Center of Excellence but not Center of Attention?

How Experts Get Attention in Global Multi-Team Work

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ABSTRACT

The functioning of the multinational corporation (MNC) relies on effective collaborations across functional, geographical and increasingly team boundaries. In order to collaborate, different functional experts require attention to their expertise and ideas. Previous research has mainly focused on organizational level attention and managerial cognition, while little research has provided an in-depth understanding of individual experts' perspective on the issue. Yet, how experts get attention becomes crucial in today's global multi-team work, in which operational level attention determines the success of collaboration. To enhance empirical understanding of the topical phenomenon, we collect data from 75 in-depth interviews in four MNCs and adopt a qualitative research design. We find that different functional experts attribute getting attention to their expertise, however, are more varied in their responses related to the complex situations in which they do not perceive getting attention across different boundaries, such as from the business side of the MNC. A nuanced understanding of attention reveals important underlying tensions across different functions with both theoretical and practical relevance for the individuals and ultimately for the competitiveness of the MNC.

Key words: *Attention theory, MNCs, Experts, qualitative study*

INTRODUCTION

”No matter how much of expertise you possess, you cannot move things forward without the recognition from the firm.” – Senior scientist, EnergyCo

Winning attention to one’s ideas and area of expertise is among the most critical, scarce and sought-after resources in organizations. However, getting attention is often challenging, which has been recognized by both researchers to the extent of calling firms “attention markets” (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Ocasio, 1997) and practioners linking attention to critical consequences, such as getting promoted or gaining influence (Parr, 2015; Hagel III & Brown, 2011). Getting attention is particularly complex in workplaces with high levels of geographical and cultural diversity coupled with complex portfolios of businesses and functions, such as in MNCs (Bouquet & Birkinshaw, 2008; Prahalad & Doz, 1987). Yet, as the senior scientist illustrates in the opening quote, even a wealth of knowledge requires adequate recognition (such as attention) to be mobilized into positive project outcomes, which is in line with insights on integrating expertise in projects (Bredin, Enberg, Niss & Söderlund; 2017; Iansiti, 1993). Heeding to a recent call for more research on the bottom-up processes and the role played by individuals (Ocasio, 2011), we posit that getting attention poses a particular challenge for the individual experts in MNCs, but from whose perspective we do not nearly enough about.

Current research on organizational attention has focused on structures, such as inter-unit relationships and HQ-subsidiary relationships (see e.g. Ambos & Birkinshaw, 2010; Bouquet & Birkinshaw, 2008; Galunic & Eisenhardt, 2001). At the individual level, research has focused on the attention of the CEO and top managers (Eggers & Kaplan, 2009; Cho & Hambrick, 2006). However, much of important expertise sharing takes places across units and hierarchies, resulting in novel and critical situations in which top-down attention is insufficient and individual perceptions shape the organizational processes (Maitlis &

Christianson, 2014; Rerup, 2009; Nigam & Ocasio, 2010). For instance, increasingly in MNCs, important innovative work is done in various team-based settings in which each member brings the expertise and perspective of his or her own field to the collaborative task (Gibson, Dunlop, & Cordery, 2019; Nurmi & Hinds, 2016; Faraj & Sproull, 2000). Despite the complexity, interestingly, attention has not been studied as an operational level phenomenon. More specifically, there is a need for an enhanced understanding of how different experts perceive getting attention to their ideas and areas of expertise. Accordingly, we pose the following research question: "*How do experts perceive getting attention in MNCs?"*.

We address the research question by taking the perspective of experts in MNCs and given the exploratory nature of the study, conduct a qualitative interview-based study. With access to four MNCs, we analyze an extensive amount of qualitative data from 75 in-depth interviews with different functional experts. The experts work in multiple development projects simultaneously, making them an ideal empirical setting to provide new insights on gaining attention in today's fluid and flexible ways of working. This offers a complementary view to attention in MNCs, as individuals give and get inputs widely across the MNC and compete over attention with others.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

We start by drawing from the previous research on attention by discussing the concept, its roots and application areas. While we focus on established knowledge on attention in organizations, we bring novelty by discussing its relevance in today's global multi-team work, in which involved individuals emerge important with their experiences and perceptions of attention. For a nuanced understanding, we also introduce attribution theory as the theoretical backdrop for the empirical part of the study.

Attention-based View of the Firm

Attention is a concept with a long and diverse history in organization science and currently constitutes a broad, yet fragmented, field of research across disciplines (Ocasio, 2011; Jones, 2005; Thornton, 2004). Much of current research focuses on organizational level attention building on the seminal work of Simon (1947) on channelling, structuring and allocation of attention as a central organizing concept for organizational control, which laid the foundation for organization theory (March & Simon, 1958). Rather than focusing on control, Ocasio (1997) coined the attention-based view of the firm by focusing on how attention shapes organizational adaptation (Ocasio & Joseph, 2005). At the level of individual cognition, for most organizational scholars, attention refers to *the set of elements (events, trends, ideas) that occupies the consciousness of managers* (Dutton, Walton, & Abrahamson, 1989). Similarly, attention has been portrayed as "*a meta-construct describing the noticing, encoding, and interpreting of available stimuli and the accompanying focusing of time and effort*" (Bouquet & Birkinshaw, 2008).

What is currently known about getting attention tends to focus on the unit level in MNCs. For example, in their widely cited work, Bouquet and Birkinshaw (2008) demonstrate that whether a subsidiary gets attention is largely driven by its position in the MNC network and in relation to the HQ (the "weight" of the subsidiary) and how it uses the opportunities to speak up and communicate its relevance ("voice"). While these unit-level and managerial actions advance the theory of attention, much of important expertise sharing goes beyond structures and hierarchies in today's MNCs making individuals important actors in how attention is allocated. However, how individuals perceive getting attention remains largely unexplored in MCNs.

Indeed, most recently, research has shifted focus towards individuals and their perceptions. More specifically, by drawing from modern cognitive neuroscience of attention

(Corbetta & Shulman, 2002; Posner & Rothbart, 2007), the attention-based view of the firm views attention as "*not a unitary concept but a variety of interrelated mechanisms and processes that at the level of human brain operate in diverse ways*" (Ocasio, 2011, p. 1286). While in stable environments, focused attention can support value-creation through exploiting existing expertise rather than diverging focus (Nell & Ambos, 2013), in the context of today's fast-paced and flexible ways of working, moving from the organizational level to lower level nuances related to attention is crucial for firm survival (Monteiro, 2015). Given that individuals increasingly allocate their expertise, time and attention to multiple projects at the same time in order to carry out strategically important knowledge work (Mortensen & Haas, 2018), it emerges important to study attention – and revisit current assumptions on stable ways of working – in the new changed reality of multi-project work (Gibson et al., 2019; Mortensen & Haas, 2018).

Attention in Today's Multi-project Work

In the new ways of working, much of important collaboration spans units and hierarchies and takes place in various team-based settings in which each member brings the expertise and perspectives for joint problem-solving (Gibson et al., 2019). For example, when developing a new product, collaboration includes engineers who provide insight into the technical details, manufacturing experts who offer the boundary conditions of the production, sales people focus on the end product while product safety specialists ensure the product meets the latest regulations. However, in global multi-team work, capturing the attention of members is often difficult, given that members' focus is diluted by their local tasks and priorities and by their membership on other teams within their own local site (Gibson et al., 2019; Klein & Kleinhaus, 2001; Metiu & Rothbard, 2013). So how do individuals get attention to multi-project work?

Indeed, it has been proposed that attention is among the most critical commodities in the multi-project work as people have increasingly unlimited access to information (through new technologies and access to networks) but limited abilities to attend to and process that information (Hansen & Haas, 2001; O'Leary, Mortensen, & Woolley, 2011). Building on this premise, as explained by reduced cognitive load theory, getting attention can be largely driven by the similarity in terms of how a problem "matches" and is close and familiar to the individual's area of expertise (Haas, Criscuolo, & George, 2015; Borgatti & Cross, 2003). In similar vein, evidence from studies on decision-makers show that individuals tend to focus their attention on opportunities that match their previous experience (Monteiro, 2015; Menon & Pfeffer, 2003). Besides the individuals, situations also matter as the extent to which problems attract attention will vary not only with the characteristics of those problems, but also with the contexts in which the problems are rooted, which Ocasio (1997) calls "the principle of situated attention". That is, what individuals focus on depends on the particular situation or context in which they find themselves (Haas et al., 2015; Nisbett & Ross, 1991).

What emerges is that getting attention in today's MNCs is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon, which despite its importance for various positive organizational outcomes, interestingly, remains unexplored from the perspective of the individual expert. Yet, importantly, it is those individuals within the organizational structures who give and get attention. To further understand the phenomenon and more particularly, what they attribute the attention to, we turn to seminal work on attributions as a theoretical lens for our study.

Personal and Situational Attributions for the Perceptions of Attention

A body of research demonstrates that individual perceptions are driven by personal and situational characteristics (see e.g. Kulik & Ambrose, 1992). According to seminal work on attribution theory (Heider, 1958), individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behavior (i.e. why people do what they do). According to the attribution theory, individuals try to understand others' behavior by *piecing together information until they arrive at a reasonable explanation or cause* (Jones et al., 1972). More specifically, a person can make *internal* (i.e. person-specific) and *external* (i.e. situation-specific) attributions (see Table 1 for a synthesis).

[Insert Table 1 about here]

An example of personal characteristic is attitude or personality, while situational factors include aspects such as location and other physical arrangements at work. Thus, when aiming to understand how oneself or others are behaving at the workplace, there can be a tendency to assume the behavior is because of one's role or position (e.g. manager) or where the person is situated (e.g. HQ). What is interesting about attributions is that individuals tend to assign less variability to other people than themselves and seeing themselves as more multifaceted and less predictable than others. The difference is explained by knowing oneself and one's inner world (social cognition theory by Kuiper & Rogers, 1979; Rogers, Kuiper & Kirker, 1977) and has implications to everyday work interactions.

Categorization is an inherent tendency for individuals to makes sense of their surrounding world, yet, they often are implicit, thus need to be detected without relying on an explicit mentioning. They are also highly context-dependent, which can further reveal underlying aspects the speaker associates with the category in mind. For example, how the account of the categorization links to the situation (e.g. an interview situation), how logical it is, how the category is negotiated and in which sequence the claims take place can be important. In general, individuals make two types of categorization: personal and non-personal. The former applies to self and others in terms of demographics, nationality, profession, status and expertise. Non-personal, in turn, refers to the surrounding physical objects, environment, location and structures. Interestingly, collective categorization is likely to be activated in interactions in which there is no direct visual context and proximity (Tajfel et al, 1970), which is commonplace for the interaction partners in today's global collaboration.

Against this background, we posit that getting attention poses a particular challenge for the individuals in MNCs, given the shift to more fluid, flexible and expertise-centered ways of working. Thus, we focus on the subjective perceptions and attributions of individuals and posit that these can reveal important underlying tensions and novel insights on the issue at hand. Overall, we propose an alternative framing of attention of the firm from a managerial (vertical) phenomenon to an operational (horizontal) level challenge (see Figure 1). In order to explore attention in today's MNCs, we set to conduct a qualitative study as discussed next.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

METHODOLOGY

To answer our research question of "*How do experts perceive getting attention in MNCs?"*, we draw from a rich qualitative data set of 75 in-depth interviews with experts working in four multinational corporations, NewTech, GlobalNet, EnergyCo and CrossCare (see Table 2 for details). All companies are part of the same large-scale research project on global collaboration to which they have been selected through theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The main criteria for the selection was that companies deal with knowledge-intensive work across national and functional boundaries.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

The research project started with an open-ended inquiry on global collaboration with the aim of gaining new insights by studying the individuals dealing with complex knowledge in practice. Motivated by a central managerial challenge in all four MNCs, our research interests aligned with those of companies' to improve current global team practices (e.g. to break down silos). We have chosen to focus our study on individuals in different expert positions for not only as they provide an ideal empirical setting to understand current ways of working in global collaboration, but there is also very little empirical research, which focuses on other strategically important individuals besides managers (Jack, Calás, Nkomo, & Peltonen, 2008). Yet, experts are at the heart of strategically important knowledge work in today's MNCs. For the details of our sample, please see Table 3.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Data Collection

The data collection was exploratory by nature, thus, we found a semi-structured interview study most suitable (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Given that interviews provide high validity of subjective experiences and the multidimensional nature of situations in which attention plays an important role, we were able to capture different perceptions of attention (see e.g. Mueller, Sillince, Harvey, & Howorth, 2004). Interviews started with pre-planned broader themes, but importantly, with flexibility to follow up issues raised by the respondent. The interviews lasted between 80-100 minutes and consisted of open-ended questions, such as "What works well?" and "How would you improve your collaboration?". These open-ended questions were key for capturing the challenge and personal experiences of getting attention (Kvale, 2006).

We aimed to keep interviews as co-performances with a natural conversational flow (Brinkmann, 2013). In many ways the interviews were "self-correcting", as after asking the question, both interviewee and interviewer would negotiate the meaning concerning the question and its broader theme, including providing clarifications when needed. We utilised a flexible interview prompt sheet which set an interactive interview situation (King, 1994). We, thus, aimed at giving the respondent an opportunity to speak in their own voice, and introduce and elaborate themes they found most pressing. We would also encourage the interviewee to provide concrete examples (Birmingham & Wilkinson, 2003), which would be followed by the interviewer's interpretation of the description before moving to the next question. One can argue that as we were dealing with (often esoteric) expertise in a global multi-project work, this part had an increased level of importance to create a common ground and thus aim for a rich description of the interviewee's view of the lived experiences.

All interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim to address the issues of credibility and confirmability and were held in meeting rooms at the worksites or via video connection when meeting face-to-face was not possible. Before the interview began, the researcher(s) explained briefly the purpose of the project, guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. In most cases the language in the interview was English as lingua franca, which was a natural choice as the corporate language in all four MNCs. In the beginning of the interview, the researchers aimed at gaining an understanding of the current projects central to the participant, which elicited accounts on striking a balance between different roles and projects and may have thus indirectly surfaced the challenge of getting attention.

In the middle of the interview, researchers posed direct questions related to being an expert, which showed the complexity of expertise and provided another angle to getting attention across different boundaries. Some of the points on expertise were often touched upon already earlier in the interview so these were then referred back to, however, perhaps more interestingly, having the opportunity to discuss expertise in-depth revealed underlying tensions related to attention. The last part of the interview focused directly about global collaboration and global collaboration practices. After the interviews, it became a routine to write reflexive field notes and whenever the interview was conducted by two researchers, discuss about the interview, which can be seen as the start of the data analysis.

Data Analysis

After identifying all instances in which experts discuss getting attention and what they attribute attention to, we utilized qualitative coding and thematizing to move from respondents' words into conceptual themes. To help with the coding process, we placed all transcripts into the qualitative software Atlas.ti. The qualitative coding process from first and second order categories to the aggregate dimensions are synthesized in Table 4.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Our aim in developing themes was to remain both reflexive and sceptical about the data and our relationship to it (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000), and we strived to reflect critically on expertise as seen 'through the eyes of the beholder' (Van Maanen, 1977, p. 174). In line with previous research on attention, we operationalized getting attention as "being noticed", "being regarded (as someone or representing something)" as "interesting" or "important". In practice, we read and re-read the interview transcripts and identified all instances of getting attention. These instances were sometimes direct references ("I get attention through my expertise"), but mostly captured through indirect accounts, which we coded as being "noticed", "observed", "recognized", "concentrated to", "heard" and "listened to". When we analyzed the way in which the instances were described, getting attention was attributed in a more straightforward way (e.g. "I get attention through my expertise"), whereas reasons for the struggles of getting attention ranged from geographical, cultural, functional, hierarchical sources of tension to differences in personalities. Although we did not ask directly about, the struggle of getting attention across functions and the several references to the "business side" of the MNC emerged as an important theme. We will discuss our key findings next.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

"Success [in the expert work] stems from combining your expertise and the core business. This is the most important thing. Because it's of everyone's interest to make you succeed. If you lack support, you can do whatever you want, but it will never fly"

As in the opening quote Senior Scientist at EnergyCo explains, in order to perform at work – or in his case to contribute in a global development project – one needs attention ("interest", "support") from others. When examined this quote in its entire interview discussion, the relevant others refer to managers but more often to other key contact persons from different functions. What emerges is that developing a global product is a highly interdependent process, in which mutual interest, attention to move project forward from development engineers to marketers. Thus, getting attention across functions emerge as an important theme in the global multi-team work.

So, what do the experts perceive getting attention to? Our analysis of the unprompted answers reveal an intriguing pattern related to personal and situational characteristics (see Figure 2). Personal aspects refer to own personal experiential knowledge, domain expertise, expert status and position in the organization (e.g. one's area of expertise is at the core of the priority area set for the project). Situational aspects, in turn, refer to the collaboration environment, referring to aspects such as geographical distance between the interaction partner, functional diversity within the project and functional distance between projects. These were seen as the main barrier of getting attention.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

Firstly, when experts perceived getting attention, they attributed this to their own expertise (36 %). Examples include descriptions of getting attention through knowing technical details or having experience over a central process. Rather than attributing gaining attention to local proximity (e.g. being located at the HQ where decisions are made), experts perceived their individual expertise as an important way of getting attention they needed.

However, the expertise, although not expressed explicitly, but what we interpreted through our analysis was powerful mostly in the local settings they described.

Secondly, when referring to the situations in which experts did not perceive getting attention, they attributed the reasons mainly to the situational characteristics (40 %), such as geographical distance. In situations in which the experts struggled getting attention, attributes were firstly, situational (e.g. functional or geographical distance) and secondly, more varied and ambiguous. When we analyzed these responses in-depth with our discursive analysis, we noticed that even the level of abstraction increased. For example, respondents listed more attributions as the potential reason for the struggle of getting attention.

What was common to both personal and situational characteristics was the emphasis on how one is connected to the business function of the firm. On one hand, sources of not getting attention were attributed to the lack of ability of the business side to comprehend the value of development work, which was coupled with reasoning that expertise is sometimes hard to prove by numbers. However, what was highlighted is the positioning of one's expertise, such as that one's own area of expertise might not be in line with the strategy of the firm or that structurally R&D was not integrated with the customer interface, which enforced the struggle to get attention when needed. On the other hand, one's expertise was also the key to gain attention from the business side. Our respondents expressed the importance of being proactive in terms of reaching out to others and pushing ideas forward. Ideally one would be closely connected to decision-making, which was perceived critical, however, in practice, keeping regular contact and take action to keep business interested were highlighted.

Research implications

Firstly, we heed to Ocasio's (2011) call for more studies on the bottom-up processes and the role played by individuals as "attention carriers" in explaining attention in MNCs

(Monteiro, 2015). An enhanced understanding of attention is important, as getting attention to one's ideas and area of expertise is among the most critical, scarce and sought-after resources in organizations (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Ocasio, 1997). By focusing on individual experts, we complement the current research, which has focused on the formal structures, such as inter-unit and HQ-subsidiary relationships (see e.g. Monteiro, 2015; Ambos & Birkinshaw 2010; Bouquet & Birkinshaw, 2008; Ocasio, 1997; Galunic & Eisenhardt, 1996; 2001) and the attention of the CEO and top managers (Kaplan, 2008; Eggers & Kaplan, 2009; Cho & Hambrick, 2006).

More specifically, we advance the theory of attention in MNCs by revisiting existing concepts and assumptions in the context of "new forms of teamwork" (see e.g. Gibson et al, 2019). Namely, while getting attention poses a particular challenge for individuals in MNCs complex working environment (see e.g. Bouquet & Birkinshaw, 2008), in today's MNCs, much of important collaboration takes places beyond units and hierarchies, resulting in novel and strategically important situations in which top-down attention is insufficient and individual perceptions shape the organizational processes (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; Nigam & Ocasio, 2010; Rerup, 2009). For example, in project-driven work of MNCs today, individuals do not only need the attention from managers, but constantly also from other functions. The operational level is critical, as firm performance is carried out by individuals performing in projects and cross-functional projects are the solution for responding to fast-paced, global competition. Yet, the new ways of organizing work are efficient only to the extent to which the involved individuals get help and attention as they need – within and across functions. We provide a nuanced understanding of attention in MNCs through identifying person and situation-specific attributes to attention in MNCs. With this we advance the understanding of functions within the MNC (see e.g. Brannen & Doz, 2001;

Bartlett, Ghoshal, & Birkinshaw, 2003) and hope to attract more studies investigating the operational level and the individuals as "attention carriers" (Ocasio, 2011).

From the methodological point of view, we heed to a recent call for doing qualitative research, in which researchers are interpreters and critical evaluators of underlying tensions, dynamics, and processes rather than glorified reporters (see e.g. Bansal, Smith, & Vaara, 2018). For example, as a guiding principle for our analysis, we would not take responses as face value but take few analytical steps further and locate the interpretation in its context to conclude what the response reflects about attention in MNCs (Charmaz, 2006; Alasuutari, 1995). We thus heed to a recent call from Barley, Treem, and Kuhn (2018) for making invisible knowledge work visible in organizations.

Although we find our approach to the empirical fieldwork appropriate to answer the research question set for this study, future studies might consider adding other qualitative techniques, such as observations, to capture the real-life situations in how attention poses a challenge for the involved individuals and how they can cope with the challenge, for instance by adopting different strategies to get attention. However, interviews are well suited to capture the more subtle elements of the challenge of getting attention, which might not surface in everyday communication and thus not capture the non-obvious aspects of it (Costas & Grey, 2014). Secondly, acknowledging that giving and getting attention is an interpersonal, inherently reciprocal process, we suggest future studies on attention to consider a smaller sample of individuals but with a wider set of network actors (e.g. both ends of the dyad etc). We also focused on expertise as a source of attention, however, as individuals in MNCs often come from varying national backgrounds, it would be interesting avenue for future research to aim capturing the role of national culture (e.g. nationality, language) in terms of getting attention. Besides individuals and their characteristics, organizational culture may influence the perceptions and opportunities to gain adequate attention, which become of interest to the studies of attention in MNCs. With this study we hope to attract more studies on bottom-up processes of attention (Ocasio, 2011). We also echo recent IB research and encourage researchers to continue to examine the complexity of new ways of working that continue to emerge (Gibson et al., 2019; O'Neill & Salas, 2018) and are likely to provide intriguing avenues for IB research now and in the future.

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Table 1
The Main Attributes for Getting Attention

Personal category (Applies to self and others)	**Non-personal category**
Demographics (e.g. age, gender)	Physical objects (e.g. technology)
Nationality	Location, environment (e.g. country, team)
Profession (e.g. title, position)	Structures (e.g. hierarchies, organization)
Status (e.g. social status)	Collective categorization (e.g. stereotyping, simplification based on a single characteristic)
Expertise (e.g. knowledge, authority)	

Table 2
Case companies and respondents

Pseudonym	**Key Statistics**	**Description of the MNC**	**Nationalities of Respondents for this Study**	**Amount of Respondents** (out of total interviews)
NewTech, HQ in USA	8500 employees in 35 countries	World-leading ICT company for manufacturing and construction	British Chinese Croatian Finnish German Peruvian Russian Spanish South Korean Vietnamese	24 (32 %)
GlobalNet, HQ in Finland	4300 employees in 11 countries	Leading ICT service provider in Finland	Finnish Indian	19 (25 %)
EnergyCo, HQ in Finland	4800 employees in 40 countries	Market-leading chemistry company in Asia and Europe	American Argentine Austrian Chinese Finnish Iranian Puerto Rican Swedish	17 (23 %)
CrossCare, HQ in UK	500 employees in five countries	A fast-growing company with a leading position in specialized technology solutions	British Finnish Irish Italian Portuguese Thai Turkish	15 (20 %)
			Total: 23 nationalities	**Total: 75 respondents**

Table 3
Characteristics of the Sample

Overall Sample	
Gender distribution	**(%)**
Male	76
Female	24
Educational background	**(%)**
Master's degree	30
Bachelor's degree	46
PhD	20
No higher degree or unreported	4
Key averages	**(years)**
Age	40
Expert tenure	14
Organizational tenure	6

Table 4
Coding Table

<table>
<tr><th>1st Order Concepts</th><th>2nd Order Concepts</th><th>Themes</th></tr>
<tr><td>Business side has a “lack of understanding or appreciation of what is needed for quality inputs”
Expertise does “not have a direct translation to an increase in revenue”</td><td>Expertise hard to comprehend</td><td rowspan="4">Situational Factors of Getting Attention</td></tr>
<tr><td>Own expertise area is not included in the “strategic tram of the firm”
Expertise is not in the business area
How “you’re perceived by the rest of the firm does not necessarily parallel” to one’s expertise
R&D is “removed from client interactions”</td><td>Positioning of expertise in the firm</td></tr>
<tr><td>Not getting answers from other functions
Hard to “get help” from other functions
“Cannot change the opinion” of the business side</td><td>Influence limited to function</td></tr>
<tr><td>Have to rely on people “not responsive to me”
Own local authority helps getting attention
Not “having control what we do in the lab”
Influence merely over the local team decisions
Not getting ideas across different locations</td><td>Influence limited to location</td></tr>
<tr><td>Actively reaching out to others
Being active and “pushing more” to get ideas through to the business side
Focusing on the positive news when reporting to the business side, helps “make them listen more”
Being closely connected to the decision-making</td><td>Emphasizing on strategic orientation and proactiveness</td><td rowspan="3">Personal Factors of Getting Attention</td></tr>
<tr><td>“They listen to my experience”
Having the required expert knowledge
Being able to bring new perspectives</td><td>Viewing expertise as competitive advantage</td></tr>
<tr><td>Keeping business interested
Having business side “ask how’s it going”
Having regular contact with “the highest business level”</td><td>Focusing on business relationships</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 1
From Managerial Attention to Attention between Functions

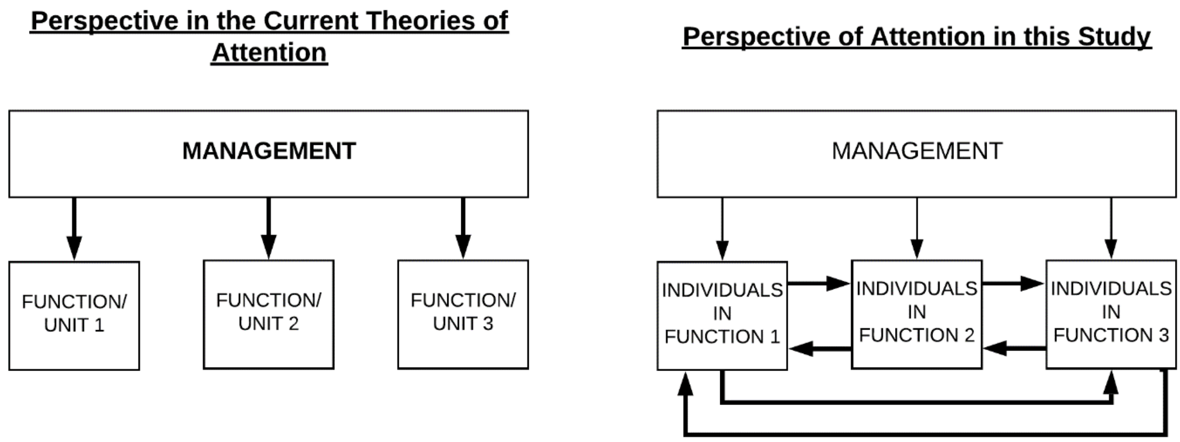

Figure 2
Main Findings of the Study