimally utilized (Hinds & McGrath, 2006).

Compared to the growing attention for GDTs, the body of literature has lagged behind (Gilson, Maynard, Jones Young, Vartiainen, & Hakonen, 2015). This can be illustrated by the research of Eubanks et al. (2018), they state that related to GDTs there are some unique characteristics that warrant investigation. As an extension thereof, the research of Ocker et al. (2011) states that the challenges related to GDTs are more demanding, but surprisingly not extensively researched in the literature. The knowledge about the challenges surrounding GDTs is currently at an early stage and remains fragmented in a number of academic and professional disciplines (Evaristo, Scudder, Desouza, & Sato, 2004).

This study focuses on the challenges that managers and particularly team-members experience within teamwork in GDTs. To the best of my knowledge, no research has been done into the challenges that team-members and managers experience with specifically teamwork within GDTs. Leading to the following research question: what challenges do team-members and managers experience with the teamwork in GDTs? The purpose of this study is to address these challenges. This could help companies and organisations in tackling the challenges related to teamwork at these kind of teams, which is important for the functioning of these teams (Mark, 2000). This means that the stated advantages of GDTs can be utilized more easily by companies and organizations. Also, removing the challenges related to teamwork in GDTs can stimulate the usage of these kind of teams when the advantages are more apparent. In addition, through Covid-19, the challenges related to teamwork at a distance will be of increasing importance (Caligiuri, De Cieri, Minbaeva, Verbeke, & Zimmermann, 2020).

To answer the research question a qualitative approach is used, where a case-study has been conducted at the court of Overijssel. The data is collected through semi-structured interviews with 19 employees of this organization, including 14 team-members and 5 managers that work in GDTs. The respondents are spread over different department and locations, and with different functions within the court. Coding the interviews shows where team-members and managers of GDTs experience the biggest challenges with respect of teamwork in GDTs.

In section 2 the theoretical framework is described, with important concepts and theories that are relevant for this study. Then in section 3 the used method is illustrated. Afterwards in section 4, the results demonstrate the most important challenges that team-members and managers of the court of Overijssel experience within teamwork in GDTs. Finally, in section 5 the conclusion with discussion is formulated.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Virtual Teams

Starting with VTs, research on VTs is closely related to research on GDTs (Ford, Piccolo, & Ford, 2017). These terms are so close together that attention is paid to both, also to make the distinction clear.

The popularity of VTs in modern organisations is rising at the moment (Liao, 2017 ; Ford, Piccolo, & Ford, 2017). This is closely related to the successes of structuring work around teams, improvements of information and telecommunication technologies, globalization, desires to maintain flexibility and agility in reducing operating costs, and finally the need to share information efficiently (Liao, 2017). Also the use of VTs in organizations offers a solution to two key problems: how to assemble an optimal ranking of human resources to tackle problems that cross traditional organizational design clusters, and how to assemble work-teams that can tackle location-specific needs (Ford, Piccolo, & Ford, 2017). So, when organizations need certain human capabilities to address a certain problem or fulfil certain tasks and these people are not collocated in one building or an organizational unit, the VTs offer a solution.

With the use of VTs the organizations benefit from collective capabilities, in the way of integration and coordination of knowledge, skills and abilities to accomplish specific tasks. For employees, these kinds of teams also offer certain benefits. The employees could enjoy the flexibility of conducting their work in different locations, this may increase their satisfaction with the job (Liao, 2017). Also through regular meetings that are made possible by new communication technologies, the involvement of the employees within the organisation is growing (Ford, Piccolo, & Ford, 2017).

From the creation of these kind of teams there are several definitions of VTs, but the most widely accepted definition of VTs is: a group of geographically and/or time dispersed workers brought together by information technology to accomplish one or more organizational tasks (Odubiyi & Oke, 2016 ; Liao, 2017). The different definitions differ in terms of their specific languages, but they share three defining attributed. First, a VT is a functioning team in which a collection of individuals work on tasks with varying degrees of interdependence and accountability to accomplish the shared goal (Liao, 2017). Second, these individuals are dispersed in certain ways. This means that they can work together at different cities, countries or even continents (Liao, 2017). Third, and possibly the most debatable attribute, is that instead of communicating face-to-face in traditional teams, individuals in VTs primarily rely on technology to communicate with other individuals of the team (Liao, 2017).

The third attribute can also be called 'virtuality', which stands for the computationally enabled and enhanced nature of communication within a VT (Shuffler, Wiese, Salas, & Burke, 2010). VTs can range extremely in terms of the degree in usage of virtuality, with teams communicating only by highly virtual tools like instant messaging and teleconferencing. With on the other end, less virtual

teams that communicate by videoconferencing and regular face-to-face meeting (Shuffler, Wiese, Salas, & Burke, 2010). Related to virtuality there is a lot of discussion, because traditional face-to-face teams and VTs are not dichotomous. There are GDTs lying in between, where face-to-face communication is alternated by different degrees of virtual communication (Liao, 2017). However, dominant in the VT literature is the comparison of face-to-face teams and VTs, where the VTs only use virtual communication to exemplify extreme cases (Gilson, Maynard, Jones Young, Vartiainen, & Hakonen, 2015; Liao, 2017). This means that in literature face-to-face teams, where only face-to-face communication is possible, are compared with virtual teams that only use virtual communication. In this way, the greatest possible contrast emerges (Liao, 2017). The term VTs can thus by dichotomy stand for different types of teams, in the sense of dependence on virtual communication between team-members and managers (Liao, 2017). Partly due to this ambiguity, the current study examines GDTs in more detail. Also, in this study the attribute of dispersion is of greater importance than the attribute of virtuality, meaning that GDTs fits better with the case study.

## 2.2 Geographically Distributed Teams

Together with the term VTs, the term GDTs is also often used in literature (Eubanks, Palanski, Olabisi, Joinson, & Dove, 2016). In literature, the usage of these terms is often interchangeably. The most commonly used definition for GDTs is: a team in which members reside in different cities, countries or continents, and like collocated teams consist of a groups of individuals who work together interdependently to accomplish organisational tasks (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). Here the topic of 'virtuality' is not included as strictly in the definition as with VTs. Team-members of an GDT can be collocated while using virtual communication with other team-members for the fulfilling of organisational goals (Cartan & Carson, 2011). There are different degrees in how much certain GDTs rely on the usage of virtual communication. However, in contrast to certain definitions for VTs, it is not stated at the GDTs that communication in an GDT should be entirely via virtual communication. The definition for GDTs does not specify how much virtual communication should be used within these kind of teams, but that communication between team-members and managers does not completely depend on it (Eubanks, Palanski, Olabisi, Joinson, & Dove, 2016).

In this study there is a preference for the use of the term GDTs. In the case study at the court of Overijssel the geographic dispersion is a more important topic compared to the usage of virtual communication within the work-teams. At the court, the work-teams alternate face-to-face communication with virtual communication. So, the term GDTs fits well with certain work-teams within the court. The method section provides more clarity on this.

Apparently, there is a lagged usage of GDTs in governmental or public organisations (Green & Roberts, 2010). As an extension thereof, the research of Day & Burbach (2011) states that little research has been published on the utilization of GDTs in public organizations. This while public organizations show an increasing interest in these types of teams (Green & Roberts, 2010). At this study there is no particular attention for the court of Overijssel as a public organisation, nonetheless the study is interesting from the perspective of public organizations.

## 2.3 The challenges of teamwork in Geographically Distributed Teams

### 2.3.1 The overall challenges in GDTs

The challenges related to GDTs arise because team-members and managers have to work together interdependently across distances (Mark, 2000). This creates challenges within GDTs in the form of more miscommunications and misunderstandings, more problems information sharing, providing feedback, and difficulties in the development of a shared team identity (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). Whereby at this study, specific attention is paid to the challenges related to teamwork within the GDTs among the team-members and managers.

For both managers and team-members, communication forms a challenge in GDTs, including team building and cultural issues (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). These challenges arise from the distance that exists between team-members and between team-members and managers within GDTs (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). The team-members and managers of GDTs mainly work separately, with a number of team-members working collocated at different countries or cities (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). This affects how team-members and managers within GDTs interact with each other (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). In terms of communication, GDTs alternate the use of face-to-face communication with virtual communication technologies in the form of email or videoconference (Cartan & Carson, 2011). Face-to-face teams mainly use face-to-face communication in which the team-members and managers are physically present, where it is sporadically necessary to use virtual communication technologies (Cartan & Carson, 2011). The use of that virtual communication technologies in GDTs leads to more challenges in the communication, in the form of more misunderstandings and ambiguities (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). In addition, the way of interacting within GDTs means that team-members and managers experience less of a common organization culture compared to face-to-face teams. The team-members of GDTs who work at a distance rarely have face-to-face contact and do not know each other well (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). While at the face-to-face teams, there is much more common contact between the team-members. As a result, the team-members in face-to-face teams build more of a common bond and are more in line with the objectives of the team (Hinds & McGrath, 2006).

The tasks that GDTs have to perform become more and more complex, they necessity more precise form of coordinated effort (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). In that sense, it appears that in the teams that functions across distances, the team-members and managers roles become highly interdependent. In those teams there is more need for well-structured teamwork, reciprocal communication, and feedback is essential. The requirements for teamwork overall are increasing, as is the importance of knowledge about teamwork (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). Teamwork refers to instances where individuals interact or coordinate behaviour in order to achieve tasks that are important for the team's goals (Stanton, et al., 2008). In this study teamwork is defined as 'a multidimensional, dynamic construct that refers to a set of interrelated cognitions, behaviours and attitudes that occur as team members perform a task that results in a coordinated and synchronised collective action' (Stanton, et al., 2008). From here this study looks at the experiences of team-members and managers within teamwork in GDTs, in the form of challenges.

### 2.3.2 The challenges for managers in GDTs

The challenges in GDTs can be viewed from two different perspectives, namely that of the manager and that of the team members. According to literature, there are two challenges that managers experience in GDTs (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). First, the managers experience challenges in the form of control, including the monitoring of performances of the GDTs (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). Second, the managers experience challenges in the training and supporting of employees in GDTs (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). These challenges arise for managers in GDTs because there are a number of tasks that need to be accomplished by substitutes. So, the manager distributes certain tasks among the team-members of the GDT, making it more difficult for the manager to keep an overview (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). The distribution of tasks is normal in GDTs, because they often consist of team-members who have been brought together based on specific expertise and competencies (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002). This is in contrast to the face-to-face teams where the manager relinquishes much less of his or her management duties (Zimmermann, Wit, & Gill, 2008). With face-to-face teams, the managers are much more physically present, so it is not necessary to divide those tasks (Zimmermann, Wit, & Gill, 2008).

### 2.3.3 The challenges for team-members in GDTs

For the team-members of GDTs there are challenges in the form of involvement and support. Team-members are afraid of being excluded from important meetings and decisions. They are worried about the provision of technical support, recognition from the managers and management resistance (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). For the team-members of GDTs these challenges arise because there is little contact between team-members at different countries or cities, which means that contextual knowledge can be withheld or distributed unevenly among the team-members (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). While with face-to-face teams the team-members are at the same meetings, work at the same work-floor, and use the same information. This means that the team-members have more direct contact in the face-to-face setting and are aware of what is going on within the team (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010).

### 2.3.4 The challenges in face-to-face teams

An often used definition for the face-to-face setting is: 'interactions between people at the same location and at the same time in which face-to-face communication is the primary method of interacting, although computer mediated communication are used in addition, and most of the time the leader of a certain department is physically present at the same location as the members of the team' (Zimmermann, Wit, & Gill, 2008). Employees that work in face-to-face teams may experience greater perceived interaction quality, because of the possibility to utilize increased verbal and non-verbal communication. This leads to efficient turn taking, immediate feedback, and the confirmation of conceptual consensus within a work-team.

Remarkable is that despite the growing attention for GDTs, there is much scepticism about the effectiveness of these GDTs compared to face-to-face teams (Purvanova, 2014). An important consideration here is that the usage of communication technology differs between GDTs and traditional face-to-face teams. When employees must work with new technologies it can take some time before it is used in an efficient way within an GDT (Purvanova, 2014). Also, new technologies are costly at the beginning, with certain defects still being present. However, new technologies are constantly being developed, offering promising prospects for GDTs (Purvanova, 2014).

As already mentioned, GDTs alternate virtual communication with face-to-face communication. In this sense, attention is paid to the challenges experienced in face-to-face teams where only face-to-face communication is used. Looking at the challenges that normal teams experience within teamwork in a face-to-face setting, the literature mainly refers to two global challenges (Unsworth & West, 2000). These challenges are present in first the coordination of the team and second the motivation of the team (Unsworth & West, 2000). Coordination as a challenge means that teams in the face-to-face setting experience difficulties with arranging and integrating new employees (Unsworth & West, 2000). Team diversity plays a role in this. When there are differences in relation to education, professional background, ethnicity, or gender, this makes teamwork challenging (Unsworth & West, 2000). Within a team, this creates certain subgroups of employees which makes teamwork as one team more difficult (Unsworth & West, 2000). The motivation challenge means that difficulties arise within the team because employees tend to make less effort when they perform certain tasks in a group instead of individually (Unsworth & West, 2000). Task diversity plays an important role in this. When there are mutual differences in terms of tasks, this leads to skewed relationships among the employees (Unsworth & West, 2000). In the face-to-face setting where employees are aware of the state of affairs within the teams, this makes motivation a challenge for the team (Unsworth & West, 2000).



### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Case description of the court of Overijssel

The court of Overijssel has approximately 540 employees which are located at 3 locations, namely Almelo, Zwolle and Enschede. At Almelo and Zwolle, the courts have almost the same size in terms of number of employees. The court of Enschede is the smaller court with less than approximately 40 employees and where there is only a specific type of law. There are 5 court areas that are dealt with by specific departments within the court of Overijssel: administrative law, oversight, canton and commercial law, family and youth law, and criminal law. Above stands the court administration, which is located at Zwolle, and in between there is the staff service/operational management. This is shown in an organizational chart, figure 1. Each department or jurisdiction consists of a group of administrative officers, legal officers, and judges. There is one manager for each of these function groups. For the administrative officers there is the head of administration, for the legal officers the head of legal support and above all mainly intended for the judges there is the chairman. Meaning that each function group has a different direct manager to work with, the chairman is the highest in rank.

In 2013 the judicial card review in the Netherlands led to a new justice organization, in which the court of Overijssel is one of the 11 courts of the Netherlands. The judicial card review resulted in the merger of the courts in Almelo, Enschede and Zwolle, from which the court of Overijssel was created. At the court of Overijssel there was a new organizational structure, leading to big changes for all involved. This new organizational structure and way of managing was evaluated in 2015 by the court of Overijssel. The evaluation report directed in a new way of managing, namely 'location-transcending management', which is an extension of the definition of GDTs. This new form of management meant that the departments canton & commercial law, family & youth law, and criminal law work in GDTs. Where the departments of family & youth law and criminal law work on the locations Almelo and Zwolle. The canton & commercial law department works on the locations Almelo, Zwolle, and to a limited extent in Enschede. These three departments each work separately as an GDT. Because the teamwork within the GDTs of the court is mainly focused on the interaction between Almelo and Zwolle, the study therefore also focuses on this.

This new form of management was implemented in 2016, but opinions on the functioning are divided within the organisation. The court wants to investigate the experiences of employees about the functioning of GDTs. They want an answer to the question: has the location-transcending management brought what was intended at the time (a sustainable management structure that fits with the court of Overijssel) and/or adjustments necessary? The new management style that the court of Overijssel uses makes them interesting for conducting a case study. By conducting interviews with the employees of the court, an answer can be given to the research questions of this study and the question of the court itself can be answered.

The GDTs were implemented with the aim of improving the court of Overijssel with regard to the established frameworks or standards. The standards of the court of Overijssel are:

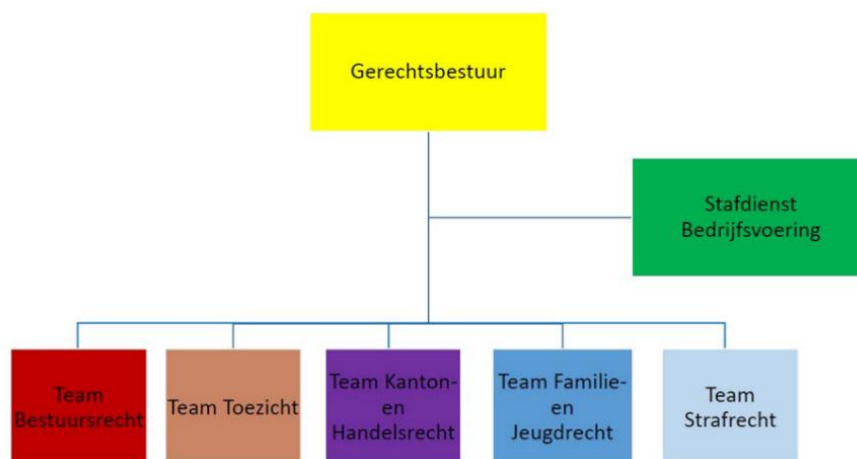
1. Craftsmanship is mastery. Meaning employees are responsible for their work and for the quality-policy regarding the work. The management with using GDTs should be structured in such a way that it facilitates this.
2. Open, involved, and active. This stand for the court of Overijssel as an ambitious court, the management wants to show leadership by connecting employees in the primary process.
3. A deal is a deal. Clarity is important internally and externally, for example the working method at clerks are unambiguously. It should also be clear to employees and teams which results (with regard to production and quality) must be achieved.
4. One court of Overijssel. Meaning that employees and managers have besides the responsibility for their own work or team, have a shared responsibility for the court of Overijssel as a whole and that they experience this themselves.

5. Lean and mean. The financial possibilities are not unlimited within the court of Overijssel. The court consciously chooses to reduce overhead costs in favour of the primary process.

With the GDTs the court of Overijssel wants a management structure that is lean and mean. The vision of the court of Overijssel is: 'The court of Overijssel stand for good, timely and understandable case law. With expertise, self-awareness and being contemporary. This includes an open, involved, and active attitude. With an open mind to society and to each other, mutually involved and focused on cooperation and on the human scale, and a mentality of tackle and continue'. In line with this, there are 5 key points that the court of Overijssel is trying to pursue, which are described below. The court thinks it is necessary to know what the litigant wants from the court and responds to that.

1. The court stand for modern just and future-proof justice that anticipates on social developments and technologies.
2. The court searches for a good balance between craftsmanship, efficiency and social relevance as quality.
3. The court is a learning and innovative organisation, inwards and outwards.
4. The court thinks all employees are important, everyone matters. Cooperation and operating as one court are essential.

*Organizational chart of the court of Overijssel*



*Figure 1*

### 3.2 The study-approach via semi-structured interviews

The purpose of this study is to address the challenges related to teamwork in GDTs among team-members and managers. Semi-structured interviews with employees of the court are used in order to collect data. These semi-structured interviews are a suitable instrument to explore different attitudes, beliefs, values, and motives among people. Semi-structured interviews are used to avoid socially desirable answers. These kind of answers stand for what a respondent thinks is the preferred social response, regardless of whether it's nonsense or not (Rowley, 2012). When starting the interviews, it is standard repeated that the data is treated confidentially. Also, to avoid the socially desirable answers of respondents. The use of interviews to collect data falls under qualitative research. This makes it possible for the researcher to freely come up with new insights related to a certain topic (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013). Regarding qualitative research there

is a controversial definition (Anastas, 2004). There is no universally accepted definition, but an often-quoted definition is: 'Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. That means that qualitative researchers investigate things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them' (Anastas, 2004). Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials, with for example case studies, personal experiences, introspective, life stories, interviews, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts that describe routines and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Anastas, 2004). In this study, semi-structured interviews were therefore chosen to collect the data, in this way respondents can talk freely about the challenges they experience within teamwork in GDTs. The research question can be answered by interviewing team-members and managers individually.

For all the respondents of the study an informed consent is developed to introduce them to the topic and ask permission for participation. Permission in the sense of recording the interview and transcribing it. The informed consent starts with the meaning of GDTs in the context of the organization and explains the use of semi-structured interviews. When an informed consent is sent to a respondent, the semi-structured interview is added in the e-mail. The basic questions of the questionnaire ask the respondents about their thoughts of the 7 components of the McKinsey 7S framework. This framework focuses on 7 global topics that are important for the internal organization, the usefulness of this framework and its content are explained later in the study. It is important to mention here that the framework is used more as a basis for the researcher to discuss certain topics during the interviews. The respondent gets complete freedom to deviate from this to delve deeper into the challenges related to teamwork in GDTs. The respondents are clearly told that the interview is not about finishing the questionnaire. An overview of the informed consent and semi-structured interview can be found in the appendix.

In consultation with an insider from the organization, it is determined how many interviews take place and how the interviews are distributed over the court of Overijssel regarding the different functions of employees. Important to mention here is that the researcher ultimately decides and that the interviews are only conducted by the researcher due to confidentiality. The interview questions are prepared in consultation with the same insider from the organization. The interview structure and categorisation of the interview questions are derived from the McKinsey 7S framework. Defining the interview questions is crucial to the interview structure. The interviews aim to examine and dig deep into the experiences and knowledge of the respondents. So, it is a necessity to carefully select the right questions to gain the maximum data with respect to the challenges related to teamwork in GDTs.

The respondents within the organisation are approached with the help of the insider from the organization, by providing a list of all employees within the court of Overijssel per jurisdiction and function. Where there is a preference for approaching respondents via e-mail, in which the informed consent and the semi-structured interview is added. Respondents are also contacted by telephone, important to mention is that from here on the researcher decides who is approached and who is not. In total, 19 interviews were conducted. This was sufficient to reach thematic data-saturation, which means that collecting more data does not result in new insights and that a certain point is reached where there are fewer surprises and no more emergent patterns in the data (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). With the provided list of employees per jurisdiction, function, and location, a distribution is made by the researcher. The attention is focused on the departments that operate as GDTs: canton & commercial law, family & youth law, and criminal law. These are the departments in which employees work in GDTs. Including respondents from different jurisdictions, different functions, and different locations is important for the data source triangulation. Which involves the collection of data from different types of people, including departments, groups, and individuals, to gain multiple perspectives and validation of data (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). Table 1 provides an overview of the distribution of respondents that participate in the research. Among the team-members, a distinction is made between different jurisdictions, functions, and locations. At the group of managers, a distinction is made between different jurisdictions. When

at the managers group is stated at which function-group he or she works, confidentiality is lost. It can then be deduced which managers took part in this study, which is why the function-groups are not listed at the managers.

In consultation with the insider from the organization, those 19 interviews are therefore distributed among the mentioned departments. During a period of approximately 10-15 weeks the semi-structured interviews are conducted, face-to-face at the agreed locations. The interviews are recorded and then transcribed. Appointments of one hour are scheduled for the interviews, with an average duration of 45 minutes. The interviews are conducted in Dutch and also transcribed in that language. Quotes that are used in the study are translated into English.

After the interviews are conducted and transcribed a verbatim transcription is sent to the respondent for validation. The recordings are treated confidentially, this happens in close consultation with the respondents. After all transcriptions of the interviews have been worked out, the gathered data is analysed and discussed in the results section. The gathered data from the interviews are transcoded into anonymous transcriptions, this due to confidentiality and a non-disclosure agreement of sensitive information. The names are omitted, this ensures that the respondent answers the questions freely. While the department, or jurisdiction, where a respondent works is mentioned. Also, a global description of the function of a respondent is mentioned. This takes the form of judges, legal officers, administrative officers, and management. Finally, the location where a respondent works is stated.

*Distribution of the respondents*

<b>Team-members: 14</b>			<b>Managers: 5</b>		
Judges: 4	Legal officers: 6	Administrative officers: 4			
Family & youth law: 6	Canton & commercial law: 4	Criminal law: 4	Family & youth law: 2	Canton & commercial law: 1	Criminal law: 2
Almelo: 7		Zwolle: 7			

Table 1

3.3 The McKinsey 7S framework for developing the semi-structured questionnaire

The McKinsey 7S framework is one of the most useful tools ever developed for understanding an entire organization (Spaho, 2014). Since the framework was introduced, it has been widely used by practitioners and academics (Spaho, 2014). In this study the tool is used to develop a semi-structured questionnaire for the interviews, which can be found in the appendix. The tool highlights various components that are important within an organization and from a free form of interviewing can thus address many different challenges that team-members and managers experience within teamwork in GDTs. This tool gives the researcher guidance to address a number of topics within the organization, and because it is semi-structured the respondents get the freedom to deviate from this.

The tool is used in the current study because it is known for broadly including all important elements that play within an organization (Spaho, 2014). In qualitative research, the tool addresses various topics that employees within an organization have to deal with (Spaho, 2014). It is a tool that can be used in a free way, the researcher can devise questions from those topics to formulate a semi-structured questionnaire. In addition, when using the tool, the researcher is not forced to go through all the topics. When a respondent has more to say about a certain topic, this can be discussed in more detail. What has also been of great importance for the researcher to use the tool is that the researcher and respondent can deviate from the 7 global topics. That freedom is present when using

the tool. The tool therefore ensures that during the interviews there is attention for the 7 global topics that all employees within an organization deal with, these 7 global topics could not have been discussed during the interviews without the use of the tool. The tool gave the researcher some guidance beforehand and did not limit the researcher to deviate from these 7 global topics.

The tool was created in 1980 by the consulting company McKinsey, in the persons of R. Waterman, T. Peters and J. Phillips, with the academic partnership of R. Pascale and A. G. Athos (Pothiyadath & Wesley, 2014). In the research of Gunn & Williams (2007) the McKinsey 7S framework is called an academically learnt tool. They note that it could be argued that the tool is a conceptual tool developed from academia, rather than industry. The McKinsey 7S framework is strongly underpinned in the world of the consultant, however the company McKinsey is an organization underpinned by academic rigour (Gunn & Williams, 2007).

Going more in detail on the McKinsey 7S framework, the 7S framework of Waterman et al. (1980) is seen as the original framework (Higgins, 2005). The framework consists of the 7Ss: structure, strategy, systems, staff, style, skills, and shared values (Singh, 2018). The 7Ss are described individually in the following section.

Starting with 'Structure', which stands for how an organisation is organised (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980 ; Higgins, 2005). It gives coordination and divides different tasks within the organization. Higgins (2005) states that structure includes five different elements: jobs, the authority to carry out those jobs, the grouping of those jobs in a logical manner, the manager's span of control, and the mechanisms for coordination. Singh (2018) states that structure can be described as the organizational chart of the organization, or as the existing hierarchy within an organization. In the current study, this is translated into the hierarchy within the GDT and its influence on teamwork.

The S of 'Strategy' refers to the actions that an organization plans in response to or in anticipation of changes in the external environment, the customer base, and the competitors (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980 ; Higgins, 2005). Higgins (2005) states that strategy and the purpose of the strategy are formulated to achieve organisational purposes. So, changes in the strategic purposes lead to changes in the strategy. Singh (2018) describes strategy as the course of action taken by the organization in allocating the organizational resources in order to achieve the organizational goals in time. In the current study, the goals of the GDTs are discussed from a strategy perspective.

The S of 'Systems' refers to all the procedures that help an organisation to function on a daily basis, including formal and informal procedures (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980 ; Higgins, 2005). The formal procedures are used for measurement, reward, and resource allocation. While the informal stand for the communication, resolving conflicts and so on (Higgins, 2005). Singh (2018) describes systems as the routine processes being followed within the organization. In the current study, systems are used to query the actions within teamwork in GDTs.

With the S of 'Staff' is related to the employees of an organisation, it's about seeing people as a pool of resources to be nurtured, guarded, developed and allocated (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). Higgins (2005) states that staff is the number and types of employees with what types of individual and group competencies the organization needs to meet the strategic goals. Singh (2018) described staff overall as the human resources within an organization. In the current study, at the staff element, the characteristics and capabilities of team-members and managers are discussed which are important for teamwork.

The S of 'Style' refers to a specific culture within an organisation, namely the behaviour patterns of the managers in formal and informal situations (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). Higgins (2005) states that style is a way of leadership and management, this is determined by the behaviour of leaders and managers towards subordinates and other employees. Singh (2018) describes style as the leadership style or behaviour which managers adopt for achieving their goals. At the current study there is attention for how team-members and managers themselves experience the management style within teamwork.

The S of 'Skills' relates to the organization's crucial attributes and capabilities (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). Higgins (2005) states that skills are 'resources', meaning the extent to which

an organisation has adequate resources to achieve its strategic goals. Three important elements here are people, technology, and money. Singh (2018) states that skills refers to the capabilities or potentials of the staff within an organization. In the current study, the element of skills looks at the resources within the organization which are important for teamwork in GDTs.

The final S stand for 'Shared values', this is about the guiding concepts of an organization. There are certain values within an organization that are more important than the formal statement of corporate objectives (Waterman Jr, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). The shared values are at the centre of the McKinsey 7S framework, meaning that the organisational core values influence the organisation's overall orientation towards customers, employees, shareholders and the society. This means that shared values are associated with all the other components of the 7S model. Higgins (2005) state that shared values stand for the values shared by members of an organisation that make them different from other organisations. Where Singh (2018) state that shared values are the guiding concepts that organizational members share. The current study looks at the culture that exists within the GDTs in relation to teamwork.

### 3.4 A case study as the research design

Case studies are a certain type of qualitative research. They are intensive analyses and descriptions of a single unit or system that is bounded by space and time (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). Topics that are often examined in case studies include individuals, events, or groups. It is about describing a social phenomenon within its context, where a wide range of research questions is possible. With a case study, a researcher hopes to gain in-dept understanding of situations and meaning for those involved. There are several data sources which might be used, such as interviews and observational data (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). Making sense of this gathered data is a recursive process, in which the researcher interacts with the data throughout the investigative process. So, there is an ongoing examination and analysis of data in order to reach tentative conclusions and to refine the research question.

The case study at the court of Overijssel is a sociological case study, with the focus on society, social institutions, and social relationships. In which structure, development, interaction and collective behaviour of organized individuals or groups are explored (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). By using a case study, it is possible to delve deeper into what employees, in the form of team-members and managers, see as challenges related to teamwork in GDTs. This creates more in-dept understanding related to the topic. This case study is not only focused on the preliminary stage of theory development, it is also about contributing to an extension or refutation of the existing concepts related to the topic.

This case study has an exploratory style. So, after each interview some preliminary analysis took place. The purpose of this is to identify certain themes and topics that are not listed in the set of interview questions, but which are brought up while conducting interviews with the respondents. If there are new themes and topics found during the interviews, new questions are added to the questionnaire in order to explore these new topics with other respondents. During the interviews in which these new themes were discussed, the respondent is given the freedom to delve deeper into this. So, the interview process is in a state of continuous refinement, a recursive process.

### 3.5 Analysis of the collected data

For the data-analysis of the interviews the recorded and transcribed interviews are clustered in two groups for the study: the team-members of GDTs from the locations Almelo and Zwolle are merged into a group, and the managers form a group. Then the interviews were analysed on the basis of codes. Through open coding, codes are attached to certain experiences of the employees. A distinction is made between positive and negative experiences of employees with teamwork, translated into positive and negative codes. In this sense, positive and negative codes represent good

and bad experiences of team-members and managers with teamwork in GDTs. In this study, the emphasis is placed on the negative codes or the bad experiences, the employees indicate here what problems or difficulties they encounter with teamwork in GDTs. From here the challenges that employees experience within teamwork in GDTs are addressed. The process of coding stands for the organizing of raw data into conceptual categories and creating themes, categories, and codes, which represent the connection between the original raw data and the researcher's concepts (DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, & McCulloch, 2011). The coding is done via the ATLAS.TI program.

In this study the findings are explained for the group of team-members and managers of GDTs. The codes that arise from the coding-process are discussed, which are important for the teamwork in GDTs. A total of 105 negative codes were found in this study, with most attention being paid to the codes that play the most prominent role during the interviews. The most common codes have been reduced to 5 global topics. Namely, visibility of the manager, cultures in the organization, cooperation in the organization, usage of technologies, and lastly the effort of managers. The results section delves deeper into what those different topics entail. In the appendix there is a list of all the negative codes from the interviews.

## 4. Results

In this section the findings are described from the codes that emerge most emphatically in the interviews. A distinction is made between the group of team-members and managers of GDTs. Both groups discuss where they experience the biggest challenges related to teamwork in GDTs.

### 4.1 The challenges that team-members of GDTs experience with teamwork

The team-members of GDTs experience different kind of challenges related to teamwork. At the base there are 4 general challenges that team-members experience within teamwork in GDTs and from which multiple challenges arise. These 4 general challenges are related to: (1) low visibility of the manager; (2) different cultures within the organization; (3) lack of cooperation between departments, and (4) inefficient usage of new technologies. The findings are discussed on the basis of these challenges.

#### 4.1.1 Low visibility of the manager

Starting with the challenge that team-members experience low visibility of the managers at the teamwork in GDTs. This challenge is divided into two types of challenges that the team-members experience. The first one is that team-members experience that they do not receive enough personal attention from the manager during the teamwork in GDTs. The team-members are busy working together, but the presence of the manager is limited in this. It causes dissatisfaction on the part of the team-members, they do not see the manager at the work-floor and do not feel a personal bond with the manager. Leading to team-members that work with the manager with less enthusiasm to achieve the goals of the GDT. The second type of challenge is related to work-related difficulties for team-members within teamwork in GDTs. Due to low visibility of the manager, little attention is paid to work-related agreements that must be adhered in the department for proper teamwork in the GDT. Also, the managers do not know exactly what is going on in the departments, because of their low presence at the work-floor. This means that the managers only later know about certain matters that are going on in the department, so that they do not immediately solve certain problems or irritations in the department. These different topics are discussed and explained in the text below.

The following two quotes of two different respondents illustrates the thoughts of team-members when the researcher asks where he or she thinks the difficulty of teamwork in GDTs lies.

Respondent: *'Well what I notice especially when working in GDTs, so we have one management for both locations and the management is actually invisible. Because you actually see them too little at both locations. Certainly, within criminal law because there are also a lot of consultations externally, for example with the public prosecution service or national consultations, so that the management is actually not able to be present on the work floor. And because of that you actually get a kind of self-managing teams, while that is not quite the intention behind the system.'* (Criminal law, judge, Almelo)

Respondent: *'Especially the presence of because we are now at two locations, the management team is not always present, also because of national consultations. This sometimes makes it difficult to see your manager only one day a week. That it is just difficult to make contact with him or her.'* (Family & youth law, administrative officer, Almelo)

So, when the managers are not present or visible at the work-floor and contacting them is difficult this creates certain challenges that the team-members of GDTs experience within teamwork. Starting with the aspect related to personal attention that the team-members of GDTs do not receive from the managers during the teamwork. The first quote below shows how this is connected to each other, when the researcher asks about personal attention for the team-members. When the manager does not pay attention to the personal side of the team-members, this ensures that there is not a close bond between the two. The second quote below shows why it is difficult for managers and team-members to form a bond, face-to-face it is difficult for team-members to get in touch with the manager. If this bond is not present, this has consequences for how the team-members feel about the teamwork within the GDT. The third quote below indicates that when the team-members do not feel a real bond with the managers, this is bad for their enthusiasm. When that individual enthusiasm is missing from the team-members side, this means that they have much less urge to perform as a team and meet the objective of the GDT. This makes the low visibility of the manager, in the form of a lack of personal attention for the team-members, a challenge that the team-members experience within the teamwork in GDTs.

Respondent: *'Concerns attention for the employee, if your team manager is not there often it is of course more difficult. And then I think you should be careful not to take off too many things by email, but if there are things then it is wise to stay at that location. Do you want to keep the feeling and bond with your employees? Then you will have to go there every now and then.'* (Canton & commercial law, judge, Almelo)

Respondent: *'Yes but you will just have something that you think 'yes I want to discuss this now with my supervisor, but he will only be back on Wednesday and it is something I would like to discuss personally'. That is also what I started with, which is actually the only drawback that they are physically only in one place.'* (Canton & commercial law, legal officer, Zwolle)

Respondent: *'I think for more satisfaction and more enthusiasm among people to cooperate that you better can work with managers who are more present at the different locations, so that people can get more attention. I just really hear from a lot of people that they think that is very important.'* (Family & youth law, legal officer, Almelo)

In addition to personal attention, the team-members also experience challenges within teamwork from work-related problems that arise from the low visibility of the manager. The first quote below shows from where this arises, when the researcher asks if there is attention for the functioning in GDTs. One of the challenges that team-members experience related to the low visibility of the



manager is that there is no real attention for the agreements made between team-members of the GDT. This concerns agreements made between team-members about how the work must be carried out within the GDT, certain procedures that must be observed. Therefore, if there is no attention for fulfilling work-related agreements, this affects teamwork within the GDT because team-members are not fully aligned. The lack of that alignment is experienced as a challenge by the team-members of GDTs during teamwork, it makes it more difficult to jointly pursue the objectives of the GDT. The second quote below illustrates this when the researcher asks about the disadvantages related to working in GDTs. Another challenge for the team-members that arises from the low visibility of the manager related to teamwork in GDTs, is that the managers do not intervene directly and adequately at the department. This ensures that certain problems or irritations between team-members of a GDT continue to play at the department for a long time. The third quote below gives an illustration of this. When certain problems or irritations between team-members play for a long time, the team-members experience difficulties with the teamwork in GDTs. In addition, by looking at this challenge from the low visibility of the manager, the person of the manager also plays a role in this. The third quote below shows that the manager's management-style is also important for how directly and adequately he or she intervenes. The low visibility of the manager, which is reflected in the department because the manager is not immediately aware of certain matters and therefore does not immediately solve them, means that the team-members look at the low visibility of the manager as a challenge within teamwork in GDTs.

Respondent: *'I don't have the idea that there is really a finger on the pulse right now, whether it works or not. The fact is that you are in two locations, at least we are. So yes, as long as you do not focus the teams in one place, you will keep the management team in two locations. So yes, that they can just be a lot less present.'* (Family & youth law, administrative officer, Almelo)

Respondent: *'The disadvantage of working in GDTs is that much more energy should be invested in a piece of coordination and also a part of monitoring agreements made. Because sometimes you agree that we are going to work like this and then someone thinks like 'I am not going to do it like that'. I do not think that is guarded enough, not all noses are always in the same direction. But in general, I am very positive about it, I think that if you want to continue developing and become more one organization, you should not go back to the former face-to-face teams.'* (Family & youth law, administrative officer, Zwolle)

Respondent: *'No no the only thing I just told you, I think that a manager, if there is some irritation or displeasure in a team. Then I think that a manager should come and not wait too long before he or she comes. He or she should discuss and also take people seriously. But that is not only related to working in GDTs. This also has to do with the person of the manager and the way of leadership. The management style has to do with that.'* (Canton & commercial law, judge, Almelo)

#### 4.1.2 Different cultures within the organization

Within the organization, the different cultures that are present provide challenges for the team-members in carrying out teamwork in GDTs. Here, team-members work together across distances from different locations. There is little face-to-face contact between team-members of different locations, meaning that there is little space for team-members to jointly create a certain culture within the GDT. The teamwork between team-members of the different locations is mainly via virtual communication. This is not the case with face-to-face teams, here team-members work together from one location via face-to-face communication. Looking at the different cultures that are present within the organization, the different cultures per location are most noticeable. It causes difficulties for team-members of a GDT to work together with the team-members at the other location of the

GDT. This challenge is mainly focused on the differences that exist between the cultures of Almelo and Zwolle. The first undermentioned quote illustrates this, when the researcher asks if there are different cultures present within the organization. These differences in culture are also reflected in the younger and older generation of employees. Because the cultures of the different generations of team-members sometimes clash, teamwork in GDTs is hindered. The second undermentioned quote illustrates this, when the researcher asks if the difference in generations between employees is significant.

Respondent: *'Uhm yes, it is really per location. Look within the teams, you actually still have, yes, they do not want to hear it, but you still have an Almelo part and a Zwolle part. And you are one team together, I mean you know each other by now. And if there is a need for the man, you help each other. But it still differs in many areas per location, such as the approach and working methods.'* (Criminal law, judge, Almelo)

Respondent: *'Yes. We are not going to change while the whole world is changing, the court is also changing we also have to digitize, and we must also work more efficiently. You really do not get the older generation there anymore. And I sometimes find that difficult because we have a part of young input in our team and a part of the old generation and they are sometimes diametrically opposed. That is so difficult for the team to function.'* (Family & youth law, legal officer, Zwolle)

The team-members of GDTs indicate that the teamwork feels unpleasant because of the different cultures that are present at the different locations. There is not really a sense of unity within the GDTs, where the team-members should have the drive to work together to achieve the intended objectives of the GDT. The first quote below illustrates this, when the researcher asks if the different cultures within the organization collide. The quote also indicates that the distance between locations and not knowing the other team-members supports the lack of a sense of unity. When team-members of GDTs do not feel the need to work together as one, this forms a challenge for the teamwork within GDTs. In addition, this us and them mentality which is mentioned in the first quote below can also create a feeling of competition between the team-members of the same team who are spread over the different locations. In the second quote below, an example is given when the researcher asks whether there is a kind of competition feeling between the different locations of GDTs. This quote shows that the feeling of competition is clearly present and that the respondent does not feel comfortable with it. It makes the team-members from one location feel less connected with the team-members from the other location. That virtual communication is mainly used for communication across the different locations plays an important role here. Through this form of communication, it is difficult for team-members to create a joint culture where employees know each other. The team-members of one GDT actually feel like two separate teams located at different locations, this complicates mutual cooperation between the two. Those separate teams are more concerned with the proper execution of their own tasks rather than the common goals of the GDT. This forms a challenge for the team-members within teamwork in GDTs.

Respondent: *'Yes, but that's from both locations. People from Zwolle do not want to work in Almelo and people from Almelo do not want to work in Zwolle and that is something very strange. I have never understood that so well. It is really a little bit us and them mentality. There is not really one team feeling and that is just the distance, you do not know each other well enough. Well there is a different culture there. When I have a seat there, I also feel like an intruder, you do not know where to sit. You do not have that feeling there like 'I know where I can sit at the office for a day'. You already have to look for a workplace and you walk around a bit lost and with such puppy eyes like 'where did I end up'. It really is a bit us and them.'* (Family & youth law, legal officer, Zwolle)

Respondent: *'Yes, I do have that feeling. In Zwolle, a few also live a bit that Almelo is looked at with suspicion, 'what have they all worked out there'. In general, that is less important here. In Almelo I sometimes notice that there are continuous comparisons, they are not too many. Just isn't always nice.'* (Family & youth law, administrative officer, Zwolle)

The first quote below gives an example of the clash of cultures between the younger and older generation of team-members. Here, the researcher asks the respondent whether this collision of different cultures within the organization makes cooperation more difficult, and mainly focuses on the clash between the older and younger generation of team-members in GDTs. It appears that the older generation of team-members find the current state of affairs difficult within the GDTs. They find it difficult to let go of the past with face-to-face teams, while the younger generation is flexible and open to working in GDTs. The older generation of team-members is much less open to working together on the goals of the GDTs, which is diametrically opposed to the attitude of the younger generation of team-members. Within a GDT there is a combination of team-members from the older and younger generation. Together they must work towards the objectives of the GDT, but their attitudes towards collaboration with other team-members is different. This clash of the cultures of the older and younger generation of team-members forms a challenge for the teamwork in GDTs.

Respondent: *'Yes and maybe also per location. When I speak for Almelo, I really think that the people who work here for a long, really long time, that they have great difficulty with it and do not remember it from what it was like. And I understand that too. And that younger people in that sense, whether they come here to work new and therefore do not know any better or whether people who work here much shorter are just a bit more flexible and can get used to it better.'* (Family & youth law, legal officer, Almelo)

#### 4.1.3 Rarely cooperation between different departments

The challenge experienced by team-members of GDTs in teamwork related to the limited cooperation between different departments differs slightly from the other mentioned challenges. Here the focus that is pointed at the teamwork between team-members of a certain GDT and the associated department is broadened to teamwork between team-members of different GDTs spread across the entire organization. This challenge focuses on teamwork between team-members from different GDTs, or departments. Instead of really looking at the teamwork between team-members within one certain GDT. As stated in the method section, there are three departments within the organization that work separately in the form of GDTs.

The team-members of a GDT notice that little collaboration is possible with other departments within the organization. The team-members of a GDT only have attention and time for their own department. This means that the teamwork between team-members of GDTs is purely focused on their own team. The first quote below reflects the thought of how a respondent thinks about this. Because this teamwork is rarely possible across different departments, the team-members do encounter certain challenges within their team. For example, they experience due to the lack of cooperation with other departments, meaning that there are no short lines between the team-members of different departments, that there is no or hardly any organizational wide teamwork at personnel problems. The team-members experience this as a challenge for teamwork within GDTs, if the team-members of a certain GDT do not manage themselves they appear to be alone within the organization. The second quote below gives an example of this when the researcher asks to what extent cooperation between different departments and thus GDTs within the organization is possible. The third quote below also indicates that if those short lines were present between team-members from different departments, it is easier to deal with staff shortages and the

workload within the organization with organization-wide teamwork. Another challenge that is more emphatically reflected in the third quote below is that team-members share less knowledge with team-members from other GDTs or departments. This means that within the teamwork of a GDT certain sophisticated professional knowledge can be missed. In order to carry out the work within the GDTs as well as possible, it is important that the supply of professional knowledge is stimulated. When this happens insufficiently, it forms a challenge for the team-members within teamwork in GDTs. From the limited cooperation between different departments, the team-members notice that this forms a challenge for the teamwork in GDTs. Where they are more dependent on themselves.

Respondent: *'Since using GDTs, you are really only within your own team and you simply have little or no space to help someone else. Yes, and I know myself that at some point I said yes, I would like to do some sessions in another department and then I can help them there. But then it was just said yes that is fine, but then you do that in your free time. Yes, and you know okay you do that for a while but at some point, then you think yes that can actually not be the intention. But that is kind of how it is now, and I think that is also due to tightness. But I think it has become less of a unit than it was.'* (Criminal law, judge, Almelo)

Respondent: *'No little. You have the head of administration who has joint consultations, the chairmen have joint consultations. An example, there is one junior legal officer who does administrative law hearings. There they have difficulty manning the court sessions. Such small trips are limited, structurally speaking it is not an option. Look, the focus with us is still within the team because you are at two locations. Uhm yes there is so much energy in that.'* (Family & youth law, administrative officer, Zwolle)

Respondent: *'No actually not. Uhm then I have to go further back in history. In Almelo, when the Almelo court was just the Almelo court, it was customary there that you worked as a judge in more than one team. You actually worked in two teams anyway, so there you already had that cross-pollination. Moreover, it was very nice there that if it were a bit quieter with one team, you could go a bit more to the other team. So basically, those were some kind of communicating vessels. That has actually gone away since using GDTs. I do not know if that came at the same time as the judicial map review. But we are actually all in, well almost all with a few not. We are on a very small part of justice, all working in one specialised team. And that means that you are actually on your own team and no longer share that knowledge.'* (Canton & commercial law, judge, Almelo)

#### 4.1.4 Inefficient usage of new technologies

The last challenge that team-members of GDTs experience with teamwork is the inefficient usage of new technologies. It is interesting that this is experienced as a challenge by the team-members of GDTs. Because of the choice that has been made within the organization about using GDTs for certain departments, with which the former face-to-face teams have been partially replaced. The team-members of GDTs therefore make more use of these new technologies in teamwork. It turns out that the use of these new technologies for teamwork is not sufficiently utilized within GDTs, mainly in the sense of technologies for the communication between team-members from different locations. The first quote below reflects a respondent's thought when the researcher asks how he or she feels about working in a GDT and where improvements are possible. The second quote below takes a closer look at this and gives a concrete example. When meetings are scheduled for GDTs and happen at a particular location, better use of videoconference technologies could be made. Because the use of these technologies is insufficiently utilized, teamwork between team-members across the different locations is made more difficult. The team-members indicate that because too little use is made of those new technologies, the team-members themselves spend more time and effort in teamwork across the different locations. In addition, the team-members of GDTs also see that using

these technologies can make teamwork more efficient. Together this makes that the team-members of GDTs experience the inefficient use of new technologies as a challenge within teamwork.

Respondent: *'I have the idea that with us the management wants to work more location-transcending with consultations and so on. However, the feasibility is not properly considered. I think to myself if you want that 'locations-transcending' you should not have the whole herd shipped to Almelo or the whole of Almelo to Zwolle. That does not work. We cannot work there during the day because there is no capacity for that in terms of workspace. You are lost like chickens without a head in Twente. Then you walk around there, you have nothing to look for. It feels like a lost day. I think to myself then discuss a meeting room here and do it via video conference. It can be done so much more efficiently.'* (Family & youth law, legal officer, Zwolle)

Respondent: *'No, I was still thinking if there is anything to be said about the possibility of arranging meetings via conference call. But that was apparently not chosen, probably because of the size of the team. But I know that there is also a lot of use in other courts and that it is also considered useful.'* (Canton & commercial law, legal officer, Zwolle)

## 4.2 The challenges that managers of GDTs experience with teamwork

At the group of managers, there are two challenges emphatically present with teamwork in GDTs. The managers first indicate that by working in GDTs, it takes them a lot of extra effort to function as one team across the different locations. They notice that from their side they really have to put more time and effort into teamwork within GDTs. Second, they also experience a challenge that the team-members experience too. Namely, that the different cultures within the organization, and with the managers purely focused on the different cultures from the different locations, make teamwork within GDTs challenging.

### 4.2.1 Extra time and effort

The main challenge faced by the managers of GDTs is the extra time and effort they have to put into teamwork for the GDTs to function. They indicate that organizing teamwork within the GDTs is difficult across the different locations. The first quote below gives an example of the extra time and effort that managers experience during teamwork in GDTs, when the researcher asks whether managing via GDTs saves costs. They indicate that their role is difficult within the teamwork in GDTs, because of the large group of team-members and that due to the different locations they do not notice everything that is going on at the department. The team-members also see this as a problem within teamwork in GDTs, that the managers do not notice everything within the teams because of the low visibility at the departments. Managers put extra time and effort into the teamwork within GDTs to limit this as much as possible. The second quote below gives an example of this, if a manager puts a lot of time and effort into maintaining the team-members within a GDT he or she is almost done for the day. Within the teamwork of a GDT a lot is demanded from the manager, extra time and effort that goes with it is experienced as a challenge by them.

With the extra time and effort that managers experience within teamwork in GDTs, they often indicate that it has to do with the high span of control of the team. Because managers have to manage many team-members within a GDT, they notice that they have to put extra time and effort into teamwork. The third quote below gives an example of this, when the researcher asks how many team-members a manager directs. The high span of control plays an important role in the challenge that the managers experience during teamwork in GDTs, in which they have to put in extra time and effort to make the GDTs function.

Respondent: *'I don't really know what the employees think about that. What I notice myself is, if I look at the other managers and look at my own tasks, it will indeed be cheap. Because the work that we have got on our plate is simply not to do in the number of hours that it stands for. And then you need people who want to do it right, I think, and are very involved. So, when I look at the working weeks we do, I believe it is cheap, but whether it is healthy is another question.'* (Criminal law, manager)

Respondent: *'I sometimes jokingly say to one of the other managers of 'the bare fact that I pay attention to more than 30 people' and sometimes I ask 'how it goes and the things around it', that actually makes me so ' a little bit ready for the day. I still participate in projects; you name it all. If you then ask what that man does. I think I sometimes have my hands full with that.'* (Canton & commercial law, manager)

Respondent: *'Well I think, when I look, I think I have 34 or 35 employees that I have to manage, if I am very honest, I think that is too much. In management language 'span of control' I believe it is called that; I think that is too much. Especially when you are talking about, in addition, with all those 35 people you have to have a performance interview. Everyone has something, I don't want to be annoying, but there are always a few nag pots.'* (Family & youth law, manager)

#### 4.2.2 Different cultures within the organization from the different locations

Like the team-members, the managers experience that the different cultures within the organization form a challenge for the teamwork within GDTs. For managers, however, the challenge in terms of different cultures within the organization is only focused on the different cultures that are present at the different locations. The managers indicate that these different cultures from the different locations complicate the whole process of teamwork within GDTs. The first quote below gives an example of this when the researcher asks how the different cultures within the organization are viewed. The second quote below elaborates on this and indicates where the differences in culture lie among the employees of Almelo and Zwolle, when the researcher asks about the presence of those differences. From both locations, the managers therefore have to deal with team-members who differ in culture, which refers to the characteristics, approach, and attitude. This reduces the willingness among team-members with different cultures to work together on the objectives of the GDT. Which makes the organizing and streamlining of teamwork within a GDT a challenge for the manager.

Respondent: *'Yes, I think the culture is a thing and I think it is a thing between Almelo and Zwolle. I find that a tricky one. And I also think, the fact that you are physically in two different locations is really a complicating factor in the story. I am not saying that it is not possible, it is possible. But it does make it more difficult and tedious.'* (Family & youth law, manager)

Respondent: *'I do see differences. If you compare Almelo with Zwolle, for example, you will see clear differences. But whether that is an immediate problem, I do not know. Well I am somewhat optimistic in nature; I must say that. You just see that Almelo is already somewhat of a stubborn court, who thought of 'we know how to do it'. Look nationwide there are all kinds of things and procedures, Almelo did not care about that. On the other hand, they did very well, financially productive. In Zwolle it seems a bit duller, people think even better and nuanced. It is just a different culture from each other.'* (Canton & commercial law, manager)

## 5. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to answer the following research question: what challenges do team-members and managers experience with the teamwork in GDTs? The study uses a qualitative approach for addressing these challenges, by conducting a case study at the court of Overijssel. The results show that the team-members and managers experience a number of challenges related to teamwork in GDTs.

The main challenge that team-members experience within teamwork in GDTs is the low visibility of managers at the work-floor. Because the managers are limited presence at the work-floor, team-members receive little personal attention from the manager. The lack of personal attention and thereby the limited bond between team-member and manager, means that team-members are less enthusiastic about the teamwork in GDTs. Also, the low visibility of the manager is a challenge for the team-members within teamwork in GDTs in terms of work-related problems. When departments are less supervised by the manager, work-related agreements are less adhered and the manager does not immediately intervene in the case of problems at the department. This forms a challenge for the team-members within teamwork in GDTs.

The team-members also indicate that the different cultures within the organization form a challenge for the teamwork in GDTs. Different cultures present within the organization from different locations and from different generations of team-members make teamwork in GDTs more difficult. This means that there is no real unity within the GDT between the team-members, while this is important for teamwork in GDTs to achieve the objectives.

Subsequently, the team-members see that a lack of cooperation between different departments within the organization is a challenge for the overall teamwork in GDTs. At this challenge teamwork is based on organization-wide objectives, instead of just the objectives of one GDT. The team-members notice that the teamwork is purely focused on their own team, and that every GDT has to save itself. This means that personnel problems are not solved jointly, and that professional knowledge is not shared outside the GDT, which forms challenges for the teamwork in GDTs.

The last challenge that team-members indicate within teamwork in GDTs is the inefficient usage of new technologies. These new technologies are insufficiently used in the teamwork between team-members across different locations. As a result, the teamwork across the different locations costs the team-members more effort, which is experienced as a challenge among the team-members.

Then the challenges that the managers experience with teamwork in GDTs. They notice that from their side they have to put extra time and effort into organizing and streamlining teamwork within GDTs. In that sense, a lot from the managers is demanded with teamwork in GDTs. By extension, the managers have a high span of control, which complicates the manager's duties in GDTs. Together this makes that the managers experience the extra time and effort as a challenge within teamwork in GDTs.

Finally, the managers, like the team-members, notice that the different cultures within the organization are a challenge for the teamwork in GDTs. Where the managers focus purely on the different cultures that are present at the different locations. This means that they work with team-members who do not have a real sense of unity, which makes teamwork more challenging in GDTs.

By naming the challenges that team-members and managers experience within teamwork in GDTs, this study hopes to contribute to the literature focused on GDTs. When it is clearer for companies and organizations where the challenges within teamwork in GDTs lie for team-members and managers, they can tackle it more easily. The use of this type of teams is interesting for the future, and this study hopes to make its use easier for organizations and companies.

### 5.1 Discussion

To the best of my knowledge this is the first study that examines what challenges team-members and managers experience within teamwork in GDTs. The study shows that there are a number of challenges related to teamwork in GDTs that correspond well with challenges that are mentioned within GDTs in general. There are also a number of clear differences between the challenges that team-members and managers experience within teamwork in GDTs and the challenges that GDTs experience in general. In this section there is attention for these similarities and differences. There is also attention for the similarities and differences that exist with the challenges of teamwork in GDTs compared to teamwork in face-to-face teams.

#### 5.1.1 The challenges of the current study supporting the existing literature

In this study, there are a number of challenges that correspond to challenges mentioned in the existing literature facing GDTs. Thereby this study supports some challenges that are mentioned at previous studies related to GDTs. The existing literature indicates that developing a shared identity, with a joint culture is challenging for GDTs (Hinds & McGrath, 2006 ; Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). Spread across different countries or cities it is difficult for team-members of GDTs to build a common culture (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). This study also shows, from the perspective of teamwork, that the different cultures within GDTs form a challenge. Meaning that at this study there is no joint culture present among the team-members and managers of GDTs. As in the existing literature, this study refers to the little face-to-face contact between team-members and managers of the same GDT spread over different locations. This underlies the challenge that arises at GDTs, related to the different cultures that are present and which are difficult to form a joint culture. In addition to the different cultures, this study shows that the challenges related to the low visibility of the manager correspond to challenges that are mentioned in the literature. The existing literature indicates that there are challenges in GDTs in the form of work-related ambiguities that arise from the difficult communication in GDTs (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). These ambiguities are, for example, about division of labour, planning, agreements made, and objectives (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). In this study, the challenge related to the low visibility of the managers creates work-related ambiguities among team-members in GDTs. No reference is made here to the communication in GDTs. However, the same type of work-related ambiguities appears to be mentioned in this study as in the existing literature. This study shows that, due to the low visibility of the manager, compliance with made agreements is a challenge for the team-members within teamwork in GDTs. So, both in literature and in this study, work-related ambiguities in the form of compliance with agreements made are mentioned as a challenge for GDTs. Finally, the literature states that involvement and support is a challenge for team-members in GDTs (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). This refers to the little contact that team-members at distance have with each other and with the managers in GDTs, meaning that there is not really a feeling where the team-members want to work together (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). The team-members do not know each other well and are not aware of what is going on within the GDT (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). This study specifically refers to the little contact that team-members have with the manager in GDTs, from the low visibility of the manager. Whereby there is not a strong personal bond between team-member and manager. From the absence of a strong personal bond, the team-members feel less involvement and enthusiasm with the GDT. This means that the challenge of involvement and support from the existing literature corresponds to the findings of this study. Looking at all the mentioned similarities, this study supports the existing literature with those challenges.

There is also attention for the similarities between face-to-face teams and GDTs. With face-to-face teams, it appears that despite the physical presence of team-members, different subgroups among team-members are created in the departments (Unsworth & West, 2000 ; Berry, 2011). This arises from team diversity, with differences in education, professional background, ethnicity, or gender between team-members (Unsworth & West, 2000). This is similar to the 'subgroups' that arise among the team-members of GDTs in this study. However, in this study these different



subgroups of team-members originate from the different cultures that are present at the different locations. So, the presence of those different subgroups among the team-members is the case in both types of teams, however the origination differs per type of team. There are also similarities between face-to-face teams and GDTs when it comes to motivating team-members. In face-to-face teams motivating the team-members is a challenge (Unsworth & West, 2000). This arises because an individual in a group works less motivated, an individual looks at other team-members in terms of the amount of work (Unsworth & West, 2000 ; Berry, 2011). In this study, the enthusiasm and motivation of team-members within teamwork in GDTs also appear to be a challenge. This study refers to the low visibility of the manager, whereby team-members do not build a bond with the manager. Leading to team-members who do not really feel involved with the teamwork and who are less motivated to jointly work on the goals of the GDT. So here there are also similarities between face-to-face teams and GDTs in terms of motivating team-members, however the origination differs per type of team. In summary, this study shows that there are also similarities between the challenges of GDTs and face-to-face teams.

#### 5.1.2 The challenges of the current study that differ from the existing literature

There are also a number of differences in the challenges mentioned in this study with teamwork in GDTs compared to the challenges facing GDTs that emerge in the existing literature. One of these differences is that multiple studies explicitly refer to communication within GDTs as a challenge (Cartan & Carson, 2011 ; Hinds & McGrath, 2006 ; Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). The difficulty here lies at the team-members and managers of a GDT who work across distances and who communicate partially via virtual communication (Hinds & McGrath, 2006). This study does not directly refer to communication as a challenge for teamwork in GDTs. One of the challenges in this study, the low visibility of the manager, does indicate that there is not much contact and communication between team-members and managers of GDTs. However, this is purely about the degree of communication between team-members and managers of GDTs within teamwork. In this study it appears that within the teamwork in GDTs, communication between team-members is not seen as a challenge. This study therefore deviates from the existing literature related to the challenges that GDTs face. In addition, this study differs from the existing literature with the challenge that team-members within teamwork in GDTs experience that there is rarely cooperation between different departments of the organization. Those different departments stand for different GDTs, with a certain department that functions as one GDT. This study shows that the departments that function as a GDT do not really work together with other departments that function as a GDT. This challenge is not mentioned in the existing literature, nor is the perspective used (Eubanks, Palanski, Olabisi, Joinson, & Dove, 2016 ; Cartan & Carson, 2011 ; Hinds & McGrath, 2006 ; Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). This perspective means that the challenges that GDTs face are not viewed from outside the GDT, so not from the organization as a whole. By including that perspective in this study, it differs from the existing literature. Finally, this study differs from the existing literature when looking the challenge that team-members indicate that new technologies are used inefficiently within teamwork in GDTs. The literature indicates that the use of these new technologies is challenging for GDTs (Eubanks, Palanski, Olabisi, Joinson, & Dove, 2016). Where team-members see challenges in the provision of technical support (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). In this study, this challenge is not addressed by the team-members within teamwork in GDTs, but they would like to see more efficient usage of new technologies. This means that the team-members in this study think that the use of these technologies can facilitate teamwork better between team-members across the different locations. The team-members do not experience the use of new technologies in themselves as a challenge, so this study differs in that sense from the existing literature. With all the mentioned differences between the challenges that emerge from this study and the challenges from the existing literature, the current study contributes to the literature. These are findings that did not emerge in the previous studies into the challenges that GDTs face. In

this sense, the current study can contribute to the use of GDTs in companies and organizations, looking at teamwork in these types of teams. The study provides new insights into the challenges experienced within GDTs.

There are also clear differences between the challenges that team-members and managers experience within teamwork in GDTs compared to the challenges in face-to-face teams. The managers in face-to-face teams are always directly involved with the department, with a lot of physical presence (Vaidyanathan, Sabbaghi, & Debrot, 2010). As a result, the managers in face-to-face teams have control over the department and know the team-members well (Cartan & Carson, 2011). This study shows that the low visibility of the manager forms a challenge for team-members with teamwork in GDTs. Where the low visibility of the managers ensures that there is little control at the department and that there is no bond between team-members and the manager. So, the face-to-face teams and GDTs are therefore diametrically opposed. Another difference lies in the use of new technologies. The face-to-face teams make little or no use of technologies that enable virtual communication between team-members (Cartan & Carson, 2011). The GDTs in this study alternate face-to-face communication with virtual communication. The use of these new technologies therefore differs substantially for both type of teams. The challenge addressed in this study, related to the inefficient use of new technologies, does not play a role in the face-to-face teams. In summary, these differences show the contrast between some of the challenges experienced within GDTs that face-to-face teams do not experience.

## 5.2 Limitations

In this section there is attention for parts of the research that are debatable. The first part that is debatable is that the initial number of interviews is not met. Initially, 25 interviews were to be conducted, and on the basis of that a distribution was made of the employees within the organization to participate in the study. A fair distribution was made of the number of respondents per department, function, and location in order to give a good representation of the court. Due to the covid-19 circumstances it was no longer possible to continue with the interviews in the same way. This happened after 19 face-to-face interviews were conducted. It has been deliberately chosen not to perform the last 6 interviews in any other way. The researcher already found the data to be sufficiently saturated and if a different approach had been used for the last 6 interviews this could lead to biased data. The abrupt stop of the interviews meant that the distribution of respondents within the court is not completely evenly distributed. The number of respondents among team-members in family & youth law is 6, while at criminal law there are 4 respondents. It would be better if there was one less respondent at family & youth law and one more respondent at criminal law. However, during the study it appeared that the employees of family & youth law were easier to participate and plan interviews compared to the other departments.

The second part is that the study is conducted at a public organization. Despite the fact that the study did not pay specific attention to the differences between a public and private organization, this may influence the results. The differences that exist between these different types of organizations can influence what team-members and managers experience as challenges within teamwork in GDTs. The general objectives of GDTs within these different organizations can also differ, which could subsequently influence the teamwork within GDTs. At the court of Overijssel, as a public organization, different challenges could arise from the interviews than if the study had been conducted at a private organization.

The third part is that proportionally more team-members are interviewed than managers in the study. This means that the challenges managers face with teamwork in GDTs are less prominent in the interviews. This makes it more difficult for the researcher to discover certain patterns from the interviews with managers. Leading to fewer challenges that emerged among the managers from the interviews. On the other hand, this can be rebutted because a manager has several team-members

under him to manage. This somewhat justifies the ratio in the study between the number of team-members and managers interviewed related to teamwork in GDTs.

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## Appendix

## The semi-structured interview

### **Introduction**

At which department, referring to the jurisdiction, do you work within the court of Overijssel?

What is your current function within the court of Overijssel?

Are there certain things unclear before starting the interview?

Regarding the McKinsey 7S framework, where do you think the main barriers and drivers of the implementation process of GDTs within the court of Overijssel lies?

### **Structure**

Who coordinates the strategic activities, in the form of resources that are used to reach the organisational goals, when you look at your fellow employees and the department as a whole?

Would you say the decision making and controlling is centralized or decentralized? Is this like it should be, regarding what you are doing in your function?

What is the influence of GDTs on the collaboration between different departments and within these departments? And in what way does the structure promote or impede collaboration between different parts of the court of Overijssel?

Does the (organisational) structure at your department facilitate or disturb the implementation process of GDTs? (With organisational structure referring to the way all tasks and departments are divided and cohere)

### **Strategy**

Was your department, involved with the formulation of GDTs? If you scale it from: low, moderate, or high?

What do you think of the implementation process of GDTs at the court of Overijssel?

Do you know if there is a specific strategic implementation plan for GDTs at the court of Overijssel? Looking at the elements of such a plan: a time schedule, progress indication, tracked time schedule and so on. If so, can you tell me more about this?

Do you think your department and your fellow employees understand how to operate in GDTs? And the usefulness of GDTs?

Is the use of GDTs with the objectives clearly stated? Efficiency is one of those objectives, what do you think of the use of GDTs in relation to this?

When is your department satisfied when it comes to the implementation process of the GDTs? If you are not the team leader of a certain department, when do you think your department is satisfied about the implementation process of GDTs?

### **Systems**

Is there an IT system within the court of Overijssel that assists the functioning in GDTs? And if not, are there other systems that assist the functioning in GDTs?

Is the whole implementation process of GDTs in the court of Overijssel controlled?

Is the effectiveness of implementing GDTs in the court of Overijssel monitored?

### **Staff**

How many employees are working at your department? And how many are working at each location of the court of Overijssel?

Considering the span of control at your department, how many people do you manage within your department? What kind of role has the GDTs in this?

What are the most important functions within your department for operating as an GDT?

Regarding the implementation of GDTs, are there gaps in the required competencies and in the existing work activities?

### **Style**

At your department or team, is there a person (leader/manager) on which you can rely when it comes to certain questions related to the GDTs and the implementation process of it?  
How participative and effective do you think the management or leadership style is?  
Is there with the use of GDTs enough time and attention for the employees within the court of Overijssel?  
Regarding the implementation of GDTs, is there sufficient support from the board of the court of Overijssel?

### **Skills**

What are the strongest skills, related to the GDTs, represented within your department and team?  
What are the weakest skills, related to the GDTs, represented within your department and team?  
What are sufficient ways or possibilities for developing skills with regard to the GDTs?  
What is the influence of GDTs on the strength and personal responsibility of the employees within the court of Overijssel?

### **Shared values**

How strong are the core values of the court of Overijssel within your department and team?  
What is the role of the GDTs in relation to these core values and then especially when you talk about putting time and attention into good quality of work?  
How was attention and awareness generated for the implementation of GDTs at your department and team?  
What kind of communication was used to reach the employees about the GDTs?

### **Conclusion**

Looking at the implementation process of GDTs, what do you think is the department and organizations main organizational barrier?  
Looking at the implementation process of GDTs, what do you think is the department and organizations main organisational driver?  
How would you formulate GDTs at the court of Overijssel in one sentence?  
Finally, as the last question: are there certain things of importance that must be added to the interview?

The Dutch version of the semi-structured interview

### **Introductie**

Op welke afdeling, verwijzend naar het rechtsgebied, werkt u binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel?  
Wat is uw huidige functie binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel?  
Zijn er bepaalde dingen onduidelijk voordat u met het interview begint?  
Betreft het McKinsey 7S raamwerk, waar denkt u dat de belangrijkste belemmeringen en drijfveren van het implementeren van GDTs in de rechtbank van Overijssel liggen?

### **Structuur**

Wie coördineert de strategische activiteiten, in de vorm van middelen die worden gebruikt om de organisatiedoelstellingen te bereiken, kijkend naar uw medecollega's en de afdeling als geheel?  
Zou u zeggen dat de besluitvorming en controle gecentraliseerd of gedecentraliseerd is? Is dit zoals het zou moeten zijn, met betrekking tot wat u doet in uw functie?  
Wat is de invloed van GDTs op de samenwerking tussen verschillende afdelingen en binnen deze afdelingen? En op welke manier bevordert of belemmert de structuur de samenwerking tussen verschillende onderdelen binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel?

Vergemakkelijkt of verstoort de (organisatie) structuur op uw afdeling het implementatieproces van GDTs? (Met organisatiestructuur wordt verwezen naar de manier waarop alle taken en afdelingen zijn verdeeld en samenhangen)

### **Strategie**

Was uw afdeling betrokken bij de formulering van GDTs? Wanneer u het schaaft van: laag, gemiddeld of hoog?

Wat vindt u van het implementatieproces van GDTs in de rechtbank van Overijssel?

Weet u of er een specifiek strategisch implementatieplan voor GDTs binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel is? Kijkend naar de elementen van zo'n plan: een tijdsplanning, voortgangsindicatie, bijgehouden tijdpad enzovoort. Zo ja, kunt u mij hier meer over vertellen?

Denkt u dat uw afdeling en uw collega's het gebruik van GDTs begrijpen? En het nut van GDTs?

Wordt het gebruik van GDTs met de doelstellingen duidelijk vermeld? Efficiëntie is een van die doelstellingen, wat vindt u van het gebruik van GDTs in verband met efficiëntie?

Wanneer is uw afdeling tevreden als het gaat om het implementatieproces van de GDTs? Als u niet de teamleider van een bepaalde afdeling bent, wanneer denkt u dat uw afdeling tevreden is over het implementatieproces van GDTs?

### **Systemen**

Is er een IT-systeem binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel dat het functioneren in GDTs ondersteunt?

En zo niet, zijn er andere systemen die het functioneren in GDTs ondersteunen?

Wordt het hele implementatieproces van GDTs binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel gecontroleerd?

Wordt de effectiviteit van de implementatie van GDTs binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel bijgehouden?

### **Staf**

Hoeveel werknemers werken er op uw afdeling? En hoeveel werken er op elke locatie van de rechtbank van Overijssel?

Kijkend naar de span of control op uw afdeling, hoeveel mensen managet u binnen uw afdeling? Wat voor rol spelen de GDTs hierin?

Wat zijn de belangrijkste functies binnen uw afdeling om te opereren als een GDT?

Zijn er bij de implementatie van GDTs, gebreken in de vereiste competenties en in de bestaande werkactiviteiten?

### **Stijl**

Is er op uw afdeling of team een persoon (leider/manager) waarop u kunt vertrouwen als het gaat om bepaalde vragen met betrekking tot de GDTs en het implementatieproces daarvan?

Hoe participatief en effectief denk je dat de management- of leiderschapstijl is?

Is er bij het gebruik van GDTs voldoende tijd en aandacht voor de medewerkers binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel?

Is er met betrekking tot de implementatie van GDTs voldoende steun van het bestuur van de rechtbank van Overijssel?

### **Skills**

Wat zijn de sterkste vaardigheden, gerelateerd aan de GDTs, vertegenwoordigd binnen uw afdeling en team?

Wat zijn de zwakste vaardigheden, gerelateerd aan de GDTs, vertegenwoordigd binnen uw afdeling en team?

Wat zijn toereikende manieren of mogelijkheden om vaardigheden te ontwikkelen met betrekking tot de GDTs?

Wat is de invloed van GDTs op de kracht en eigen verantwoordelijkheid van werknemers binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel?



### **Gedeelde waarden**

Hoe sterk zijn de kernwaarden van de rechtbank van Overijssel binnen uw afdeling en team?

Wat is de rol van de GDTs in relatie tot deze kernwaarden en dan voornamelijk gericht op het besteden van voldoende tijd en aandacht aan goede kwaliteit van werk?

Hoe werd aandacht en bewustzijn gegenereerd voor de implementatie van GDTs op uw afdeling en team?

Wat voor soort communicatie werd gebruikt om de werknemers over de GDTs te bereiken?

### **Conclusie**

Kijkend naar het implementatieproces van GDTs, wat is volgens u de belangrijkste organisatorische belemmering binnen de afdelingen en organisatie?

Kijkend naar het implementatieproces van GDTs, wat is volgens u de belangrijkste organisatorische drijfveer binnen de afdelingen en organisatie?

Hoe zou u GDTs binnen de rechtbank van Overijssel in één zin formuleren?

Tot slot als laatste vraag: zijn er bepaalde belangrijke zaken die aan het interview moeten worden toegevoegd?

The informed consent

### **Informatieblad voor het evaluatieonderzoek van de nieuwe managementstructuur binnen Rechtbank Overijssel**

#### **Doel van het onderzoek**

Dit onderzoek wordt geleid door Milas Oddo, in overleg met Regina Zwart.

Het doel van dit onderzoek komt voort uit de onderzoeksvraag die in het projectplan van Rechtbank Overijssel is geformuleerd: heeft de locatie-overstijgende aansturing gebracht hetgeen toentertijd is beoogd (een duurzame managementstructuur passend bij de rechtbank Overijssel) en/of zijn aanpassingen nodig?

Deze vraag wordt wetenschappelijk benaderd waarbij het implementatieproces wordt geëvalueerd, in het onderzoek zal worden gewerkt met de volgende onderzoeksvraag: wat zijn de belemmeringen en drijfveren bij het implementeren van Geografisch Gedistribueerde Teams (GDTs) in publieke organisaties?

Een GDT staat voor een groep mensen die onderling afhankelijk van ruimte, tijd en organisatiegrenzen met elkaar communiceren door gebruik te maken van technologie om samen te werken binnen een afdeling. Binnen een afdeling is het daarom mogelijk dat bepaalde werknemers verspreid werken en bepaalde werknemers bijeen geplaatst als gevolg van het locatie-overstijgende management.

Praktisch gezien levert het onderzoek de Rechtbank Overijssel een evaluatierapport op, waarbij aandacht is voor de belemmeringen en drijfveren van het implementatieproces van GDTs. Het onderzoek zal de opgestelde onderzoeksvraag in het projectplan van Rechtbank Overijssel direct kunnen beantwoorden. In het onderzoek wordt er naar de interne situatie van Rechtbank Overijssel gekeken, uitleg hierover volgt. De onderzoeksgegevens worden gehaald uit interviews met medewerkers. Wanneer medewerkers deelnemen aan de interviews zullen daaruit voorbeelden komen van de problemen die zij ervaren door het werken in GDTs. Ook zullen er voorbeelden van zaken die juist goed verlopen door het werken in GDTs naar voren komen. Sprekend over belemmeringen dan worden de problemen bedoeld die medewerkers ervaren en sprekend over drijfveren dan gaat het juist over de zaken die goed verlopen binnen GDTs. Het onderzoek leidt dus

tot een rapport waarin de belemmeringen en drijfveren van het implementeren en gebruiken van GDTs binnen de rechtbank worden aangekaart/aangepast.

Wetenschappelijk gezien zal het onderzoek bijdragen aan het implementatieproces van GDTs in de publieke sector.

De onderzoeksgegevens zullen resulteren in een wetenschappelijk artikel dat op de website van Universiteit Twente wordt gepubliceerd en mogelijk op andere wetenschappelijke websites. Voor Rechtbank Overijssel wordt er een speciale versie gemaakt, waarin een Nederlandse samenvatting wordt toegevoegd en een paragraaf met aanbevelingen.

### **Hoe gaan we te werk?**

U neemt deel aan een onderzoek waarbij we informatie zullen vergaren door anoniem semigestructureerde interviews af te nemen met werknemers van Rechtbank Overijssel. U zal worden geïnterviewd en uw antwoorden worden genoteerd en opgenomen via een audio-opname. Er zal een transcript worden uitgewerkt van het interview.

De semigestructureerde interviews zullen gebaseerd zijn op het McKinsey 7S framework. Dit framework kijkt naar de interne aspecten van een organisatie bij organisatieveranderingen. Het framework wordt gebruikt bij bijvoorbeeld de samenstelling van afdelingen/processen in een reorganisatie, bij pogingen om de prestaties van een organisatie te verbeteren, en bij het implementatieproces van een bepaalde strategie binnen een organisatie. De 7 verschillende onderdelen waaraan de vragen zijn gerelateerd:

- Structuur, dit staat voor hoe de organisatie is georganiseerd, kijkend naar coördinatie en de verdeling van taken.
- Strategie, dit verwijst naar de acties die een organisatie plant in reactie op of anticiperend op veranderingen in de externe omgeving, het 'klantenbestand' en de 'concurrenten'.
- Systemen, dit verwijst naar alle procedures die een organisatie nodig heeft om dagelijks te functioneren, inclusief formele en informele procedures.
- Staf, dit is gerelateerd aan de werknemers van een organisatie. De organisatie moet werknemers zien als een belangrijke 'resource' die moet worden gekoesterd, bewaakt, en ontwikkeld.
- Stijl, dit staat voor de manier van leiderschap en management, kijkend naar het gedrag van leiders en managers ten opzichte van andere werknemers.
- Skills, dit staat voor de cruciale kenmerken en mogelijkheden van een organisatie, denk daarbij aan werknemers, technologie en geld.
- Gedeelde waarden, dit gaat over de leidende concepten van een organisatie. Er zijn bepaalde waarden binnen een organisatie die belangrijker zijn dan de formele organisatiedoelstellingen.

Wanneer een deelnemer binnen de Rechtbank Overijssel wordt benaderd zal naast dit informatieblad ook een bijlage worden toegevoegd met de vragen van de semigestructureerde interviews. Voor het onderzoek is het belangrijk dat de deelnemers goed voorbereid zijn.

### **Vertrouwelijkheid van gegevens**

Er wordt op geen enkele wijze vertrouwelijke informatie of persoonsgegevens van of over u naar buiten gebracht waardoor iemand u zal kunnen herkennen. Bij de interviews zullen geen persoonlijke vragen worden gesteld, er wordt niet gevraagd naar uw naam of hoeveel jaren u werkt voor de Rechtbank Overijssel. Dit blijft beperkt tot de afdeling waarop u werkt en de algemene functie die u heeft.

In de publicatie zullen anonieme gegevens worden gebruikt. De audio-opnamen, formulieren en andere documenten die in het kader van deze studie worden gemaakt of verzameld, worden

opgeslagen op een beveiligde locatie bij de Universiteit Twente en op de beveiligde (versleutelde) gegevensdragers van de onderzoekers.

De onderzoeksgegevens worden bewaard voor een periode van ongeveer 10 jaar. Uiterlijk na het verstrijken van deze termijn zullen de gegevens worden verwijderd.

De onderzoeksgegevens worden indien nodig (bijvoorbeeld voor een controle op wetenschappelijke integriteit) en alleen in anonieme vorm ter beschikking gesteld aan personen buiten de onderzoeksgroep. Hierbij gaat het om personen die bijvoorbeeld werken voor de Universiteit Twente en controleren of het onderzoek echt heeft plaats gevonden, personen gerelateerd aan de rechtbank Overijssel zullen hier niet onder vallen. De opzet van het onderzoek is beoordeeld en goedgekeurd door de ethische commissie van de faculteit BMS.

U heeft het recht op een verzoek tot inzage, wijziging, verwijdering of aanpassing van uw gegevens te doen bij de Onderzoeksleider. Wanneer u bepaalde vragen bijvoorbeeld niet wil beantwoorden dan kunt u dit het beste vooraf melden/vragen. De onderzoeker is flexibel wanneer het gaat over inzage van de gegevens, echter leidt een grote wijziging/verwijdering van gegevens tot kwalitatief minder goede onderzoeksdata. De onderzoeker hoopt dit te voorkomen dus bij twijfel kunt u altijd navraag doen.

### **Vrijwilligheid**

Deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig. U kunt als deelnemer uw medewerking aan het onderzoek te allen tijde stoppen, of weigeren dat uw gegevens voor het onderzoek mogen worden gebruikt, zonder opgaaf van redenen.

Als u tijdens het onderzoek besluit om uw medewerking te staken, zullen de gegevens die u reeds hebt verstrekt tot het moment van intrekking van de toestemming in het onderzoek gebruikt worden.

Wilt u stoppen met het onderzoek of heeft u vragen en/of klachten? Neem dan contact op met de onderzoeksleider.

Milas Oddo

[m.s.oddo@student.utwente.nl](mailto:m.s.oddo@student.utwente.nl)

06-46811889

Voor bezwaren met betrekking tot de opzet en of uitvoering van het onderzoek kunt u zich ook wenden tot de Secretaris van de Ethische Commissie van de faculteit Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences op de Universiteit Twente via [ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl](mailto:ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl). Dit onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd vanuit de Universiteit Twente, faculteit Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences. Indien u specifieke vragen heeft over de omgang met persoonsgegevens kun u deze ook richten aan de Functionaris Gegevensbescherming van de UT door een mail te sturen naar [dpo@utwente.nl](mailto:dpo@utwente.nl).

### **Door dit toestemmingsformulier te ondertekenen erken ik het volgende:**

1. Ik ben voldoende geïnformeerd over het onderzoek door middel van een separaat informatieblad. Ik heb het informatieblad gelezen en heb daarna de mogelijkheid gehad vragen te kunnen stellen. Deze vragen zijn voldoende beantwoord.
2. Ik neem vrijwillig deel aan dit onderzoek. Er is geen expliciete of impliciete dwang voor mij om aan dit onderzoek deel te nemen. Het is mij duidelijk dat ik deelname aan het onderzoek op elk moment, zonder opgaaf van redenen, kan beëindigen. Ik hoef een vraag niet te beantwoorden als ik dat niet wil.

Naast het bovenstaande is het hieronder mogelijk voor verschillende onderdelen van Het onderzoek specifiek toestemming te geven. U kunt er per onderdeel voor kiezen wel of geen toestemming te geven.

3. Ik geef toestemming om de gegevens die gedurende het onderzoek bij mij worden verzameld te verwerken zoals is opgenomen in het bijgevoegde informatieblad. Deze toestemming ziet dus ook op het verwerken van gegevens betreffende mijn gezondheid/ras/etnische afkomst/politieke opvattingen/religieuze en of levensbeschouwelijke overtuigingen/lidmaatschap van vakbond.	JA  <input type="checkbox"/>	NEE  <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ik geef toestemming om tijdens het interview opnames (geluid) te maken en mijn antwoorden uit te werken in een transcript.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Ik geef toestemming om mijn antwoorden te gebruiken voor quotes in de onderzoekpublicaties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Ik geef toestemming om de bij mij verzamelde onderzoeksdata te bewaren en te gebruiken voor toekomstig onderzoek en voor onderwijsdoeleinden.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ik geef toestemming voor alles dat hierboven beschreven staat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Naam Deelnemer:

Naam Onderzoeker:

Handtekening:

Handtekening:

Datum:

Datum:

List of codes

	Code	Grounded
<input type="radio"/>	Different cultures (from the locations) within the organisation -	43
<input type="radio"/>	Visibility of the direct manager in location-transcending management is a problem -	39
<input type="radio"/>	Personal differences between employees make certain topics difficult -	37
<input type="radio"/>	No attention for the actual/practical functioning of location-transcending management and compliance with agreements made -	33
<input type="radio"/>	Rarely cooperation between different departments -	33
<input type="radio"/>	High work pressure and many overtime hours (concern for the future) -	32
<input type="radio"/>	Location-transcending management makes it difficult for the manager to understand the situation (work/personal) at the department -	32
<input type="radio"/>	No personal attention from the management (formal) -	29
<input type="radio"/>	Working location-transcending costs the management a lot of time/effort (example in performance reviews) -	29
<input type="radio"/>	Rarely cooperation/communication between the different locations of a department -	28
<input type="radio"/>	Shortage of staff in certain positions within the organisation (part-timers) -	28

o	Culture of Almelo keeping everything the same (resistance to change) -	27
o	The management (with board) should make certain decisions themselves (direct/adequate/efficient) -	26
o	Extra effort for maintaining the multiple locations -	25
o	Culture of the old generation (decisive) clashes with that of the new generation -	23
o	Possible solution with one location for a certain department -	23
o	There should be more time spend on personal attention (stimulates motivation) -	22
o	(Old) employees are stuck at the department (work processes), while rotation is good for a new look/motivation -	21
o	The (new) employees do not know the real purposes of location-transcending management -	21
o	The travel distance makes location-transcending management hard -	21
o	Apart from the management structure, personal appreciation is a point of attention (related to the time pressure) -	20
o	Culture of employees/management not to be direct/honest with each other -	20
o	More cooperation/exchange between different departments is a point of attention (easier exchange when within same location) -	20
o	No unity yet between Almelo en Zwolle -	20
o	Culture at the entire court of keeping everything the same -	19
o	The department is too big (span of control) (loses overview) -	19
o	The management is not much present at the work floor by time pressure (not at the location where necessary) -	19
o	For employees, the management-style/quality is important for the functioning with location-transcending management -	18
o	The chairman is hard to reach/approach (time pressure) -	18
o	There is no real interest for the purposes/documents behind location-transcending management -	18
o	Using new technologies (flexible interpretation) for location-transcending management (meetings) can be more efficient -	18
o	Communication with each other (departments/board) could be better within the court of Overijssel -	17

○	Involvement/communication about the implementation process of location-transcending management at the department -	17
○	More transparency about the division of tasks (management and employees) -	17
○	No (time for) evaluation about possible improvements for the department -	17
○	The court of Overijssel is vulnerable to illness/quality by spreading over different locations (in size) -	17
○	The culture of keeping everything the same keeps the court from moving forward -	17
○	The department is laborious/hectic with different disciplines within the department (makes unity within the court hard) -	17
○	The possible solution of one location (per department) is difficult by the travel distance (resistance and still not always together) -	17
○	The usage of new technologies (videoconference) at the department is too small -	17
○	Uniformity in systems/work processes is needed for working within the court as a whole (attention needed) -	17
○	Difficulty with the transition to one court of Overijssel -	16
○	No idea how the court wants/sees unity within the court -	16
○	The need for contact with the manager is higher at the administration, compared to the other functions at the department -	16
○	The transport of documents over employees/locations is difficult -	16
○	With location-transcending management there is an attitude of resistance between the locations -	16
○	Looking at cost reduction/efficiency from the primary process (more attention) -	15
○	One location makes the work of a manager easier (visibility) -	15
○	The attitude of Almelo towards Zwolle (constant comparison, Zwolle being more important) -	15
○	Visibility of the manager (face-to-face) ensures more effective communication -	15
○	Changes in systems/work processes are harder for older employees -	14
○	Employees get a lot of additional tasks, which makes the work fragmented -	14
○	Location-transcending management gives employees more (unwanted) responsibility, they want the direct manager to act -	14

○	Someone that is present at the location can make better work-related decisions (qualitatively) -	14
○	Too few meetings within the department/management (difficult to straighten things out) -	14
○	Cooperation/exchange between different departments is difficult because it involves different areas of laws (knowledge faded) -	13
○	Employees do not feel heard -	13
○	It is difficult to manage judges (judicial domain) -	13
○	The absence of the manager leads to delay at the department -	13
○	The use of a scammer/intermediary would be beneficial for work related matters/division of tasks/efficiency -	13
○	People who have experienced the previous structure are different in the current situation as new employees -	12
○	The current problems with the F&J administration may lead to a distorted picture -	12
○	There is no time for the training/settlement of new employees at the department -	12
○	Judges/legal assistances are not always on the same line (cases delivered in different ways) (different kind of relationship per location) -	11
○	More/better communication about location-transcending management could have helped -	11
○	No understanding for the us and them mentality between the management/board and employees -	11
○	Nowadays certain employees must have different capabilities than they used to (clashes with old) -	11
○	Rarely cooperation/communication between the different groups of employees with the same function -	11
○	The transition to location-transcending management is difficult for people in Almelo (resistance) -	11
○	Difficult to find a good chairman (multiple capacities) (ungrateful) -	10
○	The only form of monitoring the functioning is the employee valuation survey/current research -	10
○	The training/settlement of (new) employees with the systems/work processes of the department takes time -	10
○	With the previous structure the courts also functioned well (qualitatively) -	10
○	Important that the court is transparent about the functioning (numbers/quality) -	9

○	The cultures/values within the location of the department are sanding -	9
○	The current problems at F&J make that the department is standing still -	9
○	The organisation being vulnerable caused by the structure -	9
○	Visibility of the chairman in location-transcending management is a problem -	9
○	Employees should have more interest in documents/plans of the court (involvement/responsibility) -	8
○	Improvement initiative (digital) is necessary for documents that are 'roaming' in the court (unclarity) -	8
○	Little attention is paid to the future vision (strategy) of the court -	8
○	Location-transcending management creates a culture of constant comparison (quality/quantity) between different locations -	8
○	Possible solution in making agreements about the time spend on lawsuits of the chairman -	8
○	The chairman spends a too much time on lawsuits (bad for visibility) -	8
○	The previous structure made it easier to form a close-knit organization in Almelo -	8
○	The previous structure makes the management more reachable/direct -	8
○	Different work processes within the organisation -	7
○	Employees notice that there is little financial space within the judiciary -	7
○	In the past Almelo already was a productive (financially) court (explains critical attitude/resistance) -	7
○	KEI has caused some problems -	7
○	No preference for working at one location as the court of Overijssel -	7
○	No understanding for the us and them mentality between Zwolle and Almelo -	7
○	The communication facilities (videoconference) must be good for location-transcending management (good usage) -	7
○	The KEI programme could bring different departments closer together in terms of procedures, creating unity within the court (for the future) -	7
○	Difficulty in location-transcending management by different interests -	6
○	Doubts as to why a chairman should be a judge (are certain difficulties) -	6
○	Less flexibility between departments to cope with the work pressure -	6



○	No contact with other locations -	6
○	No time/staffing for cooperation/exchange between different departments -	6
○	Possible improvement by planning a regular meeting hour per location with the management -	6
○	Possible solution in autonomous teams -	6
○	Possible solution in the use of a chairman that is not a judge (slowly acceptance) -	6
○	There should be more space to work with other departments for the sharing of knowledge (quality) -	6
○	Preference for working at one location with a certain department (visible management) -	5
○	The improvement initiative was employees exchange to the other location within a certain department should be used more often (> than 1 time per half-year) -	5