

# 1: My Research Position

## Introduction

This paper describes the elements and progression of my dissertation research. It is a supplement to the book: “*Strategic Relational Leadership*”, which forms the other part of the complete dissertation. This chapter explains the background for my research, my curiosity regarding this topic, and describes the details of the research process. My project is inspired by action research where the focus, form, and results unfold along with the process of researching (McNiff & Whitehead 2008). For example, my early working focus was on what organization strategy looked like using a systemic – constructionist lens which subsequently evolved into the following research question: “How can systemic - constructionist ideas and practices increase our knowledge about and ability to develop organizational capacity for change?”

The Strategic Relational Leadership book (full version in appendix 1) is a large part of the dissertation where the specific concepts, ideas, and models are a result of the research process. It has been a vital landing ground for all my research work, a space where I have used the learning and findings from the research in a more practice-oriented context. This has helped me bridge the more abstract research and the specific work with the leaders in the three case organisations. In the book, the background for my research interest and the focus of the book/research are explained in Chapters 1 and 2. My philosophical position within the systemic - social constructionist tradition is articulated in Chapter 3. The theoretical elements relevant for my change capacity model – strategy, appreciation, reflexivity and positioning are unfolded in Chapters 4 to 7. The model of change capacity I have developed as a result of my research within organizations is described in Chapters 8 to 10. Chapter 11 gives an example for how the thinking can be used in practice.

This introductory paper will describe the research process from start to finish and includes the following elements. In the first chapter, I provide the reader a bit of

background about the author to position the study in my work history. In the second chapter, I clarify my standing myself as a researcher within the social constructionist paradigm. I describe the basis of my work as a practitioner – researcher and the implication this position has for my approach to research and the progression of my research process. In the third chapter, I connect the research process and how it contributed to my writing “*Strategic Relational Leadership*”. In the fourth chapter, I use what I see as the most interesting new ideas from this research project - as both concrete examples of learning and as my ‘claim’ of having generated new knowledge.