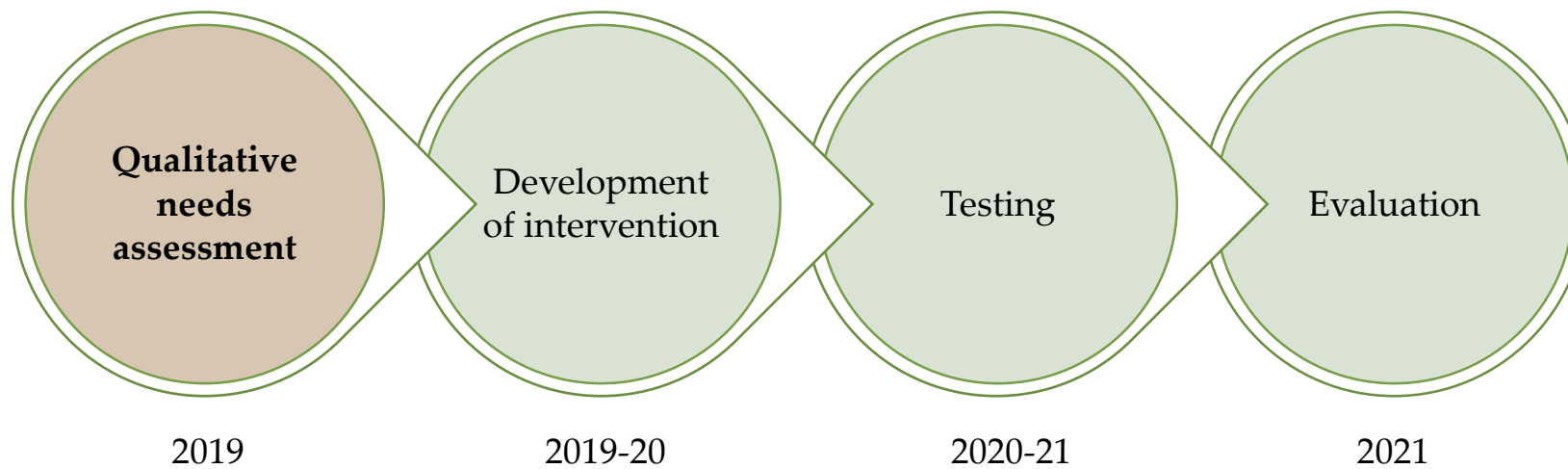


# Mental health and teamwork in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)

*- Findings from a qualitative pilot study*



# Aim

- To explore collaboration and social capital in SMEs, including:
  - Within teams (bonding)
  - Between teams (bridging)
  - Between managers and employees (linking)





# Methods and participants

- Semi-structured group interviews in ten SMEs (6-70 employees)
- Participants:
  - Managers (n=18) and employees (n=38)
  - Production, veterinary, communication, pharmacy, consulting engineering etc.
  - Characteristic: fast expansion and unpredictability in work processes
- Qualitative thematic analysis

# Preliminary results



Collaboration between employees and managers



Collaboration within teams and between teams



Consequences to the working environment



# Collaboration between employees and managers

- Lack of feedback from managers
- Lack of trust between employees and managers
  - e.g. being watched and monitored by managers
- Disagreements in perception of reality

*I trust my colleagues fully, but if I look at my managers, I certainly don't have much trust in them!*

*In one situation, we communicated to our employees way too late. We have improved since then!*



*We get conflicting and half messages from management. We generally have a hard time understanding our director. He speaks another language.*





# Collaboration within and between teams

- Lack of defined teams
- Employees work independently
- Collaboration is constituted ad hoc and elusive depending on the specific task at hand



*It's not my job anymore!*






# Consequences to the working environment

- Individual responsibility
  - Afraid of making mistakes
- Lack of coordination and distribution of roles
- Collective vulnerability
  - e.g. staff replacement

*When people get a new job, there is a lack of information on who takes over that person's responsibilities. I feel like their role is being lost on the floor and nobody else picks it up.*



# What is a team?

*"a small number of people with complementary skills who are **committed to a common purpose**, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves **mutually accountable**."*

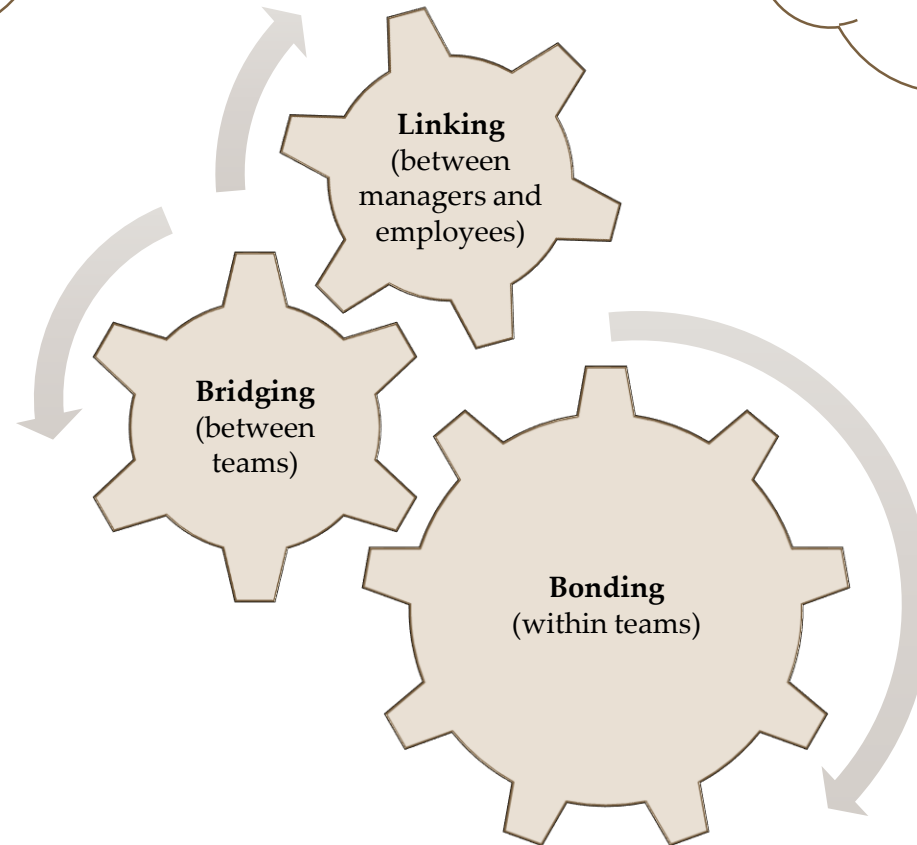
*(Katzenbach & Smith, 1993)*

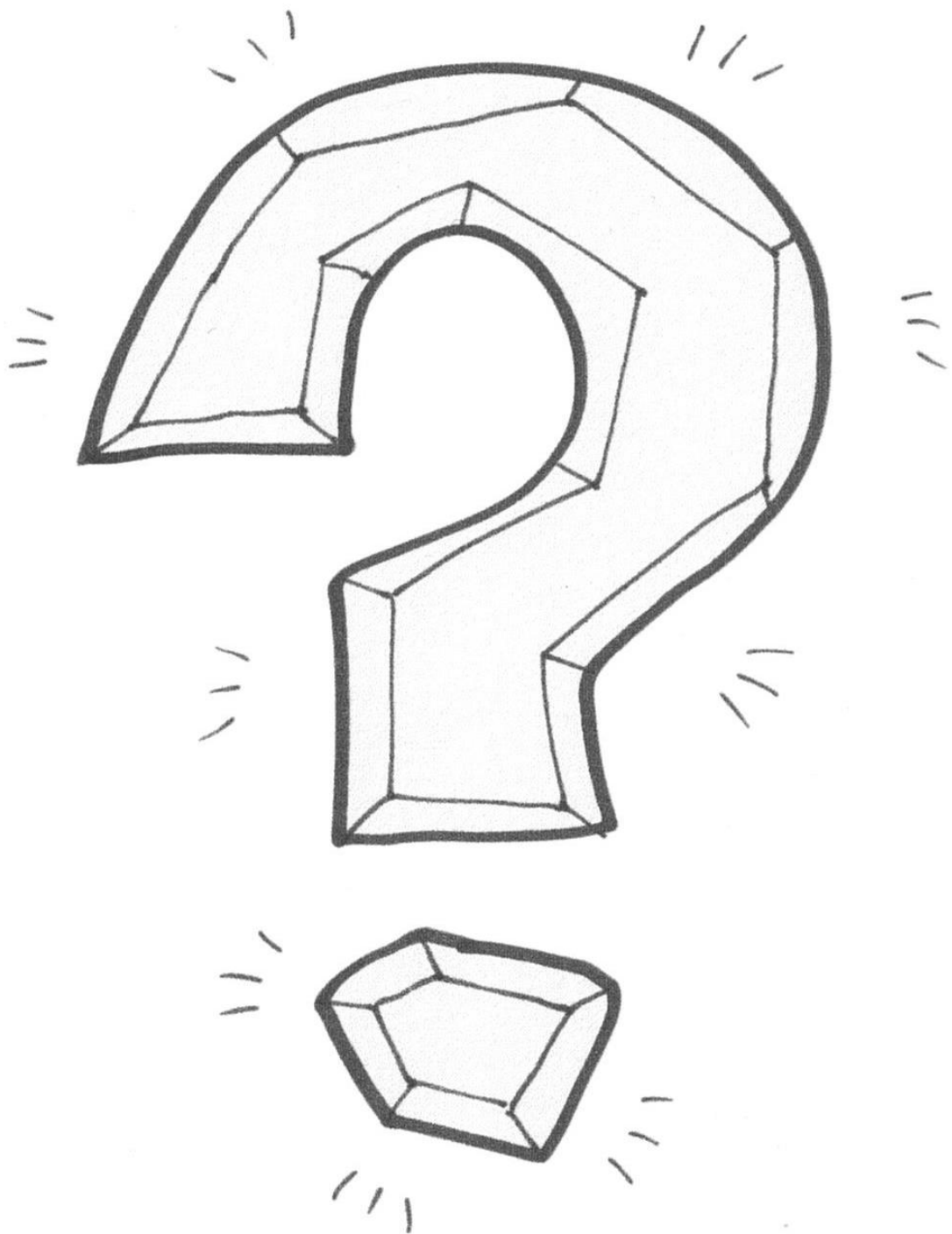
*"a team is two or more individuals with **specified roles** interacting adaptively, **interdependently**, and dynamically toward a common and valued goal."*

*(Dyer, 1984; Salas et al., 1992)*

**Are there no teams?**

**Do the definitions  
of a team not apply  
to the context?**





# Questions?

*Any thoughts or suggestions?*

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