The aim of the study was to explore employee attitudes toward change and change communication. Communication process was examined by enquiring employees' perceptions concerning the process in order to see how employee's experienced and understood the change. Another aim was to examine how different perceptions affect the organisational life during a change process. The employee's of two air cargo companies forming an alliance and integrating their sales offices were included. All in all 42 persons were included in the study. The interviews took place at the joint offices in Stockholm and Oslo.

The method used was qualitative attitude research. The interviewees were presented five statements that were directly related to the process as well as to the reviewed literature. The statements concerned managerial communication, stress, relationship between the partners, planning and management of the process and integration. The commentary and argumentation interviewees presented was analysed by using attitude as a constructing concept. Attitudes under study were attitudes toward change and change communication. The basic assumption was that these phenomenon are interrelated. Attitudes were also considered a part of communication due to their argumentative nature. Therefore also methodologically attitudes and communication are intertwined.

The findings of the study show that communication is an integrative part of change. The employee attitudes toward the change were positive. To this contributed the successful communication of the aims and reasons of forming the alliance, the friendly relationship between the new partners as well as satisfactory communication with the closest manager. However, change communication was experienced to be insufficient, since due to the nature of change not all the information was available. Nevertheless lack of information was not the most critical question but that how these situations were managed. Contradictory messages as well as lack of support from top management's part affected the process negatively. People did understand the nature of change, and the most essential factor in communication proved to be the personally relevant information. The perceptions and needs for information differ and it is relevant to provide information according to the specific needs of each individual. Small meetings that offer the possibility for face-to-face communication were preferred. The aim of these meetings was also to ventilate ideas and to reduce uncertainty. Meetings also serve as a forum where the new can be created through interaction. In the previous research the amount of information was emphasised over the quality. According to the findings of this study not everything need to be communicated, but it would be relevant to formulate the message according to the needs of the employees’. It would also be essential to broaden the meaning of communicating change to embrace the change process as a whole in order to meet all the goals set for change communication.

Most important references were Kari Vesala: Yrittäjyyys ja Individualismi (1996) and Michael Billig: Arguing and Thinking (1987).